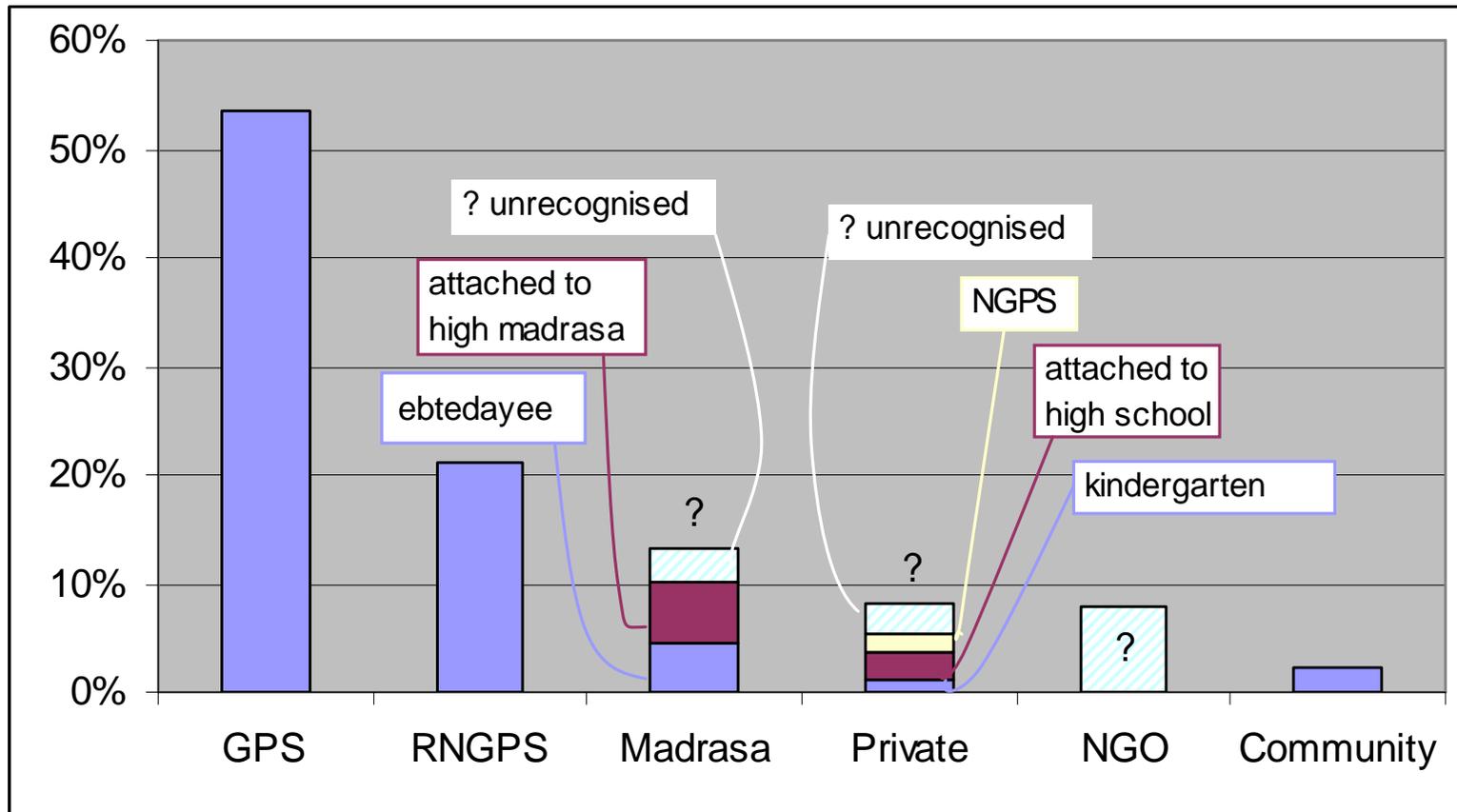


# Education decisions in slums of Dhaka

Stuart Cameron

August 2008

# Education provision in Bangladesh: complicated and uncertain



Enrolments by school type, 2005 (MOPME / World Bank)

