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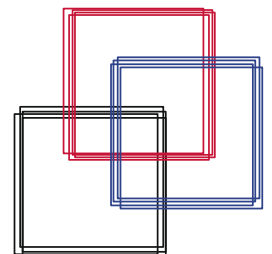
The MasterCard
Foundation

Labour market transitions of young women and men in Bangladesh

Kazi Ali Toufique

June 2014

Youth Employment Programme
Employment Policy Department



Work4Youth Publication Series No. 13

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June 2014

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Preface

Youth is a crucial time of life when young people start realizing their aspirations, assuming their economic independence and finding their place in society. The global jobs crisis has exacerbated the vulnerability of young people in terms of: i) higher unemployment, ii) lower quality jobs for those who find work, iii) greater labour market inequalities among different groups of young people, iv) longer and more insecure school-to-work transitions, and v) increased detachment from the labour market.

In June 2012, the International Labour Conference of the ILO resolved to take urgent action to tackle the unprecedented youth employment crisis through a multi-pronged approach geared towards pro-employment growth and decent job creation. The resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” contains a set of conclusions that constitute a blueprint for shaping national strategies for youth employment.¹ It calls for increased coherence of policies and action on youth employment across the multilateral system. In parallel, the UN Secretary-General highlighted youth as one of the five generational imperatives to be addressed through the mobilization of all the human, financial and political resources available to the United Nations (UN). As part of this agenda, the UN has developed a System-wide Action Plan on Youth, with youth employment as one of the main priorities, to strengthen youth programmes across the UN system.

The ILO supports governments and social partners in designing and implementing integrated employment policy responses. As part of this work, the ILO seeks to enhance the capacity of national and local level institutions to undertake evidence-based analysis that feeds social dialogue and the policy-making process. To assist member States in building a knowledge base on youth employment, the ILO has designed the “school-to-work transition survey” (SWTS). The current report, which presents the results of the survey in Bangladesh, is a product of a partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation. The “Work4Youth” Project entails collaboration with statistical partners and policy-makers of 28 low- and middle-income countries to undertake the SWTS and assist governments and the social partners in the use of the data for effective policy design and implementation.

It is not an easy time to be a young person in the labour market today. The hope is that with leadership from the UN system, with the commitment of governments, trade unions and employers’ organizations and through the active participation of donors such as The MasterCard Foundation, the international community can provide the effective assistance needed to help young women and men make a good start in the world of work. If we can get this right, it will positively affect young people’s professional and personal success in all future stages of life.

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¹ The full text of the 2012 resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” can be found on the ILO website at: http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang--en/index.htm.

List of acronyms and abbreviations

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDT	Bangladesh Taka (currency)
CPI	Consumer price index
FSSSP	Female Secondary School Stipend Programme
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
IT	Information technology
LFS	Labour force survey
NAP	National Action Plan
NEET	Neither in employment nor in education or training
NYP	National Youth Policy
RMG	Ready-made garments
SFYP	Sixth Five-Year Plan
SWTS	School-to-work transition survey

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Finally, the ILO would like to acknowledge the support given by The MasterCard Foundation in allowing the research to move forward, under the scope of the Work4Youth partnership.

1. Introduction and key findings

1.1 Overview

During the last decade, Bangladesh maintained a stable growth rate of around 6 per cent, and gross domestic product (GDP) doubled in the period 2000–12. This impressive growth was accompanied by progress in the health sector and a reduction of poverty, although inequality has remained high since 1991. Unfortunately, economic growth has not translated well into an expansion of decent and productive jobs. The bulk of the working-age population is underemployed in informal jobs, with young people bearing the brunt of the lacklustre results of decent work opportunities (ILO, 2013a).

Much political attention has been given to the employment of young people in the country. In recent years, the Government of Bangladesh has been active in developing policies to promote youth employment. As the challenges are many and cut across several policy dimensions, measures focus on both supply and demand, and are curative as well as preventative. The main policies are elaborated in the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2003, and National Labour Policy (NLP) 2012. Emphasis is placed on education and training, job creation and entrepreneurship, inclusion of youth in the labour market, and institutional reform. Section 5 of this report will present in greater detail the policy response to youth employment challenges in the country.

To characterize the specific youth employment challenges and to support policy-makers in designing adequate instruments to support the transition of young people into employment, the ILO has developed its school-to-work transition survey (SWTS), a household survey of young people aged 15–29. The SWTS, implemented in 2012, can serve as a principle tool for monitoring the impact of youth employment policies and programmes. This report is intended for the policy-makers and social partners that concern themselves with the implementation of youth-related policies and programmes.

The indicators generated from the survey and analysed in this report aim to present a much more detailed picture of youth in the labour market than what can usually be derived through standard surveys, including the labour force survey. Unemployment among youth is a major national concern, but it is also important to consider the quality of work made available to the young population. Does the work provide the wages and security necessary to empower young people to move towards self-sufficiency in their pending adulthood? The emphasis on quality of employment in this report should help to answer this question. The report also draws attention to the path and duration that young people's transition from school to work takes and draws conclusions on characteristics or experiences that make for a smoother transition.

1.2 Main findings

Too many young people are not benefiting fully from the education system, but clear progress has still been made in the area of education when comparing this generation of youth to the previous generation.

Remarkable progress has been made in the area of educational enrolment in Bangladesh in recent years. The SWTS findings show a progression, in the sense that youth are in general far more educated than their parents. Both young men and women today are much more likely to have easy access to school facilities.

According to the survey, the largest share of youth in the country has completed education up to the secondary level (40.7 per cent), and 1.8 per cent of out-of-school youth

have completed tertiary-level education. But still, 18.9 per cent of youth finished school below the primary level and another 38.6 per cent finished at the primary level. The extent of school drop-outs remains very high; 64.4 per cent of young people had left school before completing their current level. Most early drop-outs were female youth who left because of marriage.

Results also show that too many young Bangladeshis were leaving school early to take up work. The SWTS results show that as many as 61.6 per cent of young working Bangladeshis were undereducated for the work they do. These are concentrated in skilled agriculture and fishery work, and craft and related trades work. Undereducation can have a negative impact on the productivity of the worker and thus on the output of the enterprise but also, more personally, on the young worker's sense of security.

The Government is well aware of the importance of educational attainment and, as a result, invests in programmes such as the Female Secondary School Stipend Programme (FSSSP), which has helped to increase female enrolment at the secondary level. The Government should now look beyond the secondary level and encourage women to stay in education and take up higher studies by incentivizing tertiary-level education for women and increasing the ratio of female teachers.

Youth unemployment in Bangladesh was 10.3 per cent at the time of the survey, with unemployment rates among young women almost four times higher than those of young men.

SWTS results indicate a youth unemployment rate, the share of persons without work, available and actively seeking work in the economically active population (see Annex I for definitions of labour market terminology), in Bangladesh of 10.3 per cent. Young women faced the greatest challenge in finding work. The female youth unemployment rate was 22.9 per cent, nearly four times greater than the male rate of 6.2 per cent.

Although unemployment is low compared to the global level, underutilization of labour is very high.

The country's youth unemployment rate is slightly below the global average of 12.4 per cent in 2012 (ILO, 2013a). Yet, it is higher than the average regional youth unemployment rate for South Asia (9.4 per cent in 2012).²

Labour underutilization also includes those not in the labour force and not in education, as well as people whose work does not allow them to make the most of their economic potential. The more troublesome components of the youth labour market in the country can be broken down as follows from the survey results: 37.6 per cent of youth were neither in the labour force nor in education or training (this group of inactive non-students consisted mainly of female youth); 20.1 per cent of young people were confined to irregular employment; and 4.6 per cent of youth were unemployed (relaxed definition). The three groups together equalled a rate of underutilized labour of 62.3 per cent. The remaining youth population was either in school – 19.9 per cent – or engaged in regular employment (17.9 per cent). Female youth were in the more disadvantaged position: 62.5 per cent of female youth were inactive non-students, compared to only 9.0 per cent of young males. Responsibility towards family and housework was cited as the main reason behind inactivity for young women (71.0 per cent).

² Data are not strictly comparable because the global and regional estimates of the ILO are for those aged 15–24, not 15–29.

The survey showed that over two-fifths (41.0 per cent) of youth in the country fell under the category of neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET). Only 7.8 per cent of the young NEETs were unemployed non-students, while the rest (mainly female) were inactive non-students.

While unemployment may be higher among the better educated, the survey results clearly show that investing in education brings positive returns to youth in terms of wages and access to the “better” jobs.

Youth unemployment rates increase with each incremental level of education. According to the survey, the youth unemployment rate of a university graduate was more than four times that of a young person with primary-level education (26.1 per cent and 6.0 per cent, respectively). This indicates that the skills levels required by the labour market, which is dominated by self-employment, are not very high, and that young people who do invest in long-term education face a long queue for the few available professional jobs. This may be due to the fact that highly educated people are keen to reap the benefits of the money and time they have invested in education, and are willing to spend more time looking for the right job. At the same time, however, the results confirm the clear deficiency of job opportunities for the most educated young graduates.

But this is not to say that investment in education does not pay off. Clear signs in the SWTS results indicate that young people with higher levels of education have a better chance of attaining stable employment. Youth with tertiary-level education were 1.5 times more likely to find a stable job than youth with primary-level education. Evidence from the survey also shows that youth with tertiary-level degrees could earn at least three times the wages of youth with no education. The average monthly wages of youth increased steadily with each incremental step of education or training.

The vast majority of young Bangladeshis are working, but the quality of employment is often low, which does not allow the youth (and the country) to make the most of their economic potential.

Approximately two-fifths (37.9 per cent) of the surveyed youth population in Bangladesh were employed. Among the employed, own-account workers represented 31.7 per cent and unpaid family workers represented 11.1 per cent. These two categories are together considered as vulnerable employment and comprised 42.8 per cent of employed youth. The large share of vulnerable employment is worrisome given that the results show that only a negligible few (5.1 per cent) who had attained stable and/or satisfactory employment arrived at that stage from a previous position of unpaid family worker. The assumption is therefore that young family workers will remain in that category for a long time and are unlikely to subsequently attain stable employment or satisfactory self-employment. One-fifth (19.9 per cent) of young working females were unpaid family workers as against 8.8 per cent of young working males.

Other quality-of-employment indicators provide additional areas of concern. Informal employment was nearly universal among youth, touching 95.1 per cent of all young workers. Nearly one-half were engaged on an irregular contract (47.1 per cent) and nearly two-thirds (61.6 per cent) were undereducated for the job they did. Finally, as many as 59.5 per cent of young workers worked “excessive hours”, or more than 48 hours per week.

The youth labour market in Bangladesh is profoundly affected by gender issues.

The vast majority of young women in Bangladesh are not employed. The survey showed that only 14.9 per cent of the young female population was working, compared to 64.3 per cent of young men. The female unemployment rate was extremely high at 22.9 per cent, nearly four times greater than the male rate of 6.2 per cent. The cultural traditions

dictating the roles of women are especially evident in the statistics: 80.7 per cent of young women remained outside the labour force, with only one-fifth (20.7 per cent) due to education or training. In addition, the high levels of inactivity among young women persist despite their recent gains in access to education. Among the few young women surveyed who did work, a majority were concentrated in manufacturing (39.5 per cent of female employment) and agriculture (25.2 per cent).

Half of youth in Bangladesh have not started the process of transition. Labour market transitions of young women and men are long, and slightly more than one-third of youth had completed their labour market transition.

Slightly more than one-third (33.6 per cent) of surveyed youth had already completed their labour market transition, 50.8 per cent had not yet started the process of transition and only 15.6 per cent of the youth population remained “in transition”.

Those who had not yet started the transition were mostly women (about 74 per cent), and only one-quarter (25.8 per cent) of females fell in the category because they were current students. The remainder were inactive non-students who had expressed no intention of working in the future. This group comprised 30.9 per cent of all youth (male and female) and 51.9 per cent of all females. Marriage or associated reproductive responsibilities could have been holding these women back from seeking work. Almost all (98.0 per cent) of these women were married.

Agriculture remains the most important employer in the country overall, but the majority of young women work in industry.

Agriculture still provides the bulk of the employment for the youth (34.5 per cent) followed closely by services (32.9 per cent) and industry (30.6 per cent). Distribution of the employed youth among these sectors by sex shows important differences, however. First, proportionately more women are employed in industry – 40.6 per cent as against 28 per cent for men. This suggests that the benefits of structural transformation in Bangladesh in terms of increased employment opportunity in the industrial sector are reaped more by women who are engaged primarily in the garments sector. Second, more males are employed in agriculture. While 36.8 per cent of male youth are employed in agriculture, the corresponding figure for females is 25.8 per cent. Third, slightly more men are employed in services than women, 33.5 per cent against 30.6 per cent.

Sex, area of residence and level of educational attainment are good determinants of who does better in the labour market transition.

Regarding who was doing better at obtaining the few “good” jobs and completing their labour market transition, young men had a strong advantage over young women in completing the transition (57.0 per cent of young men had completed the transition compared to 13.0 per cent of young women). However, the few young women who did manage to complete the transition were more likely than young men to transit to stable employment, while young “transited” men were equally divided among those in satisfactory self-employment and stable employment. Living in an urban area certainly increased the likelihood of completing a transition to stable employment, as did remaining in education. Almost four-fifths (79.3 per cent) of youth with tertiary-level education completed the transition to stable employment, with the remainder transiting to satisfactory self-employment.

1.3 Structure of the report

This report is divided into five sections. Following this introduction, section 2 presents an overview of the labour market in Bangladesh and introduces the SWTS. Section 3 presents the main results of the SWTS, with details on the characteristics of youth and their labour market outcomes. It includes an overall description of household characteristics, aspirations and life goals of young people, educational achievement, characteristics of young students and a detailed characterization of young workers, the unemployed youth population and youth who are outside the labour market for reasons other than studying. Section 4 introduces the classification of stages of labour market transition and investigates the characteristics that lead to more advantageous labour market outcomes, specifically in the attainment of stable employment. It also discusses the length of time that young men and women spend in transition and traces the various labour market experiences they have along the way. Finally, Section 5 goes into more detail on the national framework guiding youth employment in Bangladesh and presents the policy implications that have been drawn from the analyses of the survey. Policy implications are also highlighted throughout the text in relation to specific findings.

2. Overview of the labour market and survey methodology

This section sets the scene by placing the youth employment situation in a broader national context. It draws evidence from the national labour force surveys and other public statistics published by the Government of Bangladesh.

2.1 The socio-economic context³

Bangladesh has maintained a GDP growth rate above 6 per cent during the last decade (table 2.1). Only in 2009 did GDP growth fall below the 6 per cent threshold due to the global financial crisis, but the economy bounced back in the following year. This impressive growth was maintained by a complex set of factors that started to operate from the 1990s, if not earlier. Liberalization of the economy in that decade removed or lessened many bottlenecks in the economy and stimulated investment. The private sector played an important role, and many women found employment in the ready-made garments (RMG) sector. Achievements were possible because of services provided not only by the State, but also by multiple players that included non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and religious and social organizations (Chowdhury et al., 2013). As a result, Bangladesh, with a lower per-capita income than Pakistan and India, performed better in many indicators of human welfare, such as life expectancy, child and infant mortality, and infant immunization rates.⁴

³ This section presents only a cursory overview of economic and labour market development of the country in recent years. For more detailed information, see ILO (2013b).

⁴ *The Economist*. 2012. "The path through the fields", 3 Nov. <http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21565617-bangladesh-has-dysfunctional-politics-and-stunted-private-sector-yet-it-has-been-surprisingly> [accessed 13 December 2013].

Table 2.1 Economic indicators of Bangladesh, 2008–12

Indicator	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Per capita gross national income (GNI), Atlas method (US\$)	570	640	700	780	...
GDP growth (% change per year)	6.2	5.7	6.1	6.7	6.3
Consumer price index (CPI) (% change per year)	9.9	6.7	7.3	8.8	10.6
Fiscal balance (% of GDP)	-4.7	-3.9	-3.7	-4.4	-5.1
Export growth (% change per year)	17.4	10.1	4.2	39.2	6.2
Import growth (% change per year)	25.6	4.2	5.4	41.8	5.4
Current account balance (% of GDP)	0.9	2.7	3.7	0.8	1.4
External debt (% of GNI)	24.3	22.3	19.4	18.8	...

... = not available.

Source: Asian Development Bank (ADB); Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), 2012, Table 5.

Economic growth was not only high but also very stable, mainly because of good macroeconomic management. Volatility of growth was found to be one of the lowest among some selected cross-country comparisons (Pritchett and Summers, 2013). Bangladesh has also been able to maintain a stable currency and contain inflation, although both increased slightly in the beginning of the current decade. The economy has become more open, with imports now comprising 28 per cent and exports 21 per cent of GDP. A major weakness, however, lies in investment, which has stagnated to one-quarter of GDP for over a decade. Investment is lacking, in particular in the energy sector. The country suffers from a lack of investment in long-term, low-cost power generation plants. An increase in investment is necessary to shift from a growth rate of 6 to 7 per cent per year and to increase employment opportunities for the young population of Bangladesh. A shift to a stable, higher growth rate also requires improvement in governance and political stability.

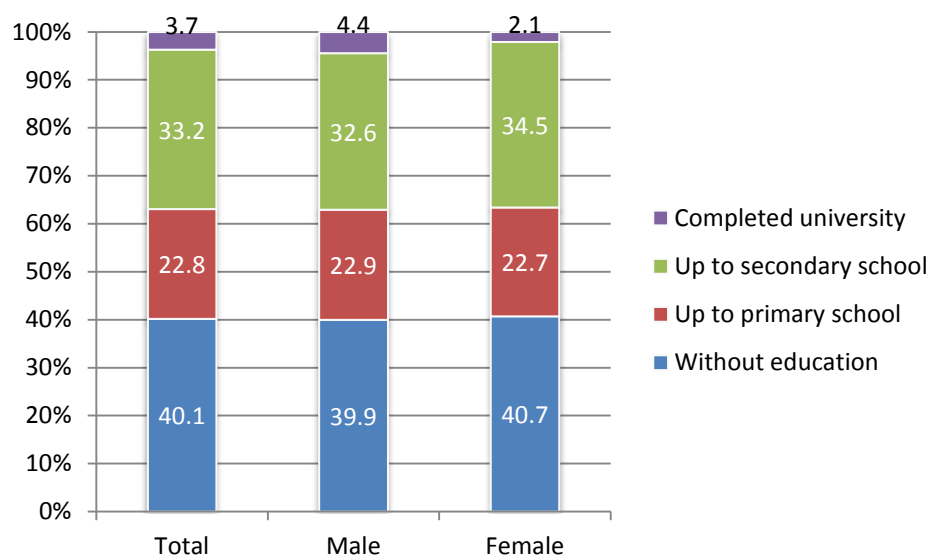
Table 2.2 Key labour market indicators for the working-age population (15 and older) by area of residence and sex, 2010

Area of residence & sex	Population (million)	Labour force (million)	Employed (million)	Unemployed (million)	Inactive (million)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Employment-to-population ratio (%)	Unemployment rate (%)
National								
Total	95.6	56.7	54.1	2.6	38.9	59.3	56.6	4.6
Male	47.9	39.5	37.9	1.6	8.4	82.5	79.2	4.1
Female	47.8	17.2	16.2	1.0	30.5	36.0	33.9	5.8
Urban								
Total	23.2	13.3	12.4	0.9	9.9	57.3	53.4	6.8
Male	11.6	9.3	8.8	0.5	2.3	80.2	75.9	5.4
Female	11.6	4.0	3.6	0.4	7.6	34.5	31.1	10.0
Rural								
Total	72.6	43.4	41.7	1.7	29.0	60.0	57.6	3.9
Male	36.3	30.2	29.1	1.1	6.1	83.3	80.3	3.6
Female	36.3	13.2	12.6	0.6	22.9	36.4	34.7	4.5

Source: BBS, Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2010.

Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of the working-age population (aged 15 and older) in 2010 by sex and level of educational attainment. The labour force survey results indicate that up to 40 per cent of the working-age population had no schooling, with results showing little variation by sex. One-third of the working-age population (33.2 per cent) had secondary education, slightly more for women (34.5 per cent) compared to men (32.6 per cent). Over one-fifth (22.8 per cent) of the population had only primary-level education. Only 3.7 per cent of the working-age population had a university degree (2.1 per cent of women compared to 4.4 per cent of men).

Figure 2.1 Working-age population (15 and older) by level of educational attainment and sex, 2010



Note: Vocational took only 0.1 per cent.

Source: BBS, LFS, 2010.

Table 2.3 shows the labour market indicators collected from various LFS reports from 2000 to 2010. Over the decade, the employment-to-population ratio increased slightly from 52.6 per cent to 56.6 per cent. The unemployment rate increased from 4.2 per cent in 2000 to 4.6 per cent in 2010, with the increase seen only between 2006 and 2010, thus showing the effect of the global economic crisis. The labour force participation rate increased from 54.9 to 59.3 per cent during the same period. The rate of growth of the labour force for all the sub-periods was higher than the rate of growth of employment, indicating increasing scarcity of work during the decade. This resulted in high informality and underemployment in the labour market, with the lack of sufficient job creation hitting the youth population the hardest.

