

*Mid-Term Evaluation Report.. The ARISE Project*  
**THE MID-TERM EVALUATION**  
**OF**

**Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's  
Environment (ARISE) Project**

**(BGD/97/028/AA/01/99\*1)**

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**ABBREVIATIONS...**

**ARISE** : Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment  
**ASK** : Ain O Salish Kendra

<b>BRAC:</b>	<b>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</b>
<b>CCF</b>	<b>: Country Co-operation Framework</b>
<b>CEDC</b>	<b>: Children in Especially Difficult Situation</b>
<b>CEP</b>	<b>: Community Empowerment Program</b>
<b>CIRDAP</b>	<b>: Centre for Integrated Development in Asia Pacific</b>
<b>CRC</b>	<b>: Convention on the Rights of the Child</b>
<b>CSKS</b>	<b>: Chinnomul Shishu Kishore Shangstha</b>
<b>CTC</b>	<b>: Child to Child</b>
<b>CTRDW</b>	<b>: Centre for Training and Rehabilitation of Destitute Women</b>
<b>DIC/OSS</b>	<b>: Drop-in-Centre/On Site School</b>
<b>DNFE</b>	<b>: Directorate of Non Formal Education</b>
<b>DOF</b>	<b>: Department of Finance</b>
<b>GOB</b>	<b>: Government of Bangladesh</b>
<b>GSS</b>	<b>: Gono Shahajho Shangstha</b>
<b>HELP</b>	<b>: Health Education and Legal Protection</b>
<b>INFEP</b>	<b>: Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme</b>
<b>MOSW</b>	<b>: Ministry of Social Welfare</b>
<b>MOU</b>	<b>: Memorandum of Understanding</b>
<b>MOWCA</b>	<b>: Ministry of Women and Children's Affair</b>
<b>MP</b>	<b>: Mohila Porishad</b>
<b>MVC</b>	<b>: Most Vulnerable Children</b>
<b>NDRT</b>	<b>: Night Drive Rescue Team</b>
<b>NPA</b>	<b>: National Project Personnel</b>
<b>APR</b>	<b>: Annual Project Review</b>
<b>PRUA</b>	<b>: Participatory Urban Appraisal</b>
<b>RESCUE</b>	<b>: Reach Education to Street Children</b>
<b>RM</b>	<b>: Reach Medicare to Children</b>
<b>SHD</b>	<b>: Sustainable Human Development</b>
<b>TOT</b>	<b>: Training of Trainers</b>
<b>UCEP</b>	<b>: Underprivileged Children Education Program UPOK</b>
<b>: Unnayan</b>	

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#### **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY...**

This is a mid-term Evaluation of the street children project, ARISE, which was initiated in the year 1998 and is a collaborative effort of UNDP and Government of Bangladesh.

The reason for UNDP support was the significance of the problem of 3-4 million children who needed immediate help and were vulnerable to abuse and exploitation due to absence of or lack of safety, shelter, food-security and any mechanism to prevent their abuse. In the national context, this was the most vulnerable group, which was denied their basic rights. The special consideration of the project was to -

- Work with most vulnerable street-children
- Work with girl-children
- Work with the DSS and NGOs together, initiating the NGOs in an active role.
- Build up national capacity to child protection (*with focus on most vulnerable children*). (*Project Document - ARISE*).

A co-ordination unit was set up which consisted of members from the different ministries like Home, Social Welfare, Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Social Services, UNICEF and UNFPA. This project planned to set up linkages with Government, International NGOs and NGOs, based on the understanding

of the need to work with each other.

The current mission being that of a 'mid term' evaluation, the team of evaluators tried to assess the efficiency of implementation and quality of management of the project. The project was intended to create an enabling environment where the child is able to learn skills and become competent enough to be employed effectively. This would help the child to live a life of safety, security and happiness. The evaluation team also tried to assess the achievement of the project in which direct and indirect stakeholders were to be mobilised in addressing the problem collectively. They were required to identify and remove the obstacles to the growth of these most vulnerable children and create an enabling environment for the child to live a life with dignity and in safety.

The methodology followed was looking into reports and any available secondary data on the issue of street children. It included several focus-group discussions with the target population (*children, staff members of Government Organisations and NGOs, and the community*). This mission was to look into innovative approaches made within the project as well as identify interesting and successful endeavours outside of it, which can be replicated for the benefit of the children. Some good practices have been stated in the chapter **Good Practices**. Time to time discussions were also held with other UN Agencies and NGOs to learn from their good practices and bad experiences. The team members also had discussions with probable and present employers of children and other community based people who the children had to interact with.

This project (ARISE) worked with nine NGOs in Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Barisal, Khulna, Rajshahi. The target group consisted of children working and/or living on the streets with or without their parents in the above mentioned districts. The NGOs already had experience of working in the slums of Bangladesh but barring a few, they did not have experience in working with street children. Children themselves were not involved in the planning stage of this particular project but the NGOs have taken up the challenge to work with the children.

The evaluation team found that this project deals with manifestations rather than the root causes of the problems faced by the street children (MVC). A major component of this project is its education programme. Unfortunately, there is a lack of a standardised, innovative, efficient and effective non-formal education tool / material and curriculum. This should have been developed by the education consultant already. The curriculum that is being used presently, is actually from

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different formal text books. The methodology used is completely different for different organisations. The teaching material is not related to the lives of the street children and hence is not making much sense to them. Unless the educational input is user friendly nothing much can be achieved from it. The evaluators felt that Aparajeyo Bangladesh had extensive experience in working with street children and both the curriculum and methodology used by the group can be replicated by all other parties. Aparajeyo Bangladesh has experience and training facilities and can offer this training to other NGOs. Jogajog in Chittagong has tried innovative methods of theatre for imparting awareness on the issue of child rights based on the CRC, which is also quite interesting. The total education programme needs to be more participatory and interesting in nature. Street children generally live and move around in depressing environment and have to undergo lot of stress, hence, unless and until the method of teaching and curriculum is interesting, these children are not going to be an active learning partner of the process. Moreover the education curriculum should include more information on problems that street children face and how to survive in spite of these problems, how they can be street smart and better protect themselves from all sorts of hazards.

As street children live unprotected and are vulnerable to diseases, unhygienic living conditions, unwanted pregnancies, STD and HIV/AIDS they need to be oriented towards networking among themselves to

protect each other and also with different Governmental and Non Governmental services who might reach out for help. Some NGOs have already worked out referral systems for these children within their own programmes or with Government hospitals. Street children lack protection as most of them lack the right kind of shelter, rather they do not sometimes have any shelter whatsoever. It is most important that the partner NGOs network with Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations to provide **part time** or **full time** drop in centre facilities and night shelters to protect these children. The Government protective homes should be lobbied with by the partner NGOs in their own capacities so that they cater to street children's needs who are without families, who are young and vulnerable.

The vocational training programme was unfortunately not as innovative as expected and the market survey completed by the individual NGOs were done pretty late. The vocational training is not targeted for all the children. What was hopeful was that most NGOs have been able to put several of their target community, the children, into job placements. It was quite clear that NGOs had good relationship / rapport with the people in the larger community as the smaller businesses, workshops and manufacturing units that the children got jobs in, were owned by the people from the community. New innovative training mechanisms and procedures should be included here. The rapport that NGOs already had with small scale factory owners or business men, is really commendable and can be used / explored even further for the benefit of the children.

A very important part of this project (ARISE) is the **drop in centre and the shelter home** facility run by the NGOs. They are needed by these children because most of them do not live where basic facilities are available. Due to non-availability of space the ongoing drop in centres and shelter did not have excellent facilities and these badly needed a face-lift. It is difficult to get enough space in crowded cities / areas but drop in centres are of primary importance, these are the safe spaces provided for the children, these are the most needed facility that these children can use at this point of time of their lives.

While working, travelling or resting, these children have to mostly live on their own. They migrate from their houses in villages and live dangerously on the edge with other children. They are not only vulnerable because of outsiders or other adults but also from their own peers who do not lose a chance to exploit each other. One has to understand that prevalence of violence is extremely high among these children. Girl children are specially and doubly vulnerable and often are sexually exploited, trafficked to other cities or other countries and are even forced into

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prostitution. In a country like Bangladesh where development in its true sense has not reached the extreme corners of the country, where families, and children especially, migrate to the cities in search of some income, drop in centres and shelter homes are needed to give them support and safety till they learn to protect themselves and are able to be on their own.

Networking, linkages, advocacy, job placement are some important components / activities of this project and NGOs involved have good examples to show.

Though there were some good, innovative experiences and advances made by the NGOs, there are a number of weaknesses too. The staff of almost all NGOs needed exposure, capacity building and training on Gender and Development, Sex and Sexuality, STD and HIV / AIDS, basic health care, non-formal education systems, training on training and group facilitation skills, [etc. to](#) run different activities under the project ARISE.

The most important training component of this project was the training on counselling provided by an international consultant. The training was good and benefited the trainees, prepared a group of trainers also, but the training had been completed a little too late. Much more could have happened if the consultant got the opportunity to make a trip to every district as soon as she arrived and got the opportunity to identify her trainees in the primary stages of the project.

The project suffered a lot of loss with reference to time due to a very slow approach in the beginning. Several staff members joined and left the project. Due to this staff turn-over and also because the consultants were slow to visit the districts the project suffered in its efficiency. As this is the mid term evaluation the evaluation team felt that much could be done if the project got full time co-operation from the National Project Director. As he is a part-time person for the project it creates lot of inefficiency in the performance of the project. The consultants had every opportunity to plan for further studies, surveys and training activities for the betterment of the services being provided to the target children, but the consultants need to be a little more focussed and prompt about the project.

The target group (*the street children*) should have been involved in the planning of the activities, as well as implementation and monitoring of the project - at every level. One must remember that this is a group that included very smart, intelligent and tough individual children who can actively contribute to their own development and also make a difference in their present and future. They can also be involved in the final evaluation of this project not just as respondents but also as evaluating partners themselves. This would help them develop an ownership of the project.

The project has a lot of future possibilities but it needs to be rearranged in a way that lot of attention is given to the safety, security and skill training of street children. They need to be empowered with information by which they can protect their own rights. In addition, the project needs to help the children develop coping skills, better communication skills and assertion skills so that they can use the child protection network to protect themselves whenever they are threatened with abuse and exploitation. The civil society and the government need to develop a fresh plan of action. This should have renewed plans for children involving the consultants, Project Staff, DSS Officers, NGOs and the children themselves.

Emphasis should be given on strategically positioned drop-in-centres in the city where children can be given services, which should include health facilities, awareness on different issues, legal support, awareness raising programmes and counselling services. It is important to simultaneously find out about the background information of the child, as many might be able to reintegrate with their families. New and innovative vocations, has to be arranged and can be offered from the drop in centres.

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Shelters, at least for the night, need to be set up because children who live alone on streets, especially girl children, are exposed to sexual abuse. This is where the NGO partners might lobby with the government to merge the ongoing orphanages and other shelter home programmes and use the space under their control for children of the ARISE Project. This is because many children become street children as they have nowhere to go. These linkages can cover a very big part of the problem.

