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# BANGLADESH

Pre-primary Education and  
the School Learning Improvement Plan

CASE STUDY



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Coordinator: Malisa Santigul

Editor: Ellie Meleisea

Graphic designer: Filippo Monti

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# Acronyms

BDT	Bangladeshi taka
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
ECCD	Early childhood care and development
ECD	Early childhood development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education management information system
ESTEEM	Effective Schools Through Enhanced Education Management
ICDP	Integrated Community Development Project
GO-NGO	Government and non-governmental organization
GPS	Government primary school
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NAPE	National Academy for Primary Education
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NER	Net enrolment rate
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
PPE	Pre-primary education
RNGPS	Registered non-governmental primary school
SLIP	School Learning Improvement Plan
SMC	School management committee
UEO	Upazila Education Office
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPEP	Upazila Primary Education Plan
URC	Upazila Resource Centre
USD	United States dollars
Exchange rate	1 USD = 79 BDT

# Preface

There has been significant progress towards the six EFA goals, however, all available indicators are pointing to a bitter reality that EFA will be an “unfinished business”. The 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report has concluded that with less than two years until the 2015 deadline, the world is not on track. Amidst the many challenges, many countries have demonstrated how achievements can be made with the commitment from government, expanded partnerships, innovative thinking and efficient use of resources. There are lessons to be learned.

At the Global EFA Meeting (GEM) in Paris in November 2012, Ministers, heads of delegations, leading officials of multilateral and bilateral organizations, and senior representatives of civil society and private sector organizations, including those from Asia-Pacific, committed to the “Big Push”. The GEM participants called upon governments and EFA partners to identify successful initiatives and innovative practices and to adapt, replicate, or scale-up such initiatives to speed up EFA progress.

Subsequently, the 13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators: The Big Push, which was organized in Bangkok, Thailand on 26-27 February 2013 as a follow up to the GEM, underscored the need for increased knowledge on innovative and creative ways of addressing EFA challenges so as to inform policy-making and programme development on EFA. To this end, the meeting requested UNESCO Bangkok to document innovative approaches and effective practices from countries that have succeeded in transforming EFA goals into concrete realities and to disseminate this knowledge for the benefit of all countries.

The Asia-Pacific region is full of successful initiatives, with stories of good practices in almost every country. Over the years, UNESCO has documented these practices to share them with a wider audience. These five country case studies provide in-depth understanding of promising initiatives that are critical in EFA acceleration in Asia-Pacific. While this research attempts to gather evidence on successful initiatives that have helped countries to accelerate EFA progress, it should be noted that these case studies are some examples selected from a vast pool of equally promising EFA practices in this region.

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# Executive Summary

This case study on promising practices in Education for All (EFA) in Bangladesh was commissioned by UNESCO Bangkok with support from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust (JFIT) as one of five country case studies from the Asia-Pacific region. The Asia-Pacific region is full of successful and innovative initiatives that have helped governments accelerate EFA progress at the country level. Governments in the region and beyond can learn from these experiences. It is in this context UNESCO Bangkok has embarked on the documentation of such practices.

Among the policy and strategy steps in Bangladesh that have contributed to positive changes in terms of intensifying the EFA effort, two are highlighted in this study. These two initiatives, incorporated into the national Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II and III), are: the pre-primary education (PPE) initiative, which prepares children, including those from disadvantaged home environments, for formal school, and the School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) programme, which engages school management committees (SMCs), teachers and parents in improving school operations.

This case study involved an in-depth examination of the PPE and SLIP initiatives, involving review of documents, visits to pre-schools, interviews and focus groups and analysis of the findings.

## The PPE initiative

The main objective of the pre-primary education initiative is to provide one year of education to young children aged between 5 and 6 years old, so as to foster their physical and mental preparation before they enter into Grade 1 of primary school. The operational framework for the development of the PPE initiative, formulated collaboratively with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Bangladesh Early Childhood Development (ECD) Network, was approved by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and taken up for implementation in 2010 under PEDP II. This operational framework envisaged institutionalization of PPE through the development of curriculum and learning materials, the recruitment of PPE teachers and the provision of professional support to those teachers.