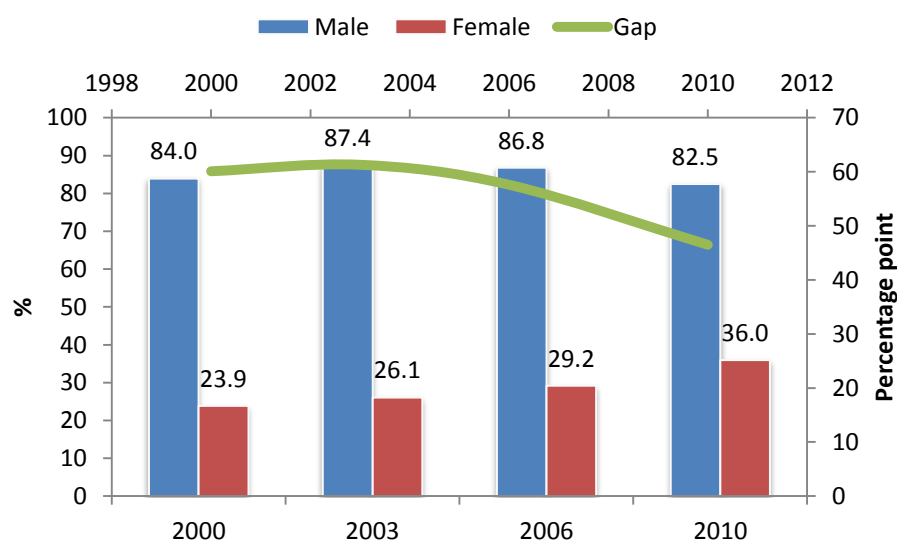
Table 2.3 Working-age population (15 and older), labour force participation rate, employment-to-population ratio and unemployment rate, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010

Year	Labour force (million)	Employed (million)	Unemployed (million)	Inactive (million)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Employment-to-population ratio (%)	Unemployment rate (%)
2000	40.7	39.0	1.7	33.5	54.9	52.6	4.2
2003	46.3	44.3	2.0	34.5	57.3	54.8	4.3
2006	49.5	47.4	2.1	35.1	58.5	56.0	4.2
2010	56.7	54.1	2.6	38.9	59.3	56.6	4.6

Source: BBS, LFS, various years.

The gap in labour force participation rates between males and females remained very high, although it declined slightly in the second half of the last decade, reflecting both an increase in female labour force participation (from a very low base) and a decrease in male labour force participation (from a very high base) (figure 2.2). In 2000, the gap between female and male labour force participation rates was 60 percentage points, but it declined to 46.5 percentage points by 2010.

Figure 2.2 Labour force participation rate by sex and gap, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010



Source: BBS, LFS, various years.

Table 2.4 shows that more than 87 per cent of the labour force was employed in the informal sector in 2010. This represents an increase from the 75.3 per cent share in 2000. Thus, the informal sector absorbed the bulk of the labour force in Bangladesh. On the other hand, employment in the formal sector decreased from 24.7 per cent in 2000 to 12.6 per cent in 2010. This indicates that the opportunity of employment in the formal sector shrank. The reduction was sharper between 2006 and 2010, when the share of formal sector employment dropped by almost 9 percentage points.

Table 2.4 Employment in the informal and formal sectors by sex, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010 (%)

Sector	2000	2003	2006	2010
Formal				
Total	24.7	20.8	21.5	12.6
Male	87.5	79.3	84.3	80.9
Female	12.5	21.7	15.7	19.1
Informal				
Total	75.3	79.2	78.5	87.4
Male	77.5	77.5	73.9	68.5
Female	22.5	22.5	26.1	31.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: BBS, LFS, various years.

The job market, be it formal or informal, is heavily dominated by male workers. Men accounted for 80.9 per cent of formal sector and 68.5 per cent of informal sector

employment in 2010. Women were more involved in the informal sector than the formal sector (31.5 per cent and 19.1 per cent, respectively).

Table 2.5 shows that the majority of people were employed as agricultural workers. However, the share of employment in this occupation decreased from 50.3 per cent in 2000 to 47.2 per cent in 2010. Growing occupations, in contrast, were in production and transport, and to some extent in administrative and managerial services. Employment in the areas of professional and technical work, and sales and service work remained more or less the same.

Table 2.5 Employment by occupation, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010 (%)

Occupation	2000	2003	2006	2010
Professional & technical	4.2	3.8	4.6	4.4
Administrative & managerial	0.5	0.2	0.4	1.3
Clerical workers	3.1	3.4	2.1	1.8
Sales workers	15.1	14.7	14.1	15.0
Service workers	5.7	4.5	5.9	5.5
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries	50.3	51.5	48.5	47.2
Production & transport labourers & others	21.1	21.9	24.3	24.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: BBS, LFS, various years.

Table 2.6 shows that the greatest share of workers in Bangladesh have been self-employed/own-account workers. The extent of self-employment decreased from 46.7 per cent in 2000 to 39.8 per cent in 2010. The second greatest share was taken by unpaid family workers. Although the number of unpaid family workers dropped slightly between 2006 and 2010, the share increased significantly after 2000. The proportion of unpaid family workers increased from 12.1 per cent in 2000 to 21.3 per cent in 2010. The day labourers comprised 19.2 per cent of the employed labour force in 2010, with a declining trend in the share of employment. Unpaid family workers and self-employed/own-account workers constituted 61.1 per cent of the employed in Bangladesh; these two categories are commonly defined as "vulnerable" employment. Among the South and South-East Asian economies, only India and the Lao People's Democratic Republic had a higher share in vulnerable employment (ILO, 2013b).

Table 2.6 Status in employment, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010 (%)

Status	2000	2003	2006	2010
Self-employed/own-account worker	46.7	44.7	42.0	39.8
Employer	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.2
Employee	16.7	13.8	13.9	17.0
Unpaid family worker	12.1	18.3	21.7	21.3
Day labourer	24.4	20.1	18.1	19.2
Household aid	–	2.7	4.0	2.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

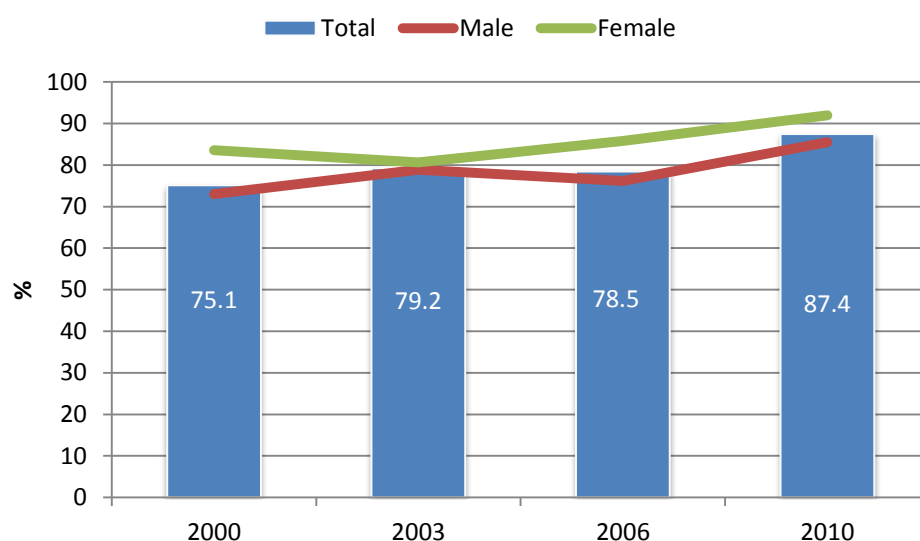
– = insignificant.

Source: BBS, LFS, various years.

The preponderance of the informal sector and declining formal sector jobs indicate not only the scarcity of jobs in Bangladesh, but also their poor quality. Women in

particular suffer from the informality in the labour market. Figure 2.3 illustrates the extent of female and male informal employment in Bangladesh between 2000 and 2010. Both male and female informal employment show a rising trend and the female informal employment rate has always been higher than the male rate (92.0 per cent for women in 2010 and 85.5 per cent for men).

Figure 2.3 Informal employment in Bangladesh by sex, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010



Source: BBS, LFS, various years.

Looking at the breakdown of categories of informal employment shows a very different picture for women compared to men (table 2.7). Sixty per cent of employed women in 2010 worked in the informal sector as unpaid family workers, compared to 9.1 per cent of men. These workers are typically unpaid household members engaged to help another family member in a family business or farm. Almost one-fifth (18.8 per cent) of employed women in Bangladesh were self-employed in agricultural or non-agricultural activities.

Table 2.7 Employment status by formal/informal employment and sex, 2010 (%)

Employment status	Male		Female	
	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal
Employee	11.5	4.6	6.7	2.4
Employer	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
Self-employed in agriculture	0.2	19.1	0.1	11.7
Self-employed in non-agriculture	0.3	17.2	0.1	7.1
Unpaid family worker	–	9.1	–	60.0
Casual/irregular paid worker	0.8	2.7	0.6	1.7
Day labour in agriculture	1.0	17.0	0.0	3.0
Day labour in non-agriculture	1.0	14.0	0.0	4.0
Domestic worker in private household	0.0	3.0	0.0	3.0
Total	14.9	87.0	7.5	93.0

– = insignificant.

Source: ADB, 2010, p. 18.

The economy of Bangladesh has grown quite impressively in recent years but, unfortunately, that growth is not reflected in improved welfare for many of the country's workers. Evidence provided so far shows that informalization of the labour market has been increasing with the dwindling of formal jobs. This indicates that the quality of work in Bangladesh is an important issue because conditions and terms of work in the informal sector are typically poor.

2.2 Youth in the national labour force

Table 2.8 compares certain labour market indicators for youth with those of the total labour force (including youth). In general, most of the indicators are higher for the total labour force, reflecting the fact that many youth remain in school. For example, the labour force participation rate of the total labour force is 59.3 per cent, but the rate for the youth labour force is 53.2 per cent. The employment-to-population ratio for the working-age population is 56.6 per cent, but 49.3 per cent for the youth population. On the other hand, the unemployment rate for youth is higher than for the total, at 7.5 per cent compared to 4.5 per cent. Higher unemployment rates among youth reflect their emergence from school as first-time jobseekers and the challenges that come from their lack of experience. Both male and female youth unemployment rates are higher than the male and female unemployment rates for the total labour force. Unlike for males, the young female labour force participation rate is higher than that of the total female population (38.2 per cent and 36.0 per cent, respectively). This reflects a change in both the mindset of the nation and the economic needs of households, which push more women towards economic participation in modern times.

Table 2.8 Labour market indicators for youth (15–29) and total population (15 and older) by sex, 2010

Characteristic	Labour force (million)	Employed (million)	Unemployed (million)	Inactive (million)	Labour force participation rate (%)	Employment-to-population ratio (%)	Unemployment rate (%)
Youth (aged 15–29)	20.9	19.3	1.6	18.4	53.2	49.3	7.5
Male	13.1	12.2	0.9	5.8	69.5	64.8	6.8
Female	7.8	7.1	0.7	12.6	38.2	35.0	8.5
Total (aged 15 & older)	56.7	54.1	2.6	38.9	59.3	56.6	4.5
Male	39.5	37.9	1.6	8.4	82.5	79.2	4.0
Female	17.2	16.2	1.0	30.6	36.0	33.9	5.7

Source: BBS, LFS, 2010.

2.3 Survey objectives and methodology

The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) conducted the combined labour force and child labour survey in 2013 with the financial and technical support of the ILO. Statistics on youth aged 15–29 can be extracted from the LFS but is typically made available only for standard indicators, such as labour force participation rates, employment-to-population ratios and unemployment rates. While information on some additional indicators could also be made available from the existing data sets (for example, the status in employment of youth and the unemployment rate of youth by level of educational attainment), an information gap remains in young people's transition to the labour market, and the inability to trace the characteristics of young people who have either transited, are in the process of transiting or have not yet started the transition process. The SWTS helps to fill this information gap (Ahmed, 2013).

The main objectives of the SWTS are to collect detailed information on the various challenges, attitudes and situations of young people aged 15–29 upon entering the labour market (box 1). The survey is designed to capture these factors and the specific experiences of young men and women from the period of time between their exit from school (or first entry to the labour market if having never attended school) to the time of entry in a stable or satisfactory job.

Box 1. Definition of youth

While in most contexts a youth is defined as a person aged between 15 and 24, for the purpose of the SWTS and related reports, the upper age limit is 29 years of age. This recognizes the fact that some young people remain in education beyond the age of 24, and allows the opportunity to capture more information on the postgraduation employment experiences of young people.

The SWTS can also be used to detect the individual characteristics of young people that determine labour market disadvantages. This, in turn, is instrumental to the development of policy responses to prevent the emergence of risk factors and measures to remedy those factors that negatively affect the transition to decent work. The survey's other specific objectives are to:

1. obtain data on personal, family and household information, including the financial situation, health problems, the highest education level of parents, the occupation of parents and financial inclusion;
2. collect data on the formal education/training (current and former students) and aspirations of youth, including areas of study, aspirations of future occupations and industry, combination of work and study, and main goal in life;
3. collect data on young workers, including details of place of work, employment status, access to benefits/entitlements, the challenges of the self-employed, access to finances, hours of work, job satisfaction, the perception of security, future prospects, training in the current activity and the job search experience;
4. collect data on unemployed youth, including method and length of the job search, occupation sought, and wage and job reservations; and
5. capture the history of economic activity of active youth, based on the personal perception of the respondent from the first time of entry, including spells of employment (by status, satisfaction and reason for leaving), unemployment and inactivity by length of each spell.

The survey was introduced as part of the Work4Youth partnership of the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation that aims to strengthen the production of labour market information specific to youth and to work with policy-makers on the interpretation of data, including on transitions to the labour market, for the design or monitoring of youth employment policies and programmes (box 2). The partnership supports the SWTS in 28 target countries, with data from the first round made available throughout 2013. A second round of the SWTS will take place in most of the 28 countries in 2014–15.

The BBS conducted the SWTS with the first quarter of the LFS in 2013. All youth (aged between 15 and 29) from this survey were selected for the SWTS. The administration of the survey was conducted by the Industry and Labour Wing of the BBS. Before conducting the survey, a new master sample was developed consisting of 1,512 primary sampling units (PSUs), with each PSU composed of, on average, 100 households. A listing operation was conducted to update the number of households in each PSU selected for the survey under the newly developed master sample. A total of 378 PSUs, and

24 households from each, were selected to administer the questionnaires together with the LFS. The final sample size came to 9,125 young people after 3 months of fieldwork (January–March 2013).

Box 2. Work4Youth: An ILO project in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation

The Work4Youth (W4Y) Project is a partnership between the ILO Youth Employment Programme and The MasterCard Foundation. The project has a budget of US\$14.6 million and will run for 5 years to mid-2016. Its aim is to “promot[e] decent work opportunities for young men and women through knowledge and action”. The immediate objective of the partnership is to produce more and better labour market information specific to youth in developing countries, focusing in particular on transition paths to the labour market. The assumption is that governments and social partners in the project’s 28 target countries will be better prepared to design effective policy and programme initiatives once armed with detailed information on:

- what young people expect in terms of transition paths and quality of work;
- what employers expect in terms of young applicants;
- what issues prevent the two sides – supply and demand – from matching; and
- what policies and programmes can have a real impact.

Work4Youth target areas and countries:

Asia and the Pacific: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Samoa, Viet Nam

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine

Latin America and the Caribbean: Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru

Middle East and North Africa: Egypt, Jordan, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Tunisia

Sub-Saharan Africa: Benin, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia

3. Characteristics of youth in the sample survey

This section presents the most important background characteristics of the surveyed youth such as age group, area of residence, marital status, educational attainment and main economic activity. Besides providing some vital information on youth, this chapter will help to understand the nature and process of transition to be discussed in section 4.

3.1 The individual characteristics of youth in Bangladesh

Most youth belonged to the 20–24 age group, followed by those aged 15–19 and 25–29, respectively (table 3.1). Males were primarily aged 15–19 (35.8 per cent) and females were primarily in the 20–24 age group (39.6 per cent). Most youth (55.7 per cent) were married or had been married at some point. The percentage of married youth was much higher among young females. About three-quarters (73.1 per cent) of female youth were married as compared to 35.7 per cent of male youth. The youth population lived primarily in rural areas (77.0 per cent). Area of residence did not vary by sex.

Table 3.1 Youth population by age group, marital status, area of residence and sex

Characteristic		Total		Male		Female	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Age group	15–19	14 110 635	33.8	6 971 456	35.8	7 139 179	32.0
	20–24	15 119 042	36.2	6 288 491	32.3	8 830 551	39.6
	25–29	12 553 858	30.0	6 221 521	31.9	6 332 338	28.4
Marital status	Married*	23 256 862	55.7	6 952 861	35.7	16 304 001	73.1
	Single	18 526 674	44.3	12 528 607	64.3	5 998 066	26.9
Area of residence	Rural	32 162 838	77.0	15 125 640	77.6	17 037 198	76.4
	Urban	9 620 698	23.0	4 355 828	22.4	5 264 869	23.6
Total		41 783 536	100.0	19 481 468	100.0	22 302 067	100.0

* Including divorced and widowed.

Note: Household income levels were based on the perception of the young respondent.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.2 Educational attainment

Education determines the potential success of youth in the labour market. A higher level of education improves a person's skills and helps in getting a better paid job. Table 3.2 provides information on the level of education attained by youth by current activity status at the time of the survey.

Table 3.2 Youth by educational attainment and sex

Education	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
None or less than primary	5 943 181	18.9	2 982 261	21.4	2 960 919	16.9
Primary	10 172 010	38.6	5 246 703	37.7	4 925 307	28.1
Secondary	14 736 866	40.7	5 424 535	39.0	9 312 332	53.2
Tertiary	564 151	1.8	261 594	1.9	302 557	1.7
Total	31 416 208	100.0	13 915 093	100.0	17 501 115	100.0

Note: This is completed education so students at the time of the survey were excluded. A separate category of youth who marked "other" as the highest level attained is not shown (the share is negligible).

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Among those who were no longer in school, the greatest proportion of youth finished at the secondary level of education (40.7 per cent), followed by 38.6 per cent who completed the primary level. About one-fifth (18.9 per cent) had no or less than primary education, and the share of tertiary-level education was very low at 1.8 per cent. Also noteworthy was that male youth exceeded female youth by only a small margin at the tertiary level (1.9 per cent versus 1.8 per cent, respectively). Interestingly, young women showed a greater likelihood than young men of completing the secondary level (53.2 per cent and 39 per cent, respectively), and a lower likelihood of finishing the primary or less-than-primary level. This is one of the positive outcomes of the Female Secondary School Stipend Programme (FSSSP). The programme was introduced by the Bangladesh Government in 1994 with the support of donor agencies to increase enrolment of girls at secondary-level education by providing uniform stipends and tuition subsidies. From 1990 to 2009, the gender parity index (the school enrolment ratio of girls to boys) increased from 0.51 to 1.07 in the country's secondary schools (Begum et al., 2013).

Looking at the level of education attained compared to current activity status at the time of the survey, the increased tendency towards unemployment at the highest level of education becomes clear; 8.2 per cent of unemployed youth completed tertiary-level education, compared to 2.1 per cent of employed youth and 1.0 per cent of inactive youth (table 3.3). The least educated were more likely to be employed than unemployed or inactive. As much as 54.0 per cent of inactive youth completed the secondary level of education.

Table 3.3 Youth by educational attainment and current activity status

Education	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
None or less than primary	3 276 074	22.2	109 147	8.2	2 557 960	16.7
Primary	5 463 966	37.1	349 996	26.4	4 358 049	28.4
Secondary	5 684 452	38.6	756 578	57.1	8 295 837	54.0
Tertiary	305 854	2.1	108 151	8.2	150 146	1.0
Total	14 730 346	100.0	1 323 871	100.0	15 361 992	100.0

Note: This is completed education so students at the time of the survey were excluded. A separate category of youth who marked "other" as the highest level of education attained is not shown (the share is negligible).