All the nine NGOs must meet every month, or at least once in two months to discuss collaborative areas and efforts of the project. There already exists good rapport between DSS officers and the NGOs and this partnership should be strengthened with specific activities and relationship building initiatives. Programmes should be organised to sensitise the law enforcing agents', general service providers, students, political party workers and mass media.

Finally, the most important activity should be capacity building of the street children. The peer group educators, the children themselves can reach even those difficult corners, which cannot be reached by experienced social workers. Within the next year motivators from the different areas have to be identified and trained to work as peer educators themselves.

Linkages should be made with ongoing projects in other neighbouring countries. Exposure visits should be organised for relevant staff of NGOs to learn from others' experiences. A common newsletter can be

published for relevant groups under the same programme. One of the NGOs who have the capacity can take up the responsibility of the same.

The project ARISE is not only a good and timely project, but if attended to carefully, it can be a very appropriate project helping the most vulnerable children in the country of Bangladesh.

## **B. INTRODUCTION**

Ever since its independence in 1971, Bangladesh is continuously fighting its own battle in different sectors of development within the country. Of the total population of 130 million in Bangladesh, 46% are children under the age of 15. Being a country with very high urban growth rate, Bangladesh experiences an influx of thousands of people migrating into the cities from the rural belts each year. The present urban population growth rate is about 7% per year in the smaller cities and 9% per year in the bigger cities like Dhaka. The reasons for such migration are better prospects for work in the cities, natural calamities like floods or cyclones which drive out the people from their home towns, and displacement due to river erosion, et cetera. Thus, a lot of children are found floating into the city, accompanied by adults and sometimes on their own, in search of shelter or just some food and income. 50% of the urban population are extremely poor. Children living alone, and thereby neglected, are increasing everyday. They travel from one city to the other and get involved in some economic activities.

According to the Labour Force Survey of 1996, nearly 5.4 million children are found to be working in the formal sector. Firm estimates of children working in the non-formal sectors are not yet recorded. A rough estimate in 1990 found 1.8 million children on the streets of major cities of Bangladesh and it estimated that this number will shoot up to 3 to 4 million by the end of the year 2000 if not checked. The children found on the streets are illiterate and found working in unorganised sectors and in hazardous situations. They are found to be working as beggars, vendors, machinery workshop helpers, rag pickers, helpers in roadside hotels etc. The daily average income of these children is Tk.24/- only. Religion plays a very important role in dictating soci-cultural practices of Bangladesh. It makes it difficult to discuss issues of child abuse because it never is felt important, the issue of sexual abuse becomes a taboo and prostitution is definitely something that is 'not done'. The overwhelming socio-sexual morality and culture fail to

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prevent or even address the issues of child abuse, which is an everyday problem for most street children. The street children are vulnerable to abuse and are left with no option other than joining groups of hooligans to avoid such abuse. For homeless and rootless children, the acceptance from peer groups is very important, as is the need of children and adolescents in any circumstances. The cost for the protection provided by these peer groups can range from participating in anti-social activities to, sexual exploitation. Prostitution, then, remains a step away for these children.

The high mobility and vulnerability of the street child often brings them into situations of abuse and needs to get all the attention from the government and the community.

The Government of Bangladesh had ratified the "United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child" in 1990 and is thereby committed to meeting the basic needs of children - which very much includes street children.

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## **C. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT**

**ARISE** - is a joint venture of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Government of Bangladesh (GoB) working for these underprivileged children, under the ARISE Project, in Dhaka City and in five other divisional cities in the country. *The project defines street children as the most vulnerable children (MVC) who live on the streets without family, who live alone, and those who are abandoned by their families.*

The project begins with an estimation of 2,15,000 street children, out of which 1,00,000 are girlchildren. Estimation done nationally in the year 1990 found 1.8 million children on the streets of Bangladesh. This estimation also said that by the end of the year 2000 this number would rise up to 4.0 million. Street children in the country are found to be involved in unorganised labour sector i.e. as vendors, car-cleaners, newspaper-sellers, beggars, flower sellers, helpers in garages, helpers in rickshaw repair shops, tempo helpers, rag pickers, etc. The starting age group is between 6 to 8 years and these children work between 8-12 hours per day (***The estimates given here is about two and-a-half year old but not much has been made available after this time.***)

People at large see them as poor, innocent and dependent whereas in actuality, they are found to be independent, strong at will and extremely street-smart.

Under the present policy of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) these street children do not have direct access to primary-education, health facilities and legal protection. They live completely on the streets or in sub-standard housing without water and sanitation facilities. They not only live in unpleasant poor conditions but also often suffer from contaminated water-related diseases, which also become fatal in some cases. They are excluded from education due to the rigid structure of the formal education system and often get involved in dangerous activities with adults who use them for a varied range of activities ranging from smuggling of drugs to supplying of arms. The worst suffering of street children happens when they are sexually abused by adults/older groups of street children and are forced into regular prostitution. This is rampant in South-Asian developing countries, with excessively ever-growing population.

Bangladesh government ratified United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in the year 1989 and had also formulated the National Policy on children. The Government also collaborated with United Nations and other International NGOs to take up development programmes for children under names like PROGOTI, SAMATA looking at the welfare and well being of children. SAMATA is an action plan for the girl child and lays special emphasis on basic education, sanitation, health and nutrition and legal and social support. The National Programme, PROGOTI, has programmes on water, environment, sanitation, education, health and this includes children in especially difficult circumstances. The UNICEF and Government collaborative group known as JGUAG oversees development of children within the country. Bangladesh fiveyear plans have not addressed the specific issues of "street children" but do concede the need for development in the rural areas, which is the major push factor why children get to and stay on the streets. The "Hard to Reach" education programme of UNICEF and Government partnership reaches 1.4 million children in the streets and slums, trying to improve quality and sustainability of learning especially introducing child-centred participatory methods. Some sixty NGOs have joined hands to make this programme a success.

Apart from the above, The Ministry of Social Welfare (1992-1997) completed a project which aimed to reach the working street children, named, Strengthening of Urban Communities Development Programme for welfare and rehabilitation of Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances. In spite of efforts made by NGOs and the government, the street children

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continue to be excluded from most of the mainstream efforts and activities of development programmes.

The Department of Social Service, under the Ministry of Social Welfare, has a major programme for children, which includes the following -

- Sarkari Shishu Paribar (*State orphanages*) - 7 institutions for 9,500 children.
- Baby Home for abandoned children- 3 institutions for 250 babies.



- Centre for Destitute Children for Rehabilitation - 1 unit for 400 children.
- Vocational Training Centre for Orphans and destitute children -1 unit for 100 children.
- Welfare and Rehabilitation programme for children with Disability 65 units for about 1,400 children.
- Correctional services for Youth Offenders - 2 units for 350 children.
- A recently completed programme of GOB with UNICEF support was CEDC to advocate children's rights and established 15 functional education centres 10 drop-in-centres and 4 hostels for street and working girls.

Though the Ministry of Social Welfare is assigned the key role of overseeing all welfare activities regarding children, The National Council for children is the highest policy-making body on child welfare and development. The National council for children, UNICEF and NGOs play a major role to safeguard children's rights according to UNCRC. To identify problems of street children this project (*ARISE*) took findings from Child Hope (*UNICEF*) and also conducted a Participatory Rapid Urban Appraisal with 156 street children in different parts of Dhaka in the year 1997 (*May*), with the help of Government Departments and a couple of NGOs. As per UNICEF, 3 out of 10 urban children live under difficult circumstances and are involved in dangerous and hazardous jobs. Children are heads of families and/or they also look after themselves. There are violation of rights at every stage of their lives, having no means and access to protection, or a support structure to prevent exploitation or neglect, education and skills training for further development. Participatory Rapid Urban Appraisal (*PRUA*) done on some children has given the government a very basic idea / information on the kind of life these children lead. But the sample size being too small, it does not address some of the key issues where there is a necessity of Government intervention.

After PRUA a consultative workshop was held in Dhaka where a group of NGOs and members of government departments participated and discussed issues that had come out of the PRUA and interventions already made by NGOs on the issue of street children. This group also tried to identify focal agencies and co-ordinating mechanisms for implementing projects.

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The recommendation of the above workshop were -

1. Ensuring street child's security; 2.
- Ensuring them of opportunity;
3. Ensuring physical and mental health support in need.

#### **D. OBJECTIVES OF THE ARISE PROJECT...**

##### PROJECT GOALS...

The Project ARISE aims at capacity building of the street children of Bangladesh in accordance with the principals of UNCRC. The focus of the Project is on the MVC. The MCV are the abandoned, homeless and disadvantaged children on the street.

##### PROJECT OBJECTIVES...

The objectives of the Project are to support the development of the MVC by strengthening their survival skills and providing opportunities for a productive future. The project strategy is to establish a comprehensive system of development for the MVC by... C) Identifying, strengthening and replicating existing support services, with focus on shelters,

half-way homes for the provision of basic needs of nutrition, medical care and psychological counselling, education and relevant vocational training.

C Developing new support services according to the needs of the MVC to identified through exploratory,

- participatory research; a pre-identified component is the development of counselling services.
- C Establishing and strengthening channels of information sharing, communication and referrals between governmental and non-governmental support agencies, formal and non-formal sectors at service delivery.
- C Developing as necessary on the basis of the research and implementation experiences, policy recommendations and advocacy strategies for the support agencies for their implementation.

The target groups for the project is...

Most Vulnerable Children...

Definition of Street Child - four categories...

- i. Children up to 18 years of age who work/live on the street day and night without their family.
- ii. Children up to 18 years of age who work/live on the street with their family.
- III. Children up to 18 years of age who work/live on the street and return to their family.
- iv. Children up to 18 years of age who work/live on the street and return to other family.

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Girl Children...

The affirmative strategy to prioritise girl children in the targeted activities will ensure empowerment of the most vulnerable girls. Street girls who are the most frequent victims of physical and sexual abuse will have safe shelter in shelter/half-way homes and attain psychological counselling, education and skill training. This will enhance their capacity to get employment for an independent livelihood. These shelters or half way homes have ensured to be staffed by female care-providers.

Environment...

Children living on the pavements and in open spaces in sub-human conditions will have an opportunity to attain a safe and secure environment with basic amenities like food, clothing, medical care, and education in shelter/half-way homes, the adopted by foster parents, a family home.

The project ARISE targets the following...

- Betterment of quality of services being provided by 24 government and Non-Government Agencies working for children.
- Access to vocational training, health services, counselling services, awareness through non formal education and livelihood opportunities for 30,000 children.
- Exploratory and participatory research for better approaches towards improved services for street children.
- Training of Project Staff in counselling
- Identify referral services and train street children to use them.
- Formulate appropriate National Policy and advocacy strategies to work for the benefit of street children.
- Equip Government and Non Government agencies to mobilise resources.

Project ARISE defines a street child as...

