

Working Towards a Fair Platform Economy: Policy and Practices

Roundtable Discussion

The rise of the platform economy in Bangladesh over the past decade has largely been enabled by the development of the country's digital infrastructure and internet consumer base. The platform economy offers flexibility to its workers while also having relatively low barriers to entry and these factors have contributed to many workers being drawn to this industry. However, despite its growth, the industry is yet to universally incorporate labour practices that create a safe and fair work environment for all its workers. The industry also lacks adequate legislature that ensures best labour practices throughout the platform economy.

Our primary goal for this event is to introduce the principles of Fairwork and create a collaborative environment where we can discuss best labor practices and scope for policy interventions. Considering your active involvement in this field, we believe that your valuable insights and experiences would contribute significantly to the event's success. Additionally, we would like to emphasize that this event is a part of the Fairwork Bangladesh Research project, which has been working in this sector for the past three years.

Roundtable Plan			
2-May-23		11:00 AM to 1:00 PM	
Time	Duration	Session Name	Speaker/ Moderator
10:45 AM	15 minutes	Arrival of Participants	
11:00 AM	5 minutes	Introductory Remarks and Introduction of Participants	Ainan Tajrian
11:05 AM	10 minutes	Introducing Roundtable	Dr. Ananya Raihan
11:15 AM	45 minutes	State of Global and Bangladeshi Gig Economy: Policy and Practices	Shamarukh Alam
12:00 PM	45 minutes	Open Interactive Discussion	Dr. Ananya Raihan Ainan Tajrian
12:45 PM	10 minutes	Concluding Remarks	Dr. Ananya Raihan
12:55 PM	60 minutes	Lunch and Networking	

Working Towards a Fair Platform Economy: Policy and Practices

Stakeholder Discussion: Fairwork Bangladesh Ratings 2023

May 2, 2023 | 11:00 am (BST) | e-CAB Open Space



Platform Work in Bangladesh

Pathway to a Policy Framework for a Growing Economy



Fairwork Stakeholder Roundtable
Dhaka, Bangladesh
May 2, 2023

Gig or Platform Economy?



Gig

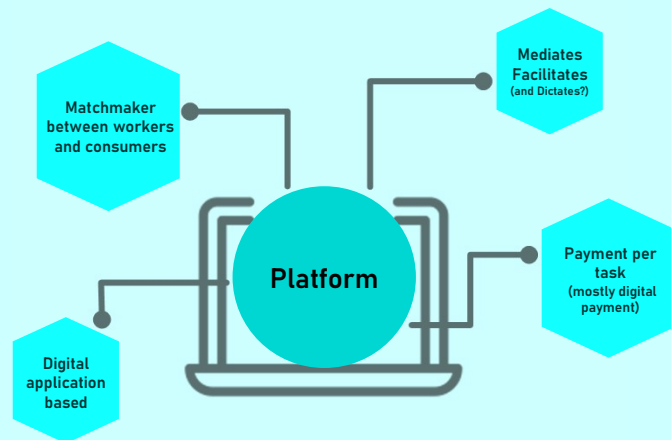
Short-term, on demand work, that refers to independent contractors/ freelancers/ musicians/ creative work/ legal/ accounting and so on



Platform Economy

A subset of gig economy

Platforms



Who are the Ecosystem Players?



- National and International Market Expansion
- Increased demand
- Availability of Workers
- Setting Industry standards
- Shift towards digital transactions

- Decent Work conditions
- Fair Pay
- Fair Contracts
- Representation, Bargaining Power

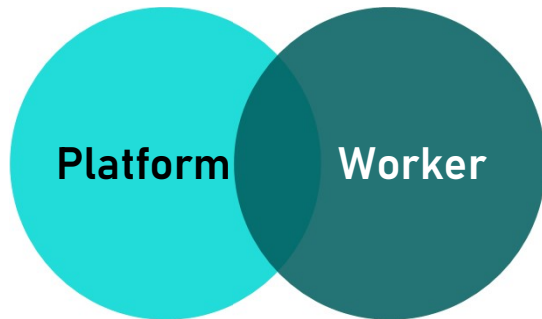
- About time to reap benefits
- Decision to further invest?
- Which geo-s?

