THE READY-MADE GARMENT SECTOR AND CHILDREN IN BANGLADESH
Disclaimer

This document summarizes key findings from qualitative research UNICEF undertook together with Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) in spring 2015. The research was based on a desk study on the impact on women and children in the garment sector, followed by interviews with experts and key stakeholders in Bangladesh. Consulted stakeholders included intergovernmental organizations, aid agencies, trade unions, civil society organizations, factory managers, welfare officers, individual experts, workers and children. UNICEF expresses its gratitude to the numerous organizations and individuals who contributed to the research for this study, including the financial support provided by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

The research summarized in this document is exploratory in nature. It has the aim to identify potential impact areas in which children can be affected in the ready-made garment (RMG) industry in Bangladesh, and does not evaluate the situation across the entire industry.

For more information on UNICEF’s work in the RMG sector in Bangladesh, please contact csr@unicef.org

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The Ready-Made Garment Sector and Children in Bangladesh

Children are affected by the ready-made garment (RMG) industry in Bangladesh on a daily basis. Lack of adequate maternity protection for the predominantly female workforce, inadequate breastfeeding support, poor access to quality childcare, long working hours and the absence of living wages can directly affect the situation of working mothers and their children.

Moreover, as a result of low wages and rapid urbanization, a significant share of workers and their families live in and around deprived urban slum communities where children are at risk of child labour and lack access to essential basic services. Clean water, improved sanitation and hygiene, health care, adequate nutrition and education can be severely limited in these communities, denying children of garment workers a safe environment where they can thrive and develop.

Without targeted interventions, the adverse effects of the RMG sector on children in Bangladesh are set to grow in scope and severity. In light of ambitious government targets to expand the industry and major challenges associated with rapid urbanization, the impact on children will increase in the future.

The exploratory research summarized in this document seeks to underline the urgent need to ensure that planning for growth of the industry also considers and improves the role of children as critical but often overlooked stakeholders.

The ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh

The RMG sector has been one of the driving forces behind Bangladesh’s economic development over the past decades. Since its rapid expansion in the late 1970s, Bangladesh has become the second largest exporter of garments in the world – after China. Today, the industry’s estimated 3,500 export-oriented factories are believed to either directly or indirectly support the livelihoods of more than 25 million people, particularly women and children.

The majority of garment workers are women, many of whom have migrated from rural to urban areas in search of employment. The RMG industry can provide them with a first opportunity to enter the formal workforce, offering an important source of income, economic independence and greater decision-making power.

However, promising opportunities associated with employment in the RMG sector can be undermined by a range of potential negative impacts on the welfare and livelihoods of workers and their families. Despite some recent progress on working conditions, especially on healthy and safety, addressing the impact of the garment industry on the livelihoods of workers and their families remains a critical but frequently neglected challenge.

Impact on children

Of the estimated 4 million garment workers in Bangladesh, approximately 80 per cent are female. Studies suggest that nationwide some 15 per cent of women between the ages of 16 and 30 years works in the garment industry. Due to the demographics of the labour force, there is a strong need to ensure that the basic rights of working women are met, and adequate mechanisms are in place to ensure the welfare of their families.

The research summarized in this document highlights eight impact areas in which the working and living conditions of garment workers affect the rights of children. These impact areas are often interlinked and relate to the practices and conditions inside and outside the factory gates. Therefore, solutions to improve the impact of the RMG sector on children require holistic approaches that address the situation in both the factory and the community context.

Impact Area 1: 

Inadequate maternity protection

The provision of maternity rights has a direct impact on the welfare and well-being of workers’ children. Special provisions for pregnant women, paid parental leave and the elimination of maternity-related employment discrimination are important measures to protect the health of children and promote equal opportunities. For example, in the absence of adequate support mechanisms, the need to return to work within six months after giving birth can be negatively correlated with a continuation of breastfeeding.4

While labour laws in Bangladesh grant relatively comprehensive maternity rights, legal standards are not consistently observed in practice. For example, the law requires employers to provide women with 16 weeks of paid maternity leave (eight weeks prior and eighth weeks post-delivery). However, many female garment workers either do not return to the same factory after giving birth or take a significantly shorter amount of maternity leave.