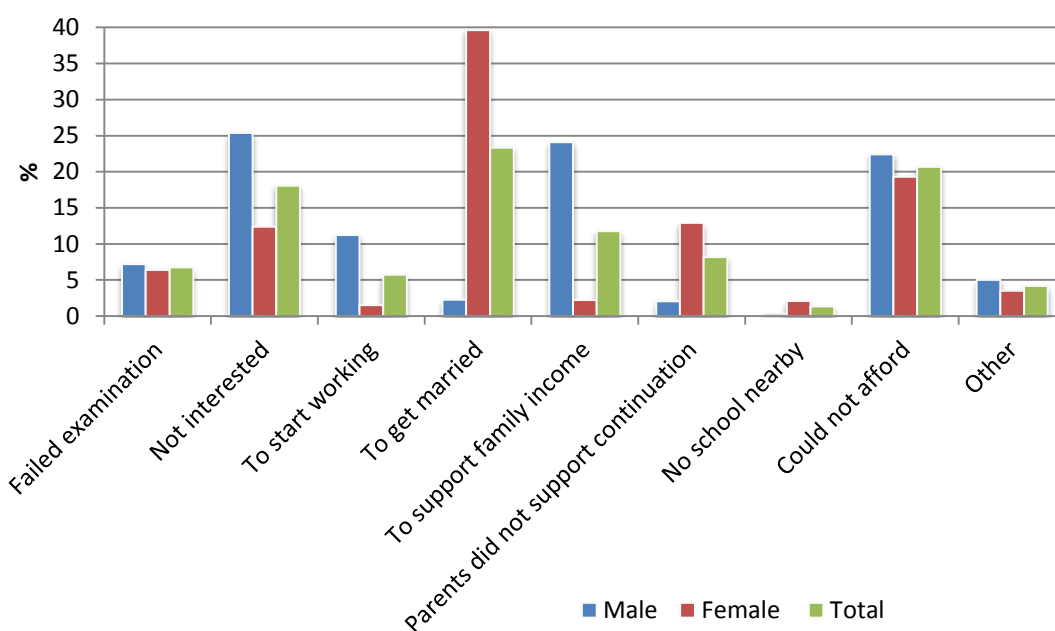
Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

The extent of school drop-outs was very high. Almost two-thirds (64.4 per cent) of youth had started schooling but could not complete it. The drop-out rate was slightly higher among women, 67.3 per cent versus 61.0 per cent for men. Figure 3.1 shows the reasons why these youth left school. The principal reason that young women gave was to get married. More than one-third (39.6 per cent) left to get married compared to only 2.3 per cent of young men. The second most important reason indicated by young women was because they could not afford it (19.3 per cent of young female drop-outs). Another 12.4 per cent of young women left school because it did not interest them, and 12.9 per cent left because their parents did not support their continuation (a reflection of cultural norms that place greater importance on education of the male child than the female child). Young male drop-outs were fairly evenly spread across the following three reasons for leaving: not interested in schooling (25.4 per cent), need to leave to support the family by earning an income (24.1 per cent) and could not afford it (22.4 per cent).

Figure 3.2 compares the completed education level of young people with that of their parents. The results were classified by whether the youth's levels matched, exceeded or were below that of their parents' (the highest level of either the mother or father). At all levels of education, youth had either as much education as their parents or more. At the university level or higher, no case existed where parents were more educated than their children.

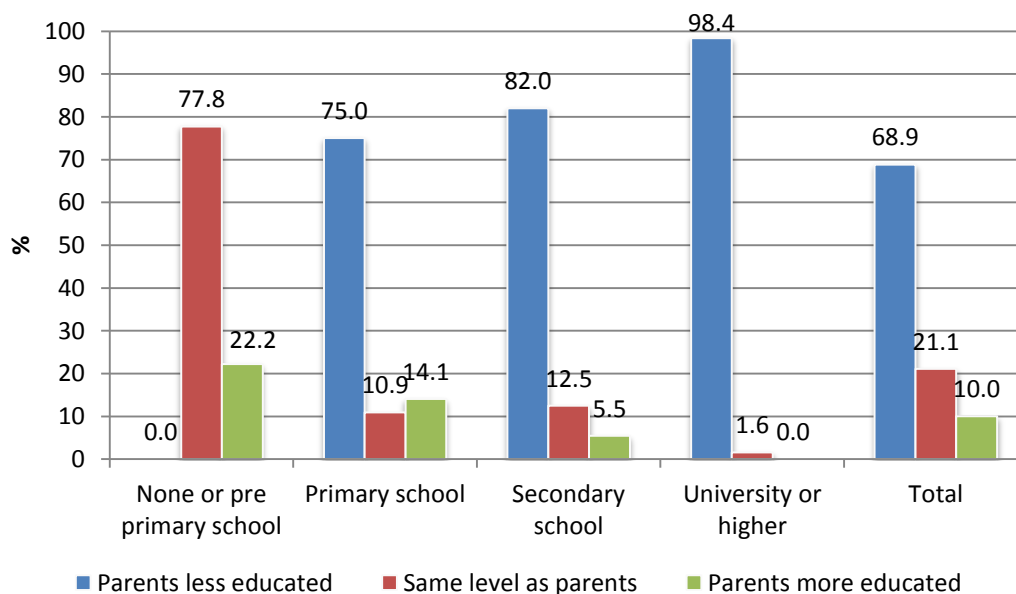
Moving from primary- to secondary-level education, the proportion of surveyed youth with either a higher or the same level of education as their parents increased. Thus, while 75.0 per cent of youth had higher education than their parents at the primary level, 82.0 per cent had higher education than their parents at the secondary level. The corresponding results for those who had the same level of education as their parents increased from 10.9 per cent to 12.5 per cent of youth. The stage of "none or pre-primary school" showed the highest proportion of parents (22.2 per cent) with more education than their children. These results are encouraging because they demonstrate clear progress in education rates over time and that youth in most cases are more educated than their parents.

Figure 3.1 Youth by reason for leaving school early and sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Figure 3.2 Cross-tabulation of youth's and parents' educational attainment



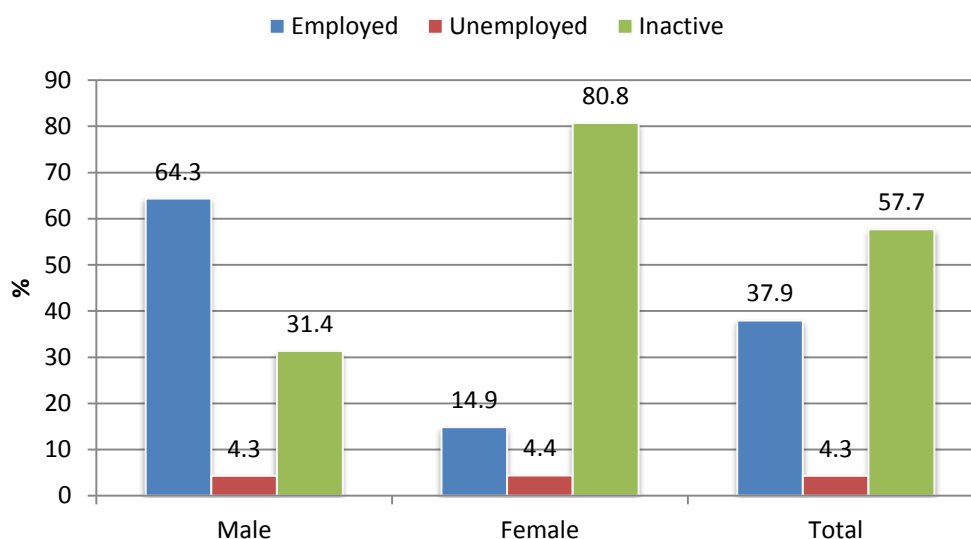
Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.3 Current activity status of youth

The international standards concerning employment and unemployment statistics are based on the labour force framework. According to this framework, the working-age population is divided into three categories (employed, unemployed and not economically active), depending on their labour market activities during a specified short reference period, either a day or a week (ILO, 2008).

Figure 3.3 illustrates the working-age youth population by main economic activity. Several observations result. First, 4.3 per cent of surveyed youth were unemployed, with little difference in the shares by sex. Second, most were inactive (57.7 per cent), and this is mainly because of the very high share of inactive young females (80.8 per cent compared to only 31.4 per cent of young males). The inactive group is not engaged in the labour market and includes people who are in education, looking after family, retired or sick/disabled. Third, the share of employed young men was more than four times that of women, at 64.3 per cent and 14.9 per cent, respectively. Thus, young women were much more likely to be inactive compared to young men, and young men were more likely to be employed compared to young women.

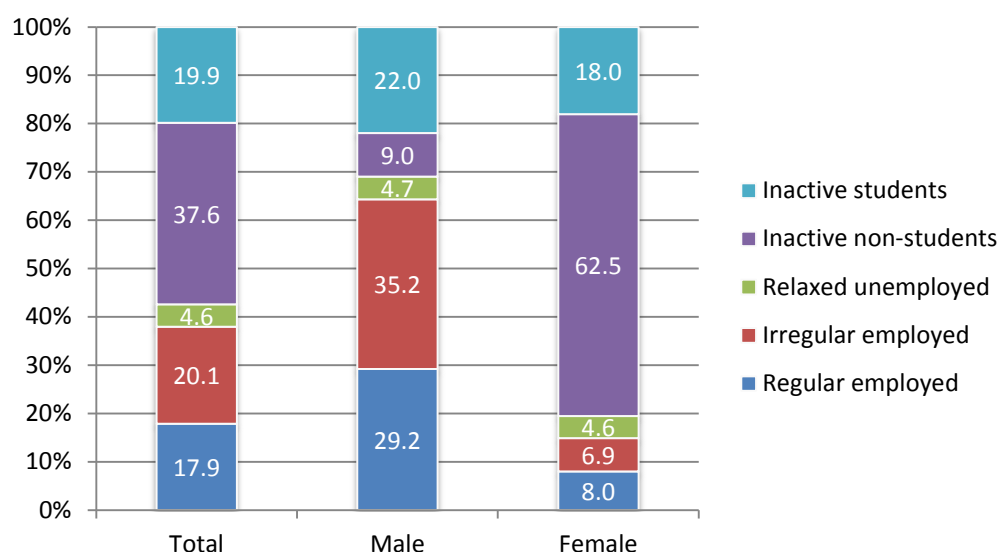
Figure 3.3 Youth population by main economic activity and sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

In the ILO's *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013* report, the argument is made that comparing traditional labour market indicators with a more detailed disaggregation of indicators made available through the SWTS allows for a more detailed picture of the challenges that youth face in developing economies (ILO, 2013a, Chapter 4). Figure 3.4 shows the results for Bangladesh from the survey. The SWTS framework proposes a distribution of the youth population in the following five categories: (a) in regular employment, defined as wage and salaried workers holding a contract of greater than 12 months in duration, plus self-employed youth with employees (employers); (b) in irregular employment, defined as wage and salaried workers holding a contract of limited duration, i.e. set to terminate prior to 12 months, as well as self-employed youth with no employees (own-account workers) and contributing family workers; (c) the unemployed (relaxed definition), defined as people currently without work and available to take up work in the week prior to the reference period; (d) inactive non-students; and (e) inactive students.

Figure 3.4 Youth population by category of economic activity and sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Figure 3.4 shows the categories of economic activity by sex. The first observation is that the greatest proportion of inactive youth were non-students (37.6 per cent of the total youth population), and the majority for young women. In fact, the percentage of inactive non-students among young women was the dominant category at 62.5 per cent, nearly seven times greater than the share of inactive non-students in the young male population (9.0 per cent). The extremely large share of young females who are neither in the labour force nor in education or training has an impact on the productive potential of the country.

Second, more youth were in irregular employment (20.1 per cent) than regular employment (17.9 per cent). A comparison of employment characteristics of youth in terms of sex leads to two further observations. The largest proportion of the male population was in irregular employment (35.2 per cent) compared to only 6.9 per cent of young females, and while the young working woman had a slightly greater tendency to be in regular than irregular employment (8.0 and 6.9 per cent, respectively), the young working man was more often in irregular employment (35.2 per cent) than in regular employment (29.2 per cent).

Table 3.4 provides information on surveyed youth who were neither in education nor in employment or training (NEET), on the basis of sex and area of residence. Over two-fifths (41.0 per cent) of Bangladeshi youth fell under the NEET category, and more than four in five young NEETs were female. Almost two-thirds of female youth (65.7 per cent) were NEETs. Most of the NEET youth were inactive non-students. Over nine-tenths (92.2 per cent) of total NEETs fell under this category. The share of unemployed non-students was marginal at 7.8 per cent, but accounted for more than one-quarter (26.8 per cent) of male NEETs. The share of NEET youths was higher in rural than urban areas, possibly because more young women in rural areas needed to engage in some sort of work to add to the household income.

Table 3.4 NEET youth by status, sex and area of residence

Sex & area of residence	NEET youth as % of youth population	Total NEETs	NEET status			
			Unemployed non-students		Inactive non-students	
			Number	%	Number	%
Sex						
Total	41.0	17 144 579	1 344 182	7.8	15 800 397	92.2
Male	12.7	2 481 618	665 014	26.8	1 816 604	73.2
Female	65.7	14 662 961	679 168	4.6	13 983 793	95.4
Area of residence						
Rural	42.4	13 646 484	1 115 786	8.2	12 530 698	91.8
Urban	36.4	3 498 096	228 396	6.5	3 269 699	93.5

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.4 Characteristics of employed youth

3.4.1 General characteristics

Table 3.5 provides characteristics of the employed youth population surveyed in Bangladesh in terms of their age, marital status, area of residence and sex. Most employed youth fell within the upper age band of 25–29 (42.1 per cent). Almost two-fifths (38.5 per cent) of young women were in this age group, compared to 43.1 per cent of young men.

Table 3.5 Employed youth by age group, marital status, area of residence and sex

Characteristic		Total		Male		Female	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Age group	15–19	3 780 516	23.9	2 969 033	23.7	811 483	24.5
	20–24	5 390 673	34.0	4 165 880	33.2	1 224 793	37.0
	25–29	6 676 305	42.1	5 399 741	43.1	1 276 564	38.5
Marital status	Married*	8 733 904	55.1	6 251 925	49.9	2 481 979	74.9
	Single	7 113 589	44.9	6 282 729	50.1	830 860	25.1
Area of residence	Rural	12 074 687	76.2	9 860 151	78.7	2 214 536	66.8
	Urban	3 772 807	23.8	2 674 503	21.3	1 098 304	33.2
Total		15 847 494	100.0	12 534 654	100.0	3 312 840	100.0

* Including divorced and widowed.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

More married than single youth were among those employed (55.1 per cent). While the working male was evenly divided between single and married status, three-quarters (74.9 per cent) of young working females were married. The employed youth population was mainly located in rural areas (76.2 per cent).

3.4.2 Status in employment

Slightly more than one-half (54.6 per cent) of the employed youth surveyed were employees, followed by almost one-third as own-account workers (31.7 per cent) and 11.1 per cent as unpaid family workers (table 3.6). The proportion of employees did not vary much by sex. Among young females employed, 55.9 per cent were employees; the

corresponding figure for young males was 54.3 per cent. Employed male and female youth, however, differed widely in terms of their involvement as unpaid family workers and own-account workers. Unpaid family worker refers to a person who works without pay in an economic enterprise operated by a related person living in the same household. One-fifth (19.9 per cent) of employed young females were unpaid family workers. In comparison, only 8.8 per cent of employed young males were unpaid family workers.

Own-account workers are self-employed with no employees. More than one-third (34.3 per cent) of employed young males were own-account workers, as compared to 21.7 per cent of employed young females. In Bangladesh, lenders give more women than men microcredits, which could explain the fairly large share of young female own-account workers.

Table 3.6 Employed youth by employment status and sex

Status	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Employees	8 652 914	54.6	6 802 630	54.3	1 850 284	55.9
Employers	73 619	0.5	67 893	0.5	5 726	0.2
Own-account workers	5 019 607	31.7	4 300 449	34.3	719 158	21.7
Unpaid family workers	1 766 299	11.1	1 105 584	8.8	660 715	19.9
Other	335 055	2.1	258 098	2.1	76 957	2.3
Total	15 847 494	100.0	12 534 654	100.0	3 312 840	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

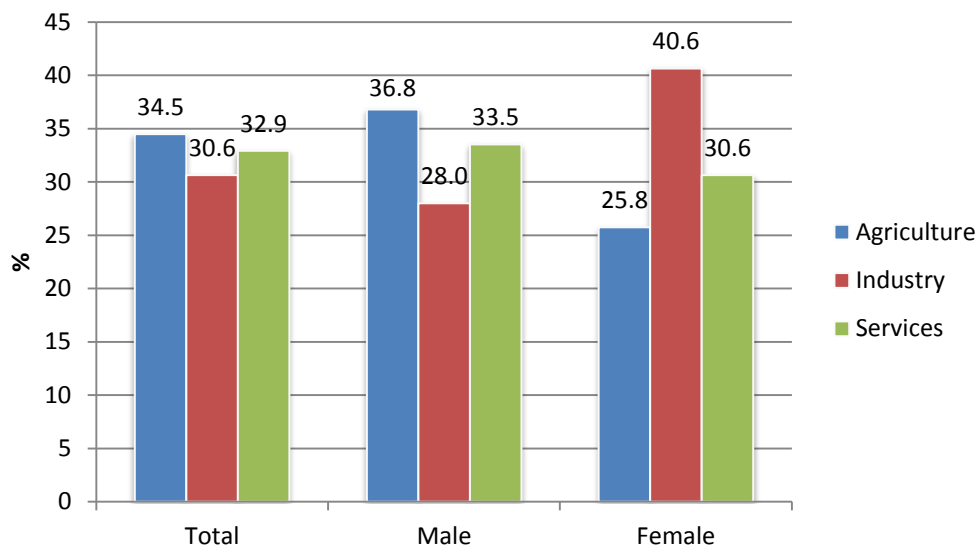
3.4.3 Employment by sector and occupation

Figure 3.5 provides the distribution of employed youth across the three major sectors: agriculture, industry and services. Agriculture still provided the largest share of employment for youth surveyed (34.5 per cent), followed closely by services (32.9 per cent) and industry (30.6 per cent). The distribution of employed youth among these sectors by sex shows important differences, however. First, proportionately more women were employed in industry – 40.6 per cent as against 28.0 per cent for men. This suggests that the benefits of structural transformation in Bangladesh, in terms of increased employment opportunity in the industrial sector, are reaped more by women who are engaged primarily in the garments sector. Second, proportionately more males were employed in agriculture: while 36.8 per cent of male youth were employed in this sector, the corresponding level for females was 25.8 per cent. Third, slightly more young men than women were employed in services (33.5 per cent and 30.6 per cent, respectively).

A detailed sector-level distribution of youth employment (1-digit) is shown in figure 3.6. The survey data provided information on 21 sectors, but only the top ten (in terms of employment) are shown. These ten sectors together employed about 96 per cent of youth.

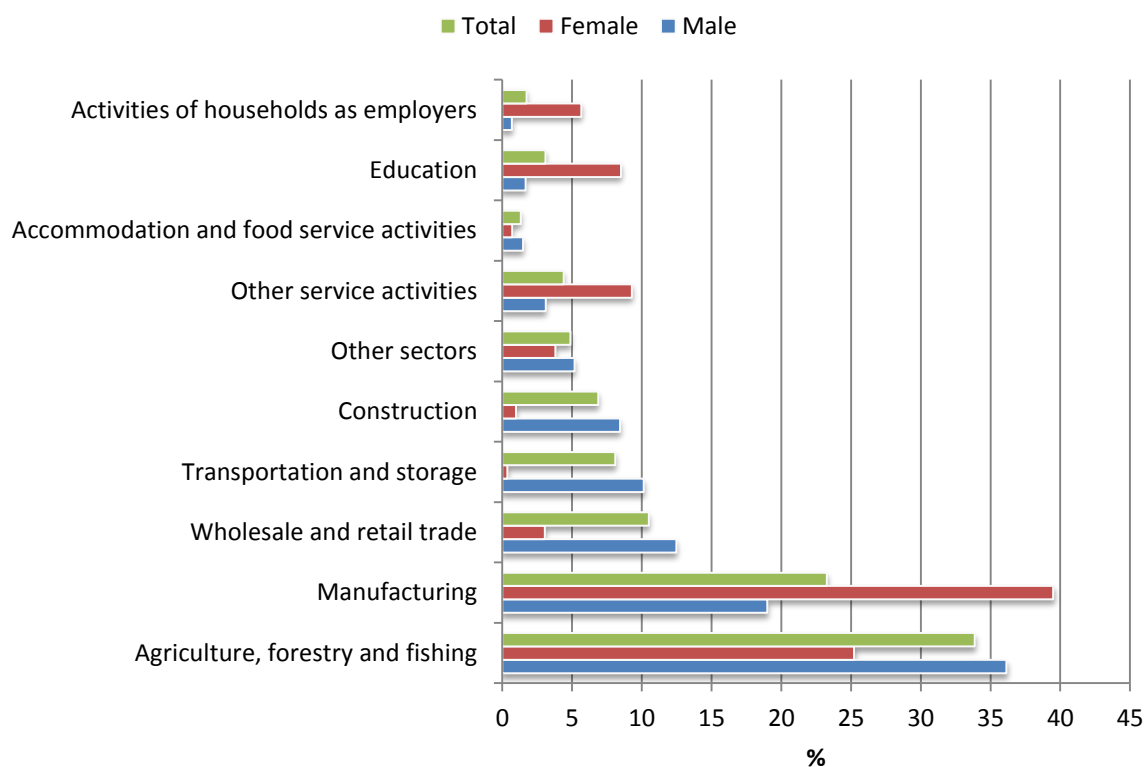
The most striking feature is the involvement of women in manufacturing. While 19 per cent of young men were employed in manufacturing, 39.5 per cent of women were employed in this sector. This high employment level of young women in manufacturing is due to the rapid growth of the RMG sector in Bangladesh, where most of the workers are women. A higher percentage of women were also employed in the education sector (8.5 per cent against 1.7 per cent of men) and in other services (9.3 per cent against 3.1 per cent of men). More than one-third (36.1 per cent) of young men were employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector, 19.0 per cent in manufacturing and between 8.4 and 12.5 per cent in each of the wholesale and retail trade, transportation and storage, and construction sectors.