The MoPME and the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) have undertaken several initiatives over the years to expand pre-primary education, involving various actors, including NGOs. Under PEDP II, orientation was given to concerned education officials and an interim curricular package was prepared to introduce pre-primary education in about 37,000 government primary schools. The government also approved guidelines for collaboration between government and non-governmental organizations (GO-NGO) and prepared a GO-NGO implementation plan, based on the guidelines, which created options for NGOs to work with government in universalizing good quality pre-primary education.

A PPE curriculum was developed and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) prepared the learning materials on the basis of the approved curriculum. A training manual for a 15-day short course for PPE teachers was developed by the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE), the NCTB and the DPE in consultation with other stakeholders, including NGOs.

An initial grant of 5,000 Bangladeshi taka (BDT), equivalent to approximately 63 United States dollars (USD), was provided to each government primary school (GPS) to prepare and procure supplementary teaching-learning materials to be used in the PPE classrooms. The PPE grant was supplemented by part of an allocation they were given for the implementation of the SLIP programme. A total of 37,672 additional assistant teacher posts (one for each GPS) were approved by the Ministry of Finance for staffing of PPE classes, with over 15,000 teachers recruited as of November 2013.

Building on the experience and progress under PEDP II, PPE became an important sub-component of the new sector-wide programme, PEDP III. The current aim of the PPE initiative is to create permanent structures for PPE in the primary education system and gradually provide standardized services for all children.

The PPE initiative, launched in 2010, has tripled participation in pre-school education, increasing it from 895,000 in 2010 to about 2.5 million in 2012. As of 2013, over 55 per cent of children aged 5 to 6 years old are participating in the one-year pre-primary courses introduced in both government primary schools and private and NGO-run pre-primary centres. NGOs have contributed significantly to the expansion of services, serving a quarter of the children participating in pre-primary education.

## The SLIP initiative

The School-Level Improvement Plan, re-named the School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) under PEDP III, is intended to improve learning outcomes and primary enrolment and completion rates through encouraging decentralization, increasing local input into school management and enhancing relations between schools and local communities.

The SLIP initiative began as a pilot in 13 *upazilas* (sub-districts) in 2007, preceded by a pre-pilot phase in six sub-districts in 2006 to trial the core procedures. Under PEDP II, around 40 Upazila Education Offices (UEO) were established (in 2008 and 2009) to support the expansion of SLIP in the remaining sub-districts of Bangladesh. Scaling-up began in 2009, providing sub-districts with technical and financial support for overall improvement in the quality of primary education. As of 2013, SLIP is operational in the GPS of 280 of the 469 sub-districts in the country.

PEDP II envisaged decentralization as an implementation strategy for improving quality and equity in primary education. The aim was to encourage active involvement of stakeholders at the grassroots level in planning, implementing and monitoring educational activities for children. SLIP promotes a bottom-up planning process, as does the process of preparing an Upazila Primary Education Plan (UPEP) in each *upazila* (sub-district). The expectation was to establish a system of preparing Annual Operational Plans (AOP) based on the consolidation of UPEPs, reflecting the needs identified through SLIP and situation analyses in each sub-district. PEDP III aims to take the SLIP initiative further and promote the decentralization of a more extensive set of education functions.

The SLIP initiative was supported by the provision of school-level improvement planning grants, which were continued and scaled up under PEDP III. In financial year 2012/13, 31,807 schools, comprising 20,800 GPS and 11,007 registered non-governmental primary schools (RNGPS), were each provided with SLIP grants of BDT30,000, approximately USD400, covering 53 districts and 280 sub-districts (a total allocation of BDT955 million or USD 12 million). Fifty sub-districts in 26

districts were also provided with training and with funding for UPEP preparation costs at the rate of BDT10,000 per sub-district, approximately USD120 each (a total of BDT500,000 or USD6,300).

Monitoring of the SLIP initiative is mainly undertaken by the UEOs, School Social Audit Committees, District Education Offices and, occasionally, by officials of the DPE.

## Lessons learned and recommendations

The recommendations gleaned from the research team's examination of the PPE and SLIP initiatives are grouped into two categories: recommendations related to creating a favourable policy environment and recommendations regarding how to build on the gains from PPE and SLIP. The specific actions necessary to build on PPE and SLIP – to broaden and deepen the efforts in school readiness and ensure greater school-level responsibility with accountability – require attention to the broader context of EFA challenges to ensure good outcomes.