- Convenience
- Competitive pricing
- Access to Digital Channels
- 24x7 Availability

- Growing Economy
- Taxation
- Employment Creation
- Long term Sustainability
- Governance to maintain ecosystem health



Policy and Legal Framework



Thoughts around a Policy Framework

A sustainable ecosystem for a growing economy

Necessary protections and regulations for all parties

Inclusion of all kinds of Platforms

A clear and legal definition of Platform Workers

Regulatory Body and associated Institutional Structure

Current status of Platform Governance



Rules



Business Model and
Pricing Strategy



Workers' Rights

Rules

Workers and consumers have to accept the platform's terms of service agreements to access the platform

Agreements unilaterally determined by the platform, with exclusivity clauses, acceptance/rejection of work, deactivation of accounts, dispute resolution and data usage

Task assignments, time to respond, time to complete, rate of pay, and delivery route can all be automatically assigned through algorithm of the platform's software

Business Model and Pricing Strategy

Types of subscriptions, offers, surge pricing, benefits etc. for consumers

Commissions charged to workers, no obligation to pay minimum wage, no investment in capital assets and operational maintenance of service equipment

Shouldering off rise in fuel price etc.

Less investment in capital assets like factories, stores, staff



Workers' Rights

Not recognized as employees or workers, but self employed/independent contractors

No contracts exist ensuring decent work, fair pay, dismissal, insurance, benefits, annual/sick leaves

No formal representation



How's the Global Platform Policy Landscape looking like?

As platform economy grows globally, dialogues are going on between platforms, governments, platform workers and their representatives to ensure that platforms become a powerful driver for fair competition and decent work for all.

?

What are the primary questions?

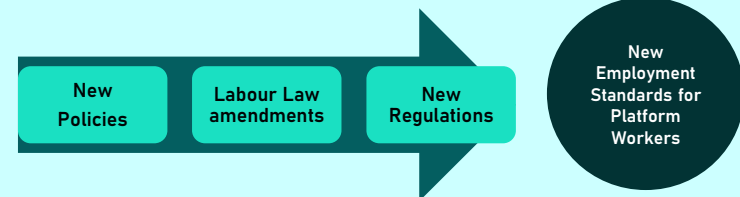
- Are platform workers misclassified as independent and self employed?
- How are their contracts and terms of work getting determined?
- Who's responsible for their work condition, fair pay, safety, and social protection?
- If they are not an equal bargaining party, how are they partners and not employees?
- What is the legal framework that governs the platform economy in a particular country?



How's the Global Platform Policy Landscape looking like?

Solutions in forms of **new policies, regulations and labour law amendments** are evolving around the world.

New employment standards are getting set.



WEF Charter of Principles for Good Platform Work

In January 2020, some of the prominent digital labour platforms, including **Uber**, **Deliveroo**, **Grab**, and **Cabify** signed the **World Economic Forum Charter of Principles for Good Platform Work** (WEF 2020). This is an important initiative by leading companies in the sector to collectively identify and commit to key principles that underpins good platform work.