There are also reported cases of pregnant women being led to ‘voluntarily’ resign rather than being dismissed. Workers state that they sometimes receive an additional month’s salary to encourage such resignations. Although little research has been done due to the sensitivity of the issue, there is also a risk that the threat of forced resignations may contribute to higher abortion rates out of fear of losing employment. This situation is unsustainable, not just for children and women in their role as mothers, but also for factories which suffer from high employee turnover and a continuous loss of skills and talent.

Impact Area 2: 

Challenges for breastfeeding

Only 56 per cent of babies younger than 6 months are exclusively breastfed in Bangladesh.5 There is evidence that this rate is even lower among female garment workers. While more research is needed to better understand prevailing breastfeeding rates and challenges, sample surveys conducted by UNICEF indicate that breastfeeding rates by working women in garment factories can be as low as 10 per cent.

The impact of low breastfeeding rates on newborn children is severe. UNICEF recommends exclusive breastfeeding of newborns for 6 months, and complimentary breastfeeding up until the age of 2 years and beyond. Children who are not breastfed exclusively through their first 6 months are 14 times more likely to die in the early months of life than breastfed children. They are more susceptible to diarrhoea and pneumonia, the two leading causes of infant death. They are also at greater risk of being malnourished and micronutrient deficient.

While nursing breaks during working hours for breastfeeding mothers are an integral component under maternity rights standards promoted by the International Labour Organization (ILO),6 legislation in Bangladesh contains no provisions on paid breastfeeding breaks.

Accordingly, the needs of breastfeeding mothers and their newborns are commonly overlooked in the RMG sector. In many garment factories, mothers do not have space or time to breastfeed. While factories sometimes provide breastfeeding corners inside childcare centres, they are often inadequately equipped to offer a safe space for mothers to breastfeed.

Low breastfeeding rates among female garment workers are also a result of a lack of awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding.7 Additionally, long and hazardous commutes to work and long working hours can further prevent working mothers’ from breastfeeding their infants, undermining their potential for healthy growth and development.

“A woman shall be provided with the right to one or more daily breaks or a daily reduction of hours of work to breastfeed her child … These breaks or the reduction of daily hours of work shall be counted as working time and remunerated accordingly.”

– ILO Maternity Convention (No 183), Article 10

Notes:

4 Research in Vietnam by Alive & Thrive indicates that a large proportion of pregnant women stated that returning to work was a major factor preventing them from exclusive breastfeeding. Available at http://aliveandthrive.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Workplace-Support-Summary-Report-2012-English.pdf


7 A 2012 study suggests that 88 per cent of female garment workers had ‘poor knowledge’ of breastfeeding benefits. Available at http://origin.searo.who.int/publications/journals/seajph/whoseajphv1i3p249.pdf
Worker Profile – Prisha

Prisha has a three-year-old daughter. She is no longer living with her husband, and lives in a one-bedroom home with her mother, who helps to raise her child. Prisha’s factory gave her a full four months of paid maternity leave from work to bear her child. When she returned to work, Prisha’s mother would care for the baby during the day, and bring her to the factory for Prisha to breastfeed on her breaks. She was not able to rely on the daycare facility in her factory, as it was being used as a factory working room. Prisha would breastfeed her baby in the prayer room instead. Because her mother was only available to bring her baby to the factory once a day, the baby was often fed watered-down milk through a bottle to supplement between feedings.
Impact Area 3: Limited childcare options

Quality childcare is an essential service ensuring that children of working mothers grow up in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. It is also critical to ensure that mothers can continue employment when returning from maternity leave, giving them the security that their child is protected and has access to early childhood development opportunities. Additionally, factory-based childcare can ensure working mothers are able to breastfeed during working hours. Where quality childcare in factories exists, it can also be a motivator for women to seek employment in the RMG industry as it enables them to earn an income while raising their child.

Factory-based childcare

Although required by law, lack of adequate childcare in Bangladesh’s RMG sector is a major challenge, directly undermining the rights of children. According to the 2013 Labour Act, factories with more than 40 workers are required to provide suitable childcare facilities for workers’ children up to the age of six. However, quality childcare is widely absent in Bangladesh’s RMG sector and, where existent, utilization rates are extremely low. Garment factories often view factory-based childcare as a mere compliance requirement, and do not understand the benefits they can provide for workers, their families and ultimately the factories themselves. As a result, the quality of childcare rooms is often substandard, and managers have no incentive to ensure workers bring their children to work.