"Children below the age of 18, living, working, playing and sleeping on the streets who are deprived of their basic rights are the street children".

*(A Review of Existing Services related to Street Children - ARISE - Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare, GOB and UNDP/ UNOPS, December 1999).*

The other definition of street children is as follows...

Street Children are those who are of the street and on the street. (

*UNICEF, 1999).*

A recent definition reads, "a street child is any minor for whom the street *(in the widest sense of the*

word, including unoccupied dwellings, waste/and, etc.) has become her/his habitual abode and who is without adequate protection".

The age limit for defining a child in various statutes of Bangladesh differs. Boys and girls under 14 years of age is considered as children under the National Children Policy. (*National Children Policy - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, December 1999*).

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#### **E. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION...**

- To assess the efficiency of implementation and the quality of management of the project, especially in creating an efficient network of the partner organisations and the government;
- To assess the efficiency of the partner organisations in implementing the project in realising the objectives of the project;
- To assess the efficiency in creating the enabling environment for the street children to participate in the different component activities;
- To assess the viability of the comprehensive packages the project offers in building capacity of the street children, and providing access to opportunities for their sustainable development;
- To identify the major factors that have facilitated or impeded the progress of the project in achieving the intended activities, outputs, and impact, paying particular attention to management issues;
- To identify the major constraints and suggestions to develop the devices in mainstreaming the street children in order to provide them with access to opportunities in life like other children in the society;
- To identify the strategies to mobilise other stakeholders with the aim of creating an enabling environment for the street children.

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#### **F. METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation mission adopted several approaches and methods to collect the critical information for evaluating the ongoing programme of ARISE. In order to find out what information is currently available on street children a literature survey was done. This clearly indicated that there is very limited information available. The following methods were employed.

- *Documentation Analysis*

Relevant documents were analysed to get information on street children, their right and status and the NGOs working with these street children. The documents include the five-year plan, Annual Reports of national and international NGOs working for children, especially street children. ARISE reports regarding the review of Existing Services Relating to Street Children.

- *Review of other Reports...*

Reports of Ahsania Mission, INCIDIN, Ain of Salish Kendra, Aparajeyo Bangladesh, ATSEC and Resource Bangladesh were consulted and used as secondary data.

- *Focus Group Discussions...*

In order to incorporate views of a large number of people, two types of Focus Group Discussions were conducted. One with people associated with implementation (*this group includes counsellors, educators, monitoring officers of NGOs working for the ARISE project, the project staff, the community leaders,*

community people and local level DSS Officers), and the other with the target population, i.e. the street children. 12 (Twelve) Focus Group Discussions were conducted in 6 (six) divisions.

- *Discussions with other organisations..*

Discussions were done with NGOs and national and international agencies - UNICEF, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), INCIDIN and ATSEC.

*The discussions particularly focused on the following...*

(a) *To learn about their own involvement on and types of programmes offered for services for street children.*

(b) *To identify issues relating to services for street children. (*

*c) To identify the existing best practices*

- *General meeting...*

One general meeting was held with ARISE project staff such as NPD, SDPC and consultants. A meeting was also held with the Secretary, Ministry of Social Services and DG, Department of Social Services. These discussions were focused on strategies, emerging trends, and the future perspective in the street children sector in Bangladesh. A meeting was also held with program officer of UNDP responsible for ARISE project.

Basically the entire process of data collection has been extremely participatory, and project partners were consulted throughout.

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## **G. PROJECT CONCEPT and DESIGN...**

The UNDP Project Document was practical but not innovative at the time of approval. It is not unusual because there were no examples within the country. The macro-economic policy framework was considered but being a big budget project, scattered over a considerable big part of the country, it is not possible to measure or predict all short falls.

This project can bit information the national plans of the Health and Social Welfare sector but did not tie up with other sources of external assistance. The project identified the grassroots participation in development through its different programmes.

### **PROJECT DOCUMENT...**

The project document was drafted with the participation of Government, NGOs and staff of UNDP. It is clear but major risks were not specified. The strategies outlined came from formal and structured discussions made at workshops but the target group, the children were not involved in planning at all.

The institutional capabilities were thoroughly assessed but because of the bidding V stem tem that exists in Bangladesh Government, the lesser-experienced NGOs were selected only because of the fact that they quoted lowest price.

Capacity building of staff concerned in the projects, as well as in the Government departments was well thought of and capacity building of children is one of the basic objectives of this project.

## **H. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION...**

The project activities is still being followed as planned but changes have to be incorporated. The project aims to achieve a lot and deals with a large mass of human beings spread over several districts and cities. Given the progress that has been made until now, it seems a little unlikely that it can achieve

everything in the given time.

In some places gaps are noticed when the project is being implemented. The approach and the activities could have been more innovative. The project might have to refocus, rearrange and replan strategy. It needs to be mentioned that the staff of such projects does not have the necessary co-ordinated training or experience, hence, implementation also varies from one area to the other. Project Managers could have visited similar projects in India (*Ko/kata*) and adopted relevant models. Several Project Staff who were part of the visit to India have been transferred.

***There is great commitment of every actor in the project but the evaluating team wants to make the following comments..***

- NPD - The National Project Director is very dynamic and can do much more provided he is available full time with the project. It seems he has lot of other responsibilities in his department. If possible, the project might use the services of a full-time Deputy Director.
- The DSS officers have excellent rapport with NGOs and they provide lot of support, in the districts. Similar thing should happen in Dhaka. One more project officer is needed in Dhaka, keeping in mind the number of target group within the city.
- NGOs are committed and innovative. They can be encouraged to link up with each other and plan changes for the rest of the project time/phase.
- Staff turnovers at the consultant and project staff level has created a setback in the project.
- Consultants should be more mobile and visit the NGOs. They should suggest -  Innovative approaches/training.
  - o Linkages (*GO, NGO, INGO and Civil Society*)

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- Corrective actions are needed to bridge the above mentioned gaps immediately.
- All stakeholders and innovative ideas from outside needs to be brought together to re-plan the project.
- The training on counselling was appropriate and good but follow-up is needed for the currently trained and working counsellors.
- There is monitoring at the field level in the sense that every responsible person is doing his or her job at the different levels. But good co-ordination needs to be brought in to
  - See positive findings and help in the growth
  - See gaps and discuss corrective measures.
- Tripartite meetings are useful but unless and until it is translated into action by consultants and staff it is not of much use.

#### **C Efficiency of implementation and the Quality of Management - National Project Director, Project Staff, Consultant and Project Partner Level..**

The Project is based on the involvement and co-ordination between the project staff and the partner organisations but the basic leadership responsibility remains with the National Project Director. Given the fact that the project is spread over a very big part of the country (*Dhaka and 5 divisional cities*) it is difficult to centrally manage such an innovative project, by the NPD alone considering that he is working only on a part-time basis for the project. As recorded by the evaluating team the NPD only comes in at the later half of the day (*around two in the afternoon*). This is creating some confusion in the project co-ordination and hence is impeding the process. Perhaps, the full-time involvement of a Deputy Director would make co-ordination much more simple and efficient.

Several project staff member and consultants have joined and left, giving the project a set back in the

very beginning. Thus, staff turn over has become a very important factor that needs to be given special attention to. Recruitment policy or at least a process of recruitment perhaps would be helpful in taking care of this problem. This is also a reason why the efficiency of the project has suffered to some extent.

As for an example - The first Education Consultant, joined the project during the initial period, visited the partner organisations but unfortunately left for some other job. One has to realise that a lot of project knowledge, effort and time was wasted on him. All that he learnt and all that his inputs were could not be shared with the entire project members. The National Project Director did not have enough time to build up similar level of continuity with the next person who joined as the project education consultant and thus the efficiency of the education component suffered.

The project could have taken care of the following for maximum efficiency of implementation and better quality of management.

The consultants (*international and local*) were supposed to look into specific issues of health, gender, counselling and non-formal education. One can definitely take into consideration that there is lot of information and experience available with the different partner organisations. Having basic expertise, on the various issues, the consultants should have been able to draw from existing information and knowledge of the partners and integrate the learning into the project process and its implementation.

Ideally the new education consultant should have visited all NGO partners to see the different types of Non Formal Education curriculum that they used. He could have developed an innovative and replicable curriculum with the help of Aparajeyo Bangladesh who use quite an interesting method and curriculum already. The new curriculum should have been shared with all the project partners and all NFE teachers should have been trained on this one single standard curriculum.

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Both Aparajeyo Bangladesh and Jogajog have interesting methods of NFE that can be learnt from. UNICEF, NFE training manuals and their education curriculum should have been looked into. Aparajeyo Bangladesh could have ably provided the training.

A follow up system / mechanism should have been developed to make this curriculum popular among all the partners and also to keep an eye on the fact that it is being followed everywhere in a standardised format. Regular reporting systems should have been developed for the project partner.

This whole process could have been completed within the first year to have a close follow up in the second and third year. But since it has not been so, one needs to start off immediately with this activity. First a comprehensive and standardised NFE package and then a monitoring mechanism needs to be put in place.

Similarly, with other consultants field visits done were very limited. It was often found out in the evaluation team's discussion with the consultants that required number of visits by them was not encouraged by the NPD.

Likewise, the first gender consultant also left abruptly after being in the project for a while. She also did not leave any information or line of action for the project to follow. The new gender consultant has only started her first round of visits to the project area in the last 6 months. She has still not been able to visit all the areas yet.

The evaluating team feels that the Gender Consultant should primarily look into gender mainstreaming and development of the project at the policy level. She should organise common meetings to find out the

understanding, approach, differences in gender ideologies and implementation processes that address the issues of Gender of NGO Partner groups and organise gender sensitisation and training for staff (*at project partner level and DSS OfAcer level*) for better implementation of project policies.

The team found that the present gender consultant was making routine visits to groups and was also trying to find out the understanding of project partners regarding gender. This is time consuming and wastage of resources also. A couple of meetings should have been arranged to bring people in a similar platform at one single level and then proceed from there. She should find out about the gender issues, policies and gaps in understanding and should look into newer strategies for better and efficient implementation.

Thus, taking into consideration of the above there still is quite a bit that needs to be done with regard to the Efficiency of implementation and the Quality of Management of the ARISE Project.

## **I. PROTECT RESULTS...**

As this is only a mid-term evaluation - project outcomes or project impact cannot be discussed in great details.

The project has reached the targeted group but needs more efficiently planned activities to complete the programme. The project definitely is on the right track and the evaluation team feels that if the recommendations can be incorporated in the project plan and relevant changes are made, the objectives can definitely be attained. But from the recommendations and other observations there are a number of lessons that need to be learnt by the project staff, project consultants as well as the project partners.