Figure 3.5 Employed youth by broad sector and sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Figure 3.6 Employed youth by sector (1-digit level) and sex

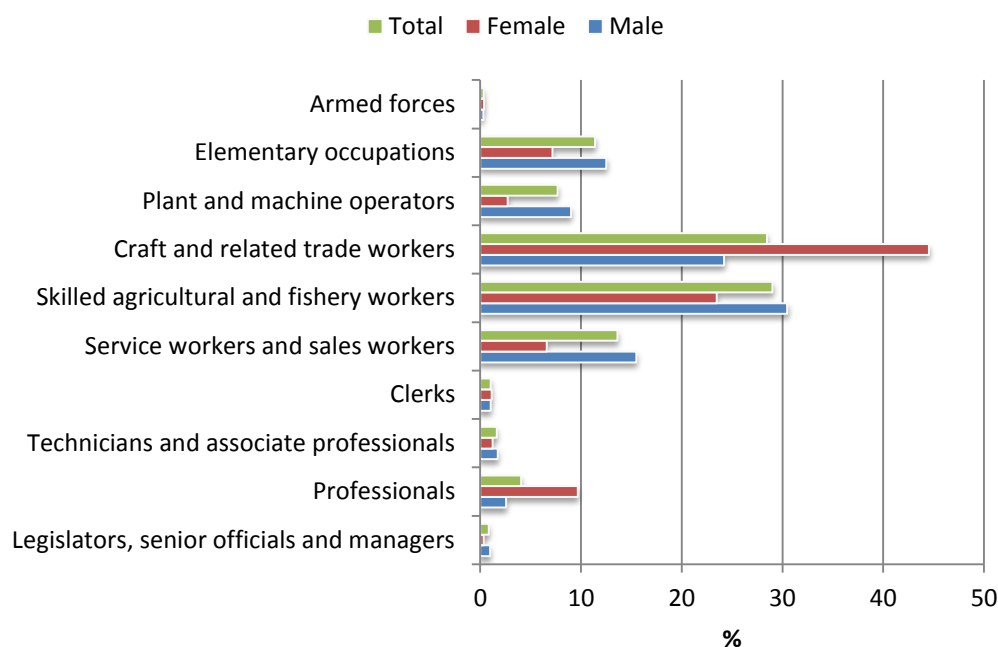


Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Figure 3.7 provides information on the occupations taken up by surveyed youth, by sex (International Standard Classification of Occupations [ISCO]-08 major group). Most youth were in occupations in craft and related trades, and in skilled agriculture and fishery (28.4 and 29.0 per cent, respectively). The third source of employment was in service and sales (13.6 per cent). Female employment was predominantly in the craft and related trades sector (44.5 per cent as against 24.2 per cent for young males), again reflecting the strong garment sector. Young women also had a higher share in professional work than young

men (9.7 per cent compared to 2.6 per cent). Dominance of male employment is observed in service and sales (15.5 per cent as against 6.6 per cent of young females), elementary occupations (12.5 per cent as against 7.2 per cent), and plant and machine operators and assemblers (9.0 per cent as against 2.7 per cent).

Figure 3.7 Employed youth by occupation (ISCO-08 major group) and sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.4.4 Wage employment

As shown in table 3.6, 54.6 per cent of employed youth surveyed in Bangladesh were paid workers – 54.3 per cent of young men and 55.9 per cent of young women.

Regarding the type of contract held by young wage and salaried workers, the results show that more than one-half (59.3 per cent) of young employees were engaged on an oral agreement, while only 27.2 per cent had a written agreement (table 3.7). Over one-tenth (13.5 per cent) of employees had no agreement at all, oral or written. While more than one-half (54.3 per cent) of female employees had a written contract, only one-fifth (19.8 per cent) of male employees had one. Female employees were more likely to have contracts of unlimited duration (without limit of time) compared to males (82.4 per cent as against 76.4 per cent).

Among those with a contract of limited duration (22.3 per cent of young employees with a specified contract duration), 65.2 per cent held a contract of less than 12 months. An interesting difference emerges when comparing contract types between rural and urban areas. In urban areas, no large difference existed between the share of young employees having written or oral agreements (38.0 per cent written, 49.5 per cent oral). In rural areas, however, oral contracts were much more prevalent (63.4 per cent oral, 22.6 per cent written).

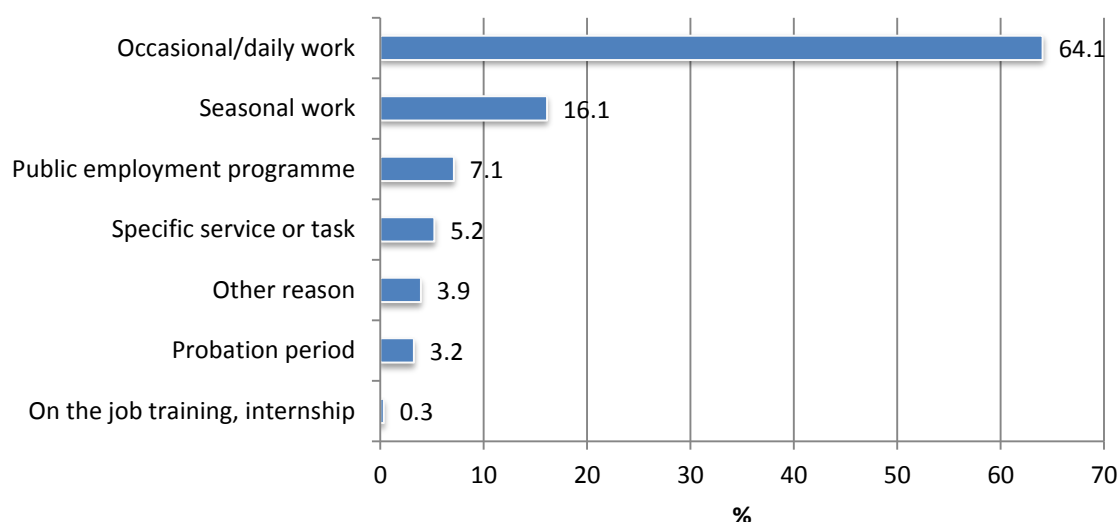
Table 3.7 Young wage and salaried workers by area of residence, type and duration of contract, and sex

Area of residence, type & duration of contract	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total (Urban + Rural)						
<i>Type of contract</i>						
Written contract	2 353 024	27.2	1 347 725	19.8	1 005 299	54.3
Oral contract	5 130 931	59.3	4 485 644	65.9	645 287	34.9
No contract	1 168 959	13.5	969 261	14.2	199 697	10.8
<i>Duration of contract</i>						
Unlimited duration	6 720 852	77.7	5 196 284	76.4	1 524 568	82.4
Limited duration	1 932 062	22.3	1 606 346	23.6	325 716	17.6
Less than 12 months	1 258 952	65.2	1 185 806	73.8	73 146	22.5
12 months to less than 36 months	255 440	13.2	187 986	11.7	67 455	20.7
36 months or more	417 670	21.6	232 555	14.5	185 115	56.8
Total	8 652 914	100.0	6 802 630	100.0	1 850 284	100.0
Urban						
<i>Type of contract</i>						
Written contract	972 718	38.0	498 370	29.6	474 348	54.1
Oral contract	1 266 445	49.5	946 374	56.3	320 071	36.5
No contract	318 791	12.5	237 135	14.1	81 656	9.3
<i>Duration of contract</i>						
Unlimited duration	2 127 134	83.2	1 357 370	80.7	769 764	87.9
Limited duration	430 820	16.8	324 510	19.3	106 310	12.1
Less than 12 months	204 228	47.4	194 905	60.1	9 323	8.8
12 months to less than 36 months	61 875	14.4	52 521	16.2	9 354	8.8
36 months or more	164 717	38.2	77 084	23.8	87 633	82.4
Total	2 557 954	100.0	1 681 879	100.0	876 075	100.0
Rural						
<i>Type of contract</i>						
Written contract	1 380 306	22.6	849 354	16.6	530 951	54.5
Oral contract	3 864 486	63.4	3 539 270	69.1	325 216	33.4
No contract	850 167	13.9	732 126	14.3	118 041	12.1
<i>Duration of contract</i>						
Unlimited duration	4 593 717	75.4	3 838 914	75.0	754 804	77.5
Limited duration	1 501 242	24.6	1 281 836	25.0	219 405	22.5
Less than 12 months	1 054 723	70.3	990 901	77.3	63 822	29.1
12 months to less than 36 months	193 566	12.9	135 465	10.6	58 101	26.5
36 months or more	252 953	16.8	155 471	12.1	97 482	44.4
Total	6 094 959	100.0	5 120 750	100.0	974 208	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

In total, 14.5 per cent of young wage and salaried workers qualified as temporary workers (with a limited contract of less than 12 months in duration). Most of the temporary workers (64.1 per cent) were involved in occasional/daily work, and 16.1 per cent were involved in seasonal work (figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8 Youth on temporary employment contract by reason



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Table 3.8 presents the number of young employees who received benefits from their jobs. The greatest proportion – although low in relative terms, at just over one-quarter of young workers – received benefits in terms of having separate toilet facilities (25.9 per cent), followed by paid sick leave (18.0 per cent), protective equipment/clothing (15.2 per cent) and maternity/paternity leave (13.5 per cent). A very small percentage of young employees had pension/old age insurance (5.5 per cent) and childcare facilities (4.5 per cent). Young female employees were more likely than males to have access to all of the entitlements, a reflection of the type of establishments (mostly private enterprises in the garment sector) where young female employment is concentrated. One-third (34.1 per cent) of young female paid employees got paid sick leave compared to 13.6 per cent of male employees.

Table 3.8 Young wage and salaried workers by access to benefits/entitlements and sex

Benefit/entitlement	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Pension/old age insurance	474 810	5.5	281 468	4.1	193 342	10.4
Maternity/paternity leave	1 166 533	13.5	387 777	5.7	778 756	42.1
Paid sick leave	1 558 731	18.0	928 330	13.6	630 401	34.1
Childcare facilities	390 188	4.5	266 378	3.9	123 810	6.7
Protective equipment/ clothing	1 317 036	15.2	731 294	10.8	585 741	31.7
Subsidized food facilities	687 488	7.9	451 620	6.6	235 869	12.7
Toilet facilities	2 243 172	25.9	1 207 951	17.8	1 035 222	55.9
Total	8 652 914		6 802 630		1 850 284	

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

In terms of wages, table 3.9 reveals that the average wage and salaried worker surveyed earned 6,299 Bangladesh Taka (BDT) per month. Young Bangladeshi men systematically earned more than young women, regardless of level of education. The average monthly wage of a male employee was 1.2 times that of a female employee, at

BDT 6,601 and BDT 5,533, respectively.⁵ Investing in education brings a clear pay-off in terms of higher wage potential. The average monthly wage increased incrementally with each added level of education. Among employees, the university graduate could earn up to three times the wage of a young worker with no education.

Table 3.9 Average monthly wage of young wage and salaried workers by sex and level of completed education

Sex & level of completed education		Average monthly wage (BDT)	SD
Total		6 299	3.44
Sex	Female	5 533	4.05
	Male	6 601	4.52
Level of education			
Total	None or less than primary	5 042	2.46
	Primary	5 432	1.86
	Secondary	6 413	3.05
	Tertiary	14 869	54.50
Male	None or less than primary	5 530	2.89
	Primary	5 704	2.30
	Secondary	6 509	2.74
	Tertiary	18 457	88.40
Female	None or less than primary	3 707	3.56
	Primary	4 700	2.71
	Secondary	6 178	8.20
	Tertiary	9 321	11.70

SD = standard deviation.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.4.5 Self-employment

As shown in table 3.6, 31.7 per cent of employed youth surveyed in Bangladesh were own-account workers (34.3 per cent of young men and 21.7 per cent of young women). Few (0.5 per cent) were employers. Together, own-account workers and employers represented 32.2 per cent of employed youth, and unpaid family workers and those in the “Other” category made up another 13.2 per cent. Table 3.10 provides the reasons why the self-employed decided to take up self-employment. Most (57.9 per cent) preferred self-employment for its greater independence, and one-quarter (24.5 per cent) had taken up self-employment as a fallback, as they could not find a wage or salaried job. One-tenth (10.4 per cent) indicated higher income as the reason for taking up self-employment. More than four-fifths (82.6 per cent) of self-employed youth lived in urban areas. Self-employed youth in rural areas referred slightly more to the lack of paid jobs (26.3 per cent in rural and 24.1 per cent in urban areas) as the main reason for having their own business.

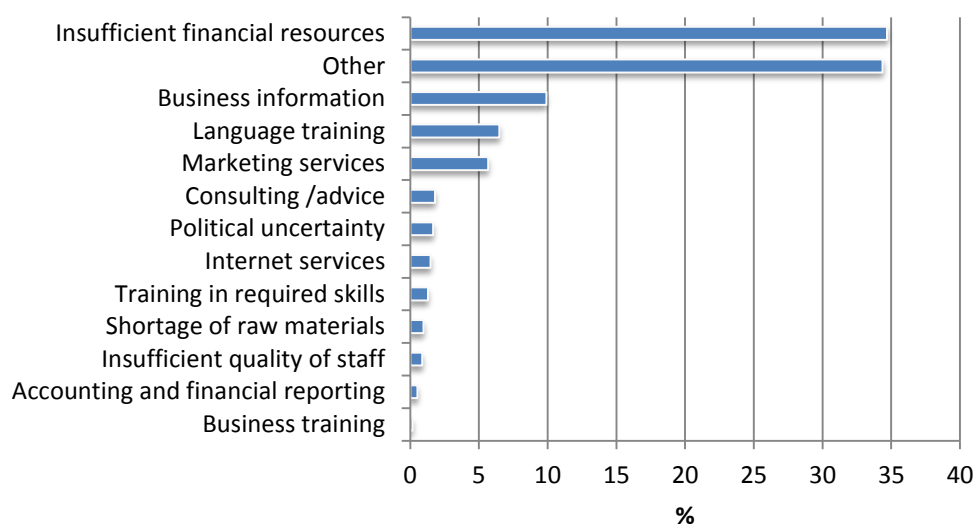
⁵ The UN operational exchange rate on 1 February 2013 (in the midst of the survey fieldwork) was 1 US dollar = 78.95 BDT. The average wage of a young employee in Bangladesh was therefore the equivalent of US\$79.78 per month. The university graduate working in paid employment earned the equivalent of US\$188.33 per month.

Table 3.10 Self-employed youth by reason for self-employment and area of residence

Reason	Total		Urban		Rural	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Could not find a wage or salaried job	1 248 462	24.5	1 015 642	24.1	232 820	26.3
Greater independence	2 951 138	57.9	2 431 220	57.8	519 918	58.8
More flexible hours of work	247 386	4.9	204 723	4.9	42 663	4.8
Higher income level	527 249	10.4	453 766	10.8	73 483	8.3
The work is creative	93 421	1.8	79 169	1.9	14 252	1.6
Other	25 571	0.5	23 979	0.6	1 593	0.2
Total	5 093 226	100.0	4 208 497	100.0	884 729	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

The self-employed youth faced many challenges, as depicted in figure 3.9 (see also table A.6). The challenge cited most often was insufficient financial resources (34.7 per cent). Business information ranked third (9.9 per cent), behind “other”.

Figure 3.9 Self-employed youth by most significant challenge

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Young entrepreneurs need funds for starting up their activity, as well as for working capital or to meet current expenses. The main source of finance for both start-up and working capital of self-employed youth surveyed was family and friends (table 3.11). This source served more than one-half (50.1 per cent) of youth for start-up capital, and more than one-third (35.7 per cent) for meeting working capital needs. One-fifth of youth (21.0 per cent) used their own savings as start-up capital, and almost one-third (30.5 per cent) used their savings as working capital. Only 5.0 per cent of youth borrowed from banks for start-up capital, and 5.7 per cent for funding working capital needs. Still, 12.7 per cent of young entrepreneurs did make use of microfinance institutions for working capital. In general, the role of formal sources of finance to help youth obtain funds for start-up as well as working capital is insufficient. Self-employed youth predominantly depend either on their savings or on family and friends for start-up and working capital.

Table 3.11 Self-employed youth by financial sources (%)

Source	For start-up capital	For working capital
No money needed	10.9	10.0
Own savings	21.0	30.5
Money from family and friends	50.1	35.7
Loan from bank	5.0	5.7
Loan from private lender	1.5	1.8
Loan from microfinance institution	–	12.7
Loan or aid from government or non-governmental organization	0.3	1.4
Other	11.2	2.2

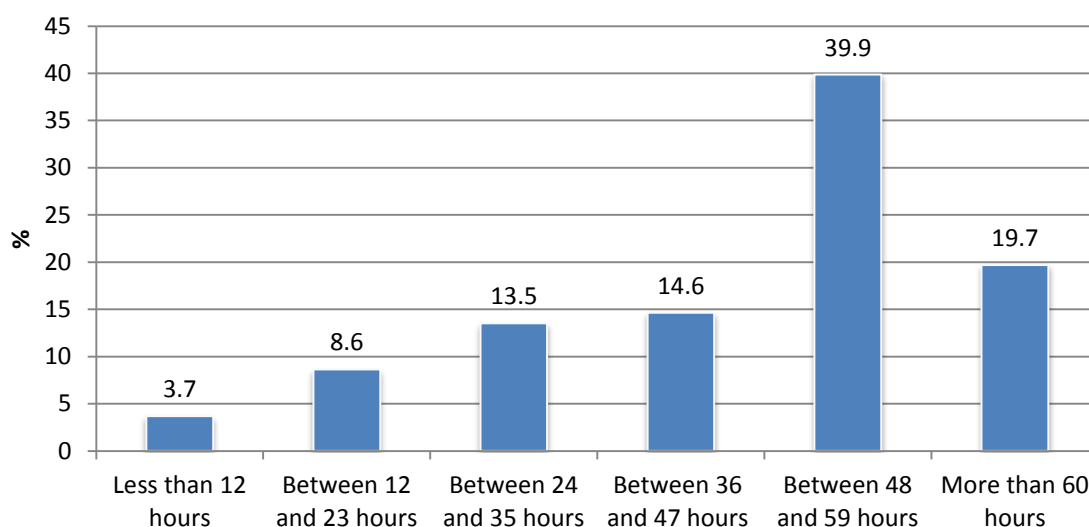
- = not available.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.4.6 Hours of work

Figure 3.10 shows youth employment by actual hours worked per week. Most young people surveyed worked full time: 74.2 per cent of working youth worked 36 hours or more per week. Well over one-half of employed youth (59.6 per cent) can be said to have worked an excessive number of hours (48 or more per week). Only 25.8 per cent of youth worked part time (up to 35 hours per week).

Figure 3.10 Employed youth by actual hours worked per week



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

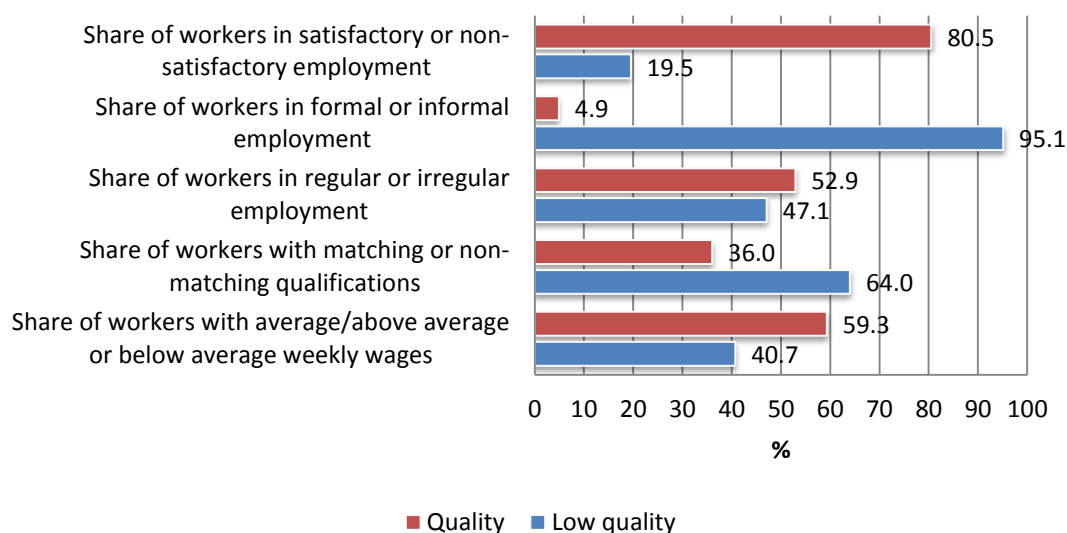
Slightly more than one-fifth (20.6 per cent) of youth working less than 35 hours per week stated that they would like to work more hours, and therefore qualified as involuntary part-time workers. Given that few youth in Bangladesh work part time, and that some of them do so involuntarily, it would appear that part-time employment is not viewed as a viable option for young Bangladeshis to gain work experience while studying or as a means to balance family responsibilities.