Poor supply of adequate childcare is both a cause and a consequence of lack of demand. The absence of trained and qualified caregivers can exacerbate lack of trust among mothers, entrenching social preferences to leave children at home where they are either unattended or with relatives (e.g. grandparents or older siblings). Some mothers also prefer leaving their children in the villages where they originated. Other barriers preventing mothers from using factory-based childcare can include a lack of transportation possibilities for infants, long and hazardous commutes to work, unfavourable opening hours, and a view that factories may not be safe enough for children.

Community-based childcare

Childcare in urban communities that neighbour garment factories can be an effective way to promote early childhood development for workers’ children. Community-based childcare centres tend to have better design, staff, governance and support frameworks in place. They are also better monitored and supported by early childhood development specialists. Often, they are run by civil society organizations that have access to capacity-building and training programmes. Typically, however, they are only available for children above the age of 2 years. Therefore, they are presently not a viable substitute for factory-based childcare for very young children. In any case, the availability of community-based childcare services is currently well below the needs of parents working in the RMG industry.

The 3–6 years gap

While the law requires factories to provide childcare for children until the age of 6, children older than 3 years rarely stay in factory-based childcare. At times, this is the case because factories only make childcare available for children up until the age of 3. In other cases, the perception among parents might be that children older than 3 years are old enough to stay at home or in the community.

The situation is more promising in community-based childcare centres, especially when they include pre-school curriculums. However, while the availability of pre-primary education is generally increasing in Bangladesh, utilization rates remain extremely low in deprived urban communities.

Enrolment in pre-primary education among poor families stands at only 11 per cent as a result of both lack of demand (poor awareness among parents) and poor supply (lack of coverage and accessibility). Children of garment workers are therefore at high risk of experiencing a gap in supervision between age 3 and the primary schooling age of 6 – a period in which early childhood development support is critical.

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“I leave my children all alone back home, so I worry about their safety ... I cannot keep my children in the daycare centre [at my factory] because they are above the age of 3, so I am always worried about them ... I wish the Government would take the initiative to do something for these children who are above the age of 3, by establishing a care centre for them where they will be safe. The children of every garment worker should have access to such a facility.”

– Interview with a female garment factory worker
Impact Area 4: Poor health and nutrition of working mothers

There is a crucial link between maternal and child health, which too often remains overlooked in the workplace. A mother’s nutritional status and level of health affect her ability not only to perform in the workplace, but also to bear and raise a healthy child. For example, maternal undernutrition and anaemia contribute up to 50 per cent of childhood stunting, as undernourished women give birth to low-weight babies that will not reach their full growth potential.

In Bangladesh, one in three adolescent girls is underweight. Similar to the general population, almost half of female garment factory workers are believed to suffer from malnutrition and anaemia. Because of the direct link between maternal and child health, improving maternal health and nutrition provides an enormous opportunity for garment factories to contribute to children’s well-being. For example, the provision of and counselling on appropriate food and nutrients, especially for pregnant and nursing women, can have a direct and positive effect on the health and well-being of workers and their young children.

Currently, however, these opportunities are largely not being capitalized on. For example, it is uncommon that factories provide hot meals in the workplace. Instead, they typically only provide space where workers can eat their home-cooked food. Access to and knowledge about nutritious food, however, is very limited among female garment workers. Low wages combined with limited access to healthy food means that the nutritional status of many female workers in the RMG sector is poor, with direct effects on the health and well-being of their children.

Hazardous workplaces and poor water, sanitation and hygiene standards in factories pose further risks to the health of workers and their children. For example, preventable water-related disease can be exacerbated by limited access in the workplace to clean toilets and water and soap for handwashing. This can exacerbate the health situation of female garment workers who are generally at high risk of suffering from exposure to infections and communicable diseases, inadequate pre- and postnatal care, and reproductive infections and diseases.
Impact Area 5:

Low wages and long working hours

The prevailing wages in Bangladesh’s RMG sector are widely considered to be insufficient to allow workers and their families to enjoy an adequate standard of living. Despite an increase in 2013, the gap between the legal minimum wage in Bangladesh’s RMG sector and an adequate living wage is considered the highest in the world.15 This gap has a direct impact on children as it undermines the ability of parents to raise healthy and educated children and to provide the necessary support they need to fulfil their potential and enjoy their rights.

