REPORT ON

BASELINE SURVEY OF SKILLS 21 PROJECT

Entrepreneurship Development Training

Submitted to

Skills 21 Project, ILO Dhaka

Submitted by

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Abbreviation and Acronyms

BDT	Bangladesh Taka
BEF	Bangladesh Employers' Federation
BIN	Business Identification Number
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
COVID-19	Corona Virus Diseases 2019
EDT	Entrepreneurship Development Training
HDRC	Human Development Research Centre
HH	Household
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
KII	Key Informant Interview
NCCWE	National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SSNP	Social Safety Net Programmes
TIN	Tax Identification Number
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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Executive Summary

Bangladesh enjoys a demographic benefit, while the youth population outnumbers the dependent-age population. However, a large portion of the two million people, who enter the job market every year, cannot get a job in domestic or overseas markets. At this very outset, self-employment remains a crucial component to ensuring the development pathway of the country. The guiding policy vision of the country—the Bangladesh Government's 8th Five-Year Plan (2020–2025)—also accurately points out "*self-employment*" as viable alternative employment.

In congruence with this phenomenon, the Government of Bangladesh, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) jointly initiated the "*Skills–21—Empowering Citizens for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth*" project, funded by the European Union. Under the auspices of Skills 21, "*Entrepreneur Development Training (EDT)*" is imparted to upward the self-employment skills of potential youths.

The baseline survey—conducted using a mixed-method approach—investigates the pre-EDT training scenario. The baseline survey compared the Intervention group's (EDT trainee) status with its two counterparts: "Control I" (having TVET, but no EDT) and "Control II" (no TVET, no EDT).

Most of the respondents (90%) surveyed were in the 18-to-35-years-age bracket—with the potential to become self-employed or entrepreneurs. The male-female portion of this age group is 69:31. Most of the respondents (68%) are lived in urban areas, and less than one-third are married (30%). In addition, around two-fifths of the respondents (39.02%) have completed higher secondary education. At the same time, only 13.3% of the respondents from the intervention group received any technical training before appearing in EDT. Only 4 Persons under the intervention group were found with any disabilities who took part in EDT.

The survey found that many respondents from the intervention group had some knowledge about initiating and running a business. Nonetheless, most did not know about a specific plan to produce a product or deliver a service, price setting, costing plan, sales estimation, legal status and responsibility of a business entity— all essential parts of a business. In addition, respondents' knowledge about other business record-keeping procedures was inadequate.

Regarding knowledge of green business, 55.3% of intervention respondents know about recycling and reuse, followed by electricity management (52.7%). At the same time, only four-tenths of the EDT Trainees confirmed knowledge about efficient use of water (38.3%), energy-efficient lighting (37%), and maintaining waste management (37%). Therefore, the survey infers that they require training to organise

their ideas into the business plan. In addition, their business affiliation and market linkage situation require more support to improve their running business or potential business.

In the intervention group, the primary source of household income was wage/salaried jobs (75.8%), followed by business (48.5%) and agricultural (34.5%). It implies that half of the households of the intervention group had some business/enterprise. About half of the respondents' annual household income was between 100,000 and 300,000 BDT; the same portion did not have any personal income. Similar to the income source, the larger share of the household income came from a salaried job, followed by business. Notably, 31% of the intervention group members involved in some income-earning reported income from a business; 17.7% of them contributed to the household income.

Many factors, together, discouraged the youth from starting their own business. Around 29% of the intervention group respondents could not start a business due to discouragement from family. Nearly 28% of the intervention respondents felt they did not have a customer base to start a business. About one-fifth of respondents in the intervention group could not start their business due to the unavailability of a loan with reasonable terms and conditions. Intervention respondents reported unavailability of training on entrepreneurship (17.1%) and lack of knowledge in start-up and ran businesses (17.1%) as discouraging factors.

This baseline survey also investigated gender identity triggered discouraging factors among the surveyed groups. The survey found that, in general, the women's independent decision-making status was nominal. For example, only 8% of the female respondents of the Intervention group could decide to join entrepreneurship development training on their own. Even when deciding to run a home-based business, only 13.9% of them could choose independently.

This Skills 21 baseline survey revealed that Intervention, Control I, and Control II youths desire business skills. The survey revealed that most intervention group youth lack basic business skills but have an entrepreneurial mindset. They need business plan training. The expansion of their business affiliation and market connectivity requires additional help. At the same time, programmes and projects must proactively support potential female entrepreneurs. Skills 21 must address social stigmas and other barriers to female entrepreneurship.