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Handbook on Education of Children in Bangladesh



Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre

Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh

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4 QUALITY EDUCATION



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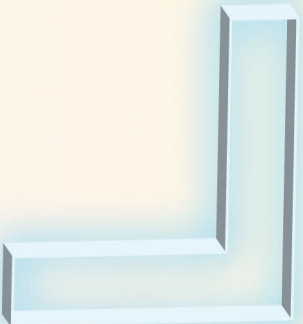
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Rector (Senior Secretary to the Govt.)
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Foreword

An MoU was signed on 18 July 2016 between BPATC and UNICEF Bangladesh with view to promoting cooperation in the areas of training, retraining and upgrading the quality of public administration, research, consultancy and also developing mutual sharing of expertise and resources based on the statutes and mandates. Various bilateral efforts have been made by both the organizations for realizing certain planned activities under the partnership to promote child rights in Bangladesh in line with the national and international documents. This 'Handbook on Education of Children in Bangladesh' is an essential part of the designed activities.

The objective of the Handbook is to disseminate hand pack information to the trainees of BPATC about the rights of the children related to education, existing governance system, situation of education of the children, initiatives of the Government and other agencies toward education, SDG related to education as well as activities need to be executed to ensure the educational rights of the children in Bangladesh. It is expected that the Handbook will assist in imparting knowledge-based training to the government officials as well as other stakeholders of the concerned field. Thus the Handbook by supporting in capacity building of the officials in the concerned field will contribute to some extent toward the implementation of the Vision 2021, Government's manifesto related to child rights, Vision 2041, and the SDG-4 of the UN.

BPATC has received ample support from officials of different line ministries, departments, organizations, academicians, UNICEF Bangladesh officials & BPATC Faculty Members for this difficult task. Their recommendations helped us to finalize the contents of the exigent task. In fact, their supports are highly appreciating as this could be a milestone for the educational development of the children of Bangladesh. Therefore, I would like to convey my utmost gratitude to all concerned of the Handbook.

Dr. M Aslam Alam



Representative
UNICEF Bangladesh

Foreword

It is definitely a pleasure that Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre has developed four sectoral Handbooks on Child Protection, Education, Health, and WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene) in Bangladesh for the officials who undergo various training courses at the centre and other places at its supervision. This 'Handbook on Education of Children in Bangladesh' is one of the four ones that carries enormous significance.

We started our partnership at the beginning of 2016 with clearly stated results as 'Institutionalize knowledge-base on children's issues and increased awareness among officials' with preferential focus on the situation of children in Bangladesh and roles of the officials for children in respective sectors and departments.

Development of the sectoral handbooks is a key activity under BPATC-UNICEF Bangladesh partnership. It presents an up-to-date picture on the situation of children in Bangladesh with candid reflection in the areas of child deprivation with data and evidence which will be very useful for local level sectoral development plans with the allocation of required resources for children.

It is highly expected that the Handbook will be used as a ready reference on the situation of education in Bangladesh with special focus on children for all the trainee officials as well as for the officials of different ministries and organizations.

Appreciating the joint efforts of BPATC and UNICEF team, I wish the continuation of this partnership and hope it will make a significant contribution toward the improvement of lives of children in Bangladesh through institutional support.

Looking forward to a better future of every child of Bangladesh.

Edouard Beigbeder



Director, BPATC

Preface

The ‘Handbook on Education of Children in Bangladesh’ is substantially an outcome of a rigorous effort. A Consultation Workshop on the draft of the Handbook was held at BPATC, Dhaka on 22 July 2018 and officials of different line ministries, departments, organizations, LGIs, academicians, BPATC faculty members as well as UNICEF officials participated in the workshop and provided diverse recommendations. Suitable recommendations delivered by the participants have been incorporated in the Handbook. Later on, the Handbook was sent to all faculty members of BPATC for opinions and suggestions with view to making it more useful and effective. Their invaluable suggestions have also been considered. The Handbook will help trainees of different training courses by providing numerous information on educational rights of the children, situation of education, initiatives of the Government and other agencies, SDG targets related to education, etc. It is expected that the Handbook will contribute to the capacity building of the government officials for promoting child rights in the country. Eventually, BPATC Faculty Members, officials of line ministries, different departments, local government bodies, NGOs and other peoples of the related fields will be enormously benefitted from the Handbook. Thus the Handbook will contribute to some extent in realizing the Vision 2021, manifesto related to children and the Vision 2041 of the Government as well as the SDG-4 of the UN.

I would like to express my highest and enormous gratefulness to Dr. M Aslam Alam, Rector (Senior Secretary to the Govt.) of BPATC for his ceaseless directions that motivated us to progress the Handbook. Simultaneously, I feel proud in conveying real appreciation to Mr. Edouard Beigbeder, Representative, UNICEF Bangladesh for his radiant eager to promote child rights through institutional support and cooperation.

I am hereby expressing my appreciation to external resource person Mr. M. Hifzur Rahman who has assisted us to draft the Handbook. At the same time, I am incalculably grateful to Mr. Mohd. Anwar Hossain, Programme Specialist and Focal Point of UNICEF Bangladesh and officials of different ministries, organizations, and academicians for their significant cooperation and crucial opinions.

Heartfelt gratitude also goes to the Thematic Group and other Faculty Members of BPATC for their inevitable support and inspiration that stimulated us vastly in finalizing the Handbook glowingly. A number of research publications, booklets, brochures, reports, etc. have helped to generate the Handbook otherwise it could be difficult to complete the daunting task within a short time. I am placing never-ending gratitude and acknowledgment to all the authors and editors of those documents.

Md. Jahidul Islam

Acronyms & Abbreviations

BANBEIS	: Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BBS	: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BPATC	: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
C4D	: Communication for Development
CRC	: Convention on the Rights of the Child
DPE	: Directorate of Primary Education
ECCD	: Early Child Care and Development
ELCs	: Early Learning Centres
GoB	: Government of Bangladesh
LGIs	: Local Government Institutions
MDGs	: Millennium Development Goals
MoE	: Ministry of Education
MoPME	: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MoWCA	: Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NFE	: Non Formal Education
NGOs	: Non-Government Organizations
NTRCA	: Non-Government Teachers' Registration and Certification Authority
OHCHR	: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PEC Exam	: Primary Education Completion Examination
PPE	: Pre Primary Education
SCE	: Second Chance Education
SDG	: Sustainable Development Goal
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goals
SMCs	: School Management Committees
TVET	: Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	: United Nations
UNCRC	: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Fund (Original United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)
WASH	: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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1. The Basis of Child Rights

Children are an integral part of society and they are the future of human civilization. Future of the world, as well as the prospect of any country, depends on the environment the children are growing up. Children become good citizens when they enjoy different rights recognized by the society, state and international community. Therefore, children should have indubitable rights as an integral part of society. And the global community has acknowledged the rights of the children in the recent time. The Charter of the UN recognizes that inherent dignity along with equal and incontrovertible rights of all human family members is the basis of liberty, justice as well as peace of the universe. The UN Charter also reaffirmed the basic human rights, dignity and value of the people along with the determination of promoting social advancement and improved life standard in big scale freedom.

The UN has declared and agreed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and in the International Covenants on Human Rights that everybody has the entitlement to enjoy every right as well as freedoms placed within them without any disparity. Recalling these, the UN has proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that childhood is entitled to scrupulous care as well as support.

The Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1924 and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child accepted on 20th November 1959 in the General Assembly pledged the requirement to extend special care for children. The Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1924 announces that the child requires particular safeguards, care, and lawful protection before and following its birth. Besides, the well-being of the children has also been focused on the statutes and related instruments of the international organizations and specialized agencies. The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules), as well as the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, felt that children living in exceptionally intricate conditions necessitate special consideration. There are also different provisions such as promoting placement including adoption both countrywide and internationally in the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles involving security along with the welfare of the Children. Besides, each people bear traditions in addition to cultural values in the field of protection along with harmonious improvement of the children. Bearing, recognizing and considering all these historic credentials, the UNCRC 1989 came into force on 2 September 1990 as per the article 49. The CRC recognizes the family as the basic group and natural atmosphere for the human being especially for the growth and welfare of the children and hence, every child should be grown up in a family setting where happiness, adore and understanding prevail. It also opines for international cooperation for better living situations of the children in all countries, especially in the developing states.

Bangladesh is amongst one of the 22 states that ratified the CRC first. Bangladesh has shown her commitment toward the children through ratifying the CRC in 1990. There is a surge of awareness of rights of the children in Bangladesh after the ratification of the CRC that has been reflected in different laws and social programmes. In Bangladesh, state activities through legislation regarding children have been progressed from protection to rights oriented legislation. Today legislations symbolizing social policy for children touch various areas of the children's lives. These laws, in fact, mirror views of the society on matters of children. Here it should be pointed out that a child is an abridged adult possessing rights those cannot be abridged. A child is a human being for all realistic purposes. It observes, feels and imitates as well as reacts to what is happening surroundings.

2. The CRC 1989 and Education Rights of the Children

The CRC, 1989 which was adopted by the General Assembly of the UN is the key instrument to ensure the rights of the children across the world. According to the CRC, a child should be provided a friendly and happy atmosphere, love and understanding environment so that he or she can develop and grow up own personality according to the requirement of the society.

The CRC emphasizes on the dignity of a child, his or her freedom of grow up without any obstacle as well as a serene, equal and harmonized environment so that he or she will prepare himself or herself as the indispensable part of the larger society.

The genesis of the CRC arises from the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1924 adopted by the League of Nations and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959 accepted by the General Assembly of the UN. Both of the declarations stresses as well as recognizes the right of a child and his or her development and this right is also aligned with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966, etc.

As per the CRC, a child should be entrusted with the safeguard as well as special care for developing his or her mental, social as well as physical maturity before and after birth take place. For development of the child education is a key tool. Therefore, the rights of education of the children have also been focused in the CRC. 2 articles, so far, have been found in the CRC related to the education rights of the children which are mentioned below:.

Article 28: The signatory countries have recognized education as right of every child in this article. To realize the education right of the children progressively, the State Parties shall adopt necessary measures on the following matters based on equal opportunity for all-



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- ★ to make primary education compulsory, free, as well as available for all;
- ★ to promote development of various types of secondary education, for instance, general and vocational education. This education will be available as well as reachable for all children. The states will adopt proper steps with view to introducing this education as free and if necessary, shall provide financial support;
- ★ to confirm higher education reachable to everyone based on capacity and highest means;
- ★ to make information along with guidance on educational as well as vocational matters available which will also be accessible to every child;

■ to adopt actions in inspiring children to be present at schools regularly as well as decreasing the rate of dropout.

As per sub-clause 2 of the article, the countries must adopt all proper steps with view to ensuring that school discipline is conducted in a way that is aligned with the dignity of the child as human being and in line with the Convention.

Sub-clause 3 of the article calls for promoting and supporting international cooperation to issues of education especially to contribute in eliminating ignorance as well as literacy across the globe and assist in accessing to scientific knowledge, technical knowledge as well as modern teaching methods. For all these, special actions must be taken for developing countries.



Article 29: In this article, the States Parties came to a decision that education of the child must be directed with view to-

- developing the personality, talents as well as mental and physical capability of the child to their highest level;
- developing respect toward the human rights, fundamental freedoms as well as the principles mentioned in the UN Charter;
- developing respect toward the parents, own cultural identity, language, and values as well as country's national values in which the child is living, the state he or she may originate from, and the civilizations beyond his or her own;
- preparing the child to create a responsible life in a liberated society carrying the spirit of understanding, tranquility, tolerance, equality of sexes as well as friendship amongst all persons, groups based on ethnicity, nationality and religion and aboriginal peoples;

Sub-clause 2 of the article specifies that there shall not be any interference toward the liberty of individuals as well as organizations in setting up and directing educational institutions; and education shall be conducted according to the above principles and to the necessities and maintaining minimum standards determined by the state (OHCHR 2018). As per this principles, each government should take proper actions to ensure quality and needful education of the children.

The Government of Bangladesh has shown her firm commitment toward education of the children through ratifying the CRC and formulating a large number of legal instruments and programmes/projects for ensuring education of the children. Government has also recognised education as an important tool to alleviate poverty and socio-economic development of the country. Government cherishes to ensure 100 percent enrolment in the primary education and improve quality up to higher level.

3. Constitution of Bangladesh and Education Rights of the Children

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh contains certain guidelines as well as provisions regarding the rights of the citizens including children. The directive principles have been mentioned in Part II that is in the 'Fundamental Principles of State Policy' part of the constitution. Among the articles related to the rights of the citizens including the children, 2 are, so far, related with education. The articles which are pertinent to education rights are 15 and 17 which are being mentioned herewith:

Article 15: This article provides the guidelines of fundamental needs of life which are food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care for all citizens. Here education has been recognized as fundamental need of all people including the children.

Article 17: As per this article, the state shall take effective actions in order to establish-

- a uniform, mass oriented as well as universal education system and to expand free and compulsory education to all children up to a level as may be fixed by law;
- relate education to the requirements of society, create appropriately trained as well as motivated citizens to serve the requirements of the society; and
- remove illiteracy within the stipulated time as may be fixed by law (GoB 2010).

4. Education- Structure, Streams, and Governance in Bangladesh

Present Structure of Education: In Bangladesh, at present the education system has 3 major stages that are primary, secondary and higher educations. Primary education is composed of a 5-year cycle and secondary education is a 7- year one comprising 3 sub-stages. The sub-stages are: 3 years of junior secondary, 2 years of secondary and 2 years of higher secondary. Secondary education is provided by junior secondary schools, some government primary schools, secondary schools, school & colleges.

Entry age for primary education is 6 years. The junior, secondary and higher stages of the secondary educations have been premeditated for the age groups of 11-13, 14-15 and 16-17 years. After higher secondary education, students can enter into graduate level education in general, technical, engineering, agriculture, business studies, and medical streams and afterward in masters' degree except for medical education (MoE 2018).

Streams in Education: Primary level education is consisted of 2 main streams-general and madrasha. On the other hand, secondary education is consisted of 3 key streams: general, technical-vocational and madrasha while higher education has also 3 streams- general (inclusive of pure and applied science, arts, business and social science), madrasha and technology education. In higher education, Technology education includes agriculture, engineering, medical, textile, leather technology as well as ICT. Madrasahs have alike core courses as in the general stream of primary, secondary and post-secondary level but have added stress on religious studies (MoE 2018).