Low wages mean that workers and their families often live in overcrowded settlements in deprived urban communities where they lack access to essential services, including health care, education, water, sanitation and hygiene. Low wages can also undermine parents’ ability to feed their children nutritious meals. Additionally, it may influence parents’ decision to send and keep their children in school. As a result, children of garment workers are at high risk of dropping out of school and engaging in child labour activities to supplement family income.

Low wages are also inextricably linked to long working hours, which undermine the ability of parents to adequately care for their children. While by law regular working hours are limited to 48 hours per week (60 hours with overtime), excessive overtime work is often necessary for workers to earn a sufficient income. Long working hours, exacerbated by long commutes, mean that children of garment workers are less likely to be breastfed and adequately supervised, exposing them to greater risks of accidents, exploitation and violence in communities where child protection systems are typically weak.

“My mother works really hard all day long, and I miss her the whole day. Even though she wants to give me time, she cannot. However my mother’s hard work brings money with which we get our food and clothes, so she has to do it no matter what, or else we will die starving; and I am thankful to the garment sector for giving my mother a job.”

– Quote from a child 7 years of age

“The workload at our factory is sometimes unbearable. Overtime lets us earn more money, but it is still very stressful for all of the workers.”

“The work pressure is very intense. We have to come to work even when we feel sick. It is very difficult to be granted sick leave.”

“The government should increase the wage so that we can live and purchase the essential goods that we need.”

“Receiving our wages is contingent on meeting our production targets. If we do not meet the targets, we do not get paid.”

“Garment factory owners and the Government should work together to provide better wages and child support for children of working parents. My main concern is my children’s future. If the Government takes care of the worker’s children, then the workers will be more motivated and will work even harder.”

– Excerpts from interviews with garment factory workers

**Impact Area 6:**

**Child labour in the informal sector**

Bangladesh has been relatively successful in eliminating child labour in export-oriented garment factories. However, it remains a significant concern in the formal and informal sectors that produce for the domestic market or feed into the supply chain of international brands through unauthorized subcontracting.

Child labour remains a particularly acute problem in home-based activities and informal, unregistered workshops. Typical activities carried out by children related to the RMG industry can include embroidery, cutting/trimming and button stitching, among many others. A survey undertaken in one of Dhaka’s major garment hubs, which predominantly produces for the domestic market, found that out of the estimated 185,000 workers, 59 per cent were below the age of 18 years. While the majority of the children were above the legal minimum age for work, many did not attend school. In some cases, they were found to be working up to 17 hours per day during peak production. In addition to long working hours, poor working conditions can expose these children to numerous hazards that risk damaging their physical and mental development.

Moreover, even where children do not work in garment production themselves, poverty and low wages for RMG workers can incentivize them to allow their children to drop out of school and contribute to the family income through child labour practices.

Poverty remains a key driver of child labour in Bangladesh. Working children are a visible part of everyday life in deprived urban communities where garment workers live. In the absence of living wages, adequate social protection schemes, lack of opportunities to access education and prevailing social norms, children of garment workers continue to be at high risk of being forced to work.

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**Impact Area 7:**

**Lack of decent living conditions**

The social infrastructure around garment factories has failed to keep up with the rapid expansion of the RMG industry since the late 1970s. The unregulated growth of the RMG sector in Bangladesh has been a major driver of the expansion of urban slums. The influx of workers from rural areas to urban centres and high demand for housing in locations close to factories has resulted in the build-up of numerous urban slum areas surrounding garment factories. In Dhaka alone, more than 4 million people are estimated to live in the city’s more than 5,000 slums. In these areas, workers are vulnerable to conditions of poor housing, insecure land tenure and limited infrastructure for clean water, toilets and good hygiene.

In light of a projected rapid increase in Bangladesh’s urban population, this situation is set to worsen unless adequate urban planning is undertaken and appropriate policy responses are implemented.

Currently, Bangladesh’s urban population stands at 51 million, which is expected to more than triple to 165 million by 2030. Since Dhaka is already one of the most densely populated cities in the world, this trend will have a major impact on the lives of children in urban communities.

