




25 July 2006



# Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP)-Bangladesh Inauguration of Rajshahi Technical School



**UCEP-Bangladesh**

**Message**

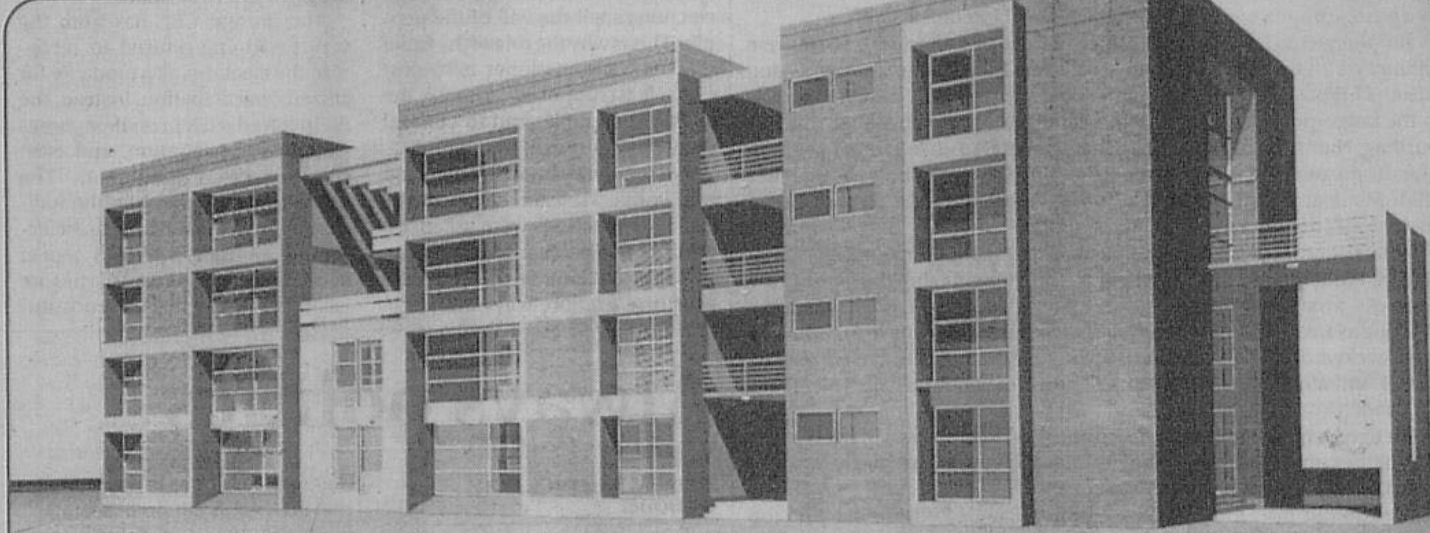
The opening of the Rajshahi Technical School is a historic event for UCEP. The underprivileged children of the Rajshahi region will now have better access to technical education and job placement support of UCEP.

With the opening of the Technical School the unique package of general education, technical education and job placement support offered by UCEP will be available for the Underprivileged Children of Rajshahi. I am sure the graduates of Rajshahi Technical School will play a vital role in the industrial development of the region.

UCEP has come a long way from its modest start in 1972 with only 60 students. The enrollment of students now stands at over 26,000. All these have been possible only due to the support of the Government of Bangladesh and our Development Partners. I express our thanks and gratitude to the Government and our Development Partners. I hope our joint efforts will continue for replication of the UCEP model of education throughout Bangladesh.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our special thanks and gratitude to DFID Bangladesh for the special grant to establish the Rajshahi Technical School and for expansion of the capacities of all the UCEP Technical Schools.

**M. Sirajul Islam**  
Former MP & Chairperson  
UCEP Board of Governors



## UCEP-Rajshahi Technical School

Rajshahi the 4th largest city of Bangladesh is located at the north western part of the country and is one of the divisional headquarters of Bangladesh with rich historical and cultural heritage. It is famous for its silk industries and a variety of tropical fruits especially mangoes.

Rajshahi has lagged behind in industrial development so long. But with the opening of the Jamuna Bridge and the government drive for industrialization of the northern region new factories and industries are opening up and economic activities are increasing day by day in the region.

The per capita income of the people of Rajshahi is pretty low in comparison to the cities of Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna. There is a significant number of working children who are out of schools or training institutions in the region.

UCEP established two general schools in Rajshahi in the year 1995 to impart education to the working children up to grade VIII following which a Para-trade Training Center (PTC) was established in 1999 to impart skills training to the graduates of the General Schools.

In response to the demand of community, the needs and desire of the working children two new General Schools and another Para-trade Training Center was set up in July 2005.

The requirement of a full fledged technical school was strongly felt with the growing industrial development in Rajshahi and other cities of the region. The short duration para trade training courses imparted by the PTCs mostly on traditional trades were not able to meet the growing needs of the industries.

