

## **Survival Challenges and Coping Strategies of Women living in Slum: Evidence from Dhaka City**

### ***Abstract***

*This article focuses on the challenges experienced by women living in slum in case of survival and the mechanisms adopted by them to cope with these challenges. Data were collected from 150 women who reside in different slum areas of Dhaka city using mix research methodology. Study found that, around 4500 slums in Dhaka city where estimated 3.4 million people are living. Most of them (40%) are migrated from countryside driven by push and pull factors. Study also found that, they are unable to maintain a minimum standard of living due to poverty. Low income, unhygienic environment, lack of pure drinking water, gas and electricity, physical and sexual harassment, extortion are the major hindrances in their slum life. Apart from these, searching better job, social network, community involvement, future hope were reported as coping strategies among slum women. At the end of the research, some suggestions for the welfare of slum women have been proposed.*

**Key Words:** Survival Challenge, Coping strategy, Slum women, Dhaka city

### **1. Introduction**

Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, is considered one of the mega cities of the world due to it's the highest urban population growth rate. Annually, the city draws an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 mostly poor migrants who provide critical employment for the city's industries and services. Most migrants come from rural areas in search of opportunities, which can provide new livelihood options for them (Hossain, 2012) and 40% of the total migrated population live in slum areas (Siddiqui, Qadir, Alamgir & Huq, 1993). An estimated 3.4 million people live in the overcrowded slums of Dhaka, and many more live in public spaces lacking the most basic shelter (Uddin, Koehlmoos, Ashraf, Khan, Saha, Hossain, Chowdhury, & Ahmed, 2009). Another study shows that, one-quarter of the population of the Dhaka City Corporation, which is located within the formal boundaries of the city proper, lives in slum households (Perry et al, 1998). Among them a handsome amount of population is woman. They are among the most physically visible of all people living and working in the streets

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and public places of the large cities like Dhaka, but they are also among the most invisible and therefore, hardest to reach with essential services (Uddin et al, 2009). Regardless of the characterization of slums, slum dwellers face higher developmental challenges such as higher morbidity and infant mortality rates than either non-slum dwellers or the rural population (UN HABITAT, 2003).

## **2. Background**

Slum Women are mostly ‘economic refugees’ driven by both ‘push’ (poverty, landlessness, violence, natural disasters, etc.) and pull (job opportunities in formal and informal sectors, better wage rate, etc.) factors (Lee, 1966). Women of slum cannot lead normal life due to negligence in all spheres of life. Their household activities are hardly recognized by society. Besides, they constitute the most underprivileged group of the area as they neither have political right nor have decision making power. Apart from it, they have limited access to government healthcare services. They are deprived of adequate and nutritious food, clothing, shelter, and other social services. Physical deprivation is the main feature in these women’s live (Hossain, 2012). Their unhygienic living condition creates a serious public health hazard. They suffer from various diseases including skin diseases, respiratory tract infection, fever, cough, cold, worm infestation and diarrhea (Uddin et al, 2009). Large numbers of women living in the slums reportedly die during pregnancy and the post-partum period. Pregnancy loss, fetal deaths, stillbirths, unsafe abortions, and HIV were also said to be very common in the slums (Izugbara & Ngilangwa, 2010). Keeping in view the above mentioned situation of women in slum areas of Dhaka city, this research attempts to investigate their survival challenges and coping strategies..

## **3. Global Trend on Slum**

The urban population in the world is growing at the rate of 7% and projected to reach 50 million by 2030 from 39.4 million in 2005 (UN-Pop, 2007). That indicates more than half of the world’s population lives within metropolitan areas where over 1.5 billion people, or one fourth of the world population, live in areas commonly referred to as “slums”. In Commonwealth countries, according to a recent UN-Habitat report, 327 million people live in slums (Kumar, 2012). More than 70% of the least developed countries (LDCs) and of Sub-Saharan Africa’s urban population lived in slums in 2001 and this is set to increase unless there is substantial intervention. The comparatively more rapid growth in the urban areas of developing countries suggests that the problems associated with slum dwelling will worsen in those areas that are already most vulnerable (UNHABITAT, 2003).