Additionally, garment manufacturing is increasingly sprawling to suburban areas, where land is available, building regulations are better enforceable and the government is rapidly establishing Economic Zones to attract national and international investors. This economic reality has started a second migration pattern towards the newly developing communities on the edges of the city. As new factories open in suburban areas, there is an urgent need for adequate policy planning to prevent the establishment of new deprived settlements around garment factories without adequate social infrastructure.

Currently, however, urban development policy in Bangladesh does not adequately address the reality in informal urban settlements. The majority of urban slums are not recognized by the government. Despite recent progress, this means that there is little or no public infrastructure, including regular water and sewage services, electricity, schools or hospitals.

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As a consequence, slum residents are forced to either illegally access these services, travel long distances or pay above-market rates to access them through private providers, including illicit networks of vendors who charge slum residents significantly higher rates than in middle-class neighbourhoods. The result is that social indicators in urban slums are often worse than in rural areas, suggesting that migrants from rural areas and their children often enter lives that are less safe and healthy than in their native villages.

**Housing**

Garment workers often live in overcrowded and non-durable housing structures made of corrugated iron or scrap wood. Living space is extremely limited, with typically three to six individuals living in one-room houses. The families of garment workers normally share kitchens and sanitary facilities with numerous others within the same block. As a result, women and family members often have to queue for cooking, washing and using the toilet. Moreover, insecure tenure in urban slum communities means that many workers and their families face a constant threat of evictions.

**Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)**

While many slum communities now have access to well water – either serviced through publicly-provided government utilities or through charity schemes – there are insufficient water access points to service the entire population in most slums.

Lack of access to safe water exposes children to inadequate water supplies for drinking and bathing, and often requires children and their mothers to wait long hours in line at the water points to secure their daily allowance of water.

Further, the number of households in urban slum areas using clean toilets stands at less than 10 per cent. The constant threat of eviction and insecure tenure can exacerbate the situation because it disincentivizes slum residents from investing in improved water supply and sanitation services. Not only does the poor water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in communities neighbouring garment factories significantly increase diarrhoeal diseases, which contribute to stunting in children under five, but it can also have an effect on parental absenteeism from work.

Moreover, the garment sector is one of the leading contributors to water scarcity and water pollution in Bangladesh’s urban areas. The garment industry consumes almost 1,500 billion litres of groundwater annually, contributing to the falling groundwater levels in Dhaka, which are presently receding at a rate of approximately two meters per year. This has a direct and disproportionate impact on the urban poor, through increased pumping costs and the need to resort to alternative, more expensive sources of water. Meanwhile, inadequately treated industrial effluent from textile mills contaminates surface water, harming the health of people living nearby and downstream.

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Impact Area 8:

**Poor access to health services and education**

*Health*

Despite progress on a number of children’s health indicators in Bangladesh, significant inequities remain between slum and non-slum areas, with limited access to health services for garment workers and their families. Generally, there remains a shortage of qualified health care providers and facilities in deprived urban communities. Additionally, low wages and long working hours can undermine workers’ ability to access health services, including for their families. In the workplace, although by law factories with more than 300 workers are required to provide basic health services, nurses often lack the necessary skills and qualifications. Moreover, most factories typically do not open their health services to workers’ dependents.

*Education*

Similarly, children of garment workers in urban slums can face greater difficulties accessing quality education. While in the past decade primary school enrolment has increased substantially in Bangladesh, the number of children enrolled in schools is generally lower in poor urban areas where many garment workers live. For example, research suggests that net attendance in secondary education is significantly lower in urban slums compared to national averages. Accordingly, while employment in the RMG sector can potentially improve the ability of workers to send their children to school, low wages and poor living conditions in deprived urban communities continue to undermine greater opportunities to access education.

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Conclusion and opportunities for action

In recent years, there have been significant efforts to improve working conditions in Bangladesh’s RMG sector, particularly in relation to workplace health and safety. At the same time, improving the industry’s direct and indirect impacts on children remains a crucial challenge.

The research outlined in this document aims to highlight some of the ways in which children are affected – both inside and outside the factories. While there is increasing recognition of the business case for family-friendly workplaces, prevailing business practices in Bangladesh’s RMG sector do not fully reflect these opportunities. Importantly, given the complexity of impacts on children in the industry, efforts to improve the situation for children require concerted action within and outside the workplace by all relevant stakeholders. This includes adequate responses by factories, industry associations, government, international buyers and civil society organizations.