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## **J. STATUS OF THE STREET CHILDREN... (**

From NGO Reports and Situations Analysis Report)

- Reasons shown for coming to cities are mainly economic but there are other factors responsible. Children migrate to the cities due to land-less-ness, river erosion, natural calamities like cyclone, famine etc., parent separation, violence from family, social or family conflict, land dispute, parental death, prolonged sickness and of course adventure. At times, they are also forced to migrate with or without the family just for food and shelter.
- The health status is vulnerable due to street exposure and they live in unhygienic and hazardous conditions. They are prone to contagious diseases and most of them do not have awareness or concern about personal hygiene.
- They do not have access to sanitary toilets and incidents of fever, diarrhoea, and dysentery are rampant.
- Many street children suffer from sexually transmitted diseases and have no awareness about the same.  
They do not have access to hospitals or doctors but some of them reach quacks, or also reach religious and faith healing.
- Most children are found not to have been able to access education and thus they are illiterate. Those who did get a chance can only write their name.
- ~~Tharighd~~ marriage for an individual less than 18 years is illegal, many are found to be by the time they are only 16. This is mainly for the girl-children.
- A large number of children have jobs in the informal sector where the opportunities are neither regular nor is the occupation definable.
- Dhaka as a city offers maximum employment opportunities and Sylhet is the next one.
- Begging is a viable income generation programme and is also a very organised activity

for street children.

- The children do not live entirely without income but as it is meagre, their total contribution to the national income is non-existent.
- Several of them earn at least Tk.700/- per month per person.
- The average daily income is at least Tk.23.70/-.
- Parents of many street children are unemployed but they are mostly found to be working as daily labourer, rickshaw pullers, helpers in shops and women particularly work as housemaids.
- Mentally or physically challenged street children generally end up or are used for begging by their parents, guardians or others who live around them.
- Working time for street children is not fixed and varies from morning to midnight depending on the kind of activity he/she is employed in.
- They do not have any permanent shelter and frequently used places like railway station platforms, launch terminal, slums, pavements, bus terminus, parks etc. These places are neither safe nor protected and they become a prey of sexual harassment.
- The possibility of children being sexually abused is very high. From bad offensive remarks to rape is how their peers, other adults, police, and their employees abuse them.
- During political demonstrations children are used in the processions, to carry arms or use bombs etc. As there is no secure income these children accept money to do the above mentioned things.
- Use of power, mental and physical is one way of keeping street children under the surveillance of adults who use them.
- Poverty and gender inequality exists in the rural areas and girl children are trafficked for prostitution from Bangladesh to countries like India and Pakistan.

K. FINDINGS, ASSESSMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS...

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The principal elements of the Evaluation Mission can be divided into four major divisions, which follow the rights of children and can be divided under participation, protection, development and prevention.

**PARTICIPATION...**

Project ARISE has been able to involve nine NGOs and through them the target population of street children. Most of these NGOs had already been working in slum areas on other programmes and only two were working with specific focus to street children. Project ARISE has been able to achieve participation with the target population and the immediate community around them within the short time of 1-1/2 years, though lot of time was spent in planning (*as it is such a big project*). It has also been able to bring the target population into the contact of other NGOs, existing government services and the community. UNICEF and a few INGOs had targeting programmes with street children and project ARISE has been able to establish contact through some of these programmes also. The target population has been able to make direct contacts with the above mentioned services and organisations.

It has been appraised that children were not involved at the planning stage of the programme at all. It requires special skills and a separate language, as opposed to the language used by adults, to involve children in planning, design, implementation and execution of programmes. There was no effort to ensure the drawing or incorporation of inputs from the children during the planning stage. Even now that the programme is underway, child participation can be ensured through innovative feedback drawing techniques - like groups sessions of sharing, in which children can talk about their reaction to the present set of programmes. They can also suggest alternatives to designs based on their needs and perceptions. It must be noted that the staff of these programmes needs to be trained in the skills mentioned above before the changes are introduced.

**PROTECTION...**

This is one major area where street children need support and very few but distinct efforts have been launched by the project ARISE. The project needs to look into psycho-social counselling and provide



better opportunities through more drop-in-centres and shelters. Though delayed from the original schedule, a counselling training of trainers was organised by project ARISE with the help of an international consultant who has experience in counselling. There needs to be tie-up with other government programmes when we talk about protection. A regular sensitisation programme with police is needed to motivate them, so that they help street children. Joint programmes can be launched with NGO-Police co-operation making the children aware about the help that they can receive. There exist mental block among the community regarding street children. Street children are seen as dangerous, mischievous, thieves, and harmful. They are never seen as individual children with lack of option and opportunity.

To break the barriers between law enforcing agencies and the general community with the street children, there needs to be ways in which the various players need to be brought together. This could be done through interfaces and events/activities which would raise awareness amongst the law enforcing agents about the issues and problems related to street children and point out community responsibility in the protection of all children, especially the ones who are vulnerable. It would need to address social and religious dogmas that affect, stigmatise and isolate children.

NGOs who are working on HIV AIDS need to look beyond harm reduction and address and concede in the spirit of their programmes, the abuse that is perpetrated on these children. The alliance must understand their responsibility beyond providing condoms.

#### **DEVELOPMENT...**

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The country needs to look into programmes with special emphasis on the rights of the child. Street children should be an important component in planning child friendly services and programmes. Experiences of Indian programmes on children tell us that enough attention given to them might bring many of them into the mainstream of the society. NGOs running programmes for them have integrated them in schools and several of them are involved in gainful activities and have also learnt to protest abuse. In Bangladesh, we have learnt that Aparajeyo and INCIDIN have trained street children to work with their peers as motivators, providing role models for others to follow.

#### **PREVENTION...**

NGOs under project ARISE have already started several activities of campaign and advocacy where they are educating and motivating the different actors in the community, other NGOs and government service providers to help street children providing care and service. This might prevent children from falling prey to further abuse and harassment. More innovative training programmes have to be organised so street children do not remain in abusive situations. It is not possible to bring every street child under shelters or drop in centres. But if people have awareness on their problems they can be motivated to be patient and also to reach out to children when needed.

NGOs under the project ARISE and outside have already initiated some very effective strategies to prevent street children from abuse and harassment. Collaborative actions has to be shared with other groups so that approaches are similar and many in number.

Whatever is done to contain these explicit exploitation of children, it must be remembered that these are only, but, manifestations of the real problem. The abuse of children in society begins much earlier to their reaching the streets. That girl-children are more prone to sexual exploitation is a fallout of deeper issues of social and religious discrimination and violence on women and girlchildren, where child-marriage and prostitution is socialised and male privilege condoned and justified. Neglect of rural economy will create migration and that in turn will make the entire migratory groups vulnerable. Children

are the least powerful to resist the violence and exploitation and that is why they are preyed upon most easily. And hence they protest and they do it the only way they can, they run away.

### **BASIC FINDINGS...** *(During visits to NGOs)*

A major component of the project is **education and awareness** raising which goes along with the entire project. The findings are that there is an absence of a common, standardised and effective non-formal education programme and every NGO is following a different curriculum. The curriculum being used by partner organisations are conventional and suitable for students in formal education. Only one NGO (AB) had looked into the curriculum which is generated from the real life situation. Ideally the curriculum should focus on health, education for better life, child rights, and address problems of addiction, STD and HIV/AIDS and Legal Right. The expertise of the educational consultant based in Dhaka has not yet been used effectively or exhaustively. The non-formal education curriculum and materials did not include information on environment, problems and related information on prevention and protection which is their basic right under UNCRC and which is violated the most amongst these children. The non-formal education material required needs to be innovative and interesting. The teaching methods were not participatory and thus children did not find it interesting. Only Aparajeyo Bangladesh have material which kept the children active. They continuously looked into pictures, forms, and blocks, which they can hold in their hands and play with. Methods should really be looked into. Memorisation of prose or poetry or even words does not bring in interest among children. They forget as soon as the classes stop.

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The services being provided under **health** was more on effective referral with existing services of NGOs or other Government Departments. The important and necessary information on STD or HIV/AIDS did not find priority in the health programmes run by different NGOs. It is necessary for street children to know about STD because they often indulge in or are forced into sexual activities. The drop-in-centres need innovative and effective planning and a face-lift to make it an interesting place for the child. The socio-religious scenario of Bangladesh does not encourage information sharing or discussions on sex and sexuality or its related problems and this is where more focus is needed for this target group. As street children always live in unprotected situations, they need more information on sex and sexuality issues and related health problems. The three main areas of information that they need are (a) Personal Hygiene (b) Sex and Sexuality (c) Existing referral services. In cognisance of the greater vulnerability of girl children, as opposed to boy children, to sexual exploitation and sexualised violence, it is important to incorporate gender sensitisation with the children to develop empathy between the sexes.

The **legal aid** being provided was only according to the need of the child and did not have any separate space for training and information building of the child. The sexual violence of the girl child went almost unreported or un-addressed. The training on counselling was good but conducted so late that the target of four Training of Trainers will not be completed during the specific time frame. The activities related to motivational and psychological counselling were found to be inadequate.

Most NGOs had effectively placed children in jobs and had been able to mobilise the interest of the employers but this needs to be followed up quite closely. More such individuals have to be identified, as many more children will be ready to go for a job. The problem of working children under the age of 14 (*ILO standards*) had not been addressed though. Several children working in the garage or street side shops were found to be between the age group of 8-14 years. It needs to be mentioned that there is lot of pressure on the child to earn for the family and they are often sent to work by the family itself. Some children of 14 years and above received on job skill training and have started receiving a regular income and many of these children have started saving money also. Some of them have individual bank accounts but most keep the money with the NGO representatives. They maintain a small notebook to keep record

of the same.

Children are involved in **theatre** and it is also used for advocacy and campaign for the different stakeholders in the community. The example set by Jogajog, Chittagong may be followed by other groups. Theatre is being used as entertainment and children enjoy doing it. There were several talents, which the NGOs are encouraging also. Theatre and other such activities are also used to attract and motivate children to come to the education and drop in centres run by NGOs.

**Networking** being an important component of this programme, NGOs have used it at the local community level but much more could have been done to lobby with other NGOs and other relevant Government departments.

### **BASIC RECOMMENDATIONS...**

The target group (*the street children*) should have been involved in the planning of the activities, as well as implementation and monitoring of the project - at every level. One must remember that this is a group that included very smart, intelligent and tough individual children who can actively contribute to their own development and also make a difference in their present and future. They can also be involved in the final evaluation and this project and help them develop an ownership of the project.

As this project deals with only manifestations and not root causes, the project might continuously provide services. We need to think of changing certain policies and look into development of children in their places of origin. The stakeholders of this project, which includes the community

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and the street children, should be included in the changed planning of the project now, making it more effective and also user friendly. An extension of a three- year follow-up period should be considered during which the programme must be broadened to address root causes of the problems and on sustainable procedures of development. As a follow up there is a need to run more drop in centres and shelters for the protection of children.

The project has a lot of future possibilities but it needs to be rearranged in a way that lot of attention is given to the safety, security and skill training of street children. They need to be empowered with information by which they can protect their own rights. In addition, the need to help the children develop coping skills, better communication skills and assertion skills so that they can use the child protection network to protect themselves whenever they are threatened with abuse and exploitation. The civil society and the government need to develop a fresh plan of action. This should have renewed plans for children involving the consultants, Project Staff, DSS Officers, NGOs and the children themselves.