The policy context recommendations are: to enforce registration of births, to respond to family poverty, to focus more attention on urban poor children, to develop and trial *upazila*-based universal primary education (including pre-primary) planning and management, to provide policy support for greater authority with accountability at the school level, to address the issue of silent exclusion, and to increase resources for education.

The recommendations regarding building on PPE and SLIP achievements are: to provide dedicated spaces and teachers for PPE in each school, to ensure an effective coordination and collaboration approach in PPE nationally and locally, to provide support for RNGPS and *ibtedayee madrasas* (private religious schools) in extending high-quality PPE services, and to implement an expanded SLIP pilot to deepen and broaden school-level authority with accountability.

# 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background

While there has been significant progress globally towards achieving the six Education for All (EFA) goals, not every country is on track to achieve the targets. The progress towards achieving some EFA goals is slowing down and several of the goals will not be met by 2015. It is now acknowledged that reaching the EFA goals will require extraordinary efforts. “More of the same” will not lead all countries to the destination. Amidst many challenges, some countries have demonstrated that good progress can be made through commitment from government, expanded partnerships, innovative thinking and effective use of resources.



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Recent international EFA meetings, including the Global EFA Meeting held in Paris in November 2012, a gathering of ministerial delegations, leading officials from multilateral and bilateral organizations and senior representatives of civil society, and the 13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators held in Bangkok in February 2013, reiterated government commitment to a “big push” to speed up progress towards achieving the EFA goals. These meetings underscored the need for increased knowledge about innovative and creative ways of addressing EFA challenges so as to inform policy-making and programme development towards accelerating and intensifying EFA efforts.

The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh acknowledges, as a fundamental principle, the right to education of the people, and the State has pledged to ensure the provision of universal, compulsory and free primary education for all children. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has given priority to education in its public sector investments. Education sector allocations are currently about 2.3 per cent of gross domestic product and 14 per cent of total government expenditure. Given the diversion of resources owing to climate vulnerabilities and various other claims in an overall resource-scarce situation, maintaining this commitment to education and setting targets for enhancing resources for the education sector is crucial in order to achieve the EFA Goals and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Momen, 2011).

Bangladesh has close to 18 million students enrolled at the primary school level, and over 8 million at the secondary level. The management of the education system falls under two ministries, the MoPME, which is responsible for primary education, including pre-primary and mass literacy, and the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for secondary, vocational and tertiary education (Government of Bangladesh, 2013; Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics, 2012).

In recent decades, a larger process of social and economic change has led to increased interest, awareness and demand for education among the people. Life prospects that can be realized with better education and skills have become available as a result of government and NGO contributions to offering the poor a stake in the economy through large-scale expansion of micro-credit, and creation of economic opportunities for women – in family enterprises and ready-made garment sector employment. At the same time, reduction in child and infant mortality and improvement in mothers' health have slowed population growth and the number of new entrants to primary school. Furthermore, NGOs, with government and donor support, have pioneered and implemented, on a significant scale, alternative primary education and school preparedness programmes for those left out or who have dropped out of formal schooling. There are now around one million children from poor families participating at any one time in NGO-run non-formal primary education (NFPE) programmes, where the main attractions and key factors behind success are well-run schools and empathetic teachers.

In Bangladesh, and arguably in most poor countries, the EFA challenge at this stage, in the run-up to 2015, is creating the conditions for all children, both boys and girls, to complete primary education and to achieve acceptable learning outcomes. Pre-primary education of at least a year's duration and school-based action for learning have been adopted as important strategies in primary education for better outcomes with inclusive access, equity and quality of instruction in PEDP II (2005–11) and PEDP III (2011–16). In Bangladesh and, in other countries in general, a key concern is ensuring high quality teaching-learning to ensure children stay in school and to help them learn.

Since the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, notable progress has been made in Bangladesh with regard to free and compulsory formal primary education, literacy education and non-formal education (NFE), as a result of EFA-focused initiatives taken by the government and by non-governmental actors with government and donor support.