# Slums in Dhaka

- Around 1/3 of Dhaka's population live in them
- Typical income Tk. 3001-4000 per month (US\$40-60)
- Main employment: rickshaw pullers; day labourers; street vendors; garment industry; domestic servants
- 20% of children work
- Around 1/4 of slums have a government school and 1/4 have an NGO school

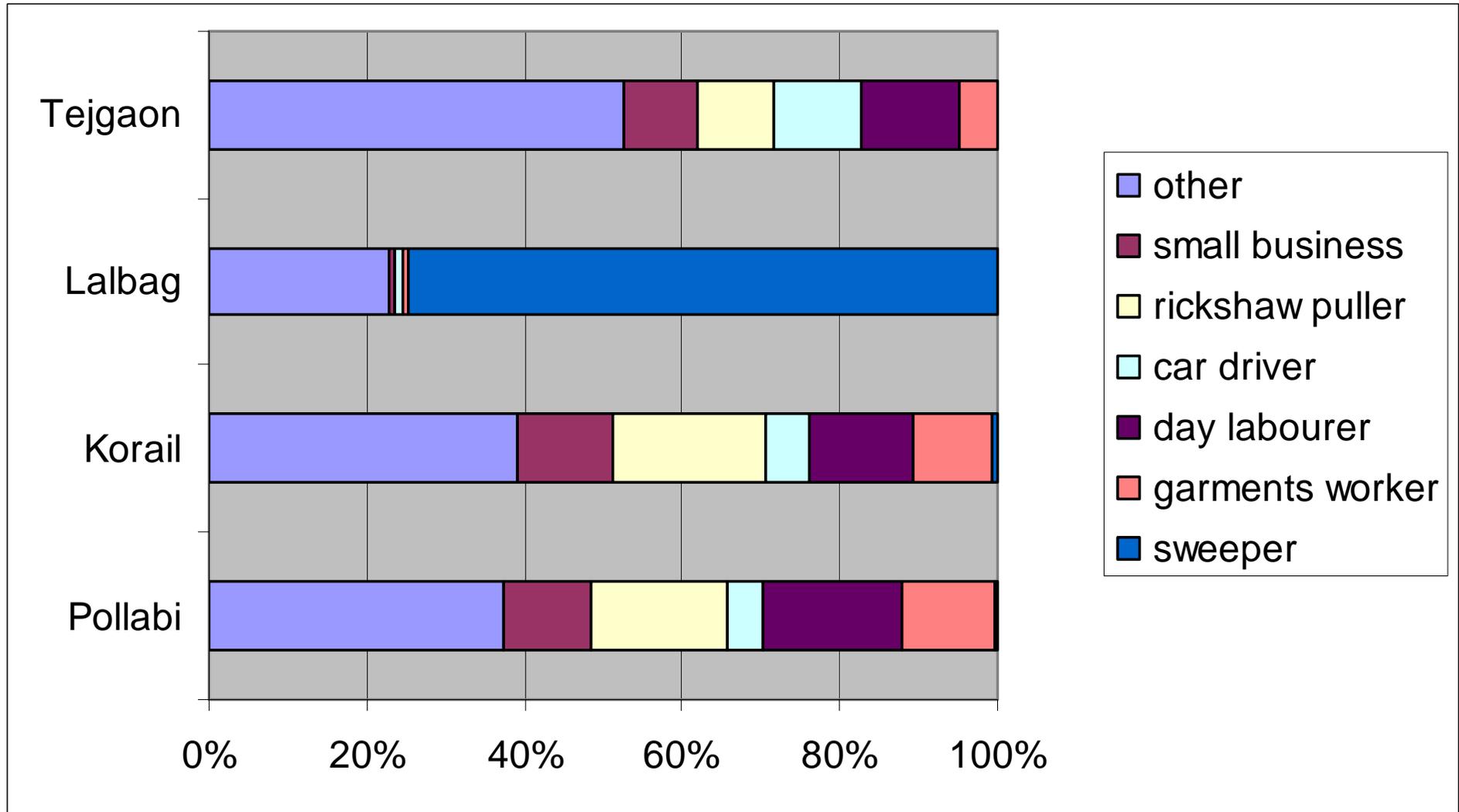
# Education, work and future prospects

- Rate of return to education:  $> 7\%$
- How easily can families in a slum draw on these theoretical returns?
- Importance of:
  - Social connections
  - Training (through social connections...)
  - Bribes
  - Difficulty for women of working outside the home