By the end of project phase IV (June 2004), UCEP was operating 30 general schools, 3 technical schools and 6 para-trade training centers in the mainstream program. At this stage the capacity of the technical schools was not sufficient to accommodate all the general school graduates and hence a large number of the graduates were being offered the short duration skills training in the Para-trade Training Centers.

The desire of the general schools students to be enrolled in the long duration courses of the technical school along with the growing demand of the employers for graduates of UCEP technical schools rather than the para-trade graduates made it imperative that the capacity of UCEP technical schools be increased to accommodate more general school graduates.

This need was communicated to the Development Partners in the beginning of the project phase V in July 2004. In response DFID came forward with a special grant of 1 million pound sterling for expansion and upgrading of technical education of UCEP programs. Accordingly, the capacities of all the technical schools have been increased and a new Technical School at Rajshahi has been established which went into operation in July 2006. At the present moment all students of UCEP general schools after completing grade VIII are being offered the long duration courses of Technical Schools.

Rajshahi Technical School is established with an intake capacity of 160 students per session (six months) and in future SSC, Vocational program will be introduced to enhance the technical education level of the students of UCEP in Rajshahi. The trades and admission capacity of Rajshahi Technical School are as follows:

Auto Mechanics	30 students per session
Industrial Electrical and Electronic Control	30 students per session
Welding and Fabrication	30 students per session
Machinist	30 students per session
Tailoring and Dress Making	40 students per session
<b>Total</b>	<b>160 students per session</b>


The duration of education and training for all trades is one year and after full-fledged operation of the technical school a total of 320 students will have opportunity to receive technical education.

With the establishment of Rajshahi Technical School, about 42 staff have been employed and most of them are with technical background and skilled to impart technical education.

The objective of this technical school is to provide high quality technical education so that students can compete and enter the job market in the country and abroad.

The Advisory Council and Employers Committee consisting of 11 and 19 members respectively from different sectors like employers, educationists, curriculum specialists and technical experts of the society have already been formed to advise the school to make its programs effective and market-oriented. The members of the Advisory Council and Employers Committee are a group of local volunteers who will meet on a regular basis to provide advice and other support services to the training program for its continued development and relevance to its stakeholders.

Rajshahi Technical School will follow its own curriculum developed in consultation with employers and technical experts like other technical schools of UCEP to make its programs meaningful and job oriented. The establishment of RTS has fulfilled a long-felt desire and need of the underprivileged children of Rajshahi.



**British High Commission, Dhaka**

**Message**

I am happy to know that the Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP) is opening its first Technical School in Rajshahi. Funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) through a donor consortium, UCEP has proved to be very successful in providing technical education to the children of Bangladesh's urban slums.

UCEP's success not only lies in providing meaningful education to these children but also in finding them appropriate jobs and providing them with credit support to become self employed. In this way UCEP has created a model of sustainable development that can be replicated in other parts of the developing world.

I congratulate UCEP and its dedicated staff on this occasion and wish them every success in their future endeavours. The UK government as a partner of development in Bangladesh feels proud to be associated with such an organisation that is making meaningful changes in the lives of thousands of children.

**Stephen Bridges**  
Acting High Commissioner  
British High Commission, Dhaka



**Message**

It is my privilege to congratulate UCEP for its continuing efforts to provide skill based need oriented education and employment opportunities for the underprivileged children of Bangladesh, specifically the urban working children, including children with disabilities.

With the rapid urbanization trend in Bangladesh, the gradual increase of urban poverty is a deepening national concern and an equal concern for development agencies. In addition to this dimension, one of the main development challenges for Bangladesh is to provide employment for the large number of currently under or unemployed workforce.


The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is proud to have supported UCEP since 1980 and to see today that it has grown into one of the most reputed technical service providers in the area of vocational technical skills development able to effectively address the issue of child rights, the problem of urban poverty and contribute to national policy goals.

At present UCEP has 32 general schools, 5 technical schools and 9 para-trade centres spread over Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi Divisions. The vocational technical training being provided by UCEP has been able to bring lasting positive changes in the lives of its students. UCEP has a demonstrated track record of ensuring employment opportunities for the majority of its students graduating from these schools. But the capacity of the technical schools are limited and its expansion is a welcomed effort considering the needs in the context.

I am very pleased to see the expansion of UCEP's services to the Rajshahi region and hope that this will maintain the same excellent quality of services as UCEP is reputed for. We believe that this initiative will greatly contribute to the growth of education and employment opportunities for the underprivileged children and the reduction of poverty in that region in the days to come.

I wish UCEP continuing success.

**Dora Rapold**  
Ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh



**DFID** Department for International Development

**Message**


I am looking forward to opening the Rajshahi Technical School for the Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP) today. It gives me great pleasure to be part of this new opportunity for the young people of Rajshahi to gain vital technical skills which will improve their employment opportunities significantly.