#### 4. Urbanization Vs Slums

Urbanization refers to the concentration of people to urban areas equating to the urban migration. The link between migration and slums has been of concern to development planners since it has become apparent that the majority of Asia's population (56%) will be living in urban areas by the year 2020 (Islam, 1996). The fastest growing sections of the urban areas are the slums. Because migrants seeking shelter in slums do not generally have any other homes to turn to. They are so poor that, at best, they can hire basic accommodation in crowded slums. Limited absorption capacities of the cities, coupled with the low-income status of the majority of migrants, have contributed to the creation of slums. As a result, urbanization in many places has resulted in the creation of vast urban slums, where thousands and sometimes millions of urban residents live in sub-standard housing conditions, without access to even the most basic services (COHRE, 2008). So, it can be said that, slums are the ultimate effect of urbanization.

#### 5. Slum of Dhaka City: An Overview

Bangladesh, with a population of 147.4 million (CIA World Fact Book, 2012) is one of the poorest countries in the world, with an estimated 3.4 million people live in some 5000 slums of its capital city Dhaka (Islam, 2005). Another report shows that the total number of slums in the Dhaka city corporation area is approximately 4,500 and these slums accommodates about 65% of the total population of Dhaka city. According to Democracy Watch (2002) the people who have migrated from different parts of the country are forced to live in the slums due to lack of proper shelter facilities. These slum lands are owned by landowner or *basti* (slum) owner, who allow the migrants to build a bamboo shelter to use as a home on high payments. These owners of the slum areas do not pay government any taxes and are not accountable for the conditions or safety of the slum dwellers. Government land is also illegally occupied by those who have power, having links with police and political parties, to be used as slum dwellings (Tiina et al. 2002). These slum areas are densely populated, i.e., >300 persons/acre, with extremely poor housing conditions (generally shacks, *Kutcha houses*, *semi-pucca houses*, flimsy structures, or very old dilapidated buildings). According to Islam (1996b), very poor people who are mostly engaged in the informal sector inhabit these areas and in 1991, about 1,125 slums housing accommodated around 2.3. The density of population doubled between 1974 and 1990 (ibid). Lloyd (1979 as cited in Majumder et al, 1996) found out that around 94% of slum dwellers in Dhaka were from rural areas. However, not all migrants are fortunate enough to find accommodation in slums and Ullah (2004) have indicated that finding a place is difficult without family connections in slums

## **6. Slum Women: The Poorest of the Poor**

Across the world, the feminization of poverty is a stark reality and poor women have enormous difficulty securing an adequate home in which to live. Global statistics show that slum women are disproportionately affected by poverty, and inequality between men and women persists in both the economic and employment fields (COHRE, 2008). It is mentionable that in Bangladesh, hunger and poverty are more women's issues than men's. Women living in slum experience hunger and poverty more intensely than men. These slum poor women in Bangladesh have the most insecure social standing. A husband can throw his wife out any time he wishes (Yunus, 1999). However, the absolute number of poor and undernourished women in urban slum areas is increasing, as is the share of urban areas in overall poverty and malnutrition (UN HABITAT, 2003). Work for slum women is difficult to get, especially in case of single mothers, who are socially out-casted, on top of being excluded from the formal economy because of various socio-cultural factors or lack of secure assets (Andre, 2009). Slum areas have the most visible concentrations of poor women and the worst shelter and environmental conditions (UN HABITAT, 2003).

## **7. Literature on Slum Women**

UN Habitat (2003) explored that Slums have grown as a seemingly inevitable part of modern urban life. Low-income people find the cheap accommodation helpful in their need to keep housekeeping costs low enough to afford. To do this, they have to tolerate much less than ideal conditions. Democracy watch (2002) indicated that the migration of people from rural to urban areas is the main reason of the growing slum population in Dhaka city. 'Urban attractions' and 'rural distractions' has gradually persuaded people to migrate throughout the last decade, whereas COHRE (2008) found that, women move to urban areas for a number of different reasons, ranging from seeking income opportunities, to fleeing conflict, environmental degradation, or family problems (especially those resulting from discrimination), to coping with health related problems like HIV/AIDS and other factors that too often leave women isolated and financially destitute..

COHRE (2008) also revealed, the problems are especially acute for women in the slum. In slums there is a noticeable lack of basic infrastructure, services, and basic shelter. Governments around the world are using increasingly callous methods to 'beautify' cities, erase the urban poor from sight, and clear urban lands for the sake of 'development'. Women living in slums are often susceptible to forced evictions by governments and other actors, and too often face gender-based violence before, during, and after eviction.