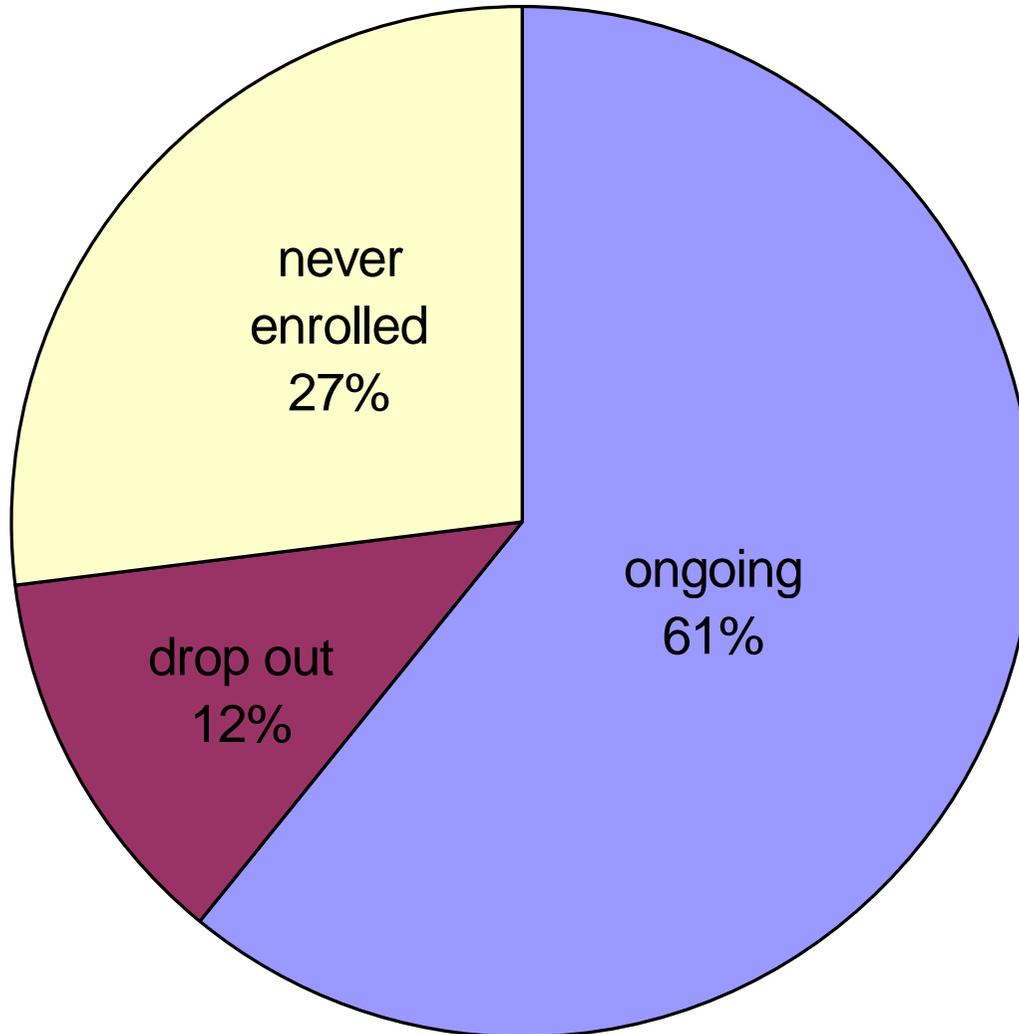
# The research

- CREATE survey – 1600 households in 4 slums (plus 6 rural areas)
- My survey – 500 of these households / 600 children aged 11-15
- Interviews – 30 households