The UK Department for International Development is committed to providing practical opportunities which improve people's lives. This is why we have been pleased to support UCEP, an organisation which has, to date, made such an impact on more than a million children and their families.

Every city in Bangladesh needs technical schools like the one we will be opening today.

UCEP is to be congratulated for building and staffing this wonderful new school and for making new opportunities for deserving children and their families. The combined efforts of those who work in this school will make a significant difference to development in Rajshahi. It is therefore a day for celebration!

**David Wood**  
Country Representative  
DFID Bangladesh



**ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY**

**Message**

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Rajshahi Technical School, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs - UCEP for their initiative to serve the underprivileged children of Rajshahi region. This is definitely a milestone in the expansion of UCEP and for the Technical Education of the underprivileged children in Rajshahi.

I am confident that with focused and sustained efforts, this school will provide cost-efficient, non formal education with employable skills training that will open the door of job placement for the underprivileged children including the adolescents and other vulnerable groups. Consequently, it will contribute to the national development through production of skilled manpower and reduction of child labour.

Norway has had a very good cooperation with UCEP since the late 80's through our support to the programme. This pioneer programme provides support to the underprivileged children through technical and vocational education and job placement. It receives appreciation nationally and internationally. I expect that the Government will replicate the UCEP model throughout the country.

I hope that all good efforts will make our relationship even stronger in the future and wish UCEP great success!

With my warmest regards,

**Kristian Jervell**  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.  
Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka

## UCEP-Bangladesh: A Beacon of Hope

Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP)-Bangladesh is a leading national NGO working with the distressed urban working children. Starting in 1972 at the Dhaka University premises with only 60 students, it is now a hub of around 26 thousand working children striving to inculcate marketable skills and provide employment support service through general education and vocational training in close collaboration with industries and workshops throughout Bangladesh. The main objective of the UCEP programs is to improve the socio-economic status of the urban poor and support industrial growth by generating skilled/semi-skilled manpower. UCEP has global reputation for its unique model of human resource development. UCEP's success has enabled it to be listed twice in the UN ESCAP's "Compendium of Centers of Excellence in HRD Research and Training".

**UCEP Programs**

UCEP operates 32 General Schools, 5 Technical Schools and 9 Para-Trade Training Centers in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi. UCEP also runs 2 other Technical Schools and an Advocacy Program under special projects with Plan-Bangladesh and Manusher Jono respectively. A new program in collaboration with the government has recently been launched under which UCEP will implement a skills training program in the 'model' of UCEP for the children of Shishu Kalyan Trust (SKT), a program of Reaching Out of School (ROSC) Project under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.

**General Education:** UCEP general schools follow the curriculum and textbooks prescribed by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and provide basic education up to Grade VIII. Student Attendance and Dropout rates in UCEP general schools were 94% and 3.3% respectively in 2005-2006. UCEP General Education Component launched SSC program under Bangladesh Open University (BOU) in 2005 and 296 students have already been enrolled for this program.

**Vocational Education:** UCEP students, upon completion of general school education, are promoted to vocational education either in technical schools or in short duration para-trade training centers. Vocational education component started SSC (Voc) Program under Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) from January 2005.

**Technical Schools:** To provide appropriate skills and thereby improve the employment prospects of General School graduates, UCEP provides Technical Education through its 5 Technical Schools in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi. The training centers offer hands-on vocational training in 17 trades all based on the demand of the contemporary employment market. Attendance and dropout rates in the technical schools were 97% and 1.26% respectively in 2005-2006.

**Para-Trade Training Centers:** Para-Trade Training of UCEP is an innovative cost-effective vocational intervention that allows working children to acquire basic skills in simple trades within 6 months. UCEP has a total of 9 Para-Trade Training Centers in 4 divisions.

**Employment & Field Services:** Employment and Field Service (EFS) Section of UCEP arranges on-the-job training for its technical school students and places its graduates in gainful jobs. EFS operates through labor market survey, linkage with employers, observance of the employers' day, meetings with the employers, observance of job hunting days/weeks and follow-up visits to the employers and employed graduates.

**Overseas Employment Scheme:** UCEP launched its overseas employment scheme in 2003 and has already placed 67 of its graduates in overseas employment. Overseas employment is the prioritized area of UCEP programs and the number is expected to increase manifold within the next couple of years.

**UCEP SME Credit Program:** UCEP introduced SME Credit Program in June 2005 for self-employment of the UCEP graduates. About 300 UCEP graduates are enjoying loan facilities under this program. The progress of the program is highly satisfactory and the recovery rate is literally 100%.

**UCEP Multipurpose Cooperative Society:** UCEP introduced Multipurpose Cooperative Society for the stakeholders in March 2006. The main objective of the Cooperative Society was to foster bondages and responsiveness to UCEP programs while it will also be a potential source of personal and business loan for UCEP students and others concerned.