Regarding women's occupation Bose, M. (2005) is of the opinion that the women engaged in productive activities were concentrated into three major job categories in the informal sector: domestic service (27%), selling/manufacturing ventures (24%) and piece-work (38%). Settings used for productive work in the private realm ranged from the courtyard, grocery store, roadside and residences in the settlement/neighborhood, to factories in the settlement. Settings used for productive work in the public arena consisted of markets (in and outside the city), charitable institutions, and residential areas for door-to-door selling of products.

United Nations Human Settlements Program, (UN Habitat, 2003) identified, most slum women are in low-paying occupations such as informal jobs in the garment industry, recycling of solid waste, a variety of home-based enterprises and many are domestic servants, security guards, piece rate workers and self-employed hair dressers and furniture makers. The informal sector is the dominant livelihood source in slums. However, information on the occupations and income generating activities of slum women from all over the world emphasizes the diversity of slum populations, who range from university lecturers, students and formal sector employees, to those engaged in marginal activities bordering on illegality, including petty crime. The main problems confronting the informal sector at present are lack of formal recognition, as well as low levels of productivity and incomes.

Frontières, M. S. (2011) observed that, many of the women living in slum are single mothers who have to earn an income themselves. Furthermore, given the sort of menial labour usually available to slum residents, she is unlikely to earn enough to provide a sufficiently nutrient- and vitamin rich diet. The resulting malnourishment stunts a child's growth and development, weakens immune systems, and increases the risk of contracting other diseases.

Netsayi N. M. and Alex C. (2009) mentioned that, some women in the informal sector sometimes work for cash payments, their work is revolves around domestic chores such as cooking, ironing, washing and cleaning for households or for individuals within the slum as well as neighboring non-slum communities. On the other hand, men living in the slums have the opportunity to take up formal employment or high paying informal jobs that sometimes take them away from home.

Koehlmoos, T. P. et al, (2009) viewed that, these women population face physical assaults by local mastans (hoodlum), police or even by the adult members of their family. Even the men face physical assaults while collecting food, fighting over space, or stealing. Their lives are marred by violence, sexual harassment, and drug abuse.

## **8. Objective of the Study**

The core objective of the study is to investigate the survival challenges faced by women living in slum and the strategies they adopt to cope with these challenges.

- (i) To identify the factors affect rural urban migration of slum women
- (ii) To explore their livelihood pattern (food, education, treatment, entertainment)
- (iii) To reveal their day to day problem in the slum areas and in their working places.

## **9. Research Methodology**

Mixed research methodology was undertaken to conduct the study based on primary and secondary data. In order to collect primary data variety of techniques were used such as survey, observation and in-depth interviews. Basically in-depth interview was conducted to explore the challenges experienced by slum women and the strategies to cope. The interviews were consisted of two phases. In first step, respondents were asked about their survival challenges that they experience in the slum life whereas the second segment included the open ended question regarding the coping mechanisms that they adopt to mitigate the situation. Besides, a survey technique was also used to know the demographics characteristics of the respondents which include their living condition, occupation, income, educational status etc. and a structured questionnaire was developed in this concern. The study was carried out on 150 (one hundred and fifty) working women aged 20 (twenty) years and above who were living in ten (10) slums of Dhaka city. These slums were selected purposively whereas the participants were selected randomly. Researcher himself collected the data during September-December 2012.

## **10. Limitations of the Study**

This research is not above limitation like others. Initially, the respondents were suspicious about the intention of the researcher. In some cases, the researcher had to struggle hard to convince the respondents for getting appropriate information. Some were afraid of being evicted and seemed less interested to give the answer and tried to conceal the information as there was no monetary benefit. And finally, this study was carried out only on women who were living in the 10 out of 45000 slums located in Dhaka city.

## **11. Result and Discussion**

The study was carried out on total 150 slum women. The name of slum areas are Mohakhali, Agargaon, Demra, Mohammadpur, Mirpur, Mati kata, Hazari Bag, Kamrangir Char, Kafrul, Vashantake. From each slum area 15 women were selected randomly who were aged 20 years and above.