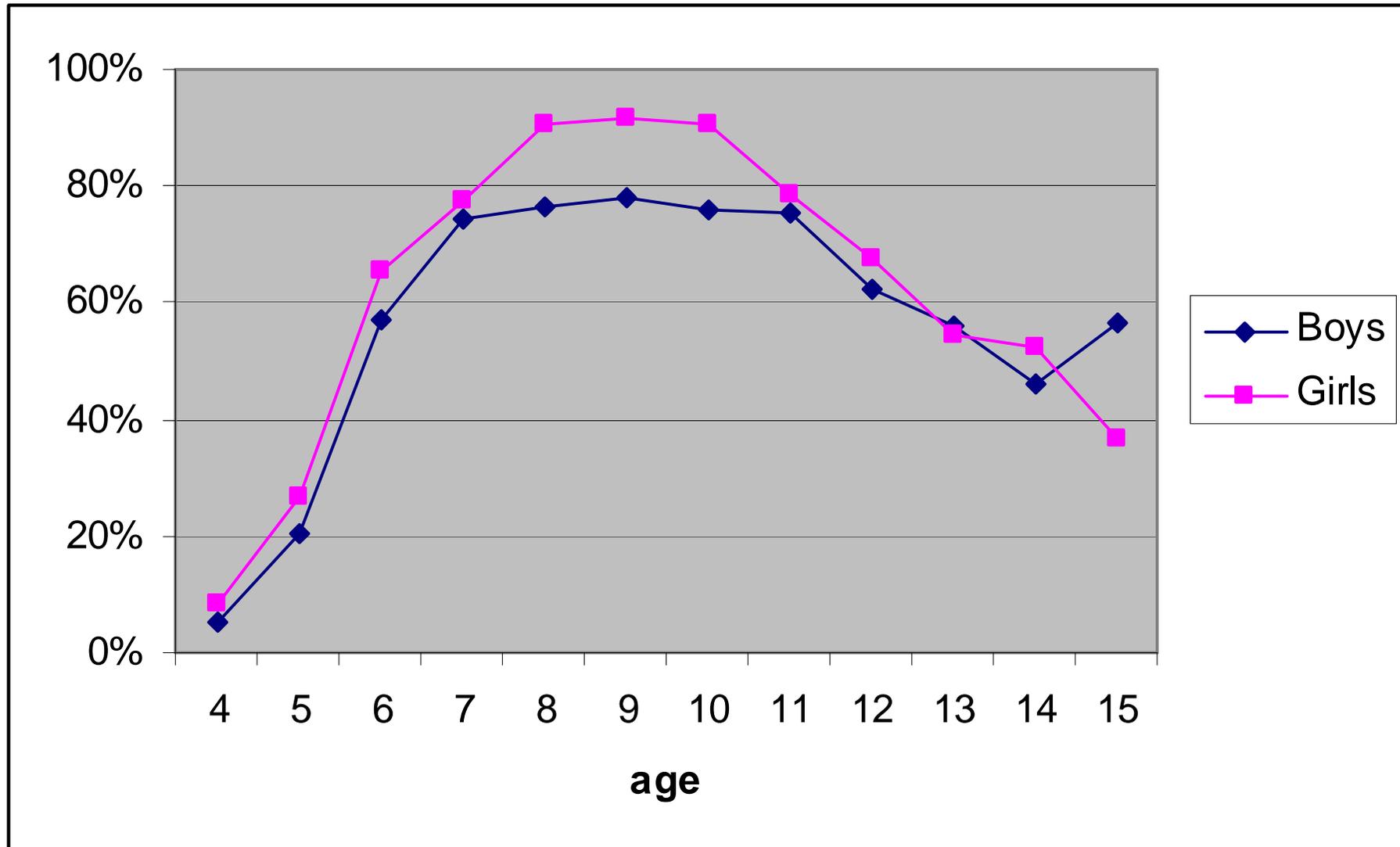
# The four slums: occupations