The 2011 Bangladesh Millennium Development Goals Progress Report (Government of Bangladesh and UNDP 2011) shows that Bangladesh has had two areas of success that stand out in the country's efforts to achieve the EFA goals. The first was the country's remarkable expansion of access to primary education, reaching close to universal access. Gross primary enrolment rates rose from 90 per cent in the late 1990s to over 100 per cent by 2012. The second success was the elimination of the gender gap in access and participation in primary and secondary education. Gender parity in access to primary education has been achieved and the ratio of female and male students in primary education is currently 51:49. Bangladesh has thus directly addressed EFA Goal 2 (Free and Compulsory Primary Education for All) and Goal 5 (Gender Parity) (Government of Bangladesh 2013).

The successes so far are a result of a high level of government and national commitment to EFA, which has been reflected in a range of proactive measures undertaken in recent years, including expansion of schooling provisions, incentives in the form of conditional cash transfers (stipends) to induce poor and disadvantaged groups to send their children to school, distribution of free textbooks, social mobilization and awareness-raising, the introduction of one year of pre-primary education on a large scale and encouragement to schools to address specific local constraints. The last two measures are the subject of the present case study.

The two policy and strategy steps highlighted in this study are noteworthy for the promise and potential they hold for addressing challenges in intensifying the EFA effort. These two initiatives, incorporated into PEDP II and continued in PEDP III, draw on approaches that were first initiated and practiced for some time by NGOs. They are the Pre-Primary Education (PPE) initiative, which

aims to provide all children aged between 5 and 6 years with one year of pre-school and focuses attention on preparing children from disadvantaged home environments for formal school, and the School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) initiative, which engages school management committees, teachers and parents in improving school operations.

The government launched the PPE initiative, under PEDP II, by introducing pre-primary classes, popularly referred to as “baby classes” (GoB, 2013). Evidence-based advocacy by national and international NGOs and recognition of the benefits of good quality pre-primary education motivated the government to choose this strategy.

The SLIP initiative was begun with the aim of improving the quality of education at the school level by providing modest amounts of funds to schools to manage and implement activities according to their own identified school improvement needs. This was also seen as a step toward decentralization of education through empowering the schools to manage their own affairs and, furthermore, promote the role of the community in education.

These two initiatives have contributed significantly towards the government’s efforts to accelerate progress towards the EFA goals, and have been particularly valuable towards achieving Goals 2, 5 and 6 (Improved Quality of Education) in Bangladesh.

Among key measures needed in the future, it is evident that adequate funds need to be allocated more optimally for ensuring essential quality-improving inputs and other factors, such as more and better-trained teachers, smaller class sizes, school meals and more learning time in school. There is a continuing role for maintaining financial assistance that selectively targets disadvantaged children. The critical challenge at this stage is, however, to accelerate achievement of all of the EFA goals.

## 1.2 Overview of the study

To gain an in-depth understanding of the innovative initiatives that have been initiated with the goal of EFA acceleration in the Asia-Pacific region, UNESCO Bangkok with support from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust commissioned five country case studies from the region and selected Bangladesh as one of those cases. The aim was to identify in each case study country one or more initiatives that best illustrate innovative and creative contributions to EFA progress and which would provide lessons for further acceleration of EFA in the case study country and in the region.

Having reflected on the purpose of the case study, which was to be forward-looking about what can be done to further accelerate progress, rather than providing solely a historical account of what has been done, the Bangladesh research team decided to evaluate two recent initiatives by the Government of Bangladesh and its development partners, the Pre-Primary Education initiative and the School Learning Improvement Plan initiative. These initiatives, begun under PEDP II and expanded during PEDP III, are recognized as promising and therefore deserve to be pursued vigorously in the run-up to 2015 and beyond.

This case study covered the following areas:

- The rationale and background of the PPE and SLIP initiatives as strategies to achieve EFA goals 2, 5 and 6.
- The roles played by government and non-government organizations in terms of the preparation, introduction and implementation of PPE and SLIP.

- The available data and information, both qualitative and quantitative, about PPE and SLIP, including synergies between the two, in contributing to EFA goals 2, 5 and 6.
- The constraints and difficulties encountered, how these were tackled and any challenges that still remain in implementing PPE and SLIP.
- Lessons learned regarding strategies and actions related to the continuation and scaling up of PPE and SLIP in the context of intensified efforts in the run-up to 2015 and also beyond 2015.