**Table 1: Livelihood challenges experienced by slum women**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Low income</b>	43	29%
<b>Husband's torture</b>	12	8%
<b>Physical and sexual harassment</b>	11	7%
<b>Fear of being evicted</b>	9	6%
<b>Unhygienic environment</b>	11	7%
<b>Insecurity</b>	7	5%
<b>Seasonal problem i.e. rainy and winter season</b>	8	5%
<b>Extortion</b>	7	5%
<b>Lack of pure drinking water</b>	16	11%
<b>Lack of access to electricity and gas</b>	11	7%
<b>Lack of health service</b>	15	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

Study shows that 29% women reported that low income is their major survival challenges. Due the low income they were unable to come out of poverty. For this reason they are considered as poorest of the poor, as it is difficult for them to maintain a minimum standard of life, with no education. So they neither can save money nor can meet fundamental needs as Bilkis Begum<sup>1</sup>, 35 years of old woman who resides in East Maticata slum said,

“I have been working as a maid servant for five years but still I have been suffering from poverty due to my low income. Poverty is our part and parcel of day to day life. What ever I earn, I have to spend to conduct my family as my husband passed away seven years back. Nowadays, I don't think about myself. My main issue is my two daughters to whom I can not provide enough food and good clothing. Apart from it I am extremely worried about their future. If I don't save money no one will marry my daughters<sup>2</sup>.”

Another 25 years old garment worker Rehana Begum, who is living in Agargoan slum for last three years, reported that,

<sup>1</sup> The original name of the respondents have not been disclosed due to ethical consideration

<sup>2</sup> The interviews were taken in Bangla and later on were translated in English

“My husband is a garment worker. We have a two years old son. After the month we earn 8000 TK. But house rent, food, transportation and baby’s milk, and other miscellaneous necessary expenses, our income breakeven our expenditures. In fact we face severe shortage of funds when my child becomes sick. Then we have to borrow money for his treatment. This is extra spending for us and this time we suffer a lot.”

Like the entire social system, women are the most neglected person in the slum. Most of them are the victim of violence insight and oversight of the family. The study reveals that, 8% slum women experience husband’s torture. Specially, slum women are tortured by their jobless and vagabond husband when they refuse to give them money. In this regard, 32 years old Halima Khatun, who was living in the Mohammadpur slum for five years, alleged,

“My husband works on daily wages. Over a period of time he became drug addict in the company of his friends. He earns nothing. I have to provide the cost of drugs otherwise he thrashes me”.

“I bear all costs of my vagabond husband. But still I have no value in his eyes. Very often he tortures me over a trivial matter. I bear all the expenses of my Family, but still he is the one who has the authority within the family.

These are the views of Said Khusbu Begum, a 27 years of old Mohakhali slum women. Physical and sexual exploitation is one of the common survival challenges among the women living in slum. As urban poor women engage with various occupations in order to survive, they have to face physical and sexual abuse at the work place. Study found out that, 41% study population worked as maid servants, whilst 21%, 17%, 6%, 7%, 5% and 3% were on daily wages, garment workers, hawker, porter and owner of tea stall, respectively. It was reported that, these women have to face the stress of long working hour, physical torture and to some extent sexual harassment. Generally, maid servant and garment worker as well as daily wage workers were the victim of these challenges. As Laboni Akhter, Agargaon slum dweller, age 25 years mentioned,

“As a garment worker I work long hour, though I am paid very low. Besides, I have to face the danger of sexual exploitation from my colleagues and boss. I can guess their attitude and gestures but

pretend not to have understood. Even I have been suffering from the fear of being sexually harassed in my slum as well.”

Another 35 years of old woman Runa Begum who resided in Mohammadpur slum and worked as maid servant, informed that,

“She (housewife) uses me a lot. I have to work from dawn till dusk she wanted me to perform all the household chores, like cooking, washing, cleaning with very little pay. But if I commit a minor mistake she rebukes me severely. Even, I have to endure physical punishment very often. She does not treat me like a human being.”.

Eviction is a grave concern among slum women. As slums are build haphazardly in the capital without the permission of City Corporation, dweller of slum very often experience eviction. Then they start a fresh struggle to survive. Nargis Akhter, a maid servant who was living in Kafrul slum said,

“We can not stop living in the slum. Because, Allah has made us poor. We live in a state of constant fear of being evicted. So far, we have been the victim of eviction twice. No one understands the pain of getting evicted with children. At that moment no one is there to help us.