3.4.7 Other job-quality indicators

The SWTS also measures the quality of jobs to which young people have access (ILO, 2013a, Chapter 4). Figure 3.11 attempts to characterize the youth labour market in Bangladesh along a job-quality continuum. Within the area of low-quality employment on the left side of the figure are the following five indicators:

- The share of own-account workers and paid employees with below-average weekly wages or income⁶ (poorly paid);
- The share of over- or undereducated workers (qualifications mismatch);⁷
- The share of workers with a contract duration of less than 12 months, own-account workers and contributing family workers⁸ (irregular employment);
- The share of workers in informal employment⁹ (informal employment); and
- The share of workers who claim dissatisfaction with their current job (non-satisfactory employment).

Figure 3.11 Indicators measuring the quality of youth employment



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

⁶ Monthly wages of employees and daily, monthly or other time-specific earnings of own-account workers were converted into weekly rates for comparability. Contributing (unpaid) family workers were excluded from the calculation.

⁷ The methodology applied is that of the normative ISCO-based approach mentioned later in this report. Table 3.12 provides the matching across ISCO and International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) educational codes.

⁸ Persons not classifiable by employment status are also included in the irregular employment category.

⁹ Informal employment is measured according to the guidelines recommended by the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). It includes the following sub-categories of workers: (a) paid employees in “informal jobs”, i.e. jobs without a social security entitlement, paid annual leave or paid sick leave; (b) paid employees in an unregistered enterprise with size classification below five employees; (c) own-account workers in an unregistered enterprise with size classification below five employees; (d) employers in an unregistered enterprise with size classification below five employees; and (e) contributing family workers.

The red bars in figure 3.11 represent the indicators of better-quality employment based on above-average wages, matching qualifications, stability, formality (security) and satisfaction. For two of the five indicators, there was a greater tendency to low-quality characteristics than quality. This was the case with qualifications mismatch and informal employment. On the positive side, more youth were working at above-average wages than below-average; the share of workers in regular employment just edged out the share in irregular employment; and the stated level of job satisfaction was very high (80.5 per cent), although the latter indicator should be interpreted with care, since many youth would have been reluctant to state non-satisfaction with the job when few alternatives existed.

Perhaps the most worrying indicator here is the extent of informal employment. Over nine-tenths (95.1 per cent) of employed youth were working in the informal economy. Informal employment is made up of two sub-categories: workers in the informal (unregistered) sector, and paid employees holding informal jobs in the formal sector. The latter category do earn a salary but do not receive other benefits, such as social security contributions or paid annual or sick leave, that would normally come with a formal job. In Bangladesh, the sub-category of informal sector employment dominates. As much as 99.2 per cent of informal employment among youth was in the informal sector.

Qualifications mismatch

One means of measuring the mismatch between the jobs people do and their level of educational qualification is to apply the normative measure of occupational skills categories from the ISCO. ISCO-08 includes the categorization of major occupational groups (first-digit ISCO levels) by level of education in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)¹⁰ reproduced in table 3.12.

Table 3.12 ISCO major groups and education levels

ISCO major group	Broad occupation group	Education level
Managers		
Professionals	High-skilled non-manual	Tertiary (ISCED 5–6)
Technicians & associate professionals		
Clerical support workers	Low-skilled non-manual	
Service & sales workers		
Skilled agricultural & fishery workers		Secondary (ISCED 3–4)
Craft & related trades workers	Skilled manual	
Plant & machine operators & assemblers		
Elementary occupations	Unskilled	Primary (ISCED 1–2)

Source: ILO, 2013a, p. 29.

Workers in a particular group who have the assigned level of education are considered well-matched. Those who have a higher level of education are considered overeducated and those with a lower level of education are considered undereducated. For instance, a university graduate working as a clerk (a low-skilled, non-manual occupation) is overeducated, while a secondary school graduate working as an engineer (a high-skilled, non-manual occupation) is undereducated.

The result for surveyed Bangladeshi youth was that a minority of young workers were in occupations that matched their level of education (36.0 per cent), compared to workers

¹⁰ For more information on the ISCO-based approach along with other methods of measuring skills mismatches, see Quintini (2011).

in occupations for which they were overeducated or undereducated (64.0 per cent) (figure 3.11). Table 3.13 provides the breakdown: 2.4 per cent of young working Bangladeshis were overeducated and 61.6 per cent were undereducated. The results are, in part, a reflection of the levels of education attained by youth in the country. With a substantial share of employed youth completing education below the secondary level, it is not overly surprising to find more youth classified as undereducated than overeducated.

Table 3.13 Overeducated and undereducated young workers by major occupational category (ISCO-08, %)

Major occupational category (ISCO-08)	Overeducated	Undereducated
1. Legislators, senior officials, managers	0.0	66.1
2. Professionals	0.0	62.0
3. Technicians & associate professionals	0.0	91.6
4. Clerks	5.9	17.1
5. Service workers, shop, market sales workers	3.1	55.9
6. Skilled agricultural & fishery workers	0.4	69.7
7. Craft & related trades workers	0.5	61.9
8. Plant & machine operators & assemblers	0.0	76.6
9. Elementary occupations	13.9	36.4
10. Armed forces	0.0	84.0
Total	2.4	61.6

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

The phenomenon of overeducation tends to take place when an insufficient number of jobs match a certain level of education. The mismatch in supply and demand forces some of the degree holders to take up available work that they are subsequently overqualified to perform. In Bangladesh, overeducated youth were found primarily in elementary occupations (13.9 per cent) and to a lesser degree in clerical (5.9 per cent) and sales (3.1 per cent) work. The consequence is that overeducated youth are likely to earn less than they otherwise could have and are not making the most of their productive potential.

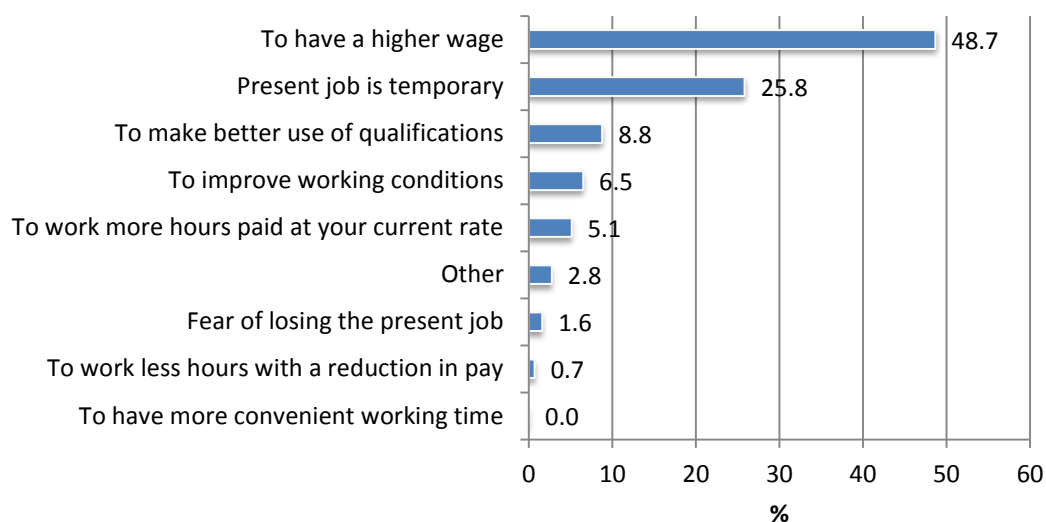
Many more young people surveyed held positions for which they were undereducated. Approximately two-thirds (66.1 per cent) of young managers, as well as 62.0 per cent of young professionals and 91.6 per cent of young technicians and associate professionals did not hold the necessary level of education expected for the job. Most of the other occupations also showed high shares of undereducated workers. The undereducation of workers can have a severe impact on labour productivity and can be a significant hindrance to economic growth, but can also impact young workers in terms of their self-confidence.

3.4.8 Security and satisfaction

One surprising element that came from the examination of job quality indicators in figure 3.11 was that despite some indications of poor quality employment, the vast majority of young people expressed satisfaction with their work (80.5 per cent). The seeming contradiction of a young person working in a job that might bring little in terms of monetary reward and stability, yet claiming job satisfaction, is a likely reflection of youth's ability to adapt to realities where not many "good jobs" exist. In the context of a low-demand labour market with large unemployment rates, simply having a job may outweigh issues of poor job quality.

As already mentioned, the survey showed the extent of job satisfaction (80.5 per cent) and most wages were higher than average. Job satisfaction can be investigated further through the indication of whether or not working youth wanted to change jobs. An insignificant share of young workers (13.2 per cent) said they would like to change their job. The most common reasons given for wanting to change work were unsatisfactory pay (48.7 per cent), the temporary nature of the current work (25.8 per cent) and making better use of qualifications/skills (8.8 per cent) (figure 3.12).

Figure 3.12 Employed youth who would like to change their job by reason



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.4.9 The job search

Table 3.14 presents the distribution of employed youth by duration of their job search before finding employment. The table reveals that the largest proportion of employed youth – 25.3 per cent – had looked for a job for less than 1 week; this was the case for 25.3 per cent of young men and 25.2 per cent of young women. The largest proportion of women (28.2 per cent) searched for 1–3 months. The proportion of youth who had been searching for a job for 6 months to less than 1 year was 21.2 per cent. No case of a search period exceeding 1 year was reported.

Table 3.14 Employed youth by duration of job search and sex

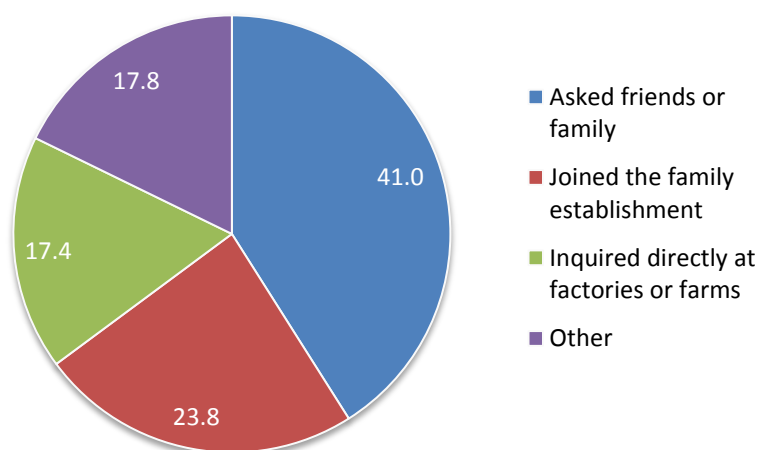
Duration	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than 1 week	1 378 897	25.3	1 118 123	25.3	260 774	25.2
1 to 4 weeks	1 035 691	19.0	854 220	19.3	181 471	17.5
1 month to less than 3 months	1 113 338	20.4	821 676	18.6	291 662	28.2
3 months to less than 6 months	765 717	14.1	641 582	14.5	124 135	12.0
6 months to less than 1 year	1 158 239	21.2	981 447	22.2	176 791	17.1
Total	5 451 882	100.0	4 417 048	100.0	1 034 834	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Employed youth were asked to indicate the method they used to get their current job (figure 3.13). The largest proportion of employed youth (41.0 per cent) got their current job by word of mouth – asking their friends, relatives and acquaintances about the

availability of a job. Almost one-quarter of respondents (23.8 per cent) joined the family establishment and close to one-fifth (17.4 per cent) went to factories and farms asking for a job. The "Other" category included diverse factors such as registering at an employment centre (0.4 per cent), taking a test or being interviewed (2.0 per cent), waiting on the street to get recruited (1.6 per cent) and seeking financial assistance to be recruited (2.0 per cent). The conclusion is that youth must depend on informal institutions to get a job.

Figure 3.13 Employed youth by job search method to attain current job (%)



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

3.5 Characteristics of unemployed youth

Youth were considered unemployed if they did not work at all during the week preceding the survey and were actively looking for work or were available for work. Unemployment among the youth population in Bangladesh was low. About one-tenth (10.3 per cent) of the young economically active population was unemployed (the youth unemployment rate), or 4.3 per cent of the total youth population. The female youth unemployment rate was nearly four times the male rate, at 22.9 and 6.2 per cent respectively (table 3.15).

The strict definition of unemployment states that to be included in the category of "unemployed", a person must be without work, available to work and actively seeking work. Relaxing the "actively seeking work" criterion makes sense in circumstances where conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance, where the labour market is largely unorganized, where labour absorption is inadequate or where the labour force is largely self-employed. "Relaxing" the definition of unemployment only marginally increases the youth unemployment rate in Bangladesh from 10.3 to 10.9 per cent (table 3.15).

Relaxing the definition of unemployment increased the number of unemployed by 121,597 or 6.7 per cent. Among these additional youth who were without work, available for work but not actively seeking work, more than one-quarter (26.8 per cent) qualified as discouraged workers. Discouraged youth had given up on the job search because of reasons implying a sense of despair about the labour market. Specific reasons included not knowing how or where to seek work; an inability to find work matching their skills; the experience looking for work before had led to no results; feeling too young to find work; and the sense that no jobs were available in the area. Overall, the share of discouraged

youth as a percentage of young unemployed not actively seeking work was small at 1.7 per cent.

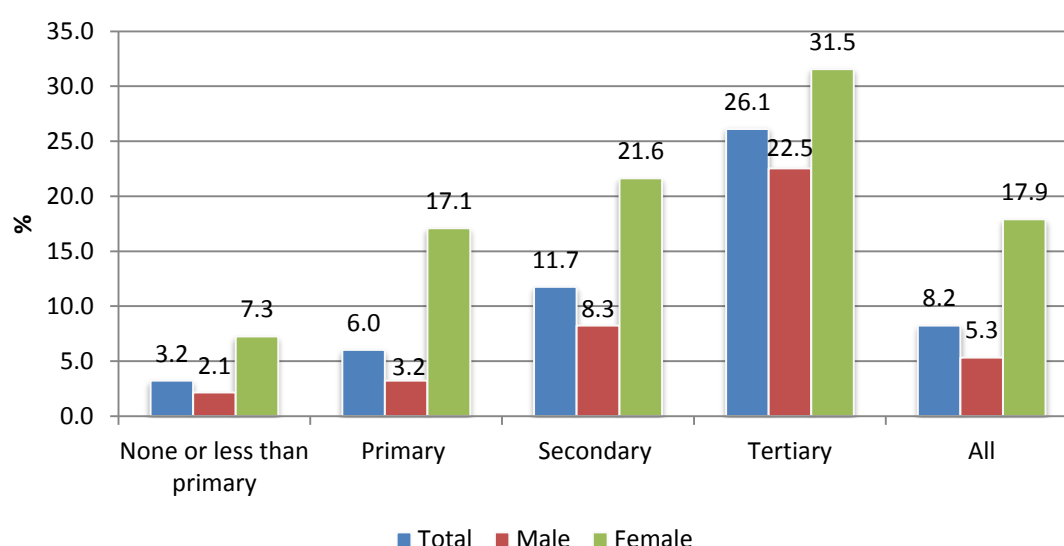
Table 3.15 Youth unemployment (strict and relaxed definition) and discouragement

Definition	Total	Male	Female
Unemployed youth (strict)	1 816 588	835 307	981 281
Unemployed youth (relaxed)	1 938 185	908 272	1 029 913
Unemployment rate (% , strict)	10.3	6.2	22.9
Unemployment rate (% , relaxed)	10.9	6.8	23.7
Discouraged young workers	32 638	16 745	15 893
Discouraged youth as % of unemployed not actively seeking work	1.7	1.8	1.5
Discouraged youth as % of labour force	0.2	0.1	0.4

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Figure 3.14 presents youth unemployment rates from the survey by level of educational attainment. The extent of unemployment was the highest among those who had a tertiary level of education. The unemployment rate among young graduates was 26.1 per cent. The unemployment rate was the lowest among the least educated (3.2 per cent), that is, among those youth who did not have any education or less than primary level. The unemployment rate among those having secondary-level education was 11.7 per cent. In fact, the probability of being steadily unemployed increased with the acquisition of more education. The unemployment rates for young women were higher than those for young men across all levels of educational attainment, but the most sizeable gender gap (in percentage points) was at the highest or tertiary level. The unemployment rate of female university graduates was 31.5 per cent, 9 percentage points above the rate of male university graduates (22.5 per cent).

Figure 3.14 Unemployed youth by level of educational attainment

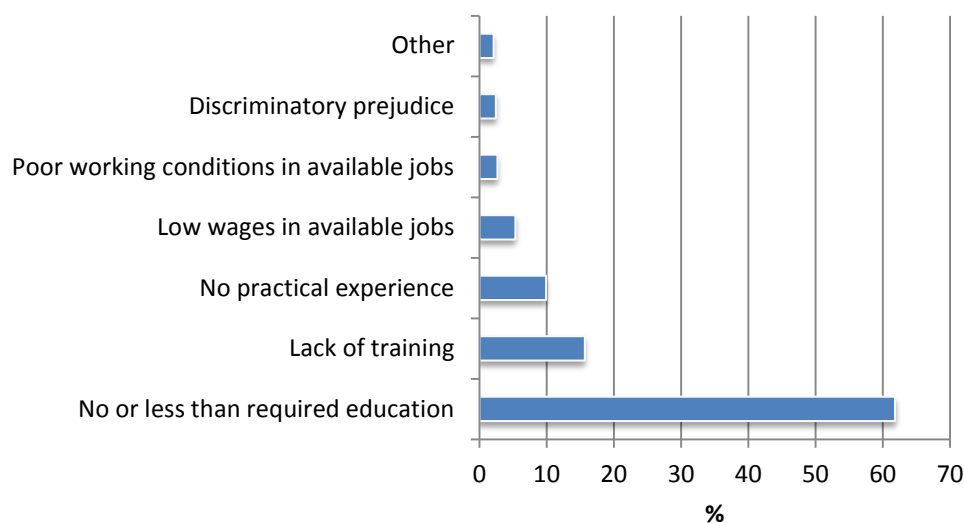


Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

The main obstacles for unemployed youth to find work are presented in figure 3.15. More than one-half (61.8 per cent) of unemployed youth singled out the lack of required education as the most crucial obstacle to finding work. Given that the least educated youth

had the highest chance of finding work implied that these youth were referring to the difficulty of getting more skilled jobs. Lack of training was mentioned by 15.7 per cent of unemployed youth. Other obstacles included lack of practical experience (9.9 per cent), low wages (5.3 per cent) and scarcity of jobs (2.7 per cent).

Figure 3.15 Unemployed youth by main obstacle to finding work



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Table 3.16 shows that the greatest proportion of unemployed youth sought office work (29.2 per cent), followed by physical work (25.9 per cent). The other work they sought included professional activity (14.6 per cent), self-employment (11.5 per cent) and technical work (11.4 per cent). In terms of type of occupation sought, not much difference existed between men and women. Proportionately more young women sought office work than young men (31.1 per cent and 27.0 per cent, respectively). On the other hand, more young men looked for technical work (14.2 per cent) than young women (9.1 per cent).

Table 3.16 Unemployed youth by type of occupation sought and sex

Type of occupation	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Physical work	471 189	25.9	226 090	27.1	245 099	25.0
Office work	530 658	29.2	225 890	27.0	304 768	31.1
Technical work	207 768	11.4	118 775	14.2	88 993	9.1
Administrative work	34 868	1.9	16 511	2.0	18 357	1.9
Managerial work	24 752	1.4	21 514	2.6	3 238	0.3
Professional activity	264 347	14.6	123 814	14.8	140 533	14.3
Self-employment (setting up a business)	209 530	11.5	79 240	9.5	130 291	13.3
Other	73 476	4.0	23 474	2.8	50 002	5.1
Total	1 816 588	100.0	835 307	100.0	981 281	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Household income level had an impact on youth unemployment, with young people in households of relatively higher income showing greater tendencies to be unemployed, as jobseeking youth could benefit from the financial resources of the household for a sustained job search. This was indeed the case for the fairly well-off households where the

extent of unemployment was the highest (table 3.17). Over two-fifths (43.8 per cent) of unemployed youth came from households that identified themselves as fairly well off, and another 12.6 per cent from well-off households. In contrast, only 16.6 per cent of unemployed youth came from fairly poor households. As already demonstrated, the unemployment rate was the lowest among the least educated youth (figure 3.14). As it can also be observed that unemployment is lowest among fairly poor households, it seems that low-skilled jobs are a major source of employment for poor and less-educated youth.