Some opportunities for action include the following:

Gathering evidence

The exploratory research for this study identified a range of impacts of the garment industry in Bangladesh on children. Further research will be critical to build an evidence base for specific factory-based interventions and policy recommendations for industry and government action. For example:

- Explore in greater detail how the different impact areas outlined above apply within specific factories and supply chains of international buyers. This could, for example, include gathering better data on breastfeeding rates, childcare utilization, length of paid maternity leave, barriers to accessing essential services in communities and parental absenteeism due to illnesses of their children.

- Explore in greater detail prevailing knowledge, attitudes and practices among garment factory workers to understand and address low utilization rates even where services are available (e.g. lack of understanding of the benefits of childcare, breastfeeding and good hygiene practices such as handwashing with soap).

- Explore in greater detail the gaps between policy and practice and how factory management can be supported to strengthen commitment towards improved compliance (e.g. in relation to maternity rights and factory-based childcare).

- Explore in greater detail additional impact areas not considered in this report (e.g. children left behind in rural villages and the situation of adolescents and young workers who are above the legal minimum age for work).

Strengthening factory awareness and capacity

- Build greater sensitivity and capacity among factory management to understand and address the impact of workplace policies and practices on the children of their employees.
• Establish and strengthen adequate management systems in relation to the identified impact areas (e.g. development and implementation of relevant policies, including procedures for monitoring and remediation).

• Develop and test factory-level and community-based solutions that will measurably improve the working and living conditions of female RMG workers. This could include, for example, provision of clean drinking water and toilets in factories and communities, mother-friendly workplaces, health and nutrition support, worker transportation and worker housing.

• Develop and promote case studies that showcase the business benefits of improved factory practices that respect and support children’s rights (e.g. in terms of productivity, worker motivation and reduced rates of illnesses, absenteeism and worker turnover).

• Review best practices and collaborate with industry associations to promote family-friendly workplace solutions across the RMG sector.

Promoting responsible practices by international buyers

• Integrate children’s rights into sustainability frameworks, including purchasing frameworks and ethical supply chain policies (e.g. reference to children’s rights in codes of conduct, audit frameworks, risk and impact assessments, training and capacity building activities, grievance mechanisms and sustainability reporting).

• Align purchasing practices with sustainability objectives to ensure buying behaviour does not contribute to inadequate workplace practices (e.g. excessive price pressure, short lead times and unexpected changes in production orders). At the same time, take steps to develop long-term partnerships and systems to reward improved factory practices that have a measurable impact on children.

• Use leverage and influence to support multi-stakeholder activities, and support industry and government efforts to invest in sustainable policy change for children.

Improving government policy

• Review gaps in policy and legislation in relation to applicable international standards and evaluate their impact on children of garment factory workers.

• Increase legal compliance by strengthening workplace monitoring systems, including through effective worker representation, labour inspections and grievance mechanisms.

• Develop multi-stakeholder approaches to promote collective action to improve the situation for garment workers, their families and communities.

• Design adequate policy responses and strengthen coordination between the public and private sector to address major urban development challenges (e.g. housing, social infrastructure and access to basic services).
Children’s voices

As part of the exploratory research undertaken for this study, UNICEF has worked with a local organization to engage a number of garment workers’ children. The interviews were undertaken in several garment communities in Dhaka with children between 6 and 15 years old. The following is a sample of perspectives from these children:

“I want to be a doctor and provide a free medical facility to all the poor people who cannot afford medical treatment and medicine, because I know how hard it is to survive without proper medical treatment.”

“I want to be a teacher and provide free primary and higher education for the unfortunate children who want to study and learn, and to help them to pursue their dreams.”

“I want to be a police woman and will ensure women’s safety in the street and at home. I have seen my mother and sister, how miserable their life is and how hard it is to survive in the slum and in the workplace, so I’ll make sure that no other woman will have to face all these troubles.”

“I feel bad when my mother goes to work. I miss my mother the whole day. She does not give me enough time.”

“I love the fact that mother is a working woman. She is my hero. I will follow in her footsteps throughout my life. But it hurts that she cannot spend enough of her time with me as a parent.”