Study also documented that women consider unhealthy environment as one of the major issue which they have to face while living in the slum areas. Study has indicated that due to lack of toilet facilities 13-19 people have to share one toilet. Along with it as most of the slums are besides the garbage dumping areas which itself is a health hazard, especially for women

Slum women also have to face the issue of clean drinking water. It is a fact that lack of clean drinking water triggers unhygienic environment because of water born diseases such as diarrhea, cholera. Mostly women and children are the ones who are affected by these diseases. The present research has pointed out that, only 13% people use tube well water for drinking, washing and cooking while 25% and 62% of the participants use surface and supply water, respectively. Asma Khatun, age 31 years, resides in capitals Demra slum said,

“The environmental condition of my slum is extremely poor. No sanitary facilities, no clean drinking water, no garbage bins to dump the garbage. This environment is the breeding ground of various diseases, this is the reason that my son becomes sick very often.

Because of unhealthy environment and people's proneness to various diseases they attain their old age much earlier."

The slum areas also lack other basic facilities like, gas and electricity. A large majority of women living in the slum areas have no access to these basic facilities. In this case a 45 years of old Rina Begum, stayed in the Mohakhali Hazari Bag slum, informed,

"We are deprived from the facilities like electricity. Due to absence of electricity this slum area turn into deep darkness while the surrounding buildings of this slum remain enlightened. This time we suffer from insecurity. The prices of everything are skyrocketed and oil which we generally use in the lamps has become extremely expensive. Besides, it is risky because from the lamp accident may occur any time. Furthermore, we are being deprived of entertainment. We can neither watch television, nor listen song."

Women living in the slum area have also indicated insecurity as one of the livelihood challenges which they have to face. It was observed during the research that slums are considered as crime zone. Prostitutes, drug traders have open access here. Besides, political parties also use the residents of these slum to attend their political gathering and processions. As tea stall owner Rubi Sultan, dweller of Agargaon slum, told,

"Very often political leaders create pressure to join their party program. They offer money for that. They use us as political tools. Though many others earn money in this way but I feel insecurity. Even they use slum women to conduct drug business."

Silent extortion goes in the slum that is evident from the 5% participants comment whose see it as their one of the livelihood challenges. According to hawker Sabina who lived in Kamrangir char slum and hawks deshi shari and bed sheet from door to door, said,

"If I want to do my job I have to pay extortion fees otherwise I will not be allowed to perform my job. They are very influential and no one can deal with them."

Slum women suffer a lot all the year round especially during extreme hot, cold and rainy weathe. Due to lack of electricity they can not use fan during extremely hot conditions. As the houses are not properly constructed, and most of the dwellers live

in *katcha* or *semi pacca houses* so during winters when the temperature is low, they have to bear intense cold. Rasheda Begum, a maid servant lived in Mirpur slum, reported,

“I suffer difficulty in all seasons and suffering reaches its climax during rainy season. I can not go to my work place. My madam rebukes me and deducts my salary if I don’t attend my duty. Sometimes the rain water enters inside my house. There is always a fear of storm also which may destroy our house whose foundations are very weak and can cause massive casualties.”

Another challenge the slum women have to face is access to quality health service. According to the report of Democracy Watch (2002), 27% respondents have poor access to health facility. Quality treatment service among the slum women is beyond their means due to low income that is why they prefer to rely on traditional healing practices or on quacks

“During my sickness I go to kabiraj because doctors’ visit is very expensive to me. Although the charges of Government hospitals are reasonable but they ignore us as we are poor”.

These are the views of Khushi Banu who inhabits in capital’s Vashantak slum and garment worker in occupation. Especially, it is a matter of grave concern among the slum women regarding quality of health service which they receive during pregnancy and during post-partum period. As Rahela Khatun, a construction laborer resided in Dottopara slum reported that,

“We become more frustrated during pregnancy. We are not entitled to maternity leave, therefore we have to leave the job. Apart from it many of us can not see the doctor regularly due to high checkup charges. Due to high delivery charges at private clinics, and non availability of public facility, most of deliveries are conducted at home. Because of the unhygienic conditions there is a high risk of pregnancy related complications as a result many women loss their lives during child birth.”