Table 3.17 Unemployed youth by household financial situation and area of residence

Financial situation	Total		Rural		Urban	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Well off	229 411	12.6	172 189	11.6	57 222	17.5
Fairly well off	795 330	43.8	646 785	43.4	148 544	45.4
Around the national average	490 843	27.0	421 312	28.3	69 532	21.2
Fairly poor	301 005	16.6	248 971	16.7	52 034	15.9
Total	1 816 588	100.0	1 489 256	100.0	327 332	100.0

Note: None of the unemployed classified their household as "poor", therefore, this category is not shown.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

A difference in terms of area of residence of unemployed youth was also evident. Unemployed young people in urban areas were more likely to be in better financial situations, although the difference was not large. Unemployed youth in urban areas were more likely to be in a household with a financial situation characterized either as "well off" (17.5 per cent, as against 11.6 per cent in rural areas) or as "fairly well off" (45.4 per cent as against 43.4 per cent).

Only 9.2 per cent of the unemployed declined to take a job that had been offered to them. In most cases (33.3 per cent), the reason for job refusal was low wages. Other factors for declining job offers included inconvenient location of work, uninteresting work and long working hours (table not shown). Unemployed youth had to depend on their family (71.0 per cent) or their spouse (23.6 per cent) to support themselves during the period of unemployment. A negligible proportion of unemployed youth received government support (0.13 per cent) (table not shown).

3.6 Characteristics of youth outside the labour market (inactive youth)

In Bangladesh, 57.7 per cent of surveyed youth were inactive. The extent of inactivity was alarmingly high among women. Over four-fifths (80.7 per cent) of female youth were inactive, and 62.5 per cent of young women were inactive non-students. Given the high rates of inactivity among young females, it is important to know the reasons.

Overall, the main reason for inactivity as shown in table 3.18 was responsibility for family or housework (58.4 per cent of total inactive youth and 71.0 per cent of female inactive youth). Almost one-third of inactive youth could not take part in the labour force because of their participation in education or training (32.1 per cent, and 66.2 per cent of male inactive youth). The differences in the composition of inactive youth by sex are therefore striking.

Table 3.18 Inactive youth by reasons for inactivity and sex

Reason	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Attending education/training	7 706 907	32.1	3 994 631	66.2	3 712 276	20.7
Family responsibility/housework	14 001 304	58.4	1 261 335	20.9	12 739 969	71.0
Illness, injury or disability	310 717	1.3	148 159	2.5	162 558	0.9
Retired	17 936	0.1	713	0.0	17 222	0.1
Too young/old to work	62 929	0.3	17 683	0.3	45 246	0.3
Off season	53 164	0.2	30 631	0.5	22 533	0.1
No desire to work	1 567 869	6.5	457 841	7.6	1 110 028	6.2
Other	272 503	1.1	127 550	2.1	144 953	0.8
Total	23 993 328	100.0	6 038 543	100.0	17 954 786	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

4. Stages of transition

This section begins the analysis of sampled youth by stage of transition, and attempts to identify the main determinants of each transition stage and transition path, looking also at vulnerable groups within each transition stage. The section presents the main characteristics and experiences of youth undergoing different stages of transition: transition completed, in transition and not yet transitioned. It identifies the major challenges and difficulties that youth face in their search for stable jobs.

4.1 Concepts and definitions¹¹

The ILO approach to determine the labour market transition of young people measures not only the length of time from their exit from education (either upon graduation or early exit without completion) to their first entry into any job, but also includes qualitative factors, such as whether the job is stable (measured by contract type).

The SWTS was designed to apply a stricter definition of “stable employment” than is typically used. By starting from the premise that a person has not “transitioned” until settled in a job that meets very basic criteria of stability, as defined by the duration of the employment contract, the ILO is introducing a new element of quality to the standard definition of labour market transition. However, only a minuscule share of youth in many developing economies, particularly in low-income economies, will ever attain stable employment, which implies that the statistics are not framed widely enough. For this reason, the ILO decided to add job satisfaction as a component and built it into the concept of labour market transition.

More specifically, labour market transition is defined as the passage of a young person (aged 15–29) from the end of schooling (or entry to first economic activity) to the first stable or satisfactory job. Stable employment is defined in terms of the employment contract (written or oral) and the contract duration (greater than 12 months). Introducing the issue of a contract automatically excludes the employment status of self-employed, where the employment relationship is not defined by a contract. The opposite of stable employment is temporary employment, or wage and salaried employment of limited

¹¹ This section is adapted from ILO, 2013a, Chapter 5.

duration. Satisfactory employment is a subjective concept, based on the self-assessment of the jobholder. It implies that respondents consider their jobs to be a good “fit” with their desired employment path at that moment in time. The contrary is termed non-satisfactory employment, implying a sense of dissatisfaction with the job.

The stages of transition are classified as follows:

Transited – A young person who has “transited” is one who is currently employed in:

- a stable job, whether satisfactory or non-satisfactory; or
- a satisfactory but temporary job; or
- satisfactory self-employment.

In transition – A young person still “in transition” is one who is currently:

- unemployed (relaxed definition); or
- employed in a temporary and non-satisfactory job; or
- in non-satisfactory self-employment; or
- inactive and not in education or training, with an aim to look for work later.

Transition not yet started – A young person whose “transition has not yet started” is one who is currently:

- still in school and inactive (inactive student); or
- inactive and not in education or training (inactive non-student), with no intention of looking for work.

Two elements of this classification are noteworthy. First, the stages of transition span across the boundaries of economic activity as defined in the standard labour force framework.¹² The “transited” category includes a sub-set of youth classified as employed; the remaining employed fall within the category of “in transition”, which includes those who fall under the strict definition of unemployed and portions of the inactive (namely, those without work, available for work but not actively seeking work,¹³ and inactive non-students who have stated an intention to join the labour force at a later stage). The “transition-not-yet-started” category is the residual of the inactive population.

Second, the stages of transition are not intended to be a normative framework. Because of the inclusion of youth in satisfactory self-employment and satisfactory temporary employment, one cannot say that all surveyed young people in the transited category had transited to a “good” job. In fact, many young people in self-employment – the own-account workers and unpaid family workers – were among the poorly paid workers in the informal economy and thus were included in the low-quality work segment shown in figure 3.11. By definition, they made up the bulk of the country’s share of irregularly employed. Yet they expressed a degree of satisfaction with their job, and they were likely to have finished their transition in the sense that they will remain in the self-employed classification for the remainder of their working lives.

¹² The international guidelines for measuring statistics on the economically active population, set out by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 1982, provide the framework for measuring who is counted as employed and as unemployed according to the economic production boundaries set out by the System of National Accounts.

¹³ This is the portion added to the “strictly” unemployed category to make up the unemployed (relaxed definition).

4.2 Stages of transition

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of surveyed youth in terms of their stage of transition and sex. One-third (33.6 per cent) of youth had made the transition from end of schooling or entry to first economic activity to the first stable or satisfactory job. Less than one-fifth (15.6 per cent) of youth were in the process of transiting, and the rest – one-half (50.8 per cent) – had not yet initiated a transition. Results by sex were very different in terms of transition stages. While 57.0 per cent of young men had already transited, only 13.0 per cent of women had completed the transition. Most of the women (70.0 per cent) had yet to start the transition process, as against 28.8 per cent of young men. A slightly higher percentage of women than men were in the process of transitioning (16.8 per cent compared to 14.3 per cent).

Table 4.1 Youth by transition stage and sex

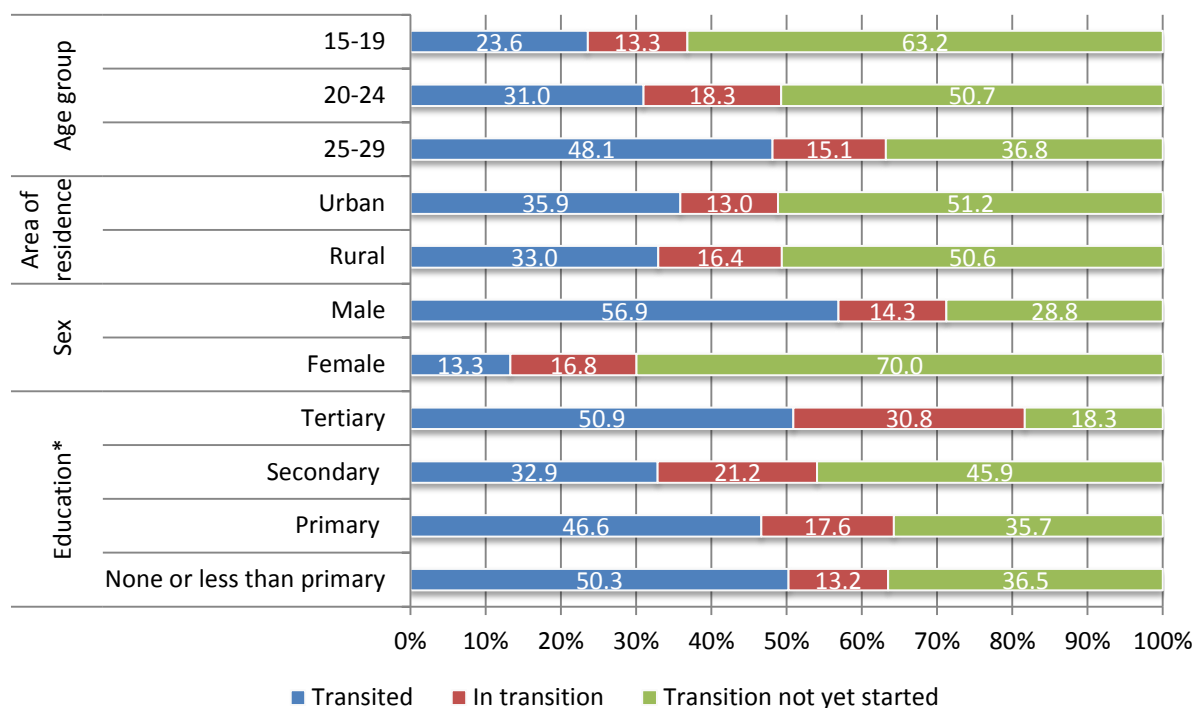
Transition stage	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Transited	14 049 771	33.6	11 085 532	57.0	2 964 239	13.0
In transition	6 530 158	15.6	2 794 026	14.3	3 736 132	16.8
Transition not yet started	21 203 607	50.8	5 601 910	28.8	15 601 697	70.0
Total	41 783 536	100.0	19 481 468	100.0	22 302 067	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Figure 4.1 presents the distribution of youth in terms of their stage in the transition process by age, residence (urban/rural), sex and level of educational attainment (see also table A.7). The data show some interesting characteristics of the transition. About one-half of youth (50.2 per cent) with none or less than primary-level education had transited. This was also the case with youth who had primary education; 46.6 per cent had already completed the transition. This supports the previous finding that the least educated are those most likely to work. On the other hand, 50.9 per cent of youth with tertiary-level education had also completed the transition. The share of transition was the lowest (32.9 per cent) among those with secondary-level education. As already observed, most youth surveyed in Bangladesh had secondary-level education but a high percentage of those youth remained inactive (56.9 per cent; calculated from table 3.2).

Not surprisingly, the higher the age cohort, the higher the percentage of youth who had made the transition. Almost one-half (48.1 per cent) of youth in the highest age cohort of 25–29 had transited, as compared to 31.0 per cent who were aged 20–24, and 23.6 per cent who were aged 15–19. Finally, the data show a slight urban bias in the extent of completed transition; more urban youth (35.9 per cent) had made the transition than rural youth (33.0 per cent). Finally, table A.7 shows that youth from households with higher income levels had the highest tendency to be in the transition-not-yet-started category, reflecting the advantage that household wealth brings by paying for and allowing youth to stay in school longer.

Figure 4.1 Youth by transition stage, age group, area of residence, sex and educational attainment



* Excluding students at the time of the survey since their highest education level was not yet determinable.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

4.2.1 Youth who had not yet started the transition

One would expect most of those who had not yet started transitioning would be in school, but from previous findings that showed the very high shares of inactive non-student females, it is not overly surprising to find that, in the case of Bangladesh, most of them were not only not in school, but also had no intention of looking for work (table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Youth who had not yet started their transition by current activity status and sex

Status	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Inactive students	8 303 193	39.2	4 282 573	76.5	4 020 620	25.8
Inactive non-students with no intention of looking for work	12 900 414	60.8	1 319 337	23.6	11 581 077	74.2
Total	21 203 607	100.0	5 601 910	100.0	15 601 697	100.0

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Three-quarters (74.2 per cent) of young women in the transition-not-yet-started category were inactive non-students with no intention of looking for work. The corresponding share of young men was only 23.6 per cent. In contrast, then, 76.5 per cent of young men had not yet started the transition because they were still in school, compared to 25.8 per cent of young women. Marriage, associated/anticipated reproductive responsibilities and culturally-defined gender roles hold women back from joining the labour market. In fact, as many as 98 per cent of these young women were already married.

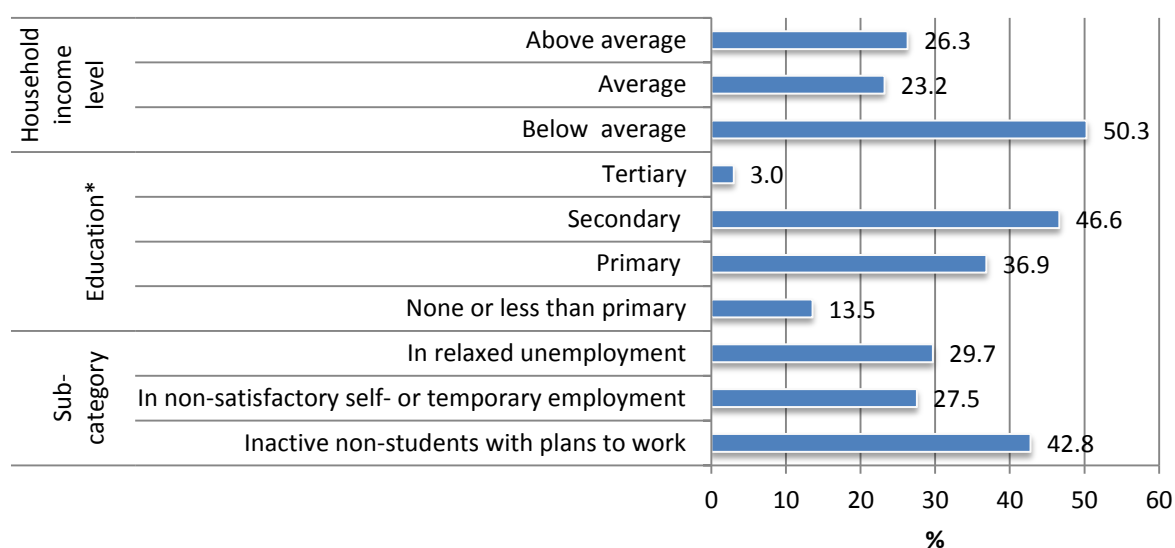
4.2.2 Youth in transition

A young person in transition is a youth who is unemployed (relaxed definition), engaged in self-employment or in a paid temporary job that they have expressed dissatisfaction with, or is an inactive non-students with an attachment to the labour market, indicated by their expressed desire to work in the future.

Figure 4.2 presents the category of youth in transition in greater detail, broken down by level of completed education and household income level. Almost one-half (42.8 per cent) of surveyed youth in transition were inactive non-students with plans to work, 27.5 per cent were in non-satisfactory self- or temporary employment, and 29.7 per cent were unemployed (relaxed definition). A majority (84.4 per cent) of inactive non-students with plans to work were women; 86.0 per cent were married at the time of the survey.

Most youth in transition had completed the secondary level of education (46.6 per cent). Those who had primary-level education represented 36.9 per cent, and only 3.0 per cent of youth in transition had a tertiary level of education. Finally, youth from wealthier households represented one-quarter (26.3 per cent) of those in transition; it may very well have been the case that the households they came from were more able to support them longer during the transition process because the households had relatively higher income. Almost one-quarter (23.2 per cent) of youth in transition came from average-income households. Half (50.3 per cent) of youth in transition came from households with below-average income.

Figure 4.2 Youth in transition by levels of household income, completed education and sub-category



* Excluding students at the time of the survey since their highest education level was not yet determinable.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

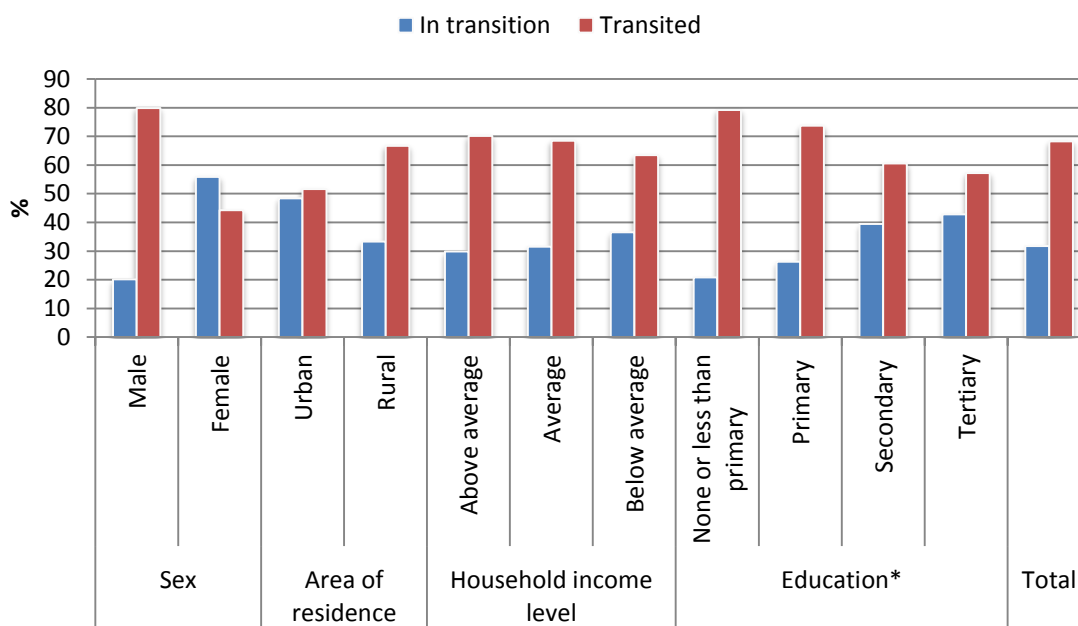
4.3 Characteristics of a completed transition

Figure 4.3 compares the completed-transition and in-transition stages of surveyed youth by sex, area of residence, household income level and educational attainment level. This comparison determines whether these factors played a role in the process of transition for those who had completed the transition and for those who were in transition. The following observations can be made:

First, results confirm the strong gender dimension in the transition process. Among the active transition population, a strong majority of young men had completed their transition (79.9 per cent), while for young women, most remained in transition (55.8 per cent of young women). Second, the incidence of completed transitions was higher in urban than in rural areas, although here the difference was less striking. Third, youth from above-average-income households had a slight advantage when it came to completing the transition. The share of youth from above-average-income households who completed the transition was 70.2 per cent, compared to 63.5 per cent of youth from below-average-income households. Still, it is important to remember that, regardless of income level, a majority of youth (excluding those who had not yet started the transition) had completed the transition versus those remaining in transition.

Finally, looking at transition stages by level of completed education, the data show that the higher the level of education, the more likely the young person remained in transition (although in the absolute sense, the share with completed transition outnumbered the shares in transition across all levels of education). The explanation here has to do with the evident demand for low-skilled workers in the economy, and also that the low skilled are those most likely to create their own job through self-employment. The more educated, on the other hand, are competing for a limited number of professional jobs and therefore face higher rates of unemployment and longer transition periods.

Figure 4.3 Distribution of transition groups (transited and in-transition) by sex, area of residence and levels of household income and completed educational attainment



* Excluding students at the time of the survey since their highest education level was not yet determinable.

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Among transited youth, slightly more than one-half (52.6 per cent) had obtained stable employment, and slightly less than one-half (47.4 per cent) had found satisfactory self- or temporary employment (figure 4.4). Thus, stable employment marginally dominated satisfactory self- or temporary employment. The share of satisfactory temporary employment was very low; only 5.9 per cent of transited youth, and hence most of the employment in this category, were in satisfactory self-employment.