Emphasis should be given on strategically positioned drop-in-centres in the city where children can be given services, which should include health facilities, awareness on different issues, legal support, awareness raising programmes and counselling services. It is important to simultaneously find out about the background information of the child, as many might be able to reintegrate with their families. New and innovative vocations, has to be arranged and can be offered from the drop in centres.

Shelters, at least for the night, need to be set up because children who live alone on streets, especially girl children, are exposed to sexual abuse. This is where the government might merge the ongoing orphanages and other shelter home programmes and use the space under their control for children of the ARISE Project. This is because many children become street children because they have nowhere to go. These linkages can cover a very big part of the problem.

All the nine NGOs must meet every month, or at least once in two months to discuss collaborative areas

and efforts of the project. There already exists good rapport between DSS officers and the NGOs and this partnership should be strengthened with specific activities and relationship building initiatives. Programmes should be organised to sensitise the law enforcing agents', general service providers, students, political party workers and mass media.

Finally, the most important activity should be capacity building of the street children. The peer group educators, the children themselves can reach even those difficult corners, which cannot be reached by experienced social workers. Within the next year motivators from the different are as have to be identified and trained.

Linkages should be made with ongoing projects in other neighbouring countries. Exposure visits should be organised for relevant staff of NGOs to learn from others' experiences. A common newsletter can be published for relevant groups under the same programme. One of the NGOs who have the capacity can take up the responsibility.

### **Components based Evaluation FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS...**

#### *1) Non-Formal Education*

##### *Findings...*

- K A common, standardised and effective non-formal education material has not yet been developed. Different partner NGOs are using different curriculum, textbooks, and instructional materials, which are not ideally relevant.
- K The curriculum being followed is conventional and suitable for students of formal education. It is not relevant with the real life situation of the street children. The textbooks used by all but one NGO are the textbooks usually taught in formal Kindergarten Schools. Education

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providers need to understand that Non-formal education in approach, technique and methodology from kindergarten curriculum. Content of the educational material needs to be based on the information those are directly related to the lives of the street children.

- Teaching methods used by all the NGOs (except Aparajeyo Bangladesh) are teacher centric and not participatory. Teaching methods used by Aparajeyo Bangladesh is participatory interesting and motivating for children. Jojajog in Chitagong is also trying to develop a teaching method with the role-play of teachers and motivators but the participation of the children is not so encouraging. Teaching method of the other NGOs are monotonous and is based on memorisation of words and numbers.
- When some of the children were asked about their teaching subjects they did not have a clue to what was being asked unless and until the teacher told them to recite poems which were learnt by heart. When they stopped in between they had to go back to the beginning which happens when they memorise something without understanding or internalising it.
- While teaching numerical skills, the teachers in most NGO centres used the age-old method of learning numbers by heart and shouting as a whole class. Children counted from 1-50 but once they stopped they had to start from the very beginning.
- The teaching method did not include materials, drawings, shapes and figures or anything that the children could touch with their hands which motivates the children. There was a stark difference in the methods used by Aparajeyo where children continuously had blocks, games, puzzles, and letters on cardboard and other items to play with. Here they were also using books but these books clearly cater to the non-formal learning education methods.
- Most of the partner NGOs had classrooms on the railway platform, inside mosques, beside the streets, and the immediate atmosphere is not congenial enough. Lot of people

stare at these children, which makes the children and the teacher uncomfortable to talk about anything other than the regular words, numbers and poems. It is very difficult to talk on sex and sexuality, violence, and other kinds of abuse in such a non-private and intrusive environment.

- Several of the NGOs had 20 or more children sitting there and were an optimally sized group. Bigger classes might be difficult to manage.
- The timing of the schools were found to be flexible which is important for these kinds of programmes and definitely catered to the need of the child.
- The teachers found in most of these centres were not trained in non-formal education and hence, they failed to make the class interesting. They did not have the training to motivate the target group and manage such classroom activities. The method that they use is totally formal based on the experience that they had as students.
- The role of the educational consultant has not been effective; in fact the educational consultant has not yet visited some of the areas. The present educational consultant has just completed a module for non-formal education, which he is planning to test in the non-formal schools.
- There are effective modules with a couple of the partner organisations, which can be replicated / further developed. The Aparajeyo Bangladesh education, curriculum is an example and they are also prepared to give training to teachers if the Project ARISE wants them to do it.
- Some of the organisations have not yet thought of any reformulation of the age-old practices of education that is not effective anymore. The teaching-learning strategy is conventional, teacher-centred, and not suitable for street children. When asked specific questions several teachers failed to report any planning, process being thought of and carried out by the respective organisations.
- Non-formal Education material did not have specific / relevant information to that of the street children, i.e. police, arrest, legal rights, health and personal hygiene, STD and HIV/AIDS, Protection from abuse and exploitation. Educational materials did not have any form of real-life situation of the street children.

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- K The entire NFE process is extremely target oriented. The groups once dealt with are not reconsidered in the following sessions. There is no single mechanism of follow-up that might keep a check on the children's capacity to grasp the information / knowledge that might be shared in the NFE system.
- K Though there is a monitoring system which tries to find out about the number of children who sat for education classes there does not exist a system of evaluation. There is an absence of outcome or impact indicators that might have provided a basis for checking efficacy of programmes even to implementers and project-managers. Output indicators do not provide a complete picture on the quality of programmes.

Recommendations..

- Teaching methods may be developed and modified to maximise student participation and learning. This method may not be a single method but may be a combination of different methods. It may include role-play by the children, group work, learning through games, story telling by the student and teachers, which should be related with their real life situation. Training of staff on simulation and group facilitation skills would be very effective.
- To make the teaching lively NGOs can use songs and other forms of music, which encourages the children. In India NGOs also use dance as a method of imparting education particularly when they are talking about violence and environmental issues which the street children have to undergo in their daily lives.
- To develop a separate curriculum for the non-formal education of the street children is an urgent need. The contents of curriculum should be generated from the real life situation of the street children. This should include health education, education for better life, earn

while you learn, drug addiction, STD, HIV/AIDS, children rights, especially UNCRF.

- The arrangements of teachers should be improved. The teachers and motivators should be more active and continuously move and play, make actions while imparting education.
  - The teachers should be trained to work with children in an innovative way Aparajeyo Bangladesh is a good example. In Kolkata there are two excellent training programmes run by Vikramsheela (a CRY, India Project) and another training programme of barefoot teachers run by Loreto Day School, Sealdah. Both these training programmes are well used by NGOs working with Non-formal education with target groups of working and street children. Vikramsheela uses lot of materials, games, and puzzles and also makes the children use paper, clay, and sand which is important for a child's mental and physical growth.
  - The education giving units should be more attractive in terms of learning activities, games (games should be related with education) and student participation in order to decrease in dropout rates and increase in regular attendance.
  - For improving teaching-learning situation, participatory learning method by the Aparajeyo Bangladesh and the teaching through dramatisation by Jogajog may be adopted.
- C More attention should be given by the partner NGOs to attract MVC rather than the slum children.

A standardised, uniform and replicable curriculum in Non-Formal Education must be developed immediately on -

- Basic literacy and calculating skills;
- Health and personal hygiene;
- Legal rights vis-a-vis child rights and child protection;
- Information on sexual and reproductive health;
- Common diseases and prevention from it;
- Actions that can be taken on emergency situations / accidents / police arrests, etc.;
- The content should be generated from real life situations of the street children;
- First Aid / when one should go to a doctor;
- Some basic information on their country, its culture, practices, etc.;
- Savings and credit.

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It is also important that a standard curriculum is prepared and it should take special care on context and culture specificity. There is a need to make the entire process absolutely relevant to that of a street child. Involving street children in developing of a standard curriculum is a useful technique that needs to be incorporated during such development process in future. The funding component of "innovative research" can be used for development of such a curriculum.

#### *2) Vocational training and job placement...*

##### *Findings..*

- x Most of the organisations are directly training children in the usual vocations of tailoring, embroidery, tie and die, handicrafts, candle making, etc. Most of them have successfully found job-placements and on the job training for some of the children in candle making factories, silk sari manufacturing units, garage, paper-box making units, rikshaw-hood repairing units, etc.
- x Vocational training and job placements were not targeted for the entire target group population.
- x In most of the organisations the "market survey" has only been completed after the vocational training and the job placement services have started but it should have been the other way round.
- x On the other hand, however, almost all the NGOs have worked quite well regarding this component. Children are working with established tailors, candle and paper box making small scale home based production units, goldsmiths, motor car garages, silk sari makers, embroidery shops, etc. Several of them are already earning between Tk600/- to Tk1500/-, which isn't too bad on that scale.
- x Quite a number of the children are saving a part of their income in the bank or with the respective organisations that they are dealing with. This is to say that the staff-members of the NGOs have been able to motivate the children into the habit of savings.
- x It also was apparent that in most NGOs their staff had excellent rapport with the employers under whom the children found their respective job placements. They made periodic visits to the

workstations. A lot of individual efforts and contacts have gone into this process and this definitely is commendable.

*Recommendations..*

- As mentioned earlier the process of "market survey" has been pretty late. But, it is extremely important to identify vocations keeping in mind the new findings of this market survey.
- It has been found through this evaluation process that the on job training and job placements have been extremely effective. Thus, it is important for all the project partners to concentrate more on this method rather than simply giving the children vocational training and hunting for their placement.
- It is also important that new, innovative training on diverse vocations must be used with an assessment of the market.
- Market trends and its shifts must be kept in mind each time any training is planned.
- Networking with the small-scale factory owners is very important. In-house training's with these factories and small-scale industries is much more effective because the children find the experience a lot more challenging rather than being trained within the comfort zones provided by the NGOs.
- In any case, for all the NGOs - no child under the age of 12 / 14 years should be involved in any kind of hazardous jobs even if it is only training. This needs to be decided at the policy level.

*3) Health services...*

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*Findings..*

- x Every drop-in-centre, every education centre and every shelter home of all the NGOs had at least one first-aid kit which is effectively used as and when needed.
- x The staff had adequate training and also some of the older children were trained to efficiently use the first-aid kit.
- x Some of the organisations have effectively linked up the social service department of the government hospitals.
- x A couple of organisations have already developed a referral system through a health card, which is being frequently used by the children.
- x A couple of organisations run clinics under their separate health programmes. They have been able to link the children under the ARISE project with these clinics.
- x Awareness programme on health and personal hygiene has not been included in the regular programmes of most of the partner NGOs. This should be added to their non-formal education material to be used everyday.
- x Older children do not have much information on STD and HIV/AIDS.
- x Sexual and Reproductive Health issues were not a part of the awareness programme.

*Recommendations..*

- Basic needs - Bathroom / Toilet, Cooking facilities, and arrangement for at least one nutritious diet per day.
- Safety - Medical care and attention, First aids, Linkages with hospitals, Counselling facilities, Emergency care and protection when battered, raped or sexually abused. Motivational workshops for children who are addicted to substance abuse.