Governance in Education System: In Bangladesh two key ministries along with their attached departments, directorates and autonomous bodies are responsible to manage and administer the education system. In the education sector Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and Ministry of Education (MoE) are mainly responsible for education. MoPME is responsible for primary and non-formal education while MoE is responsible for secondary, higher secondary and higher education. MoE has two divisions.

Under the MoPME, the following departments and agencies are playing critical roles for ensuring primary and NFE education of the children of Bangladesh:

- Directorate of Primary Education
- National Academy for Primary Education
- Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit
- Shishu Kollan Trust
- Bureau of Non-formal Education

On the other hand, the following departments and agencies are involved with the secondary, higher secondary and higher education under the MoE in Bangladesh.

Under the Secondary and Higher Education Division of MoE-

- University Grants Commission
- Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education
- National Academy for Educational Management
- Education Engineering Department
- BANBEIS
- Directorate of Inspection and Audit
- National Curriculum and Textbook Board
- Non-Government Teachers' Registration and Certification Authority
- Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO
- PM Education Trust
- International Mother Language Institute
- Non-Government Teacher Employee Retirement Benefit Board
- Non-Government Teachers and Employee Welfare Trust.

Under the Technical and Madrasa Education Division of MoE-

- Directorate of Technical Education
- Directorate of Madrasa Education
- Bangladesh Madrasa Teachers' Training Institute
- Bangladesh Technical Education Board
- National Computer Training and Research Academy
- Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board.

Legal Instruments in the Education System: Bangladesh has formulated numerous legal instruments to govern the education system. Among the legal instruments, the National Education Policy 2010 is a highly significant one. Other legal instruments are as follows:

Key legal Instruments for Pre-Primary and Primary Education in Bangladesh:

- Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990
- ECCD Policy 2013
- Government Primary School Teacher Transfer Guidelines 2018

- Government Primary School Grading Policy 2017
- Primary Education Completion Examination Policy (Revised) 2016
- Teacher Transfer Guideline of Government Primary School 2015
- Free Book Distribution Policy for Primary Education
- Government Primary School Teachers Recruitment Rules 2013

Key legal Instruments for Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh: In the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh, an important legal instrument is the Non-government Teachers' Registration and Certification Act 2005. Under the act, the NTRCA was established in March 2005 with view to ensuring quality teaching in class rooms of all non-government educational institutions: junior high schools, secondary schools, colleges, madrasahs, technical schools and vocational institutions of the country.

Key legal Instruments for Non-Formal Education: There are two key legal instruments for Non-Formal education which are as follows:

- Non-Formal Education Policy 2006
- Non-Formal Education Act 2014

The National Education Policy 2010

The policy has been adopted to ensure quality and inclusive education for all so that children can learn appropriate and equal learning in a suitable environment and can share their learning. It has also emphasized on quality teacher, increase of the teacher ratio compared to students, update curriculum and proper infrastructure.

The policy covers the areas of Pre-Primary Education, Primary Education, Adult and Non-formal Education, Secondary Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Madrasa Education, Religious and Moral Education as well as Higher Education. Several types of educational system such as General (Bangla and English version), English Medium, Kindergarten, Madrasa (Ebtedayee and Aliya), Vocational (Technical) etc. have been marked in the policy. Some of the major issues regarding pre-primary education, primary education and secondary education are highlighted below:

Introduction of Pre-primary Education: Since the independence of the country, there was no provision of pre-primary education, formally, in the country. However, in Bangladesh there are hundred thousand of Kindergarten schools without any formal syllabus and policy on how to teach the kids. It is the 'National Education Policy 2010' which recognized the importance of pre-primary education for the children of 4 to 6 years of old. The main objective of pre-primary education is to create conducive environment for the children of under 6 so that they can learn with enjoyment for development of their universal sense of humanity. They will get the opportunity to learn by playing with their peers and it will prepare them to develop sound mental and physical health in all respects. In this policy, it is mandatory for the children to undergo through one year pre-primary education before primary education and in future, pre-primary education will be extended up to 4+ children. Under this policy, the government has the provision for creating post and equipping classrooms for pre-primary class in every primary school.

Primary Education: Since primary education is the backbone of the country, the government ensures access for all section of the children in this level irrespective of their religion, ethnicity, geographical difference and physical condition under the guideline of the policy. Therefore, government declares free and compulsory education for all in this level including providing free books and other materials. As primary education is the base structure for the higher education, therefore, quality education is very essential in this level. Government wishes to establish at least one

primary school in every village. However, the challenges in this stage are to ensure quality teachers, equal facilities for all regions, infrastructure, adequate training etc.

One significant change brought in the policy is the extended primary level education up to class VIII from class V. The designated age, for the children, for admission in the primary level is 6+ and the ratio of teacher and student is 1:30 under this policy. Class VI has been started in 764 primary schools till 2016 to implement the Education Policy 2010 (DPE 2018).

According to the Constitution of the country, the state shall ensure uniform basic education and this philosophy has been emphasized in the education policy. Therefore, all the schools including Bangla, English medium and the Ebtedayee and all kinds of madrashas will have to follow and implement the new policy. Not only that, common curriculum has to be followed in this level for all the schools.

In order to introduce a non-discriminatory education system, a uniform curricula as well as syllabus will have to be followed in some specific subjects at the primary level that is in all government and-non-government primary schools, kindergartens both Bangla and English medium and Ebtedayee madrashas. However, school can teach extra subjects or issue in addition to those specified

subjects taking permission from the relevant authorities. The Government has introduced a new subject named Bangladesh Studies for providing basic idea about the history, culture and heritage of the country. There are some subjects that have been made compulsory under this policy such as Bangla, English, Moral science, Bangladesh Studies, Mathematics, Social Environment, Natural Environment, Science and Information Technology for all streams. As per the policy, the government will take special measures to ensure the participation of ethnic, disable and disadvantaged groups. The school authority will ensure conducive and learning environment for the students in the school so that they can learn by playing and joyfully. The Government will recruit adequate number of qualified teachers and provide necessary training for them.



Secondary Education: According to the policy, secondary education ranges from grade IX to XII. After finishing this level, student can enroll themselves in different level of tertiary education or vocational education or skill. Even, some of them can join the job sector at this level. Therefore, the main objectives at this level are:

- To help in enhancing latent intellects and inner faculties of the students;
- To equip the students in such a way so that they can compete in the job market;
- To impart quality education etc.

In the secondary level, there will be three streams i.e. general (Bangla and English Version), Madrasha and Technical education. However, for ensuring the uniformity among different levels, there will be some compulsory subjects in this stage such as Bangla, English, Bangladesh Studies, General Mathematics and Information Technology for all streams. High schools need to add classes of XI and XII under this policy and higher secondary colleges need to open classes of IX and X which is a tremendous change brought under this policy. The policy had the goal to have teacher-student ratio to 1:30 by 2018 (MoE 2018).

5. Situation of Child Education in Bangladesh

One of the fundamental human rights is access to quality education and it plays positive role to access other essential rights. It is a powerful tool for the marginalized as well as disadvantaged people to participate fully as citizens since it promotes individual's confidence, freedom, empowerment and yields important development benefits. Despite huge success during the recent time, millions of children and adults are still deprived of lifelong educational opportunities in Bangladesh which occurs mainly because of poverty, child labour, child marriage and prevailing gaps of the education system etc. Situation of the child education is illuminated herewith:

Present Situation of Pre- Primary and Primary Education: Although all educational commissions recommended pre-primary education, not much was achieved until now. The Government of Bangladesh recognised in the National Education Policy 2010 that there should be a separate pre-primary class for children aged 5+.