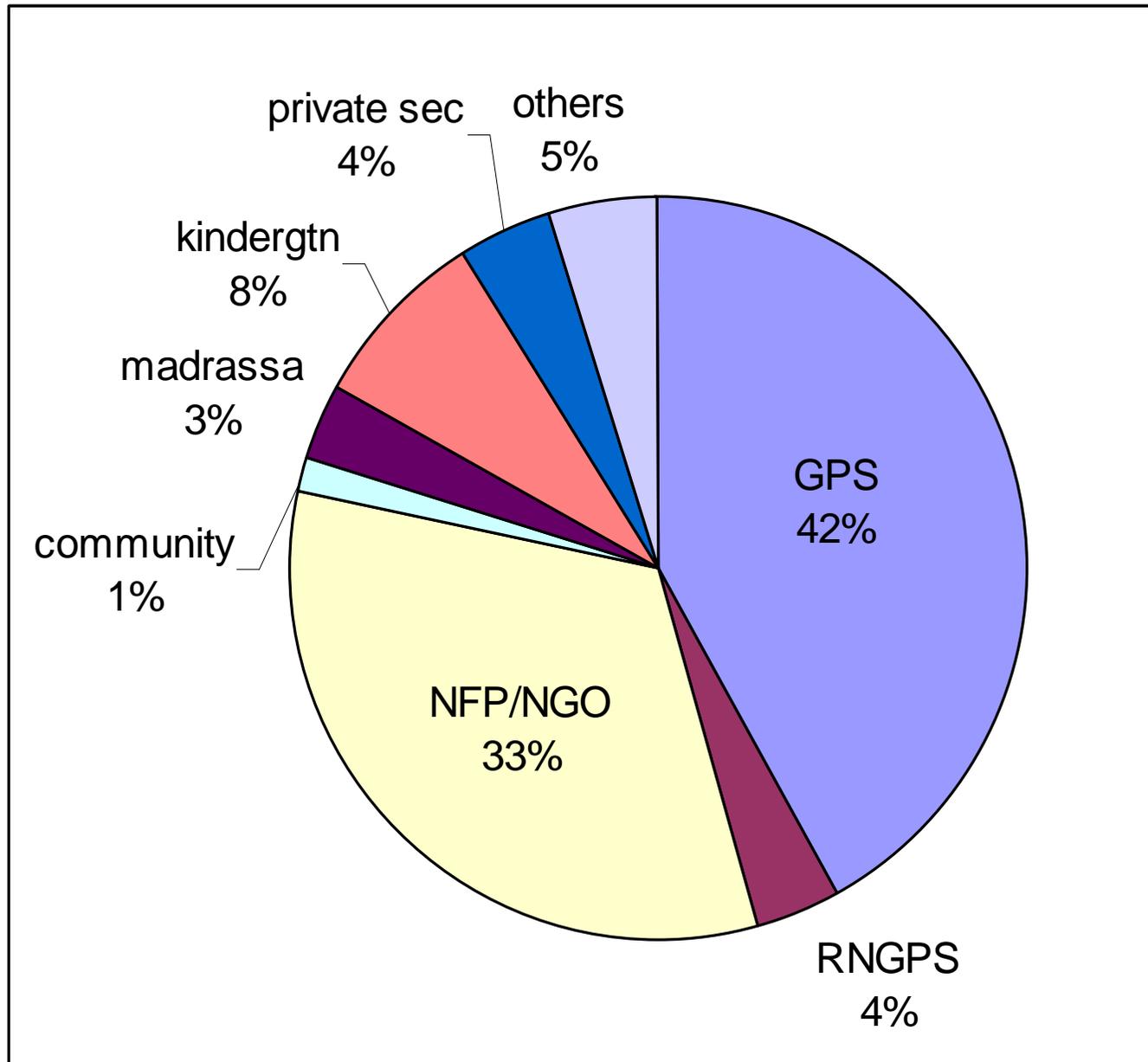
## School status of 4-15 year olds