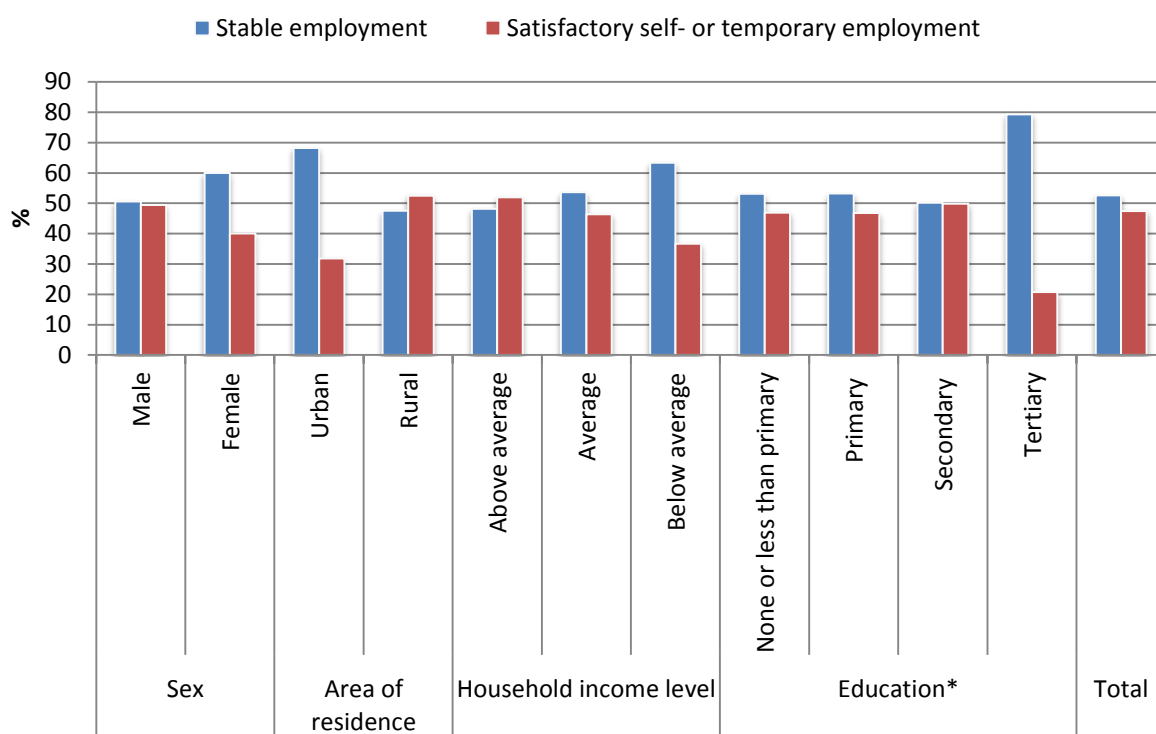
Among the young women who had completed the transition (bearing in mind that they were far fewer than the young men), the likelihood of attaining stable employment was greater than for young males. Three-fifths (60.0 per cent) of young transited females had stable employment compared to 50.6 per cent of young transited males. This finding is

consistent with that above concluding that most working young women were engaged on the basis of a contract of unlimited duration or with a duration greater than 12 months (section 3.4.4). Successful transitions to stable employment were far more frequent in urban than rural areas. In rural areas, by contrast, more youth transitioned to satisfactory self- or temporary employment (52.5 per cent) than stable employment (47.5 per cent).

In contrast to other countries where the SWTS was run,¹⁴ youth in Bangladesh from lower-income households had a higher probability of attaining stable employment. This finding reflects the peculiarities of the national labour market, with relatively high shares of manufacturing jobs offering paid employment (as opposed to self-employment) as an option for low-income youth under a comparatively stable contract. In other low-income countries, the poor tend to be in self-employment as the only option for generating an income.

Finally, figure 4.4 reflects the gain to be had for those who invest in their education to attain stable employment. More than three-quarters (79.3 per cent) of youth with tertiary-level education completed the transition to stable employment. This compares to 53.2 per cent of youth with primary education and 50.2 per cent of youth with secondary education.

Figure 4.4 Transited youth by sub-category, sex, area of residence and levels of household income and completed educational attainment



* Excluding students at the time of the survey since their highest education level was not yet determinable.

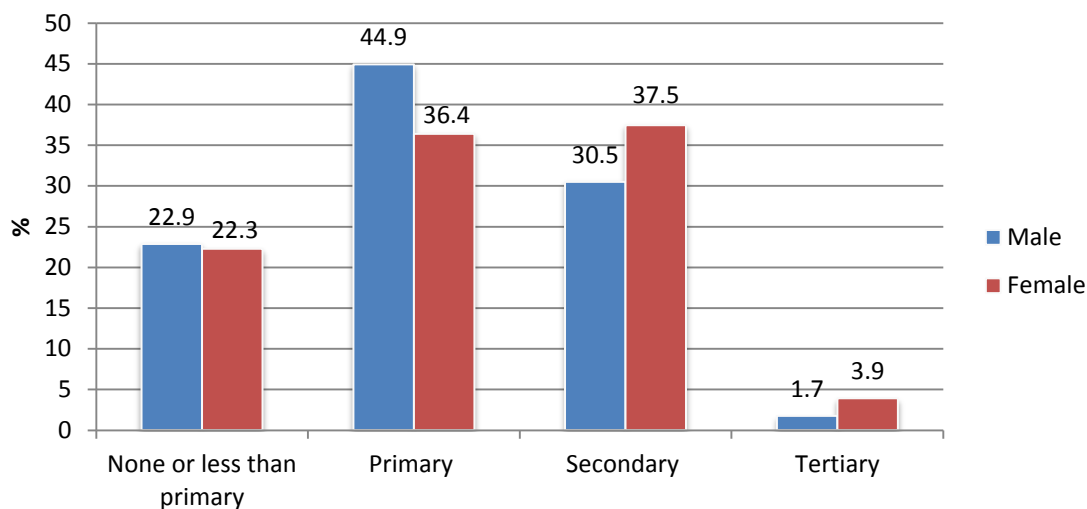
Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

The survey results demonstrated a concentration of transited youth around less than primary and primary levels of education, the same as for the overall population (figure 4.1). As demonstrated in figure 4.5, which shows the educational attainment of transited youth, as young women moved from the primary to the secondary level of education, they slightly increased their chances of completing the transition (36.4 and 37.5 per cent, respectively). Young men, in contrast, were more likely to have completed the transition

¹⁴ Readers are encouraged to see the list of national publications analysing SWTS results at: www.ilo.org/w4y.

with primary- rather than secondary-level education. Also, young women had a better chance than young men of completing the transition when they attained tertiary-level education; 3.9 per cent of transited women had tertiary-level education compared to 1.7 per cent of men.

Figure 4.5 Transited youth by level of educational attainment and sex



* Excluding students at the time of the survey since their highest education level was not yet determinable.

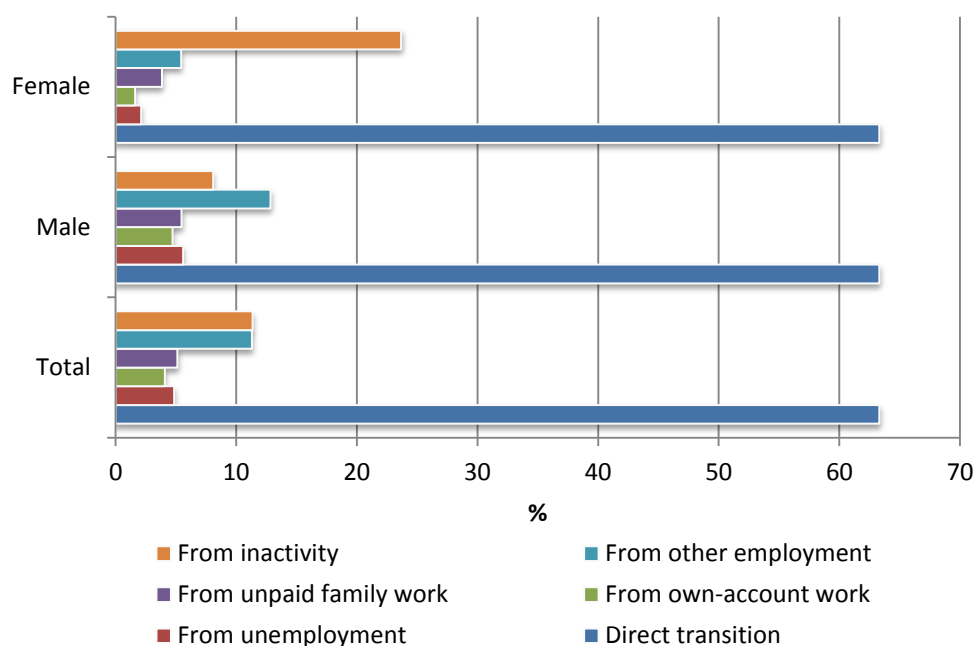
Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

In summary, it seems that the labour market transition process is quite complex in Bangladesh. According to the survey, a majority of young women did not enter the labour market at all because of marriage or other factors, but those who did enter the labour market and attain employment showed a better chance of success in the sense that they were more likely to have a stable job. This finding is reflective of the dominance of the garment industry, where most women are employed in a paid job of unlimited duration.

4.4 Transition paths and length

Another means of examining the transition is through flows and identifying the labour market category held by a young person prior to transiting to stable and/or satisfactory employment. The largest share of transited youth surveyed in Bangladesh made a direct transition (63.3 per cent), as shown in figure 4.6. This means they had no other labour market experience (employment or unemployment) before taking up their current stable or satisfactory job. About one-tenth (11.3 per cent) of transited youth started their transition from other employment and 11.4 per cent had been inactive. Figure 4.6 also provides the same information by sex. Most striking here is that 23.7 per cent of female youth made the transition from the state of inactivity. Thus, breaking the “inactivity trap” seems possible. Transition from own-account work and unpaid family work was very low, at 4.1 per cent and 5.1 per cent, respectively. This gives a rather gloomy prospect for the youth falling in those categories; as already observed, almost one-third of employed youth were in own-account work, and one-fifth of female employment was characterized as unpaid family labour (table 3.6).

Figure 4.6 Transited youth by flows to stable and/or satisfactory employment by sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

Table 4.3 presents certain transition path indicators that provide a more detailed picture of how youth arrived to the transited stage. Excluding youth who transited directly to stable and/or satisfactory employment (63.3 per cent of the total), the path involved, on average, 1.2 intermediate labour market activities – whether unemployment, employment or inactivity – prior to completing the labour market transition. The typical young person in the country experienced “only” one spell of unemployment in their transition path, but the spell was long, averaging 38.6 months or more than 3 years. Spells of temporary employment were more frequent than unemployment and longer in duration, with a young person spending, on average, 44.3 months or slightly less than 4 years in temporary employment prior to completing the transition. The average young transited female spent less time than the young transited male in both temporary employment and unemployment.

Table 4.3 Indicators on the path of transition for youth who completed their labour market transition by sex

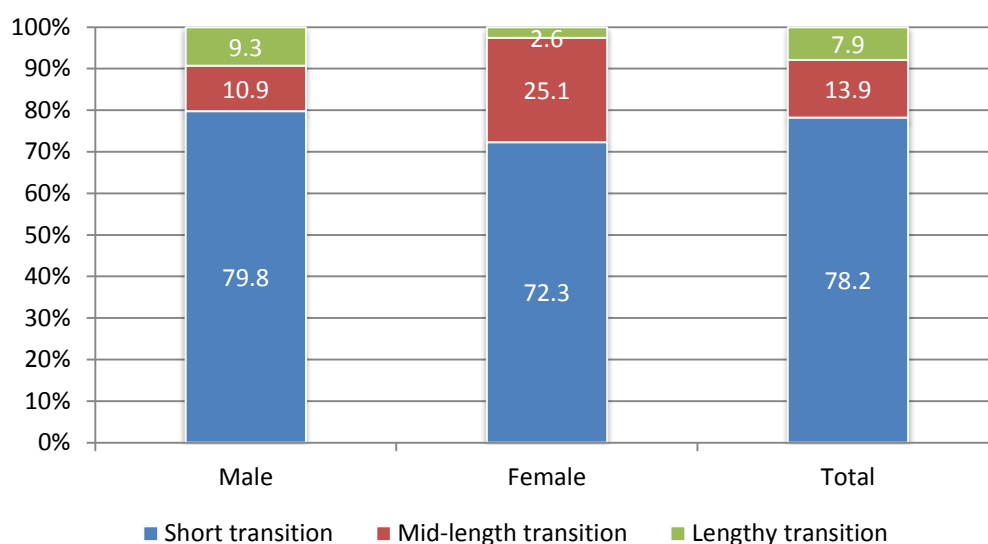
Indicator	Total	Male	Female
Average length of transition, excluding direct transits	63.6 months	62.2 months	69.1 months
Average length of transition, including direct transits	23.4 months	22.9 months	25.3 months
Average length of transition to stable employment	25.7 months	24.0 months	31.1 months
Average length of transition to satisfactory self- or temporary employment	20.5 months	20.4 months	16.3 months
Average number of intermediate activities	1.2	1.3	1.2
Average number of unemployment spells	1.0	1.0	1.1
Average length of unemployment spells	38.6 months	39.0 months	34.8 months
Average number of temporary employment spells	1.4	1.4	1.0
Average length of temporary employment spells	44.3 months	44.4 months	42.7 months
Average number of self-employment spells	1.0	1.0	1.0
Average length of self-employment spells	58.7 months	58.3 months	61.3 months

Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

When including young people who transitioned directly to stable and/or satisfactory employment to generate an average duration of transition, the results show the length of the transition period to be around 2 years (23.4 months). Removing the youth who transitioned directly from the calculation, however, reveals a very different picture. The path to transition was not especially circuitous for those who did not move directly to stable and/or satisfactory work (with 1.2 spells of intermediate activities), but it was extremely long, at 63.6 months, or more than 5 years. The time spent in transition averaged more than 7 months longer for young women compared to young men (69.1 and 62.2 months, respectively).

The ILO has also developed a classification system for the length of transition period of youth who have completed the transition.¹⁵ As already observed, 63.3 per cent of transitioned Bangladeshi youth had experienced a direct transition. This is reflected in figure 4.7, with 78.2 per cent of the total experiencing a short transition. Less than one-tenth (7.9 per cent) of transitioned youth experienced a long transition. It was higher for men than women (9.3 per cent and 2.6 per cent, respectively).

Figure 4.7 Transited youth by length of transition and sex



Source: SWTS-Bangladesh, 2013.

¹⁵ A **short transition** is classified as one in which, before obtaining the current satisfactory/stable job, the young person underwent: (1) a direct transition; or (2) a spell (or cumulative spells) of stable or satisfactory employment with no spell of unemployment or inactivity; or (3) a spell (or cumulative spells) of employment of less than or equal to 1 year with no spell of unemployment or inactivity where the job(s) held is(are) classified as non-satisfactory self- or temporary employment; or (4) a spell of unemployment with or without spells of employment or inactivity of less than or equal to 3 months; or (5) a spell of inactivity of less than or equal to 1 year. A **mid-length transition** is classified as one in which, before obtaining the current satisfactory/stable job, the young person underwent: (1) a spell (or cumulative spells) of non-satisfactory self- or temporary employment of between 1 and 2 years with no spell of unemployment or inactivity; or (2) a spell of unemployment with or without spells of employment or inactivity of between 3 months and 1 year; or (3) a spell of inactivity longer than 1 year. A **lengthy transition** is classified as one in which, before obtaining the current satisfactory/stable job, the young person underwent: (1) a spell (or cumulative spells) of non-satisfactory self- or temporary employment of 2 years or over with no spell of unemployment or inactivity; or (2) a spell of unemployment with or without spells of employment or inactivity of 1 year or over.

5. Relevant policy framework and policy implications

5.1 Relevant policy framework for Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh established the Ministry of Youth & Sports in 1978. The Department of Youth Development within the Ministry was formed in 1981. Its main objective is to provide a creative environment for youth, along with improved education, training and various skill development programmes so that youth may find suitable employment in different sectors of the economy. The Department is responsible for collecting statistics and conducting research to develop proper plans for youth employment and development. It also imparts financial assistance and counselling to youth-related organizations to further accelerate the pace of employment generation.

The National Youth Policy was formulated in 2003 with the aim to utilize the potential that youth possess and to bring out their leadership qualities through proper guidance and training. This Policy is an updated version of the youth policy formed in the 1980s and was designed in keeping with the current socio-economic, global, technological and cultural perspectives of the country. The Ministry of Youth & Sports is responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing the National Youth Policy. The key objectives of the Policy are to: empower youth for various market-based jobs and self-employment; create awareness among youth of their labour market roles; train youth in areas of information technology (IT); ensure a steady flow of labour market information and research; and form an ethical, productive and culturally aware young workforce.

The implementation strategy of the National Youth Policy focuses on establishing training centres for human skill development throughout the country. These centres should have modern equipment available and should aim to instil entrepreneurial skills among youth. The private sector and the media are two key weapons which help to accelerate and publicize the youth development activities, and a highly efficient committee headed by the Ministry of Youth & Sports monitors the progress of the policy.

The Government of Bangladesh also provides microcredit to young people from the **Youth Welfare Fund**. The private sector, NGOs and private and public universities also work to enhance youth development for employment generation in the country.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan (SFYP) of Bangladesh considers the demographic transition in the country as a positive factor for economic growth and is working to provide secondary and tertiary-level education to female youth, along with computer literacy training, so they can find suitable employment in IT and similar fields. Rebalancing the employment structure is a long-term plan, but if the SFYP can steadily follow its policies to educate youth and successfully shift low-paid workers to higher paid jobs in manufacturing and the services sector, a visible reduction in unemployment and a significant increase in real wages should result. The SFYP predicts the creation of 10 million new jobs due to accelerated growth in the manufacturing, construction and services sectors during 2011–15. Half of this growth is expected to originate from the services sector, 3 million jobs from the manufacturing sector and another 1 million jobs from the construction sector.

The significance of the youth population in the labour market is fully recognized in Bangladesh and, along with the provisions mentioned in the Second Five-Year Plan, the Government also drafted a National Labour Policy (2012) which aims to provide a safe, modest, productive and unprejudiced working environment for all workers. Its objectives include forming an efficient workforce and providing proper jobs according to qualification, removing gender bias in workplaces, ensuring the safety of workers in

domestic and foreign markets and improving workers' standard of living. The policy also encourages entrepreneurship, has created job-opportunity-related information centres, and has designed research programmes along with on-the-job and futuristic training sessions to ensure job security for all.

5.2 Policy implications

1. **Design macroeconomic policy to promote job growth, especially within the services sector.** The SWTS results found that a number of unemployed youth were hoping to gain work as professionals. While 15 per cent of unemployed youth wanted to gain employment as skilled professionals, only 4 per cent of young workers were in professional work. A clear gap exists in the supply and demand of young professionals. The young person looking for self-employment, on the other hand, is likely to find it less difficult to find an opportunity. Beyond improving the alignment of the education system with the demands of the labour market, demand-side solutions are needed to generate additional jobs for young professionals. This requires coordinated policy efforts to support aggregate demand through pro-employment macroeconomic policies and to foster growth engines through an appropriate balance of export-driven growth and expansion of domestic markets (ILO, 2013a, Chapter 6). Some general approaches in this area are mentioned in box 3.

Box 3. Approaches to boost aggregate demand and promote youth employment

Policies that promote employment-centred and sustainable growth are vital if young people are to be given a fair chance at a decent job. Youth labour market outcomes are closely related to overall employment trends but are more sensitive to the business cycle. A boost in aggregate demand is key to addressing the youth employment crisis as this will create more job opportunities for young people. ILO research shows that macroeconomic policies can influence youth employment by:

1. encouraging economic diversification and productive transformation;
2. reducing macroeconomic volatility by engaging in timely and targeted counter-cyclical policies;
3. loosening constraints on private sector growth, with a particular emphasis on access to finance for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;
4. focusing on targeted demand-side interventions with particular impact on youth employment (e.g. labour-intensive infrastructure works, public employment programmes, wage and training subsidies); and
5. ensuring adequate and predictable funding for targeted youth employment interventions.

Source: ILO, 2013a, box 8.

2. **Ensure educational access for all and prevention of early school departures.** Bangladesh has slowly made a move from concentration of the youth population with primary-level education to secondary-level education. School enrolment, particularly of women, has significantly improved. This has not, however, translated into better labour market performance and shows that education alone is not a panacea. The survey showed most youth who had transited and were in transition attained a secondary level of education, and most employed youth had a secondary-level (38.6 per cent). The extent of early school drop-outs was almost two-thirds (64.4 per cent). With educational outcomes shown to be clearly linked to better labour market outcomes for youth and an easier labour market transition, policies and resources should be directed towards keeping young people in school and enhancing the quality of education in academic institutions and vocational training centres. Policy actions in this regards are numerous, including:
 - Promote equitable access to basic education, but make sure that quality is not sacrificed in the face of quantity;

- Promote literacy among those who did not have previous access to basic education (this can be embedded in skills training programmes);
 - Address financial and non-financial access barriers to skills training, including for young girls;
 - Reinforce the relevance of technical and vocational education by investment in public TVET systems, including technological upgrades, and bring together government and employers on national skills councils for curriculum development;
 - Strengthen career guidance within school;
 - Encourage programmes aimed to increase productivity and the wage potential of undereducated young workers. An example is the Personal Advancement & Career Enhancement (P.A.C.E.) programme for women in the garment industry.¹⁶
 - Specifically address disadvantaged groups in skills development strategies and remove impediments to participation (e.g. child care for young mothers);
 - Improve access to and quality of informal apprenticeship training;¹⁷
 - Establish process for certification of skills, including those gained through informal training;
 - Target informal sector workers in specific trades and re-train toward more productive fields.
3. **Improve working conditions by ensuring equal treatment for and rights of young workers.** The survey results show that young people continued to suffer from decent work deficits and low-quality jobs. Many of them were trapped in irregular employment, often in the informal economy. Labour laws and collective agreements, including through sanctioning mechanisms, can protect young workers and ease their transitions into stable and decent employment; a recently launched ILO initiative aims to improve working conditions in the garment sector (box 4). In parallel, a system of incentives to invest in the improvement of young people's working conditions can facilitate transitions from temporary to stable jobs and from the informal to the formal economy.
4. **Support employers in taking active part in the creation of decent jobs for young people.** Employers may take on young people when subsidies are offered in the way of tax breaks or other financial incentives, although the very high levels of informality among enterprises in the country can hamper the effectiveness of such a strategy. Perhaps more can be done to make the business case for employing young people by

¹⁶ P.A.C.E. is a programme of Gap Inc. that aims to increase economic empowerment of women in the garment industry. The programme is active in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. "Gap Inc.'s P.A.C.E. Program Recognized by Former President Clinton as an Exemplary Approach to Women's Economic Empowerment", Gap Inc., 21 Sep. 2011, http://www.gapinc.com/content/gapinc/html/media/pressrelease/2011/med_pr_PACE_Recognized_by_CGI092111.html [accessed 20 May 2014].