This job is now done to a great extent by private organisations/agencies through nursery schools. Several thousand nursery schools are run privately to meet the demand of the time but these are not adequate. Hence, children mostly receive their early childhood education at home from parents and other adults. Children of families whose members are not educated in most cases remain unattended and no early childhood education is available for them although most of the 5+ children attend pre-primary classes in the government primary schools. Enrolment in pre-primary school in number is 35,78,384 in 2018.

In the case of primary education, for both girls and boys, Bangladesh has achieved significant improvement since dropout rare as well as gender parity gap removed tremendously, and enrolment rate has increased largely. The gender parity is now in favour of girls and their percentage is 50.75 percent in primary education. The country has reached the target of MDG especially for gender parity. In primary education, the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of boys and girls in 2018 is 97.55 Vs 98.16 percent and overall NER 97.85 percent. The NER of boys and girls in 2017 was 97.66 Vs 98.29 percent and overall NER was 97.97 percent. It is found that in 2018 the NER has been reduced slightly compared to 2017 and the reason needs to be found out. The overall NER in 2005 was 87.2. It is appreciating that the NER has increased gradually from 2005 but still the dropout rate in primary education is very high. In 2018, the dropout rate stands at 18.6 percent which was 47.2 in 2005. This means that a huge number of children remain deprived of the primary education.

The Government has taken several initiatives to ensure primary education for all children such as bi-stipend for 13 million children, School Feeding Programme. Under the School Feeding Programme in 15700 primary schools of 93 poverty-stricken upazilas, 30,00758 students are getting food at schools and this programme is likely to be extended with the support of World Bank. Introduction of Primary Education Completion (PEC) examination in 2009 is a kind of incentive for the parents as well as students to continue their studies and consequently survival rates to Grade 5 have increased. On the other hand, Decentralized School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) is being playing crucial rule to increase the number of students in primary level.

Pre-primary Education (PPE) model of education institutions are also contributing in increasing the number of children in primary education. Another important issue, the government recognizes the contribution of NGOs in the case of curriculum and learning materials which are being also used in the national curriculum for pre-primary education. Therefore, sufficient amount of money and manpower have been allocated under the Third Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-3) for incorporating PPE to primary schools.

Child-focused Education Indicators/Data of Primary Education:

Indicator/Data Type	Value	Year
Number of schools (including Ebtedayee and high madrasha attached Ebtedayee)	134147	2018
Number of Total Students (including Ebtedayee and high madrasha attached Ebtedayee)	17338100	2018
Number of girl students in Percentage	50.75	2018
Teacher Student Ratio (TSR)	1:25	2018
Number of special needs children Enrolled (children with disability)	45977	2018
Net Intake Rate (NIR) in percentage	96.48	2018
Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in percentage	97.85	2018
Net Enrolment Rate (NER) Boys in percentage	97.55	2018
Net Enrolment Rate (NER) Girls in percentage	98.16	2018
Dropout rate in percentage	18.6	2018
PEC Exam pass rate	97.59	2018
PEC Exam pass rate Girls	97.68	2018
Ebtedayee Education Completion Exam pass rate	97.69	2018
Ebtedayee Education Completion Exam pass rate girls	97.94	2018

Source: BANBEIS

In primary level, education is provided by 25 types of providers under 5 broad categories as such:

1. MoPME managed: GPS, NNPS, RNGPS, NRNGPS, Experimental, Community, ROSC, Shishu Kollyan
2. MoE managed: High School Attached Primary, Ebtedayee, High madrasha attached Ebtedayee
3. MoC managed school: KG, Tea garden
4. Managed by other authorities: Temple based LC, Social welfare based (MoSW), Deaf & Dumb (MoSW), Mosque based LC, School for Blind, Jail Attached, CHTs School, Other types, Quami
5. NGO Bureau Managed School: NGO School, BRAC, Other NGO LCs

However, among 6 primary schools at least 1 does not have any functioning toilet and the overall percentage is 17. But the situation is improving. In 2010 only 31 percent Government schools had facilities of water points in good condition which stood to 72 percent in 2013 that also indicate that there is still room for huge improvement for potable drinking water category (UNICEF 2015).

Situation of Secondary Education: In secondary education, number of girl students is also higher than boys (Girls 53.99 percent). Overall NER in 2018 is 53.10 and the NER for boys is 47.51 while for girls is 59.00. In 2017, the overall NER was 54.68. The NER decreased 1.58 percent in 2018 compared to 2017 and the reason need to be found out critically. Teacher Students Ratio stands in secondary education 1:45 and in the Education Policy 2010, the expected ratio is 1:30 by 2018. In this case, the country needs to travel a long way. Among the teachers of the junior secondary schools, secondary schools and school and colleges (school section), 66.86 percent are trained which means

33.14 percent, a large number of teachers did not receive training. Training is essential for imparting quality education. As per statistics of 2018, 2.59 percent of institutions do not have the arrangement of pure drinking water while 4.41 percent institutions do not have separate toilet for girls. In 46.95 percent of institutions do not have hand washing facilities.

Key focused indicators/data related to secondary school education of the children are as follows:

Indicator/Data Type	Value	Year
Number of Total Schools	20465	2018
Number of Total Students	10475100	2018
Number of girl students in Percentage	53.99	2018
Teacher Student Ratio (TSR)	1:45	2018
Average number of teacher per institution	11	2018
Number of trained teachers in percentage	66.86	2018
Number of special needs children Enrolled (children with disability)	66093	2018
Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in percentage	53.10	2018
Net Enrolment Rate (NER) Boys in percentage	47.51	2018
Net Enrolment Rate (NER) Girls in percentage	59.00	2018
Number of institutions having electricity connection in percentage	92.03	2018
Number of institutions having multimedia in percentage	78.63	2018
Number of institutions having computer facility in percentage	87.24	2018
Number of institutions having computer teacher in percentage	79.18	2018
Number of institutions having internet facility in percentage	80.80	2018
Number of institutions having pure drinking water in percentage	97.41	2018
Number of institutions having separate toilet facilities in percentage	93.52	2018
Number of institutions having ramp in percentage	21.75	2018
Number of institutions having computer lab in percentage	30.77	2018
Number of institutions having web site in percentage	43.15	2018
Number of institutions having hand washing facilities in percentage	53.05	2018
Institutions publicly managed in percentage	3.24	2018
Institutions privately managed in percentage	96.76	2018
Number of schools having digital attendance for students	6.35	2018
Number of schools having digital attendance for teachers	8.82	2018

Source: BANBEIS

Situation of Higher Secondary (college) Education: Higher secondary education is provided by school and colleges and higher secondary colleges which are also known as intermediate college. Total number of intermediate colleges is 2603 (57.91 percent of the total colleges) in 2018. The percentage of total enrolment in intermediate college is 17.33 percent out of 4.278 million enrolled students of the college education in 2018.