## 1.3 Methods

The study methods consisted of a review and analysis of secondary sources, complemented by some field work; both of which provided qualitative and quantitative data, as described below.

- A desk review was made of the overall EFA situation in Bangladesh, based on relevant documents and reports. The documents reviewed included publications about PPE and SLIP and their contribution to EFA goals 2, 5 and 6, that were prepared by the government, development partners, NGOs and research institutions.
- An analytical framework was developed for the review of secondary sources and for field work, identifying key issues and concerns, relevant information to be examined, the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative information from secondary and primary sources, the nature of conclusions and lessons expected, and types of potential recommendations and their use (See Annex 1).
- An in-depth field investigation was conducted in 15 primary education institutions (10 public schools and five NGO-run PPE facilities) in which the research team examined the application of PPE and SLIP principles, methods and activities. The institutions were selected to represent geographical, size and management variations (See Annex 4 for a list of the schools visited).

School records and data were examined and observations of school and classroom operations were conducted along with focus group discussions (FGD) with teachers, school management committees, parents and students. Guidelines and checklists were prepared prior to these school visits and FGDs (See Annex 2 for the instruments used in the study).



# 2

## Context: EFA in Bangladesh and the challenges faced

In Bangladesh, education is compulsory for children aged 6 to 10, covering five years of primary school. A policy emphasis, since 1990, on expanding enrolment has created a formal system of primary education that now serves about 18 million students. Since the 1990s, the number of young people who have completed primary education per year has doubled and the participation of girls has increased to the point where more girls than boys now enrol and complete formal primary school. Enrolment is also high in non-formal primary education, with an estimated 1.5 million learners participating (Islam, 2013).



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Learning outcomes and completion rates have not kept pace with advances in participation and gender parity, however. This is in spite of investments in infrastructure and other inputs, including in teacher training, curriculum revision, textbook provision and materials supply (GOB, 2013).

The new education policy adopted in 2010, the launching of the sixth five-year development plan (2011–16) and the vision for a “Digital Bangladesh” proposed by the government, present both opportunities and challenges. There is opportunity for making significant progress in the run-up to 2015. The challenge is to look forward with resolve in fulfilling the rights and meeting the obligations regarding basic education for all children.

There is a general agreement in Bangladesh regarding the essential features of the basic education system, which are as follows:

- It must be an inclusive and responsive system, with special efforts to serve the highly deprived and poor groups and areas. Low quality education, which characterizes much of the system now, along with large variations in quality and the consequent serious inequity, must be reversed.
- Eight years of universal primary education, as recommended in the education policy, is achievable and must be achieved without delay.
- The diversity in delivery modes that exists today (GPS, RNGPS, madrasas, second chance NFPE and private proprietary schools) may continue, but a unified national system (not necessarily uniform) has to be established, with a common core curriculum and standards for provisions that allow a broadly common educational experience for all children.
- All students must be equipped with the foundation of basic mathematics, science and computer skills, and a core objective should be for all students completing secondary education to have strong bilingual competency in Bangla and English – building the foundation of Bangla competency by fifth grade and similar English skills at the secondary stage.



- Related to the common standards is a qualitative transformation in teaching and learning of the identified core skills and competencies in all categories of primary and secondary institutions.
- The system cannot achieve its goals with the current numbers of teachers, the existing methods of their professional preparation and development and the current level of salary and incentives. New ways of thinking about teachers and pedagogy are needed. Class sizes should be manageable and effective learning time (contact hours) should be raised to the international average of around 1,000 hours per year. Bold and creative measures are needed to attract talented and inspired young people to teaching and keep them in the profession, ensuring a critical mass of talented teachers in the education system.
- The quality goals in primary education require major changes in curriculum development, teaching-learning materials and assessment of student learning.
- To make possible a full day of schooling, midday meals should be served in schools.
- Information and communication technology resources must be widely and creatively used to support teacher development and student self-learning.
- Physical infrastructure requires further major investments to meet the minimum acceptable criteria for appropriate learning environments, so as to meet the quality-with-equity goals.
- Pre-school education has to be a key component of the unified system, especially to ensure school readiness for first generation learners and children subject to disadvantages. Systematic area-based planning and provision are needed for children with special needs.
- Substantially greater resources are needed to assure minimum necessary levels of quality with equity. More resources are needed at the school level along with greater discretion with accountability in their use.
- Effective governance and management are essential, at both the central and school levels. A results-focused system requires meaningful decentralization in planning and resource management, recognizing the need for professionalism and capacity building, especially at school, sub-district and district levels. Structural and legal changes for this purpose will require national political resolve at the top.
- A law enshrining the right to education is necessary.<sup>1</sup> Such a law would spell out the obligations and entitlements, the common quality standards and the principles of governance with accountability and participation.
- A permanent and statutory education commission, with adequate technical capacity and resources should be formed to guide, maintain oversight and facilitate public dialogue on progress towards the key policy goals (Abed, 2011, pp xiv –xvi).