## 11.2. Coping Strategy

Table 2: Coping strategies adopted by of slum women

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Searching new job</b>	36	23
<b>Social network</b>	22	15
<b>Community involvement</b>	16	11
<b>Frequent rural visit</b>	31	21
<b>Seek NGO's assistance</b>	12	8
<b>Emphasis on entertainment</b>	14	9
<b>Hope of future</b>	19	13
<b>Total</b>	150	100

The poor women migrated from country sides find refuge in the slums of Dhaka city for cheap accommodation. They are unable to fulfill their basic needs because of their poverty. To cope with this challenge 23% women reported they were searching new job where salary is very high. As Dotto Para slum dweller Shahina Akter who worked as maid servant, said

“I am searching new one job where I will be paid high salary in order to get rid from poverty. To survive smoothly, there is no alternative of high income. Money is essential in order to provide better educational facilities for my son, for better health care facilities and to buy good and nutritious food.. Hope that I will get it soon because I have working experience enough”.

Evidence shows, 15 percent participants maintain social network as a technique to cope with the stresses of slum life. According to their information, strengthening relationship with neighbors and friends help them to lessen constant worries what they experience in daily life. Evidence also confirms that 11 percent people get involved with community and other voluntary activities etc. to handle the challenges which they have to face. Runa Sultana, who resided in Vashantake slum and worked as porter in a nearby school, commented,

“Each day after finishing my duty I go to my neighbor house which is next to me. I use to gossip with them for long hours and refresh my mind as my husband does not care and does not listen to my problem.”

On the other hand, Kafrul slum woman Eti Khatun aged 28 years, who was living there for seven years, told,”

Maintaining ties with rural relatives, back home, is my strategy to deal with strains of slum life. At the end of every month I visit my rural relatives’ house. I stay there for few days that add energy to fight with the challenges of urban livelihood”.

There are some development organizations who are working for the development for slum people such as Plan Bangladesh, Opajeo Bangladesh etc. But most of the slum women are not informed about this. However, it was observed that around 8 percent slum women seek the assistance of development organizations to cope with the difficulties they have to face while living in the slum areas. Sabina Begum who was resident of Agargoan slum and construction labor by occupation said,

“I was informed about Plan office who works for slum children from one of my relatives. I approached the organization and asked for their help in case of my children’s education. While living in this area with meager income, we are unable to afford their educational expenses. The organization was very helpful and it is bearing all the expenses of his education. It also provides health facilities to some extent. Now I am feeling less pressure on me.”  
Said occupation.

Entertainment or recreation is a one of the fundamental demands for human being. Though this opportunity is rare among slum women, 9% women of slum women depend on entertainment to make slum life enjoyable. Ranu Akter, a garment worker who lives in Mati Kata slum, informed

“Every holyday I use to go to cinema hall to watch Bangla movie with my husband. That day we try to enjoy a bit. Likewise my other friends and neighbors also does the same”.

Out of total slum women 13 percent claimed that without future hope no one can survive and they had a firm belief that one day their lives will be improved and will have better living conditions, as Sanjida Begum, Kafrul slum dweller and owner of tea stall, confidently said,

“Now my husband and I am working hard with a view to get our children educated. When our son will complete his study and will

be involved with a better job, the happiness will embrace us. We are eagerly waiting for that day”.

## **12. Conclusion and Policy Implication**

This study documented the situation of women living in the slums of Dhaka city. In order to survive they have to face many challenges, like poor living conditions, unhygienic environment, lack of basic facilities, like sanitary, electricity, and clean drinking water, as well as access to education and quality health service. Though, access to shelter, provide quality service, environmental concern, and creation of job opportunity are the issues of concern for the government, yet no serious effort has been put in place by the administration to improve the living conditions of these urban slums. However, the following initiatives can be taken for promoting the welfare of the slum women such as:

1. A proper survey can be conducted by the government and non government organization to know the number of slum women.
2. Vocational and technical training can be arranged for them so that they can have access to better job opportunities. Ministry of Social Welfare can play a pioneer role in this regard.
3. Government and various development organizations can provide them microcredit with low interest rate to create women entrepreneur in income generating activities.
4. The government should fix the wage rate for the poor people especially for slum women.
5. Initiative should be taken to rehabilitate these destitute women.
6. Constitutional legal protection regarding women torture including physical and sexual harassment has to be strengthened.
7. Provide security at job place and in the slum as well.
8. Ensure entrée to essential services, for example, water, gas, electricity and sanitation.
9. Joint initiative should be taken to ensure the basic education and health services.
10. Remove gender discrimination and ensure equal rights for slum women.

Slum women have also the rights to enjoy the basic social services like the other women of the Bangladesh. The government must pay attention to improve their living standard. Improving the implementation of government policy framework and proper monitoring can change the fate of these destitute slum women.

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