Child-focused Education Indicators/Data of higher Secondary (college) Education:

Indicator/Data Type	Value	Year
Number of total school and college/intermediate college	2603	2018
Number of total school and college/intermediate college Female	389	2018
Number of Total Students	741295	2018
Number of girl students in number	381165	2018
Enrolment in school and college (college section) in percentage	53	2018
Enrollment in higher secondary college in percentage	50	2018
Teacher Student Ratio (TSR) in school and college (college section)	1:19	2018
Teacher Student Ratio (TSR) in higher secondary college	1:16	2018

Source: BANBEIS

Situation of Madrasa Education: Madrasa education has turned into a big sub-sector of education in Bangladesh dealing over 3.81 million students including the Ebtedayee. This education is commonly known as religious stream which is distinct from general stream. The Ebtedayee madrasahs provide primary equivalent education, Dhakhil madrasahs secondary equivalent, Alim madrasahs higher secondary, Fazil madrasahs degree equivalent while kamil madrasahs provide masters equivalent education of general stream. Among all category of madrasahs, 58.28 percent of them use computer in academic/pedagogy purposes.

Child-focused Education Indicators/Data of Madrasa Education:

Indicator/Data Type	Value	Year
Number of Ebtedayee madrasahs	5164	2018
Number of students in Ebtedayee madrasahs	348936	2018
Number of total Dakhil Madrasa	6553	2018
Number of students in Dakhil madrasahs	1352590	2018
Ratio of Teacher students in Dakhil madrasahs	1:21	2018
Number of teachers trained of Dakhil madrasahs in percentage	24	2018
Number of Alim Madrasahs	1412	2018
Number of students in Alim Madrasahs	442875	2018
Ratio of Teacher students in Alim Madrasahs	1:21	2018

Source: BANBEIS

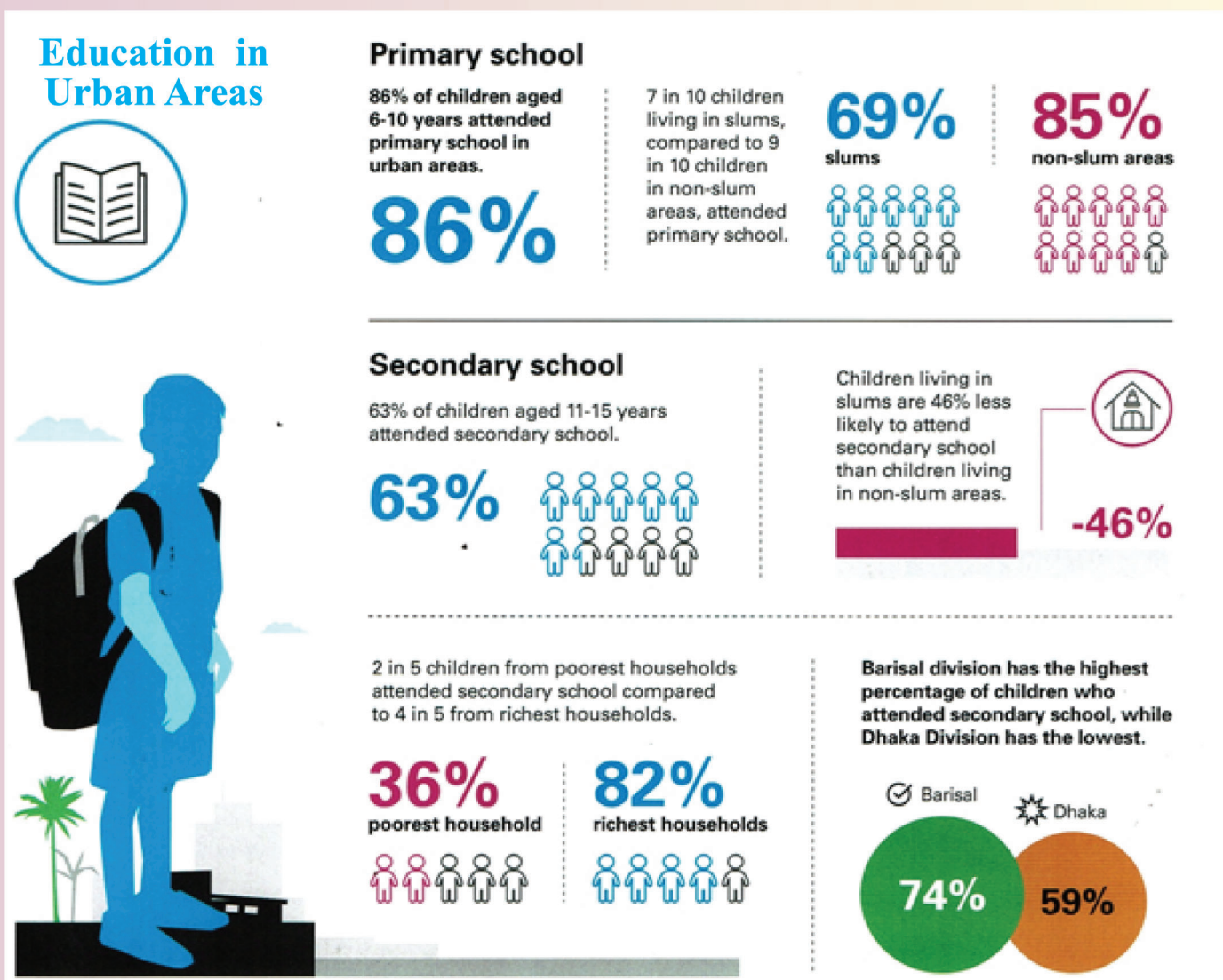
6. Situation of Child Education in Urban Areas of Bangladesh

A Survey was conducted during 2016 in the urban areas of Bangladesh by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF, titled as 'Child Well-Being Survey in Urban Areas of Bangladesh 2016' which shows some statistics regarding the situation of education of the children in urban areas. The important findings are:

- The primary school adjusted Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) of the children was 85.5 percent.
- The adjusted primary school NAR for children of City Corporation (CC) non-slums was 85.0 percent, other urban areas 86.8 percent while it was 69.4 percent in CC slums. There is a little variation of the NAR by division, but some variations have been found by the education of mothers as well as the status of the socio-economic condition.

- Primary School Completion Rate (PSCR) was observed extensively higher in other urban areas (92.8 percent) compared to CC non-slums (77.4 percent) and CC slum areas (73.1 percent). The PSCR in Rajshahi division was 99.4 percent (highest) while it was 81.8 percent in Dhaka division (lowest).
- The effective transition rate to secondary school was 97.3 percent.
- Secondary school adjusted NAR was 63.1 percent which means 63.1 percent children of 11 to 15 years was attending secondary school or higher. The NAR at the secondary level is considerably lower than primary school NAR (85.5 percent).
- The secondary school NAR varied notably in terms of urban domains. It was 62.0 percent in CC non-slums, other urban areas 65.5 percent while only 33.3 percent in CC slum areas. NAR at secondary level was highest in Barisal (74.4 percent) while lowest in Dhaka division (59.4 percent).
- Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary school adjusted NAR was 1.05 that indicates an advantage in the attendance of girls over boys in primary school or higher. The index rises higher to 1.18 for secondary education. The advantage of girls was predominantly prominent in children with less educated mothers as well as children from poorer households (BBS & UNICEF 2017).

Figure: Situation of primary and secondary education of children in urban areas:



Data Source: BBS & UNICEF 2017

However, the condition of street children is very vulnerable as they do not have, normally, any access to school and they are out of any statistics. In 2012, approximately 1.3 million children lived on the streets and about 250,000 children engaged in begging in Dhaka. It is reported that at present, there are 0.7 million children live in the streets of Bangladesh and among them, 250,000 live in capital Dhaka alone. Therefore, systems of education need to be relaxed and flexible for them so that they can continue or get access to any form of education such as Second Chance Education/Non-Formal Education (SCE/NFE). The main challenge, in this case, is to introduce the equivalent system with its counterpart formal education.