The priorities indicated above are in line with the conclusions of an inter-country research study involving Bangladesh, India, Ghana and South Africa, carried out under the auspices of the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity. The study argues that meaningful access to education that is characterized by quality with equity is likely to be achieved when:

<sup>1</sup> In 2010, an inclusive, prop-poor and accepted education policy was declared in Bangladesh. A policy document however, is not enough because it only articulates how the government values education, the ideological position it takes, and the course of action and guiding principles for achieving the goal of education policy. In this regard, the Bangladesh constitution does not recognize education as a fundamental human right. Hence, the declaration of an education law must be accompanied by an amendment of the constitution, recognizing education as a fundamental human right. To date, the draft Education Act 2013 is not clearly defined. For more information, visit: <http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/article.pdf>

- All children enrol in primary school at the age of six years.
- All children attend school for at least 80 per cent of school days and teachers are present and available to teach at least as frequently.
- No child is more than two years outside a normal age-in-grade relationship.
- No child fails to achieve at levels within two years of national curriculum expectations for a particular grade and repetition becomes rare and carefully managed to reduce its frequency.
- Differences in key indicators of educational inputs (e.g. pupil-teacher ratios, class sizes, textbook availability, clean water and sanitation on site, safe learning environments) between schools and localities show smaller rather than larger standard deviations and indicate more- rather than less-even investment in directions that are pro-poor (Lewin, 2011, p. xviii).

The MDGs' target for the net enrolment rate (NER) was set at 100 per cent by the year 2015. As of 2013, Bangladesh had an NER of 92 per cent. It is unlikely that Bangladesh will reach 100 per cent by 2015. It has been empirically demonstrated that once countries attain an NER of over 90 per cent, it is very challenging and costly to reach the last 5 to 10 per cent of children who, for various reasons, are difficult to cover (such as nomadic groups, marginal populations, populations living in remote and land-locked areas, the poorest, children with disabilities and ethnic minorities who face difficulties with the mainstream language) (Ahmad and Haque, 2011).

Research and analysis, including Education Watch studies and the studies by the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity in Bangladesh, indicate that the country faces broad challenges that affect children's access to schools and their performance while at school, and which also affect the performance of the schools in delivering good quality services to students. These challenges include high levels of poverty, which particularly affects children living in urban slums, late enrolment of children, and limited area-based planning and management of education access and participation.

Eradicating the country's high incidence of poverty has been one of the biggest challenges in the way of achieving EFA Goal 2 (Universal Primary Education). Poverty keeps children away from school as they have to join the workforce to contribute to their families' survival. In the case of males, the opportunity costs for attending school for children from poor households becomes high when they are seen as ready to be engaged in paid or unpaid work. For girls, there is pressure from family and community that girls get married soon after the onset of puberty. There is increased concern for safety and security for older unmarried girls (Hossain, 2011). Poverty is also related to the continuation of children in school, as it contributes to late enrolments, low attendance rates and high drop-out rates. The consequences of not being enrolled in primary school at the designated age manifest as drop-outs in later years. About 60 per cent of the non-enrolled children were reported to be aged between 6 and 8 years, suggesting that the culture of enrolling in school consistently at the right age is yet to catch on. Neglect of birth registration and birth records lead to a casual approach to starting school at the right age (Ahmed et al., 2011).