#### 4) Drop-in-centres..

##### Findings...

- x Apart from one organisation in Dhaka all the organisations have drop-in-centres which clearly suffers from tremendous space problems. It is difficult to organise / rent appropriate houses in the appropriate locations.
- x Some of the drop-in-centres had a very depressing atmosphere, which is basically due to the lack of space.
- x In some of the drop-in-centres, there seemed to be a lack of motivation among the staff - the children were dirty and soiled even though there was an element of such kind of service provision in the project proposal.
- x Most of the staff members of almost all the drop-in-centres had very close contact / connection with the children. They were mostly quite devoted and committed to the entire process.
- x Almost all drop-in-centres provided the regular children with individual lockers, which was a great help for the kids and was immensely appreciated.

##### Recommendations..

- The idea of a drop in centre is to provide a child with a safe space where the child can be provided with certain services related to their basic needs, safety, protection, recreation, training and exposure. Ideally it must be spacious and have a happy environment which, will attract the child and result in lesser dropouts.
- The staff should be specially trained to run such places. Non-Formal Education should be used here based on life skills, specific to their job placements and general survival techniques.

#### 5) Legal Aid and Protection...

##### Findings...

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- x Not much mention of legal aid and protection was done by any of the organisations except for those who have been in any case working with children sent to them by police or the judiciary.
- x The general feeling that was generated through the process of evaluation was that protection; harassment from the police, other forms of violence etc. was not much of a problem. But, somewhere down the line these perhaps were non-addressed issues.
  - x The staff reported problems like physical abuse, violence among peers, stealing from each other, etc. for which the children needed support but not necessarily legal interventions.
- x Sexual abuse of girl children was rampant; it was something that was common for all the project areas. But, no initiatives were taken by the project staff to find-out such cases unless others informed them from the locality outside the project or from the friends of the child. The children have not yet found that space where they can talk about their problems in total confidentiality. In one of the project we were told that a girl of thirteen years was involved in regular prostitution and no one had yet talked to the girl. They were waiting for the trained counsellor to start the process.

##### Recommendations..

Protection - Help from / Liaison with police, legal aid when and if arrested, lockers to keep money / belongings. Linkages with shelters and self-defence training must be an integral part of the drop-in-centre component. Children must also be protected from getting into practices like that of vending drugs, carrying arms for local hoodlums, joining rallies and processions of the political parties as these are extremely dangerous and might prove harmful for them.

#### 6) Networking / linkages/ advocacy...

##### Findings..



- x There certainly was a strong presence of networking on a very local level. But, unfortunately there was a serious gap in networking among the groups at different levels.
- x Networking with organisations working on issues of children, especially street children like that of the UNICEF, Save the Children, etc. were not being networked / lobbied with.
- x There were small-scale local networking initiatives of the NGOs with the local governments but nothing really to comment upon.

#### 7) Awareness raising

##### Findings..

- The NGO project partners were unfortunately not involved in direct awareness raising programmes with various stakeholders, which is extremely important for this project at least.
- Some of the NGOs did have some small, yet direct programmes on awareness raising on issues around United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and how it is relevant to children. But most of it stuck to purely verbal discussion with the children, neither was there a mass awareness effort, nor was there any holistic approach to the awareness-raising component.

##### Recommendations for Awareness Raising, Networking and Advocacy...

But, Networking and advocacy must be done at various levels with varied stakeholders.

- All the nine partner NGOs of the ARISE project must meet at regular intervals. This can be done at every NGO, with each playing the host at least once. This would help them in learning from each other's experiences. They would also get the opportunity to learn from the host NGOs method of working, sharing of views, learning from problems faced / mistakes made and the existing best practices. Reports of these meetings must be given top priority, as they would definitely help in the process of organisational development management and organisational capacity building.
- One of the consultants can take responsibility of facilitating such initiatives among these NGOs and can act as catalysts in the process of organisational knowledge development. At

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- the same time the consultant can stress on her / his specific topic through these periodical sharing.
- Sensitisation and conscientisation of law enforcing agents, service providers (*doctors, social workers, students, political party workers, etc.*) should feature frequently in the ARISE project. It has to be kept in mind that the design of these workshops or dialogues has to be brief, precise and hard-hitting.
- Children should be involved in such a way that they become their own advocates. They must be provided with the opportunity and space so that they are able to use public addressal systems to talk about their own issues. It is always important that they take an active role in their own development and become key actors of the process rather than mere recipients of services.
- Mass media should be effectively used for awareness generation and solidarity on the issues. But, while using the mass media the project actors need to be sure that the media does not sensationalise the entire issue, rather deal with it sensitively.
- 'Child to child' care and 'peer group development' should definitely be one of the key elements of the ARISE project. It is important that the children targeted through the ARISE project must get an opportunity to have a dialogue and share views with children who belong to the mainstream. There needs to be plenty of interactions between the street children and the children who go to formal schools, children who live with their families, etc. Joint sports, combined cultural programmes, united picnics, etc. could really be very effective.
- The ARISE street children project must be linked with other street children projects, NGOs working on any issue related to vulnerable children, different effective forums and platforms (*Sishu Adhikar Forum, ATSEC, etc.*). Networks with UCEF and UNICEF - Hard to Reach Project can also be extremely effective.
- Reaching out to the local clubs and sensitising them on the issue is also extremely important. In fact, it is quite possible that some of these clubs may join the process and perhaps even

go a step further and provide with the much-needed space for the drop-in-centres.

- Out-reach programmes with religious institutions must be organised with an aim towards provision of space and funds for such initiatives.
- The project must start off on networking with the bus syndicates, trade unions, [etc. at](#) ferryghats, bus terminals, railway platforms, and market places where the concentration of the street children population is the most. This would help in reducing the harassment of street children, get help in emergency situations, get adequate space for running the programmes, etc. Through these processes the people in these areas would also know that the NGOs are watching.
- The project partners must also network with and learn from other street children projects of Kolkata, India where the culture, language and the problems are more or less similar.
- It is important to lobby with university and college student groups. This might help the project partners in identifying efficient people who might be interested in volunteering for this project. One must never forget the power of such student groups and use it to the benefit of the project as in Bangladesh the national movements have had very important / effective inputs from these groups.
- Linkages with referral systems providing psychotherapy and psychiatric help are very important. It is important that all the partner NGOs of ARISE must always be equipped with such linkages.
- Presently UNICEF and a core group of NGOs are preparing a National Action Plan for the sexually abused children in Bangladesh. ARISE must link itself up with this ongoing process because a large section of the street children go through sexual abuse and exploitation.
- A web-site may be opened for sharing information in the country and abroad.
- A quarterly Newsletter may be published featuring the experiences, good practices, problems, lesson learnt of Partner NGOs. Documentation / reports / journals etc. should be identified, collected, and information disseminated through this ARISE newsletter.

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- In order to reach out to different groups of vested interest, the following communication methods may be used:
  - ' Traditional Shadow Theatre performance on the theme of street children and their problems.
  - ' Using of "Pats Katha" (traditional scroll painting along with a song used in villages of Bengal).
  - ' "Jatra" (Traditional village theatre, staged in open air.
  - ' Using renowned faces (TV journalists, actors etc.) to talk on the issues and needs of street children.
  - ' Using print media (famous journalists to write on the issue).
  - ' Organise press conferences, seminars and debates for different kinds of audience (media, schools, universities, law enforcement authorities, government, judiciary, community etc.).

#### **Policy Dialogue and Donor Consortium**

In order to sustain the ARISE Project policy dialogue should be immediately initiated with

- (a) other relevant ministries such as Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Home, Ministry of Social Welfare etc.
- (b) NGOs working with similar programmes in Bangladesh itself and organisations working in the neighbouring countries like Nepal, India.
- (c) Political leaders/religious leaders
- (d) Community people
- (e) Donor agencies

*(During the missions visits to different NGOs it was learnt that some NGOs have been able to draw attention of some donors for sustaining ARISE Project. These NGOs are Aparajeyo Bangladesh, Dhaka; VARD, Sy/het; VOSSD, Barishal).*

An initiative may be taken to organise a meeting with all partner-NGOs and identify donors who might be interested in this project. A donor consortium may be formed for financing the project in future. A common **brochure** may be developed to share the experiences and best practices of the project for

future donor involvement.

UNICEF may be interested to finance the programme for street children as they are directly involved with children's well being and have put lot of stress on child protection from trafficking and sexual abuse.

#### *8) Psychological counselling*

##### *Findings...*

- Each and every staff member who had received the training on counselling appreciated the efforts of Valerie, and the approach, content and method of the training on counselling. They have specifically commented on the hard work that she had done in spite of the language barrier that was present. Trained persons have not yet been able to practice what they have learnt from Valerie's intervention.
- Projects reported on the fact that Valerie could have visited the organisations much earlier and the training could have been organised during the first six months of her stay in Dhaka. This could have given her ample time to do a regular follow-up of the counselling services being carried out by selected counsellors and also they could have come back to Valerie with their blocks and clarifications. The activities related to motivational therapy and psychological counselling were found to be very inadequate for almost all the set-ups.

#### *8) Recreational activities*

##### *Findings...*

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- x In most organisations children were found to be excellent in drama, dance, music, etc. They simply loved doing it.
- x Organisations who are using theatre as one of their tools are doing a great job. They are using theatre for their campaign, education and advocacy programmes.
- x Drama or other forms of recreational activities gave the children the motivation and interest in staying in the shelter homes, or staying with each other.
- x Other forms of recreation - like watching television was also quite popular among the children. Some of the NGOs used this to their advantage and tried to pair recreation with education and this has really worked quite well.
- x Quite a number of the staff members of the NGOs used the recreational activities to bring the children together, they did the whole thing with entirety and with a meaning.
- x Some took the children for exposure and educational trips as a part of these recreational programmes. They took them to the zoo, and other places in Dhaka and elsewhere which was a great experience for the kids. The children appreciated these visits.
- x As the children loved to play - some of the NGOs have organised sports and games as special events. Games like cricket, football, etc. was organised and the children appreciated these quite a lot. They also were very proud of all the prizes that they had won. These activities generated awareness among the community on issues relating to the street children.

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#### *9) Market survey*

##### *Findings..*

- x Some of the NGOs had just completed their market survey, and yet they had already started their vocational training and job placement months ago.

x With the new found results of the market survey, some of the training already imparted do not seem as effective and appropriate and hence, certain changes are being incorporated by the NGOs. Such, wastage of resources could have been avoided if the market survey would have been done earlier.

#### 10) General

##### *Findings..*

- x The target group - the children were not involved at any stage in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project.
- x There is a lack of co-ordination among the consultants and the NGOs at the field level.
- x NGOs do not have clarity in their perception of the role of the consultants and this is creating major communication gap between them.
  - x A comprehensive curriculum on awareness vis-a-vis health, legal rights, gender, basic literacy through a non-formal method had not yet been developed.
- x There exists extremely effective co-ordination between the grass-root level NGOs and the Department of Social Welfare, GoB in the divisional cities compared to that of Dhaka.
- x There has been too much of staff turnover at the Project level. This made the pace of the project and its development slow.
- x The Base-line Survey has been done very late; and now the findings that are coming out of it are development processes and initiatives that the ARISE project has been addressing.