7. Situation of Education of the Children with Disabilities

Like other countries, children with disabilities are the most vulnerable and marginalized in Bangladesh. In 2002, only 4 percent of children with disabilities (1.6 million) get access to primary school. Among them, most of them had mild to a moderate physical problem. But the journey of achievement started since then. Under the Primary Education Development Programme-II with the duration of 2004-2011 inclusive education was incorporated first which addressed some of the barriers faced by the children having disabilities.

In PEDP-3 (July 2011-December 2017) priority was given to make schools more accessible. Therefore, the enrolment of children with disabilities in the government and registered NGO primary schools had been increased as per the Annual Education Sector Performance Report of 2013. As per statistics of BANBEIS, the number of special needs children (disable) enrolled in government primary schools in 2018 is 45,977 and in all types of primary schools, NGO run schools and Ebtedayee madrashas, the number of students is 96,385. In the secondary schools, the total



number of children with disabilities up to grade twelve in 2018 is 66,093 and among them, 30,311 are girls while in intermediate colleges, the number of students is 7,440 including 3,010 female students. In Dhakhil and Alim madrasahs, the total number of students with disabilities is 9,927 including 4,597 girls/female students.

However, the concept of inclusive education remains still at an emerging stage in Bangladesh. Even, there is a lack of awareness among different stakeholders about the concept. Therefore, this concept further needs to address some social problems relating to children such as poor and disadvantaged children as well as children with physical/intellectual disabilities. It is expected that special measures will be adopted for the students with disability through the PEDP-4 (NEWAGE 2018).

There is an acute need for reformation in the mainstream schooling system to address the various needs of children with disabilities. Besides, more initiatives are required in secondary schools since enrolment tends lower among children with disabilities.

Another barrier for the children having disabilities is the infrastructure barrier at the secondary level. Since most of the

secondary level institutions are multi-storied building, it is very tough for children with disabilities to continue their education. Among the secondary schools, only 21.75 percent have ramp facilities in 2018. Due to Lack of accessibility, they leave or drop them out from the school. On the other hand, teachers are not properly trained to handle children with disabilities in Bangladesh.

For including persons with disabilities in skills development activities a national strategy was formulated in 2013 by the Government of Bangladesh. The main philosophy of the strategy was to include disabled children in the larger society. Disable children need skill-oriented education and training so that they can get jobs by finishing primary or secondary education overcoming the deprivation caused by existing belief and stigma.

8. Education - Supports of UNICEF

UNICEF has contributed a lot in achieving the targets of MDGs and is contributing to achieving several targets of SDGs. The journey of UNICEF in Bangladesh has started before 60 years back and the organization is working in the country in collaboration with the Government, development partners, civil society organizations and local people. And the progress or results are remarkable in reducing preventable child deaths, ensuring enrolment of more boys and girls in primary education, reducing gender inequality in schools, and ensuring more people's access to safe water and nutritious food during this long 60 years. Though the future of Bangladesh is promising, there are lots of challenges in this case. However, UNICEF expressed its interest and commitment to continue its support and efforts to the Government of Bangladesh and its other stakeholders in the country to improve the survival, development, protection, and participation of women and children, especially the most vulnerable. By this time, the Government of Bangladesh and UNICEF Bangladesh have jointly adopted Country Programme 2017-2020 for Bangladesh which has been prepared aligning with the 7th Five Year Plan.

The Country Programme 2017-2020 intends to protect the school-age children as they are facing enormous challenges particularly in getting high-quality education as well as protection. As per the National Student Assessment 2013 for Grades 3 and 5, only 1 in 4 children in grade 5 have the necessary competencies in mathematics and Bangla (DPE 2014). Functional gender-or disability-responsive water, sanitation, and menstrual hygiene facilities are absent in most of the schools. There is a lack of safety and prevailing high sexual harassment as well as abuse in public places and on way to schools that create dropout of girls from schools. It is projected that around 6.2 million children are out of school and among them, 2.6 million are primary school age while 1.1 million are pre-primary school age. Most of the out of school children live in urban slums, and hard-to-reach areas. Geographical disparities are also found (UNICEF 2015). Moreover, a recent survey anticipated that 1.7 million children are involved in child labour and maximum of them are boys, and 1 in every 4 of them are between the age of 6 and 11 years.

Therefore, the in general vision of the country programme 2017-2020 is that all the children of primary-school age whether boys or girls, will learn equitably in a healthy, secured and resilient environment (UNICEF 2016). Hence, several programmes have been initiated by the Government and UNICEF especially to strengthen equitable coverage of inclusive high-quality formal and non-formal primary education as well as to prevent violence against children in schools and communities.

Support of UNICEF has also been extended to strategic advocacy with a view to carrying out support toward better investment for quality education and confirming the progress of the children to secondary education (formal, non-formal and second-chance education). A number of research projects are being carried out for generating evidence to see the returns of education relating to an investment in WASH in schools together with the benchmarking of WASH facilities as well as practices, promoting hand washing, hygiene and taking up of technical designs in support of inclusive and climate-resilient WASH in the schools. Support of UNICEF extended to-

Early Learning: For ensuring 100 percent primary education, UNICEF has initiated different programmes and one of them is the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme. Children who get the opportunity of ECD programme are likely to enroll in primary education more than those who do not get this benefit. Therefore, this programme is very crucial for increasing the percentage of child education in Bangladesh. However, there are some structural problems remain in this regard as it cannot ensure coverage for all the children because of limited access. It has been observed that lack of awareness along with the knowledge and infrastructural gap is another hindrance for this programme. Therefore, children are unable to fully develop their mental faculty as well as complete quality primary education which leads to low retention and learning outcomes in subsequent years.



A teacher reads with her students in an early learning centre in Bandarban

Mainstreaming of pre-primary education: Under the Education Policy 2010, Bangladesh Government introduces one-year pre-primary education which is mandatory for all primary schools. UNICEF is also providing support in this programme which opens a new era in the country.

Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy: The Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy 2013 is another UNICEF supported initiative for increasing the percentage of primary and quality education. This programme is being implemented with the collaboration of UNICEF and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA 2018). MoPME has approved this programme for ensuring high quality education. A pre-school framework has been approved and also endorsed the development of PPE standards by the MoPME and expected that these will move forward the delivery of high quality and persistent school preparedness programme.

Early Learning Centres (ELCs): UNICEF has developed ELCs for providing centre-based care and education for the vulnerable children ages between 4 and 6 years. Under the project of the Early Learning for Child Development and PPE programme more than 1.1 million children were covered from the disadvantaged groups such as CHT, slums, etc. since 2006. Teachers of primary schools are also getting training under this programme and teachers are supporting children for developing their skills in terms of social and cognitive skills.

Since 2006, MoWCA, under the Early Learning for Child Development Project (ELCDP) supported by UNICEF, has provided early learning and PPE services to 1.1 million children in the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT), urban slums as well as other disadvantaged districts. Under the project, teachers assist children in developing linguistic, social along with cognitive skills by different activities as such:

- story-telling;
- singing;
- indoor as well as outdoor games;
- toys making with the materials brought from home;
- drawing;
- show-and-tell;
- question-and-answer sessions; and
- age suitable early literacy and numeracy materials.