As noted in a survey report by the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity, two-thirds of the never-enrolled children in primary school come from households "always in deficit" in respect of staple grains (ultra poor) during the year and "sometimes in deficit" (poor). With regard to dropouts, 55 per cent of these children were from "food deficit" households. It is clear that a lack of food security, a proxy for general poverty, adversely affects enrolment and continuation in school (Hossain and Zeitlyn, 2011).

Children living in urban slums are at a particular disadvantage when it comes to accessing education. An investigation in Dhaka slums found that three quarters of the primary-age children in slums were enrolled in school, compared to the national average of over 90 per cent in gross terms. About 42 per cent of the enrolled children were in government schools compared to double that proportion in public institutions nationally. Clearly, the educational participation of children, including in pre-primary education, in urban slums, a growing population, deserves priority attention in terms of policy and operational steps (Cameron, 2011).

The category of “silent exclusion” describes a significant proportion of children who are enrolled in school, but are not effectively engaged in learning. The characteristics of these students include poor attendance, grade repetition and poor performance in class activities and examinations, all of which make them vulnerable to dropping out. It is difficult to quantify this situation, but studies by the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity indicate that this category comprises between one fifth and one quarter of primary school students in Bangladesh (Ahmed et al., 2011).

It has also been well-established that there are linkages between infrastructure and access to education. Improved roads and transportation have major implications for enrolment ratios – especially for rural girls’ enrolment and attendance rates. The distance of schools from residences and unfavourable teacher-student ratios are other significant factors that contribute to low attendance rates as these factors discourage parents and guardians from sending children to school (GoB and UNDP, 2009).

Another issue affecting enrolment and retention rates is that although there is a notional catchment area for GPS and RNGPS, children are not required to be enrolled in the neighbourhood school, nor are schools required to enrol all children from the neighbourhood who seek admission. There is also no rigorous or systematic planning for geographical distribution of schools so as to make provisions for the schooling of all children for a geographical unit (Sabur and Ahmed, 2011).

Although there are district and sub-district offices to oversee the schools, primary education in Bangladesh is basically governed from the central office located in the capital. As a consequence, the school management committees are unable to function as required. This centralization is also a barrier to developing local level leadership, which is vital for an effectively functioning primary education system. Furthermore, coordination among the various types of primary schools towards achieving universal primary education is greatly hampered by the present system. Thus, it is clear that decentralized primary education planning and management, at least at the sub-district level, with adequate responsibility and authority for sub-district-level planning and its implementation, following national standards and making the authority accountable to the communities is required.

The first sub-sector-wide approach, the PEDP II, jointly financed by the government and 11 development partners, under the MoPME, addressed several aspects in terms of accelerating the achievement of the EFA goals. The government, with support from development partners, then developed a follow-on programme (PEDP III) based on the lessons learned and the government’s priorities articulated in the Second National Plan of Action, the National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction, the National Education Policy and other related documents.

It is in the larger context of these challenges that various initiatives have been undertaken in Bangladesh with government lead, including the introduction of pre-primary education for all children and the SLIP initiative, which encourages reform at the school level – the school being, ultimately, the locus of action for where improvement of learning must happen.

# 3

## The pre-primary education initiative

### 3.1 Background

The main objective of pre-primary education is to foster physical and mental preparation before children enter into Grade 1 of formal primary school (Akhter, 2012). The entry age of the current one-year pre-primary education initiative in Bangladesh is 5. This age limit is adhered to by government providers of education services and, in general, by NGOs.

In the context of EFA, early childhood programmes are considered important in improving enrolment, retention and achievement for girls and disadvantaged groups. Mingat and Jaramillo (2003) used data from 133 countries to look at the correlation between pre-school enrolment and primary completion as well as pre-school enrolment and repetition rates in primary school. They found completion rates of 50 per cent in the absence of pre-school, and around 80 per cent where half the children have access to some sort of pre-school or early childhood development centre. When they looked at repetition they found that an absence of pre-school experience correlated with 25 per cent repetition; while pre-school enrolment of 45 per cent correlated with a reduction of repetition to 12 per cent.