##### *Recommendations..*

- The project needs more drop-in-centres where non-formal education support can be provided. The education centres, which are more in numbers, can be reduced and more drop-in-centres installed which is the real need of the children.
- Girl children should be provided with private spaces where they can talk to friendly counsellors about the problems they encounter on the streets and also about their sexual health problems.
- The project needs a phone-line where the children themselves and anyone who is interested about the children can notify the concerned NGO if a child is in any kind of emergency situation. There are similar programmes of such help-line, which is known as child-line in India. These are toll free numbers and used frequently by children.
- Girl children should be transferred to Government run shelter homes and the concerned NGOs can be their local guardian in case an address is needed for that admission.
- The project should be rearranged and changed slightly having children and other International NGOs on the planning and should be enhanced for another term of three years after the completion of this term. This should be phasing out term where..
  - Shelters should be merged with Government shelters or children should be admitted in Government shelters.
  - Drop-in-centres should be positioned in strategic points run by NGOs which will provide information, awareness, legal aid, emergency aid and counselling to children.
  - All health related activities should be provided at Government hospitals.
  - Service providers at Hospitals, police stations and orphanages / shelters should be sensitised on the issue.

#### **COMMENTS...**

One of the areas or we could call it the target group that drew the evaluation team's attention was efforts made to address the interest of the girl child. The team noticed that there were a

number of rehabilitation programmes for girl children with an emphasis on providing shelter. This could perhaps be the result of both - an experiential situational analysis and a predominantly south Asian

conditioning that girls need more protection. Even then the number of shelter homes that exist are insufficient to address the felt need for protection of the MVC.

In contrast quantitatively the number of NFE and Drop-in-centres (*DIC*) are many more. The point to be noticed here is that the DICs cater more to boys in the areas that they exist in rather than to girls. The reasons for these can be many and varied. In the South-Asian context gender conditioning makes male children, more adventurous and mobile which makes them a large component of the MVC group. On the other hand a girl who belongs to this very same group would have to look after and maintain her street corner single-handedly without the help of her male counterparts. This additional pressure is time consuming and would prevent her from availing of drop-in-centre services. To add to this situation is the reality that field-workers lack the skills and information needed to address this socio-economic gender imbalance. These could be skills in areas ranging from empathy building to motivation.

So either the said project should declare that need addressal should be more focused on boy children or intensive efforts have to be made to train and orient staff on how to motivate more girls of the project services.

### **TRAINING ON COUNSELLING...**

#### *Findings...*

Ms. Valerie Jacques, the expatriate Consultant from Malaysia was appointed for a period of one year to be the technical support person for the ARISE Project in Bangladesh.

The main objective was...

- To make project personnel aware of the need for psycho-social counselling of the Most Vulnerable Children (i.e. *the target group of street children*,
- To identify a group of people from the nine projects under ARISE who could be developed as trainers;
- To give counselling training to this core group of trainers;
- To prepare a module which would be used by this core group for further training;
- To prepare a manual on how to use this module;
- To give suggestions for further follow up.

As the need for psycho-social counselling was predetermined, it was only to be expected that the infrastructural arrangements to ensure the successful completion of planning and implementing such a training programme would be established before the arrival of the expert. *The expert would have needed...*

- Comfortable logistical arrangements for visits to the various projects are necessary so as to easily identify personnel for the training;
- Participants who would have a background in social work/psychology or counselling;
- A supportive team to organise the training;
- A translator and rapporteur who would be familiar with the socio-cultural background of the target group;
- A translator and rapporteur who have had an orientation to counselling or psychology or considerable experience in the field of social work so as to facilitate group processes and the documentation of the same.

***Counselling is a process, which involves an interaction between two human beings where one (the counsellor) acts as a facilitator and helps the other (the client)...***

- By giving non judgmental and empathetic support;

- To identify repetitive patterns of thought and behaviour which are unhelpful and to change those if necessary;
- To develop the skills and understanding needed to cope with their environmental pressures;
- To explore options for life and living;
- To build understanding of self and others.

The process being as difficult as it is, it was necessary that the right kind of individuals be chosen to receive the training.

*Valerie has managed to...*

- Visit the various project fields and give inputs in orientation workshops on the need for psycho-social counselling;
- Prepare a format to gather information about potential candidates for the counselling training;
- Identify individuals who could receive training on counselling;
- Conduct a workshop with the required number of people;
- Conduct a short training of trainers on counselling.

Besides, these she has also managed to...

- Develop activity reporting format for all components in the project;
- Help as a facilitator in other workshops under the project *information received from Valerie and a couple of other project NGO partners*
- Build a relationship with the participants of the training programme. This has been ratified by the positive feedback given by all the participants, including the DSS officers, who spoke very highly of both the training and the trainer.

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*Valerie seems to have undergone a lot of logistical dihculties, which have resulted in unnecessary delays in activity implementation such as..*

- The permission to travel was not available easily but the geographical area to be understood was large. Hence, what could have been accomplished within two months took much more time;
- The persons she recommended for the TOT were not sent by the organisation's concerned and the substitutes did not have the prerequisite qualifications (*no background in social work or psychology*) to be trainers on counselling;
- The translator did not have a counselling background resulting in tremendous difficulties in communication between the consultant and the translator. This also prevented the development of a relationship of trust between them;
- The rapporteur also did not have an orientation or background in counselling as a result of which documentation of sessions did not tally with the consultant's memory of how a session had proceeded.

*With more active support from the government Valeries time could have been ut/used more effectively...*

- The area visits could have been accomplished in the first three months;
- The candidates for the training could have been identified by the fifth month;
- Then all the training that she had planned could have been completed;
- She could also have done monitoring and supervision of follow up programmes, conducted by the newly trained personnel;
- The final module for training and the manual which details how the module is to be used could have been field tested and rectified if necessary.

As far as the content of her training module is concerned Valerie seems to have created an exciting and

participatory learning process which seems to have covered all the areas that she had decided to explore. *Nevertheless, there are some features, which could have been included...*

- Some specific information on training techniques and facilitation skills;
  - Skills building on interview taking;
  - Information on the fall out of doing as pressurising a job as that of a counsellor i.e. information on burn out and how to take care of oneself;
  - Information on recognising symptom formation i.e. on being able to realise when a client needs medicine for their anxieties and stresses;
- i Information on group therapy and how to handle group activities and processes;
- More time could have been spent on skills building in alternative forms of therapy i.e. expressive therapy such as art therapy, sound therapy, movement therapy, drama therapy etc.;
  - More specific information on the target group (i.e. "most vulnerable children or street children") and specific skills on how to handle their special problems should have been imparted;
  - Report writing or how to prepare a case report based on actual interactions in the field, should have been discussed.

Despite the lack of co-operation from the project staff and the lack of orientation of the team leader in the ARISE Project it has to be concluded that Valerie has done the best that she could have.

*Recommendations..*

*The evaluation team feels that...*

- The language barrier could have been avoided by using a consultant from Kolkata, India (*because the language is the same*);
- The training could have been cost effective as the translator would have not been needed;

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- A follow up training, supervision, and monitoring of the processes begun is essential even now and can be done by a team from Kolkata;
- The core team should have further skill enhancement workshops and special training on how to supervise other counsellors;
- A supervisory and personal counselling process should be initiated for the counsellors created;
- The international consultant had suggested that Ms Farida Akhtar of Bangladesh who has a lot of experience could be referred to for supervision. A formal contract for the same should be drawn up with her (***details of Ms Farida Akhtar can be found in Valeris reports There are several people / consultants living in Kolkata, India who can help in supervision,***);
- Hands on counselling experience with Indian organisations in Kolkata who work with vulnerable children could help the trainees;
- The counselling consultant will be submitting the final module and the training manual before her departure.

This evaluation team feels that a necessary process has begun which would facilitate better quality support services for the "most vulnerable children" but this process would be rendered ineffective if follow up activities are not initiated. A little knowledge is dangerous; and the amount of harm that an unsupervised or unskilled caregiver can render to a vulnerable child, it is sometimes far more than what an outright exploiter can. Any delays in initiating of such follow up activities would in this case cause more problems than we can possibly imagine.

L. **STRATEGIES to MOBILISE OTHER STAKEHOLDERS and INITIATE POLICY DIALOGUE AIMING at SUSTAINABLE COMMITMENT...**

One has to keep in mind that there are a number of stakeholders who are already involved with the

ARISE Project. For sustainability of the effort and initiative, and to aim at providing an enabling environment for the MVC for their growth and development, a number of other stakeholders need to be identified and worked with. All these varied stakeholders would have approached through separate kinds of policy communication or dialogue. This would involve them into long-term commitment for holistic development of the MVC.

- UNICEF - UNICEF already has a programme on Non Formal Education called Hard-to-Reach. This gives the ARISE Project a tremendous lead to involve UNICEF in their activities. Perhaps, UNICEF can take up the NFE centres run by the different project partners after the end of the ARISE Project period.
- ATSEC / ECPAT / SISHU ADHIKAR FORUM - these are some of the platforms that specifically work on issues of children. These are extremely important pressure groups that are working towards advocacy and lobbying initiatives to affect social policy, planning and participation for children. The ARISE project, by linking itself with such platforms would be able to bring in issues of the MVC to light, in front of the regional and local governments. This would also help them to create international pressure on the Government to act upon and provide necessary services for the MVC.
- Other NGOs - Other NGOs can be approached for a number of reasons. These could be training of the project staff, capacity building for the NGO partner organisations, basic networking, vocational training for children, job placement for the children, usage of other NGO shelter homes and drop-in-centres, help in reintegration processes and initiatives, identifying the family if any, bridging gaps in services for the MVC, etc.
- Student Volunteer Groups - to create a continuous lobby with the different students groups and continuously having them to work at the ARISE project as volunteers. There also could be other initiatives like that of sponsoring of a child, adopting the child, getting students as teachers, getting them to train the MVC for vocations and other recreational activities, etc. are also important facets that needs to be explored.

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- Unions - there are Unions at the ferry ghats, at the bus terminus's, etc. These unions are capable of providing a number of services, which could possibly help in sustainable development of the MVC. These are identifying of the MVC and sending them / letting them know of the available services, protect them from any abuse and exploitation by being the vigilant eye, provide the children with relevant less hazardous jobs, help the self employed MVC to set up small businesses in these areas, etc.
  - Hospitals and Police Stations - Government Hospitals have their social service wings which could be lobbied with and these children can be given ID cards which they can use and avail of free medical services all their lives. It should be made sure Police Stations are made aware about the issues of the MVC, the services available which the MVC can get, etc. Also an ID card for these children would help them from being harassed by the policemen.
- C Families and the Children themselves - These are stakeholders of the project in any case. But, special effort needs to be given in for them. Empower and build capacity of the children and their families ( if any) in such a way that they are capable of running their own centres even if ARISE Project makes its exit. Using children as trainers themselves of vocations that they themselves are trained in, use the older children to teach the younger ones, use child to child development procedures rather than only involving adults for their development, teach the children to protect themselves, their beloved ones, their groups, their centres and build a sense of responsibility and ownership for the programme.
- M. LESSONS LEARNT...
- set the canvas before we get into applying these recommendations there are a few things more that need to be mentioned at this stage.
  - It is absolutely imperative that the street children be made an integral part of the planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation process One must remember that nothing



grows from top down. Our attempt should be to make the children realise that it is their project and we must make it an absolutely participatory process. We need to develop their ownership, help them build partnerships, advocate for their own rights, plan for the service implementation and also assess the output or the developmental impact on their lives of the children.