Education for Teachers and Parents: For ensuring the proper functioning of Early Learning Centres, UNICEF is providing training to one pre-school teacher for each Early Learning Centre. Moreover, parents are inspired to visit the centres so that they can learn how to give age suitable interactive care to their young children at home.

Working with Primary Schools: Children are encouraged to stay at school by the Early Learning Centres through providing support at the transition time. Research shows that 94 percent of the children who had participated in the pre-school in the CHT ELCs have enrolled afterward in primary schools. Subsequently, the transition rate stands at 99 percent in the primary schools.

Food and Learning: For the Pre-School children attending the ELCs in the CHT region, UNICE provides micronutrient fortified biscuits taking assistance from the UN World Food Programme. Children are motivated in attending classes on a regular basis through this programme. The programme also helps in improving the nutritional status, decreasing hunger, increasing the capacity of the children for concentration.

Early learning for all: UNICEF is working for ensuring early learning for all children in all the regions of the country as it is very essential for developing their capability through education. Therefore, UNICEF is working in this regard at the policy level with the Government as well as using the public media. This programme has been introduced in 2001 and before that, there was no mentionable public awareness about ECD and opportunities for formal early learning. MoPME and UNICEF have worked together in this regard for developing and approving an effective operational framework for pre-primary education in all government primary schools by the year 2015.

In true sense, UNICEF and Government of Bangladesh are committed together to promote the global movement of Education for All in Bangladesh. Goal one of the movement is to extend and get better early childhood care as well as education particularly for the children who are highly vulnerable. UNICEF is working with the GoB as well as the NGOs in order to develop a set of Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) with high validation for the children aged up to 8 years.

9. Education and SDG-4 Targets

Bangladesh has obtained enormous progress in achieving MDG targets especially in bringing gender parity in primary and secondary education, reducing child and maternal mortality rate, escalating access to improved drinking water and improved sanitation, reducing poverty, etc. Hence, the country has the confidence to reach the targets of the SDGs. The Government of Bangladesh has by this time adopted some initiatives for attaining the targets of SDGs within the designated timeframe such as the Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020) that seeks to increase economic growth which is inclusive, pro-poor and adapted to an economy progressively powered by urban productivity as well as environmental sustainability. Several plans have also been outlined for accomplishing the targets of SDG-4 which is related to education but the country needs a robust strategy and action plan to achieve the targets of the SDG-4.

Goal-4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Targets of the Goal-4 related with the children may be viewed herewith (Detail in Annexure 1).

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States (UN 2018).

10. Education of Children in Bangladesh- Key Challenges

Although success is huge in the education sector in Bangladesh, still there exist enormous challenges at all levels. Challenges may be discussed level-wise herewith:

Challenges in Pre-primary and Primary Education:

- The Comprehensive ECCD Policy 2013, which is very relevant and important for integrating child services with ECCD's multi-sectoral network and scope. For ensuring excellence education and human resources, the ECCD needs to emphasize pre-primary and primary level education. However, special programmes and care for the special needs (disabled) and disadvantaged children need to be addressed by both systems.
- In Bangladesh, pre-primary age children, younger than 5 years age are still not getting proper and 100 percent coverage since PPE is covering age between 5 to 6 years. Study result shows that only 13.4 percent of children are under the coverage of early learning teaching programme (UNICEF 2015). However, traditional religious education is very common (maktab/temple education) at an early age in Bangladesh although communities have yet to utilize the present educational facilities and opportunities for PPE.
- As per the National Education Policy 2010, 1-year pre-primary schooling is mandatory for 5+ children which will be extended up to 4+ years later on. Although most of the 5+ children attend pre-primary classes in the government primary schools, data on the total number of 5+ children is not available as there is no linkage with the birth registration system. Therefore, the key challenge in this area is to interlink the pre-primary and primary education to the birth registration and health system, especially with the immunization system.
- Non-enrolment still remains a key challenge in primary education. In 2018, the NER in primary education is 97.85 percent which was 97.97 percent in the previous year. That means 2.15 percent of children were not enrolled in 2018 and in terms of figure, the number is enormous.
- The dropout problem is a serious concern for the primary education sector as the rate remains 18.6 percent in 2018 although the rate is declining slowly. On the other hand, for aged 6, more than 1 in 4 children are out of school (26.8 percent) due to a very low attendance rate; but it can be prevented. The situation is actually dangerous in the worst performing upazilas since 45 percent of the children are out of school which requires necessary action. In remote areas, especially in the CHT region, it is very tough to go to school because of the weak communication system, less educational institution and awareness of parents, the existence of superstition related to the modern educational

system, high cost in terms of transportation, cultural barriers etc.

Children from poor family suffer as much as twice (27 percent) compared to the richest families (13 percent) in the case of education deprivation. In the urban slums and hard-to-reach areas, around 6.2 million children are out of school. Among them, 1.1 million are pre-primary school age whereas 2.6 million are primary level (UNICEF 2015).

To overcome the challenges arise from poverty, focus should be given on school meal/school feeding programme, bi-stipends and transport facilities for all schools especially in poverty-stricken and hard-to-reach areas.



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- To extending primary education up to class VIII in all primary schools is a gigantic task. As per available data from BANBEIS only 626 Government Primary schools have been upgraded while DPE data shows that 764 schools have started class VI till 2016.

- Efficient coverage and outcome from learning compared to global standard are also another significant challenges for ensuring the sustainability of the achievement in primary level education and it is, of course, the area that requires even more attention. Quality education and outcomes from the learner that is from students remain a crucial issue along with the number and quality of teachers, infrastructure and so on impact in this case. Because of the huge number of students and less infrastructure, most schools run a double shift, therefore, teachers cannot give proper attention to the children and in the case of international standard, the position of Bangladesh is not up to the mark.

Therefore, ensuring the overall quality of primary education and learning outcome are key issues at present. Although the target of TSR has been achieved, it requires more quality teachers with standard training before joining the classroom as well as other staff. Standard classrooms, neat and clean premises, toilet and hand washing facilities with soap, pure drinking water, ramp facilities, co-curricular activities, skill-based education, and inclusiveness are pre-requisite for quality education.

- Training for the teachers need to be intensive and training should be imparted to teachers before they join the classroom. However, teachers get one year of in-service training. The National Academy of Primary Education (NAPE) and Primary Teachers Training Institutes (PTIs) are responsible for providing training to the teachers. Therefore, these institutions need to be empowered in terms of capacity and skill for ensuring quality teachers as well as overall education at primary level.

- Supervision, monitoring, and accountability need to be more emphasized for better results in primary education. Need to impart continuous training to the officials managing the sector.

It is expected that the Primary Education Development Programme-4 (PEDP-4), the ever biggest programme in primary education, for the period of five years to be ended on June 2023 will contribute in solving many of the challenges of the primary education sector and in ensuring inclusive, equitable and quality primary education enormously. Estimated cost of the programme is BDT. 38,397.16 crore. Development Partners including UNICEF will provide financial support to the GoB led programme. The PEDP-4 also envisages imparting non-formal education to 10 lakh out of school children (NEWAGE 2018).