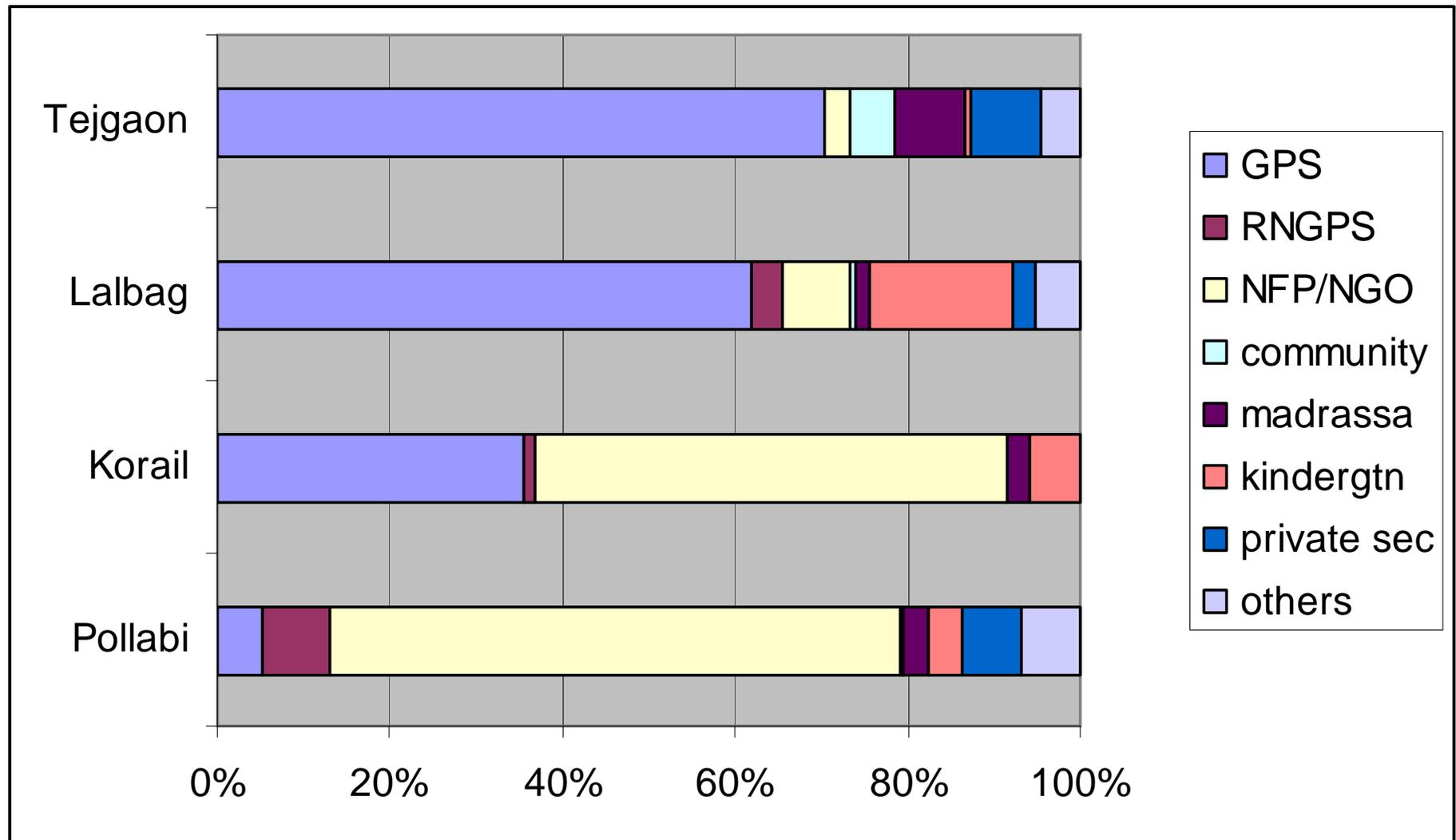
# Proportion of schoolgoing children by age and sex