Diversity and Inclusion

Social Protection

Safety and Well-being

Learning and Development

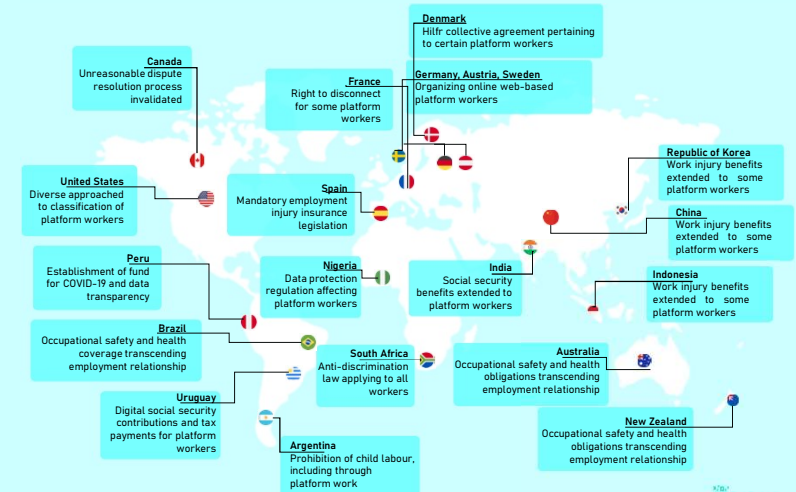
Flexibility and Fair Conditions

Voice and Participation

Reasonable Pay and Fees

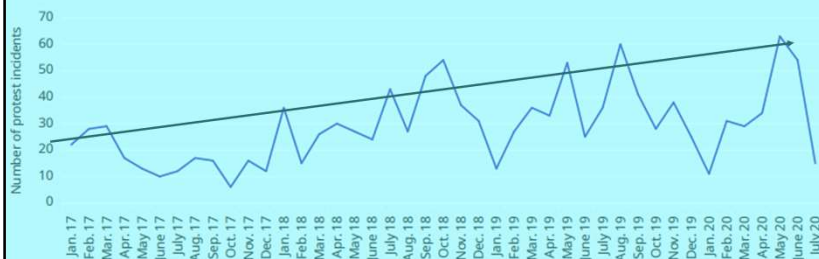


Emerging Regulatory Responses Worldwide



Source: ILO Flagship Report 2021: World Employment and Social Outlook The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work

Number of protest incidents related to working conditions on digital labour platforms per month globally, January 2017 to July 2020



Source: Bessa et al. (forthcoming, figure 1).

A key challenge is platform workers are dispersed, and any interaction between them is usually virtual. Due to many different platforms, types of work, multiple sectors, it is not always clear what type of union can best represent their interests. However, there is considerable mobilisation that's spreading worldwide.

In April 2023, protests launched by delivery workers of Zomato-owned Blinkit in Delhi against a revised payout regime, resulted in loss of sales amounting to about 1% loss of revenue.

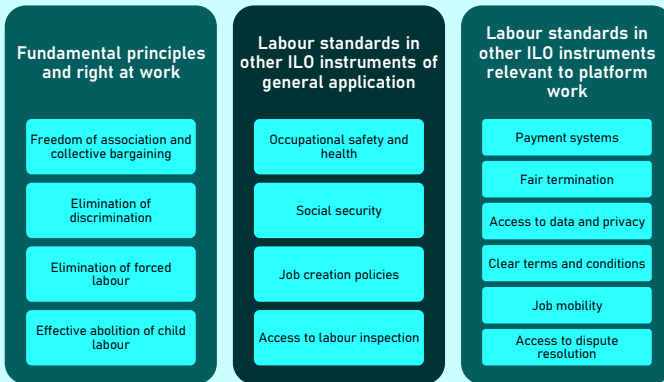


Legal Framework for Labours in Bangladesh

- ❑ Bangladesh has ratified 33 ILO Conventions including seven fundamental Conventions as enshrined in the ILO Declaration
- ❑ Labour Act 2006 was amended in 2013 and in 2018 to include better access to freedom of association (forming trade unions etc.), and occupational health and safety conditions
- ❑ National Labour Policy 2012
- ❑ Labour Act implementation Rules 2015
- ❑ Minimum Wages Board has set minimum wages for 44 different types of work including garment workers
- ❑ Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy 2015
- ❑ BRTA Ride Sharing Policy 2017



ILO Decent Work Elements Applicable to All Platform Workers Irrespective of Contractual Status



Source: ILO Flagship Report 2021: World Employment and Social Outlook The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work



Pathway Forward

- ☐ Classification of Platform Workers as 'Workers' with clear outline of relationship with platforms
- ☐ Categorising different platform sectors and various activities (gigs)
- ☐ Fair Contracts covering ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights of Decent Work
- ☐ Relevant Social Protections, Occupational Safety
- ☐ Fair access and non-discrimination, fair termination, dispute resolution
- ☐ Define responsibilities of all parties
- ☐ Right to form worker associations
- ☐ Gender Rights



A sound and robust legal framework around platform work ensures

Market Growth

More Investments

Healthy Competition

and **Fair Work**

It benefits all players in the ecosystem.