Challenges in Secondary and Higher Secondary Education:

- To bring uniformity and unified education system is a key challenge in secondary education. As per the National Education Policy 2010, secondary education is to be extended up to class XII. Every school needs to add classes of XI and XII under the policy while colleges need to open classes of IX and X which is a tremendous challenge. Transforming these areas will necessitate huge infrastructures as well as quality teachers. Technical/vocational education also needs to be emphasized.
- Integration of Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) is critical for the adolescents in the secondary level. Adequate investment in technical and vocational education can reduce the additional pressure on secondary and tertiary levels. Since dropout rate is very high at secondary level, therefore, government can introduce model vocational training institutions with special curriculum for the dropout and less educated adolescents for providing them skill-oriented education and training in line with the National Technical Vocational Qualification Framework.
- In the South Asia, the performance of Bangladesh is very poor in the case of dropout at the secondary level. It is found that child marriage is one of the main reasons for the girl students for dropping out of school at the primary and secondary level. Child marriage was the main reason for 60 percent of girls who did not enroll in Grade 9. However, because of child labor, boys cannot continue school in rural and slum areas in the country. Overcoming all these problems will take time and requires inter-ministerial specific interventions along with action plan.
- For overall quality of secondary and higher secondary education and ensuring learning outcome remain as major challenges in the sector. The TSR is 1:45 at present which needs to be 1:30 as per the Education Policy and at the same time require more quality teachers with standard training as well as other staff. Standard classrooms, neat and clean premises, separate toilet and hand washing facilities with soap, pure drinking water, ramp facilities, co-curricular activities, skill-based education, and inclusiveness are pre-requisite for quality education. For the children with disabilities, urban slums, third gender, the unprivileged, worst performing as well as CHT regions need special measures to ensure quality-driven education.
- Secondary and higher secondary education also need proper supervision, coordination, monitoring, and accountability for better output and impact. Ensuring better planning, improving management capacity, proper use of resources, bi-stipends, scholarships and involving local government bodies with the institutions are also key issues.
- Need to ensure continuous training to the officials and staff managing the sector.
- C4D will contribute to addressing the behavioral and social dimensions of education programmes through community engagement and social norm change among families and communities to create demand for quality education and this is, in fact, urgent but not easy.
- For overall improvement of the whole education system and implementation the Education Policy need consensus, strong coordination among all streams, all relevant ministries, departments and different bodies. Monitoring system should also be strengthened with real time and reliable data. Separate action and implementation plan as well as a huge amount of money will be needed to face the challenges in this case.
- The number and the amount of bi-stipends and scholarships need to be increased. The target should be better so that the poor and the marginalised children can avail the opportunity. School meal/school feeding programme may be introduced.

It should be mentioned here that effective coordination is mandatory between SCE/NFE and government should introduce an equivalent formula between the formal and non-formal education. However, SCE/NFE needs to be vibrant through using own resources and/or taking assistance from Development Partners.

11. Underlying Causes of Key Education Challenges

There are different underlying causes behind the challenges of education in Bangladesh which may be identified as follows:

- The poverty of parents that hinder them in supporting their children's education



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- Lack of awareness of the parents which creates obstacles on the way to send their children to schools
- Lack of understanding about child psychology, child development, the essence of early learning as well as insufficient institutional capacity especially on ECCD services
- Importance of education is ignored in Bangladesh by many of the people. Many people also fail to understand the essence of birth certificate for identifying school going age. This matter also works as an impediment toward realizing the overall education goal in the country.
- Multi-dimensional education system especially in the primary level and lack of coordination among the institutions of the fragmentation system
- Hard-to-reach areas such as char lands, urban slums, and CHT areas as well as disadvantaged and third gender children (the hijra children)
- Insufficient facilities in the educational institutions
- Hazardous situations as well as recurrent disasters
- Superstition towards modern education
- Child marriage and child labour, etc.

However, in Bangladesh, Government recognizes education as a means of decreasing poverty and upgrading the quality of life for the children. Therefore, stress has been given on education and Bangladesh has achieved immense in the primary education in line with the targets of the MDGs (BBS, IMED and UNICEF 2017). It is expected that Bangladesh will be able to achieve the targets of the SDG-4 within 2030 overcoming all the challenges.

12. Education of Children - Way Forward

To achieve the targets of the Vision 2021, Vision 2041, the Delta Plan and the UN SDGs 2030 need quality, equal, inclusive and strategic education and life-long educational opportunities for the children.

Since education is the backbone of a nation and a major tool to expedite socio-economic development of a country, it should be unified, quality-driven, universal and appropriate to meet the demands of the society as well as the state. Education for all children as per the Constitution of Bangladesh, the UNCRC and other national and international documents needs to be realized for the interest of the country. In doing so, the following recommendations may be considered:

Policy/Strategy	■ Ensuring a uniform, mass-oriented and universal education system for all children. ■ Specific policy and strategy to eliminating dropout from primary and secondary level. ■ Relating education to the requirements of the society and the present context. ■ Aligning the activities of the education sector to SDG-4 for achieving those. ■ Ensuring separate action and implementation plan to realize all directions mentioned in the National Education Policy 2010 and the ECCD Policy 2013. ■ For implementing SCE/NFE vision, a national level consensus is required. ■ Emphasize on skill development/technical/vocational education and training.
Institution/ Governance	■ Increasing institutional capacities through training to realize all legal instruments. ■ Supporting strong decentralized planning as well as decision making, development planning at school level and ensuring quality standards at all schools. ■ Adequate allocation regularly to ECCD programmes through Annual Development Plans. ■ Introducing pre-service training and intensifying in-service professional training for the teachers to ensure quality teaching for quality education at all level schools/institutions and developing all the classrooms as child-friendly for good teaching/learning practices. ■ Supporting the expansion of NFE to Grade 8 which will be linked to technical and vocational education and training for the development of skills to meet the needs of the society. ■ For working children, a flexible SCE/NFE model.

Programmes, Projects	■ More intervention toward improved quality of early learning as well as primary schools in slums of urban areas, hard-to-reach areas and making linkages with SCE/NFE. ■ More support to the development of quality and disaster-prone infrastructure and increase WASH facilities with a view to inspiring the enrolment of girls as well as children with disabilities in all areas of the country. ■ Inclusion of hard-to-reach areas in programming and ensure accurate implementation of the programmes and projects. ■ Special programme/project to eliminate dropout and 100 percent enrolment. ■ Supporting bigger access to secondary education with extended NFE. ■ For SCE/NFE apprenticeships, need to develop a partnership with the private sector which may act as a catalyst in preventing child marriage. ■ Intensifying the execution of C4D interventions with a view to improving the priorities of the education sector including parenting education, lessening the rates of dropout, increasing the rates of enrolment, supporting child-centred pedagogy, enhancing learning outcomes of early childhood development as well as for the children with disabilities.
Monitoring and Evaluation/Data/Knowledge Management/Best Practices/Innovation	■ Internal efficacy of PPE programmes has to be tracked as well as needed to support an intensive information management system related to PPE and it should be linked with the birth registration and health system especially with immunization. ■ Strong and effective monitoring, coordination and evaluation system for confirming improvement in all spheres of the education sector including the safety net programmes or bi-stipends related to the education sector. ■ Tracking in depth the transition to secondary education especially the survival of the girls to secondary school completion which will help to stop child marriage in the country. ■ Generating data to exhibit the contribution of C4D interventions especially on the engagement of the communities and SMCs. ■ Listing best practices and innovations for replication to improve the situations.

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Annexure 1: SDG-4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Target	Indicator
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture	4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment

of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	
4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)
4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries	4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study
4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country