- Every problem has some root causes and it also has its manifestations. We must remember that if we only address the manifestations, which are visible, and tangible in some cases then we are failing to address the root causes of the problem. If the root causes are not appropriately addressed then they would remain unchanged and perhaps all that we would be doing is provide services. We must think in terms of change in policy and law, active participation by all the stakeholders, behavioural change of the people, solidarity and conscientisation, etc. Only these processes can at least address the root causes of the problems and this is extremely important if we are talking about sustainability in our development processes.
- ARISE is a complex and multisectorally approached project. Such kinds of projects are completely dependent on excellent linkages and co-ordination between all the key actors. ARISE must examine at this aspect with much more efficiency. It is the prime factor in which the project is dependent. The networking and co-ordination must be strengthened further.
- Recreational activities - through experiences of a couple of the organisations in the ARISE project it is observed that where ever theatre, music, dance, paintings, etc. have been used children have expressed their feelings and the drop-out rate has been lower. Efforts to motivate the children have succeeded by using such mediums.
- Exposure - Educational trips to places of learning should be organised more frequently by the project drop-in-centre staff.

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## **N. GOOD PRACTICES and LESSONS LEARNT FROM THEM... I.**

### **ID Card for street children: A good practice**

Jogajog of Chitagong has issued identity cards for children who attend their open school regularly and also to children who are enrol to their drop-in-centre. This ID card not only provides them the members of the Jogajog family but also helps them to get...

- Protection from police harassment.
- B. Protection from public harassment due to minor offenses done.
- To get a job for self support
- D. To get help services from government medical hospital
- E. To get confident from others.

### **Lessons Learnt...**

- Every partner NGOs should issue an ID card for every child to whom they are providing services because public, police and other anti-social elements generally harass them. They live in danger on streets of the city and might be recognised by the authorities if they know that these cards are being provided to the street children.
- ACLAB, Khulna has also decided to issue ID Cards for their service receiving street children.

## **II. SELLING OF BOILED WATER AND ROTI BHAZI**

SPK working in Dhaka City near the Sadar Ghat Launch Terminal works in a very busy market where hundreds of street children work as vendors, porters, and helpers in shops. Several of them are also involved in rag picking and hang around in the market area in search of food or a little bit of work. With SPK's initiative and training several of the children (*good boys and girls*) sell hand rolled bread and bhaji (

vegetable) and boiled water which is highly popular in that area. The food, which is low-cost and easy to prepare, helps these children to earn more than Tk.30/per day. This programme is encouraging because with SPK capital to buy ingredients and cooking facilities these children are earning some money for their labour. 50% of the income is given to the child who also likes the other ongoing programmes of the centre. As this particular organisation is suffering from space problem they are not being able to cater to many more children. The income of the child also decreases.

#### **Lessons Learnt...**

Similar programmes can be initiative by other NGOs. Prepared food is welcome in areas where there is lots of movements of people e.g. bus terminus, stations, and launch ghats. Investment being very low the children can pay off the loan pretty soon. It also needs to be mentioned that while the children are making these food items they also eat a bit which is good for their own health. Cooking can be done in-groups and drop-in-centre's space can be used to cook such food. Apart from a can for the water and some paper plates they do not need anything to carry the food around. If there is enough in term the child might be away from another hazardous job like working in a garage or a small factory.

### **III. VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN BY PLACING THEM WITH THEIR ENTREPRENEURS**

Some of the partner NGOs such as ACLAB, Khulna; Jogajog, Chitagong; VOSD, Borisal; and ACD, Rajshahi are providing vocational training to the children by palcing them directly in the real work place run by entrepreneurs. Discussions with the local community and motivation done by the NGOs has made these interventions where the child receives training directly which is much better than getting it at the NGO centre. Here the child earns some money as well as gains experience at the workplace. After the training these children are/will be absorbed by the

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entrepreneurs on a permanent basis. The child is also safe in an environment where regular follow up is done by the NGO. The fixed timings make it possible for the child to go to the nonformal school and other activities organised by the NGO partner organisation.

#### **Lessons Learnt...**

All NGOs need to look into such training where they can also motivate the community an encourage them to take responsibility of the children of their society. Continuous vigilance keeps the child away from anti social activities and harassment of police and other adults, particularly from his/her own peer group.

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### **IV. LINKING STREET CHILDREN PROGRAMME WITH OTHER ONGOING PROGRAMME OF PARTNER NGOS.**

YARD, Sylhet; ACD, Rajshahi and PSTC, Dhaka have been able to link up the ARISE Project to their other service providing ongoing programmes which will help in sustaining ARISE Programme in future.

VARD has linked up their credit programme with ARISE Income Generation Programme. They have identified the parents of some of the street children and have brought them under their credit programme. This will intern help the rehabilitation of the child in the family.

PSTC has linked up the health services for the street children of the ARISE project with their health service programme for the community people. Children coming to the education centres and drop-in-centres are given a health card which enables them to directly make use of the PSTC health clinics totally free of cost. The card give them opportunity of getting treatment from the clinics and because they go their directly and on their own they are confident compare to children who is provided health check ups at their centres.

### **LESSONS LEARNT...**

All NGOs should look into ongoing health programmes run by themselves, other NGOs or the government and link up the street children with these programmes. Linking up with the government hospitals is most necessary because the government hospitals will continue to provide services even if the NGO withdraws from the same area.

- It is very difficult to retain street children in any programme for a long time. Therefore the programme of education and vocational training should be a short term one.
- It is not possible to put them in the mainstream education (*formal schooling*). They have neither time nor interest to spend many years for formal education. Thus they should be provided with functional education and a short vocational training and be placed in some job/work immediately.
- A night shelter is an urgent need, especially for the girl children.
- It is not possible to confine street children in boarding schools or hostels because they are generally very independent in nature. Permanent shelters do not work for all children but drop in centres and night shelters which allows the children to come and go at their own will can provide better protection.
- Experiences of people working with street children is that they do not want money but can really change if they are shown affection and sympathy and encouraged to bring out their own self esteem.

- **Child Motivators...**

Aparajeyo Bangladesh has taken the initiative of creating 'Child Motivators'. In this innovative initiative six residents of Aparajeyo shelter home, who have completed their education, have been selected for the organisations outreach programme. These children will be visiting different centres to talk on problems of living on the street and provide role models for street children.

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### **Lessons Learnt...**

Other NGOs can take up this particular activity. Peer education has proved successful in many other projects. This activity might help create leadership in every street child group.

## **VI. Barefoot Teachers**

Loreto Day School Sealdah, Kolkata/India has an outreach programme, which is planned by Sr. Cyril in Loreto Day School. Sr. Cyril who trained her formal school children to educate street children particularly girl children started the programme. In the beginning there were problems as guardians of formal school children were not very happy with their children giving so much time. But within a few years these children have done well in their own career as well as have taken up responsibility of motivating street children who are now completing their studies, through formal education. Several NGOs in Kolkata have tried to engage in similar activities and in the process several street children have found motivation, direct support in completing education.

### **Recommendation...**

Visit can be organised for NGO project partners, project consultants and DSS Officers to visit these projects in Kolkata.

### **VII. FOCUS and TILJALA SHED**

This is yet another NGO working in Kolkata with street children who are rag pickers.

This group over the years has worked with street children involved in rag picking and has seen the problems they are faced with. On one hand there are health problems as often children got cuts while picking rubbish. This group campaigned and approached residents in some areas already to keep their rubbish in two plastic bags. The plastic bags are supplied by the NGO and it is easier for the children to pick things from separate bags without going through dirty and rotten things looking for plastic or paper which has resale value.

### **Recommendations...**

This is another organisation to visit to find out not only about the rag-picking problem but also to see their campaign programme which educates people about the issues of street children. They have activities to sensitise general people, other NGOs, Government to

- (a) Give their waste in a sensible way that the children can use in recycling and
- (b) To not see street children as dangerous children and thieves but help them to become members of the organisation, receive education and skill training and become self-sufficient.

This is another organisation, which will help to plan activities in Bangladesh.

### **VIII. BUTTERFLIES and MOBILE CRECHE...**

Two other organisations namely "Butterflies" and "Mobile Creche" in Delhi can be seen as good examples to be replicated.

It is most important to meet with members of CLPOA (*City Level Plan of Action*) in Kolkata. All organisations working with children on the streets and slums have been organised under this platform and they take up activities together. Hence, campaign on street children issues have lot strength and done with a big noise. They have become a big group to be seen during "Kolkata Book Fair" which is famous in the World as publishers from all over the World participate. CLPOA is given a big stall where street children talk, draw, perform and meet others from all over the

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world. UNICEF, West Bengal, sponsors this platform. IPER and CINI ASHA are two more organisations in Kolkata who work with street children and have special "half way homes" for **psychologically affected** and sexually abused street children.

Visit to these two organisations might provide a special insight to ARISE Project partners in dealing with the issues of sexual abuse and psycho-social counselling.

Sanlaa in Kolkata runs shelter homes (3) and drop-in-centres (15) for sexually abused and vulnerable children. Also fields rescue operations and runs rehabilitation programmes for children of women in prostitution and girl children forced into prostitution. They have psycho-social rehabilitation programmes, which has long term rehabilitation values.

Visits to Sanlaap will help gain knowledge in psychosocial rehabilitation of sexually abused girl children.

**IX. CHILD-LINE...**

This is yet another programme of having "toll free number" given by the P and T Department which is advertised continuously all over the city. Street children rather any children can use this number for any problems they face. Any adult who sees a problem with an unaccompanied child may make phone calls. The calls are received by four NGOs in the city situated in four corners and street children receive rescue/ immediate help. These four organisations also network with other organisations that provide physical support to children.

All incoming calls are picked up and saved in a computer automatically so that it can be retraced if necessary. Police also provides necessary support here. This service is provided to all children in danger.

**X. Activities with Kolkata Police...**

Several NGOs like Sanlaap, CRY, CINI etc. have programmes with the Kolkata Police Department. Regular interface is organised where police and street children meet each other to discuss common problems of abuse, harassment. Kolkata police also takes up and organises activities like "foot ball match", sports and street schools, counselling centres etc directly with the help of different NGOs working with street children.

**Recommendations...**

Visits can be made to see these activities.