Title: Women Entrepreneurs and Their vulnerability in Informal Sector: A Study on Women Street Vendors in Dhaka city

Women entrepreneurs, who own an enterprise, work for themselves and retain profit, are the lion share in the informal sector. This paper presents that women entrepreneurs, particularly those who are street vendors, face serious vulnerabilities ranging from the possibility of physical to financial attack to abuse. Since their workplaces are unsecured, unhealthy, and hazardous, women street vendors face a lot of vulnerabilities. They often face frequent harassment and evictions from their working place by local authorities including administrative bodies (municipal corporation, police), local leaders or competing men street vendors. This paper contributes to the literature by exploring the following questions: what are the financial, physical, and gender vulnerabilities of women entrepreneurs in the informal sector? How women entrepreneurs have achieved financial independence within their households and contributed to their families and societies?

We did the survey on 120 women street vendors in Dhaka city using a purposive sampling design to conduct our survey. We applied a mixed method (both qualitative and quantitative) to establish our hypothesis. Furthermore, this study presents some case study to clearly point out the real scenario.

From the survey, we find that 48 percent of women street vendors face evictions from their selling place by local authorities and 37 percent of women street vendors give bribe to the local authorities. The workplace of 49 percent of women street vendors is dirty. Furthermore, the 76.7 percent of women street vendors in Dhaka city do not have same daily income as counterpart male street vendors.

Using preliminary data on women street vendors around Dhaka City of Bangladesh, we find that women entrepreneurs are highly vulnerable in their workplace despite playing a significant role in their families and societies through working in the informal sector.