**Achievements at a Glance**

Children Admitted in UCEP :	1,34,903
Technical Training Completed (since 1983) :	18,479
Para-trade Training Completed :	6,335
Placement in Jobs (since 1991) :	25,507
Overseas Employment (since 2003) :	67

**Future Plan**

- Introducing Integrated General and Vocational Education from grade I
- Establishing a Textile Institute
- Establishing a Welding Institute


**Impact of UCEP Education**

- Breaking the vicious cycle of poverty of the urban poor
- Children of UCEP graduates study in normal schools
- Promotion of female education and women empowerment
- Replication of UCEP model by GOs and NGOs
- Contributing to achieve MDGs
- Change of attitude of employers towards working children
- Enhancing the level of technical workmanship in our industries
- Children participating in national and international forums

- Protection of the Rights of the Child
- Increasing community awareness on health and hygiene
- UCEP students proving to be Agents of Change in the society

**How UCEP Runs**

UCEP Programs is run by the financial assistance from Royal Danish Embassy (DANIDA), Department for International Development (DFID), Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Save the Children Sweden-Denmark (SCSD). From the very beginning, UCEP Programs is privileged to get huge response from people of all walks of the society. A number of UCEP Schools are established on lands of the local donors. UCEP also gets support from the government itself and the City Corporations of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi mainly through allotment of lands for establishing schools and training centers.



**Royal Danish Embassy Dhaka**

**Message**


It gives me immense pleasure to congratulate UCEP as it makes another stride in the field of technical education for the underprivileged children by establishing a technical school in Rajshahi. The Embassy of Denmark is happy to be associated with UCEP in its efforts to improve the socio-economic condition of the working children and their families in Bangladesh.

The new school in Rajshahi will fulfill the long cherished desire of the working children of the region. I am confident that this school will continue to uphold the rich tradition of UCEP and be a center of excellence in education like all other schools of UCEP. I believe that it will not only benefit the students but will also cater to the needs of skilled human resources of the industries of northern part of Bangladesh.

I wish to convey my thanks to DFID for supporting UCEP in establishing the school, and would reiterate our support and assistance to UCEP in its efforts to work for the underprivileged children.

My best wishes to UCEP and its students.

**Niels Severin Munk**  
Ambassador  
Embassy of Denmark



**UCEP-Bangladesh**

**Message**


UCEP-Bangladesh enters a new phase of technical education in Rajshahi Division with the establishment of the new Rajshahi Technical School. This school will be the 5th in the chain of UCEP Technical Schools (under mainstream programs) throughout Bangladesh. The technical schools of UCEP have been recognized to impart market oriented skill development training of a high standard suited to the requirements of the region.

We are sure the new school will fulfill the needs of the growing industrialization of the Rajshahi industrial belt. This technical school will also be a beacon of hope for a better life for the poor underprivileged children of Rajshahi and their families.

There was a dire need for establishment of a technical school at Rajshahi which could not be established so long. But now with the special grant of DFID Bangladesh a new technical school has been established.

We are thankful to the government of Bangladesh and our Development Partners for their support to UCEP and especially to DFID Bangladesh for the special grant for establishment of Rajshahi Technical School.

**Brig. Gen. Aftab Uddin Ahmad (Retd.)**  
Executive Director



**Save the Children Sweden-Denmark**

**Message**

Save the Children Sweden-Denmark works for a world which respects and values each child, listens to children where all children have hope and opportunity. Our vision is a world where all children's rights have been realized. UCEP-Bangladesh is one of our development partners. UCEP is working at national level as well for advocating on relevant education for developing skilled manpower and hazardous child labour. UCEP also supports children in finding alternatives to hazardous jobs through job placement, continuous assessment of the quality of skills training and children's self-employment opportunities. So I would like to take opportunity to thank UCEP-Bangladesh for their efforts that helps children to enjoy their rights. I also congratulate UCEP to open a Technical School at Rajshahi which will create opportunity for underprivileged children to get Technical Education in Rajshahi. I wish all the success of UCEP-Bangladesh.

**Olof Risberg**  
Country Representative  
Save the Children Sweden - Denmark

**An Appeal to the Society**

UCEP believes that a strong sense of social responsibility by the privileged class towards the noble cause of eliminating child labor would further strengthen the endeavor of UCEP. To supplement UCEP efforts, a fundraising drive "UCEP Children Sponsorship Program" has been launched to motivate support and assistance from individuals/businesses/corporate bodies. Under the sponsorship program, one can sponsor the education costs of a general school student at the rate of Tk. 3,000 per year while Tk. 5,000 per year for a technical school student. UCEP regularly forwards to the sponsor the dossiers and academic progress reports of the sponsored children.

**For further information please contact**

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