¹⁷ Introducing apprenticeships and scaling them up has been a key initiative of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform Project, supported by the ILO and funded by the European Union. The programme graduated 8,000 apprentices in 2013. *98 to 8000 formal apprentices in three years: Bangladesh's success in learning and earning*, ILO, ILO Country Office in Bangladesh (CO-Dhaka), 2013, http://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Whatsnew/WCMS_232646/lang--en/index.htm [accessed 20 May 2014].

highlighting how this impacts on organizations' competitiveness. Helping employers to link investment in young people and also training of their young staff to their business strategy is an area that could be expanded.

Box 4. ILO programme to make the garment industry safer

In late 2013, the ILO launched a major programme with the Government, workers and employers in Bangladesh, in response to a number of accidents that had hit the country's RMG industry. The initiative includes a new Better Work programme aimed at improving working conditions in the RMG industry in Bangladesh.

The three-and-a-half-year initiative, "Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-Made Garment Sector Programme in Bangladesh" (RMGP), focuses on minimizing the threat of fire and building collapse in RMG factories and on ensuring the rights and safety of workers. The programme will provide technical support to building and fire safety assessments; strengthen and support labour, fire and building inspections; build occupational safety and health awareness, capacity and systems; and provide rehabilitation and skills training for the victims of Rana Plaza and Tazreen Fashions, where 112 workers died in a fire in November 2012.

As part of the new programme, the ILO and the International Finance Corporation also announced the launch of a Better Work programme in Bangladesh. This will complement the RMGP by implementing factory-level activities to improve compliance with national labour laws and respect for international core labour standards, while promoting the competitiveness of participating factories.

Better Work Bangladesh is a partnership with government, employers, workers, international buyers and other relevant stakeholders to promote sustainable change in the ready-made garments sector, by helping factories comply with labour laws and building the capacity for labour administration and industrial relations.

5. **Strengthen support mechanisms to informal enterprises.** Access to finance is consistently listed as a major constraint for enterprises to expand their capacity via investments that lead to the creation of new jobs. This is particularly important in countries where a majority of establishments are micro and small enterprises. Consequently, measures aiming to improve financial inclusion are likely to stimulate labour demand and thereby to generate new employment opportunities for young people. At the same time, there are a wealth of other support mechanisms which can help to increase the productivity and working conditions of micro and small enterprises where so many young people are engaged, including the following macro- and micro-level areas of intervention:
 - Macro-level: rationalize and streamline business registration and licensing regimes; simplify tax administration; review land ownership; create an enabling environment for enterprises; introduce incentives for compliance with the legal and regulatory framework;
 - Micro-level: support entrepreneurship training; reduce vulnerability through extension of social safety nets; introduce safety and health training for homeworkers and small enterprises; improve access to markets; support development of peer support mechanisms through organization of business membership organizations and informal workers organizations.
6. **Facilitate the financial inclusion of youth and access to credit for existing enterprises.** Access to finance is consistently listed as a major constraint for enterprises to expand their capacity through investments that lead to the creation of new jobs. This is particularly important in countries where a majority of establishments are micro- and small enterprises. The results of the SWTS show that 34.7 per cent of self-employed youth in the country named insufficient access to capital as their most significant challenge. Consequently, measures aimed at improving financial inclusion are likely to stimulate labour demand and thereby generate new employment opportunities for young people.

7. **Promote bipartite and tripartite cooperation on youth employment to yield better employment outcomes.** Establishing an enabling environment for the successful implementation of employment and labour market interventions for young people requires bipartite and tripartite cooperation. This is confirmed by the results of evaluations of youth employment programmes. The Government, employers' organizations and trade unions of Bangladesh have a role to play by fulfilling their own specific mandates and through concerted and joint efforts for the promotion of decent work for youth in the country.

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Annex I. Definitions of labour market statistics

1. The following units are defined according to the standards of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians:
 - a. The **employed** include all persons of 15 years of age or more who during a week of reference:
 - worked for wage or profit (in cash or in kind) for at least one hour;
 - were temporarily absent from work (because of illness, leave, studies, a break of activity of the firm, etc.), but had a formal attachment to their job;
 - performed some work without pay for family gain.
 - b. The **unemployed** (strictly defined) include all persons of 15 years of age or more who meet the following three conditions during the week of reference:
 - They did not work (according to the abovementioned definition);
 - were actively searching for a job or took concrete action to start their own business;
 - were available to start work within the two weeks following the reference week.
 - c. Persons neither included in the employed nor in the unemployed are classified as **not in the labour force (also known as inactive)**.
2. The International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE) categorizes the employed population on the basis of their explicit or implicit contract of employment, as follows:
 - a. **Employees** (also wage and salaried workers) are those who hold the type of jobs defined as "paid employment jobs", where the incumbents hold explicit (written or oral) or implicit employment contracts that give them a basic remuneration that is not directly dependent upon the revenue of the unit for which they work.
 - b. **Employers** are those who, working on their own account or with one or a few partners, hold the type of jobs defined as a "self-employment jobs" (i.e. jobs where the remuneration is directly dependent upon the profits derived from the goods and services produced) and, in this capacity, have engaged, on a continuous basis, one or more persons to work for them as employee(s).
 - c. **Own-account workers** are those who, working on their own account or with one or more partners, hold the type of jobs defined as a "self-employment jobs" and have not engaged, on a continuous basis, any employees to work for them.
 - d. **Contributing (unpaid) family workers** are those who hold "self-employment jobs" as own-account workers in a market-oriented establishment operated by a related person living in the same household.
3. The employed are also classified by their main **occupation**, in accordance with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).
4. A **household** is every family or other community of persons living together and jointly spending their income to satisfy the basic necessities of life. The concept of household includes members present in the place where the household resides, as well as individuals who are temporarily absent and living elsewhere, including abroad, for business, education or other, as long as their residence in the foreign country does not exceed 1 year. A person living alone can also qualify as a household ("single household") if s/he does not already

belong to another unit. The single household can reside in a separate or shared apartment, considered as an independent unit as long as the household's income is not shared with other residents. Collective households, such as prisons and institutions, and their members are not observed in the LFS.

5. **The reporting period**, to which the questions for the economic activity are related, is the week before the week of interview (52 reporting weeks throughout the year).
6. The following units are also defined within the SWTS analysis but are outside the scope of those defined within the international framework of labour market statistics mentioned in item 1 above:
 - a. **Relaxed unemployment** – a person without work and available to work (relaxing the jobseeking criteria of item 1b above).
 - b. **Labour underutilization rate** – the sum of shares of youth in irregular employment, unemployed (relaxed definition) and youth neither in the labour force nor in education/training (inactive non-students) as a percentage of the youth population.
 - c. **Regular employment** – the sum of employees with a contract (oral or written) of 12 months or more in duration and employers; the indicators are therefore a mix of information on status in employment and contract situations.
 - d. **Satisfactory employment** – based on self-assessment of the jobholder; implies a job that the respondent considers to “fit” to their desired employment path at that moment in time.
 - e. **Stable employment** – employees with a contract (oral or written) of 12 months or more in duration.
 - f. **Temporary employment** – employees with a contract (oral or written) of less than 12 months in duration.

Annex II. Additional statistical tables

The source for all tables is the SWTS for Bangladesh, 2013.

Table A.1 Youth population by use of financial instruments, area of residence and sex

Financial instrument	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total (Urban + Rural)						
None	33 628 116	80.5	15 686 370	80.5	17 941 746	80.4
Business loans	1 836 768	4.4	942 848	4.8	893 920	4.0
Emergency loans	1 810 116	4.3	827 684	4.2	982 432	4.4
Consumption loans	790 735	1.9	367 569	1.9	423 166	1.9
Savings	997 924	2.4	499 233	2.6	498 690	2.2
Insurance	158 022	0.4	60 297	0.3	97 725	0.4
Remittance	572 469	1.4	229 316	1.2	343 153	1.5
Other	3 269 919	7.8	1 460 531	7.5	1 809 387	8.1
Rural						
None	25 389 622	78.9	12 010 030	79.4	13 379 591	78.5
Business loans	1 473 362	4.6	742 539	4.9	730 823	4.3
Emergency loans	1 654 346	5.1	744 009	4.9	910 337	5.3
Consumption loans	490 767	1.5	228 493	1.5	262 274	1.5
Savings	753 632	2.3	379 084	2.5	374 548	2.2
Insurance	91 086	0.3	28 846	0.2	62 240	0.4
Remittance	501 891	1.6	205 178	1.4	296 713	1.7
Other	2 626 023	8.2	1 149 275	7.6	1 476 748	8.7
Urban						
None	8 238 494	85.6	3 676 339	84.4	4 562 155	86.7
Business loans	363 406	3.8	200 309	4.6	163 097	3.1
Emergency loans	155 770	1.6	83 675	1.9	72 095	1.4
Consumption loans	299 968	3.1	139 077	3.2	160 891	3.1
Savings	244 292	2.5	120 150	2.8	124 142	2.4
Insurance	66 936	0.7	31 452	0.7	35 485	0.7
Remittance	70 577	0.7	24 138	0.6	46 440	0.9
Other	643 896	6.7	311 256	7.1	332 639	6.3

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Table A.2 Youth by source of financial services, area of residence and sex

Source	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total (Urban + Rural)						
Banks	1 469 858	18.0	783 996	20.7	685 863	15.7
Insurance companies	339 895	4.2	183 461	4.8	156 434	3.6
Microfinance institutions	3 208 387	39.3	1 393 077	36.7	1 815 310	41.6
Money transfer operators	278 752	3.4	162 873	4.3	115 879	2.7
Informal financial operators	3 264 163	40.0	1 615 849	42.6	1 648 314	37.8
Family & friends	33 706	0.4	26 085	0.7	7 621	0.2
Other	674 367	8.3	220 827	5.8	453 540	10.4
Urban						
Banks	1 213 124	17.9	637 563	20.5	575 562	15.7
Insurance companies	243 906	3.6	137 844	4.4	106 062	2.9
Microfinance institutions	2 756 266	40.7	1 171 774	37.6	1 584 492	43.3
Money transfer operators	131 861	1.9	73 266	2.4	58 596	1.6
Informal financial operators	2 661 144	39.3	1 305 702	41.9	1 355 442	37.1
Family & friends	31 129	0.5	23 508	0.8	7 621	0.2
Other	496 094	7.3	143 743	4.6	352 352	9.6
Rural						
Banks	256 734	18.6	146 433	21.6	110 301	15.7
Insurance companies	95 990	6.9	45 618	6.7	50 372	7.2
Microfinance institutions	452 121	32.7	221 303	32.6	230 818	32.8
Money transfer operators	146 890	10.6	89 607	13.2	57 283	8.2
Informal financial operators	603 019	43.6	310 147	45.6	292 872	41.7
Family & friends	2 577	0.2	2 577	0.4	0	0.0
Other	178 272	12.9	77 084	11.3	101 188	14.4

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Table A.3 Employed youth by union membership, area of residence and sex

Membership	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total (Urban + Rural)						
Member	480 797	3.0	428 237	3.4	52 560	1.6
Non-member	15 364 530	97.0	12 105 252	96.6	3 259 278	98.4
Total	15 845 327	100.0	12 533 489	100.0	3 311 838	100.0
Rural						
Member	387 778	3.2	348 363	3.5	39 415	1.8
Non-member	11 686 909	96.8	9 511 788	96.5	2 175 121	98.2
Total	12 074 687	100.0	9 860 151	100.0	2 214 536	100.0
Urban						
Member	93 019	2.5	79 874	3.0	13 146	1.2
Non-member	3 677 621	97.5	2 593 464	97.0	1 084 157	98.8
Total	3 770 640	100.0	2 673 338	100.0	1 097 302	100.0

Table A.4 Employed youth by satisfaction with current job, area of residence and sex

Satisfaction	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total (Urban + Rural)						
Very satisfied	1 419 972	9.0	1 050 132	8.4	369 840	11.2
Somewhat satisfied	11 342 047	71.6	8 958 149	71.5	2 383 898	72.0
Somewhat unsatisfied	2 860 032	18.1	2 390 296	19.1	469 736	14.2
Very unsatisfied	225 442	1.4	136 077	1.1	89 366	2.7
Total	15 847 494	100.0	12 534 654	100.0	3 312 840	100.0
Rural						
Very satisfied	1 026 107	8.5	787 621	8.0	238 486	10.8
Somewhat satisfied	8 571 109	71.0	7 003 579	71.0	1 567 530	70.8
Somewhat unsatisfied	2 307 817	19.1	1 969 238	20.0	338 579	15.3
Very unsatisfied	169 654	1.4	99 713	1.0	69 941	3.2
Total	12 074 687	100.0	9 860 151	100.0	2 214 536	100.0
Urban						
Very satisfied	393 865	10.4	262 511	9.8	131 354	12.0
Somewhat satisfied	2 770 938	73.5	1 954 570	73.1	816 368	74.3
Somewhat unsatisfied	552 215	14.6	421 058	15.7	131 157	11.9
Very unsatisfied	55 788	1.5	36 363	1.4	19 425	1.8
Total	3 772 807	100.0	2 674 503	100.0	1 098 304	100.0

Table A.5 Employed youth by type of job-oriented training received and sex

Main field of training	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mechanical/civil engineering	53 633	2.2	53 633	3.9	0	0.0
Electrical engineering	41 523	1.7	35 774	2.6	5 749	0.6
Computer technology	805 315	33.5	487 478	35.6	317 837	30.7
Leather & textile	23 831	1.0	23 831	1.7	0	0.0
Catering, hotel & restaurant services	7 673	0.3	7 673	0.6	0	0.0
Craftsman/handicrafts	278 496	11.6	65 621	4.8	212 875	20.6
Creative arts/artists	19 547	0.8	11 985	0.9	7 562	0.7
Agriculture crop production	118 362	4.9	61 122	4.5	57 240	5.5
Non-crop agricultural	23 031	1.0	22 918	1.7	113	0.0
Health & paramedical services	67 462	2.8	35 538	2.6	31 923	3.1
Office management	22 106	0.9	20 880	1.5	1 226	0.1
Driving & motor mechanics	287 995	12.0	283 360	20.7	4 634	0.5
Beautician & hairdressing	22 760	1.0	14 452	1.1	8 308	0.8
Foreign language	20 396	0.9	15 202	1.1	5 194	0.5
Construction-related	35 910	1.5	35 910	2.6	0	0.0
Furniture production	61 732	2.6	60 749	4.4	982	0.1
Welding	23 502	1.0	23 502	1.7	0	0.0
Poultry farming	54 238	2.3	34 827	2.6	19 410	1.9
Ready-made garments	435 735	18.1	73 175	5.4	362 561	35.0
Total	2 403 244	100.0	1 367 631	100.0	1 035 613	100.0

Table A.6 Self-employed youth by problem in running the business, area of residence and sex

Most important problem	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total (Urban + Rural)						
Business information	504 030	9.9	447 005	10.2	57 025	7.9
Marketing services	289 007	5.7	241 729	5.5	47 278	6.5
Insufficient financial resources	1 766 508	34.7	1 525 987	34.9	240 521	33.2
Insufficient quality of staff	44 909	0.9	44 909	1.0	0	0.0
Political uncertainty	84 949	1.7	82 573	1.9	2 375	0.3
Shortage of raw materials	49 272	1.0	41 792	1.0	7 480	1.0
Accounting & financial reporting	27 104	0.5	27 104	0.6	0	0.0
Consulting/advice	91 468	1.8	83 761	1.9	7 707	1.1
Business training	9 046	0.2	8 148	0.2	899	0.1
Language training	330 801	6.5	226 807	5.2	103 993	14.4
Training in required skills	65 902	1.3	65 902	1.5	0	0.0
Internet services	75 335	1.5	75 335	1.7	0	0.0
Other	1 754 895	34.5	1 497 290	34.3	257 606	35.5
Total	5 093 226	100.0	4 368 342	100.0	724 884	100.0
Rural						
Business information	405 684	9.6	356 768	9.9	48 915	8.0
Marketing services	237 635	5.7	206 513	5.7	31 122	5.1
Insufficient financial resources	1 462 884	34.8	1 263 613	35.2	199 271	32.5
Insufficient quality of staff	33 315	0.8	33 315	0.9	0	0.0
Political uncertainty	47 957	1.1	47 957	1.3	0	0.0
Shortage of raw materials	40 415	1.0	32 934	0.9	7 480	1.2
Accounting & financial reporting	27 104	0.6	27 104	0.8	0	0.0
Consulting/advice	86 552	2.1	79 811	2.2	6 740	1.1
Business training	3 046	0.1	3 046	0.1	0	0.0
Language training	308 760	7.3	209 570	5.8	99 190	16.2
Training in required skills	61 515	1.5	61 515	1.7	0	0.0
Internet services	70 321	1.7	70 321	2.0	0	0.0
Other	1 423 311	33.8	1 202 874	33.5	220 437	36.0
Total	4 208 497	100.0	3 595 342	100.0	613 156	100.0
Urban						
Business information	98 346	11.1	90 237	11.7	8 109	7.3
Marketing services	51 372	5.8	35 216	4.6	16 156	14.5
Insufficient financial resources	303 624	34.3	262 374	33.9	41 250	36.9
Insufficient quality of staff	11 595	1.3	11 595	1.5	0	0.0
Political uncertainty	36 992	4.2	34 616	4.5	2 375	2.1
Shortage of raw materials	8 857	1.0	8 857	1.2	0	0.0
Accounting & financial reporting	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Consulting/advice	4 917	0.6	3 950	0.5	967	0.9
Business training	6 001	0.7	5 102	0.7	899	0.8
Language training	22 040	2.5	17 237	2.2	4 803	4.3
Training in required skills	4 387	0.5	4 387	0.6	0	0.0
Internet services	5 014	0.6	5 014	0.7	0	0.0
Other	331 584	37.5	294 415	38.1	37 169	33.3
Total	884 729	100.0	773 000	100.0	111 728	100.0

Table A.7 Youth by stages of transition, level of completed education, sex, area of residence, age group and household income level

Characteristic	Transited		In transition		Transition not yet started	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Education*						
None or less than primary	2 985 994	50.2	786 443	13.2	2 169 967	36.5
Primary	5 660 604	46.6	2 140 509	17.6	4 337 169	35.7
Secondary	4 196 196	32.9	2 707 790	21.2	5 866 607	45.9
Tertiary	287 185	50.9	173 521	30.8	103 445	18.3
Sex						
Male	11 085 532	56.9	2 794 026	14.3	5 601 910	28.8
Female	2 964 239	13.3	3 736 132	16.8	15 601 697	70.0
Area of residence						
Urban	3 450 707	35.9	1 248 626	13.0	4 921 365	51.2
Rural	10 599 064	33.0	5 281 532	16.4	16 282 242	50.6
Age group						
15–19	3 324 776	23.6	1 870 816	13.3	8 915 044	63.2
20–24	4 684 164	31.0	2 767 330	18.3	7 667 548	50.7
20–29	6 040 832	48.1	1 892 012	15.1	4 621 015	36.8
Household income level						
Above average	7 730 809	30.7	3 281 141	13.0	14 146 732	56.2
Average	3 332 555	38.1	1 531 237	17.5	3 889 797	44.4
Below average	2 986 407	37.9	1 717 779	21.8	3 167 078	40.2
Total	14 049 771		6 530 158		21 203 607	

* Excluding students at the time of the survey since their highest education level was not yet determinable.



This report presents the highlights of the 2013 School-to-work Transition Survey (SWTS) run together with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics within the framework of the ILO Work4Youth Project. This Project is a five-year partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation that aims to promote decent work opportunities for young men and women through knowledge and action. The W4Y Publication Series is designed to disseminate data and analyses from the SWTS administered by the ILO in 28 countries covering five regions of the world. The SWTS is a unique survey instrument that generates relevant labour market information on young people aged 15 to 29 years. The survey captures longitudinal information on transitions within the labour market, thus providing evidence of the increasingly tentative and indirect paths to decent and productive employment that today's young men and women face.

The W4Y Publications Series covers national reports, with main survey findings and details on current national policy interventions in the area of youth employment, and regional synthesis reports that highlight regional patterns in youth labour market transitions and distinctions in national policy frameworks.

Work4Youth



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