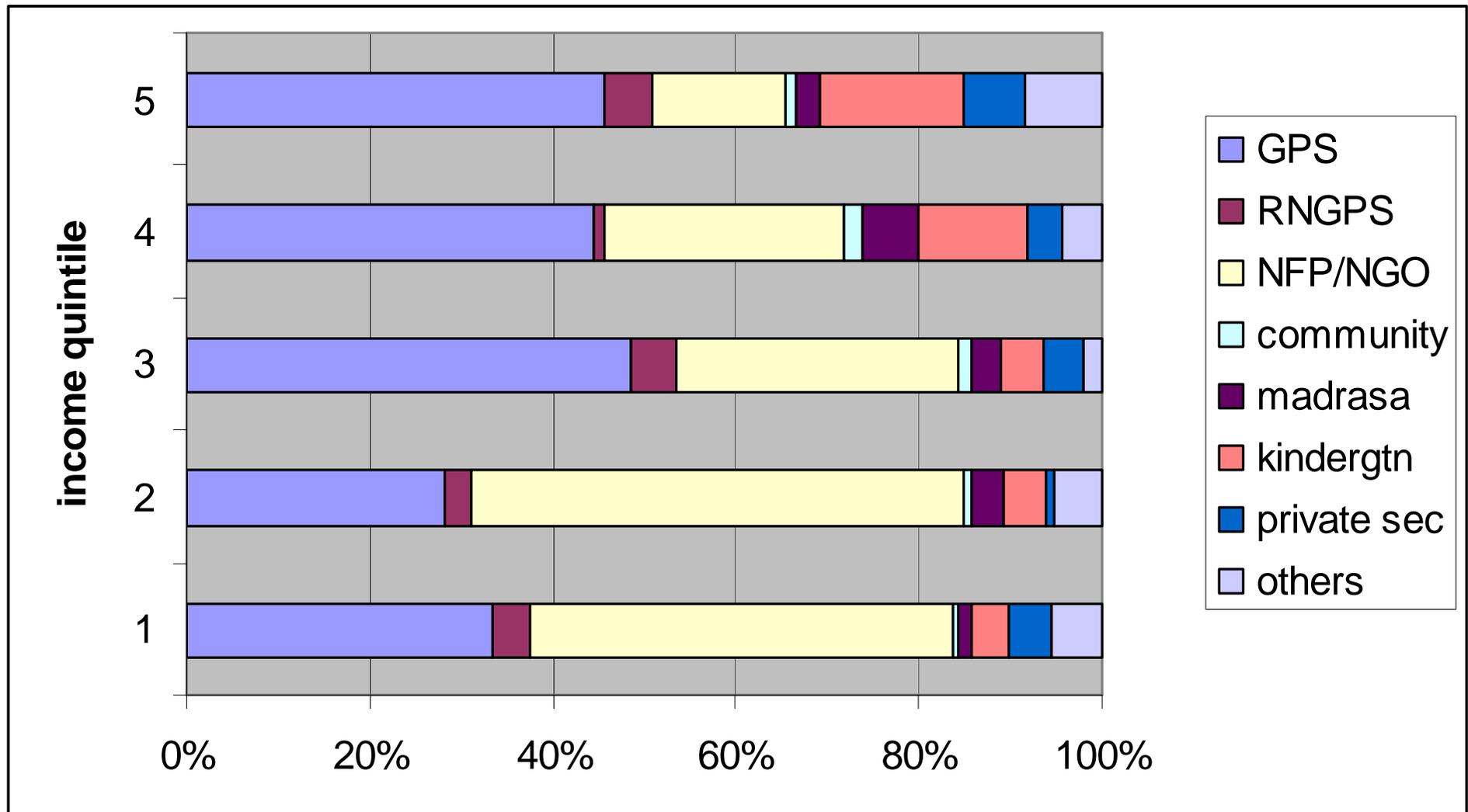
# School type



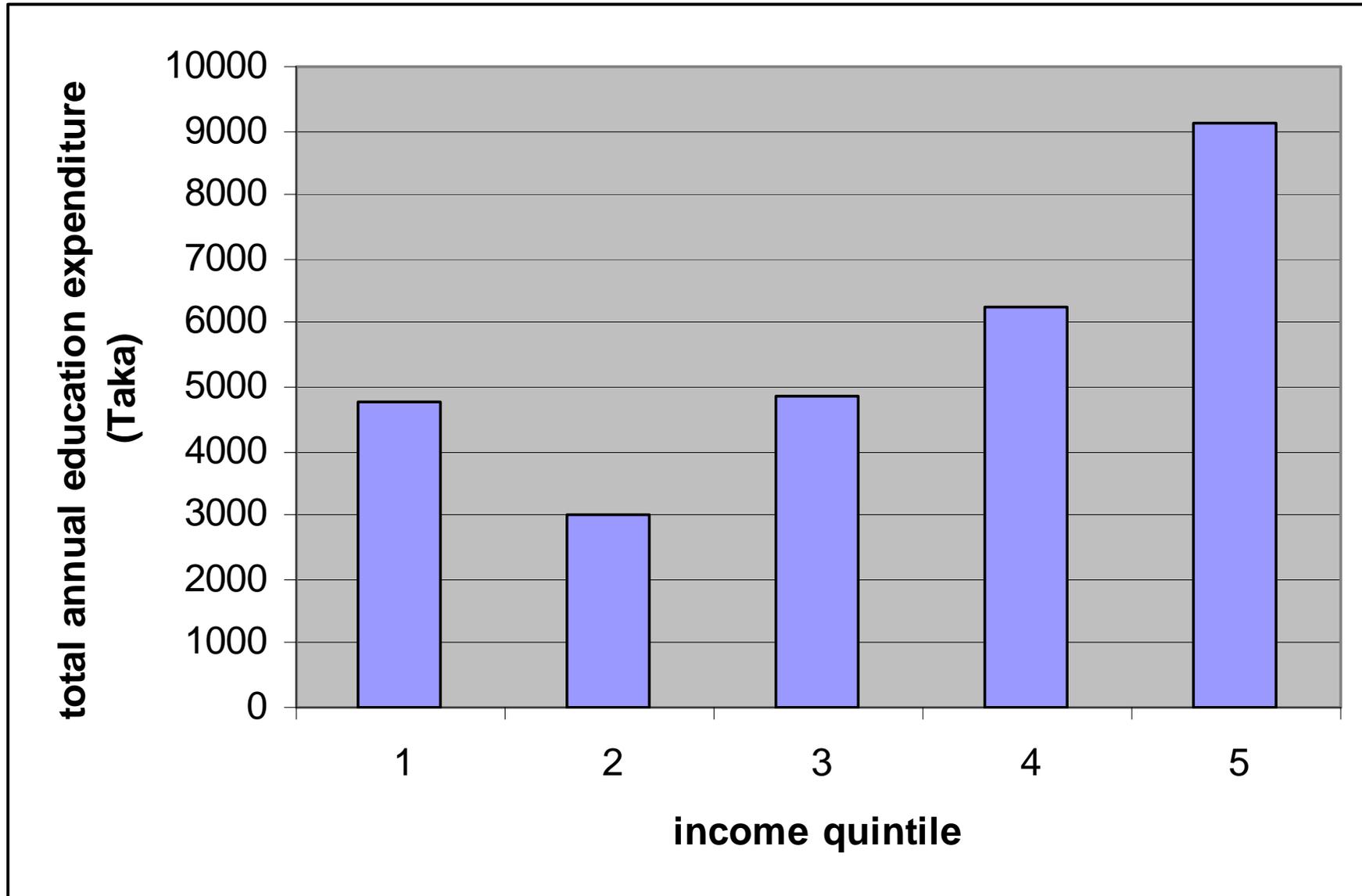
# School type by area



# School type by income quintile



# Spending on schooling



# Costs of school

- Physical and verbal abuse
- Bribes to get into good schools
- Lost earnings from child work: up to US\$10 per month but 9% of total family income
- Value of unpaid child work
- Lost chance to learn skilled manual work

# What makes a good or bad school?

- “Of course there are differences between good [and bad] schools. If there are good teachers, the school will be good. On the other hand, bad schools have bad teachers.” [4]
- Samsunnaha reported that there are 4 or 5 schools in the area. She thought that the government school was good and the others are small and not so good. She later said that she doesn't know very much about these other schools, and supposed that some were good and some not so good. Her attitude was that she had tried one school and it didn't work out. [28]
- Ali's father considered that the quality of NGO schools is good and also that they are free; while the merit of government schools is just that they are cheaper than other schools, such as kindergartens. [10]

# Aspirations

- Ruman's father had set his expectations firmly on a future for Ruman in the embroidery industry, hoping to give him a shop from which to work. A 'good job' in a large firm or government was definitely out: "Now it is impossible for him to get a good job or to be a government employee. To be a government employee, higher education is needed. He doesn't have this. Besides, in these cases you have to have a link with the upper level, which we don't have."
- "I will give my job to my child. I'll marry her off to one of my neighbours' sons. My daughter will be an ideal housewife in future. As my daughter is not educated, she will not be able to do any other good job. Besides, we are cleaners, so people look down upon us. So, I will marry her off to a family of the same class as ours."

# The value of schooling

- Accessing jobs
- Keeping accounts, avoiding being cheated, social interaction, reading for pleasure
- Schooling of little value in small amounts?
- Idealised vision of schooling:  
“If people don’t go to school their eyes don’t open. Schools light people with the light of knowledge.”

# For discussion

- School *choice* in slums of Dhaka?
- How do parents perceive and find out about quality?
- Who makes the decisions?
- How do particular events precipitate schooling decisions?
- Policy implications