Historically, pre-primary schooling was mainly only accessible by privileged groups, who were served by private kindergartens (Moore et al., 2008). To increase accessibility, NGOs began offering pre-primary education for underprivileged groups in many developing countries (UNESCO, 2007), including in Bangladesh.



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### 3.2 Evolution of the PPE Initiative

Pre-primary education in Bangladesh today consists of various programmes under the auspices of several actors. Historically, NGOs were in the forefront and a large number of pre-primary classes were run by NGOs, including by Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Save the Children, Plan International, Care Bangladesh, Action Aid, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, and Gonoshahajjo Sangstha. These organizations are members of both the Campaign for Popular Education and the Bangladesh ECD Network, which have served as advocacy and lobbying groups for ECD and pre-school education. In addition, *madrasas*, mosque-based *maktabs*, *mandirs* (temples) and private kindergartens offered pre-school education. The various government and non-government pre-primary actors have followed varying objectives, methodology and curricula, with little coordination.

The Government of Bangladesh first introduced pre-primary education as a substantial public sector activity in 1992 through a project titled the Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme. The government did not, however, mobilize the necessary resources to implement the project. Nevertheless, some NGOs took up the programme and began operating pre-primary classes (GOB, 2013). Pre-primary education in the public sector formally began in 2001. It was not until 2010, however, that a major initiative was begun, with inclusion of pre-primary education in the national primary education development programme, PEDP II.

The National Education Policy of 2010 highlights two main policy directions for pre-primary education. First, that an integrated school system should be established, encompassing pre-school through to higher secondary levels under a unified framework to bring together all educational setups delivering education services. Second, that the main objective of the PPE initiative is to provide one year of pre-school classes – so as to foster the physical and mental preparation of children before they begin Grade 1 of formal primary school (GoB, 2013).

The operational framework for the development of PPE was approved by the MoPME in 2010, under PEDP II. This operational framework envisaged institutionalization of PPE through the development of a curriculum and learning materials and the recruitment and professional development of PPE teachers. Following approval of the PPE operational framework, the MoPME and the DPE took steps to expand pre-primary education by engaging various actors, including NGOs. In 2010 the government initiated pre-primary classes in GPS and RNGPS with an “interim curriculum” (Akhter, 2012).

In order to move towards standard content delivery, the government developed a national PPE curriculum in 2011 and subsequently begun a pilot test. Recognizing the effort of NGOs in the field of pre-primary education and realizing the need of support to reach the goals, the government also approved GO-NGO collaboration guidelines and a GO-NGO implementation plan based on the guidelines. The guidelines and plan create options for NGOs to be involved with government to universalize good quality pre-primary education (Akhter, 2012).

Based on the experience and progress under PEDP II, PPE was adopted as an important sub-component of the new sector-wide programme, PEDP III. The aims under PEDP III are to create a permanent system and structure for PPE, linked to the primary education system, and to provide a standardized service that will gradually reach all pre-school aged children. To initiate and develop this structure, a comprehensive mapping of PPE services in Bangladesh was conducted by the DPE (Akhter, 2012).

Under the “learning and teaching” component of PEDP III, the government has committed to the gradual introduction of pre-primary education for all children in Bangladesh. A PPE expansion plan was recently developed by DPE with technical assistance from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), aiming for expansion of PPE to all government schools and to all RNGPS, which were recently brought under government management, by the end of 2014. This goal was included as one of the disbursement-linked indicators for the first year of PEDP III. With NGO support, the government will also seek to implement the PPE initiative in hard-to-reach areas. The expansion plan presents the standards of PPE service delivery; the roles and responsibilities of the government, the NGOs and the private sector; the needs in terms of recruitment; the type and duration of training; and other requirements for expansion (Mostafa, 2012).

The NCTB prepared the learning materials (textbooks for children) on the basis of a curriculum approved by the MoPME. Other teaching-learning aids for PPE have also been designed. In addition, a training manual for a 15-day course for PPE teachers was developed by the NAPE, the NCTB and the DPE in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, including NGOs.

An initial operating grant of BDT5,000 (USD63) was provided to each GPS to enable them to procure supplementary teaching learning materials to be used in the PPE classrooms. Furthermore, a total of 37,672 additional posts of assistant PPE teachers (one for each GPS) were created by the MOPME and approved by the Ministry of Finance. The first phase of recruitment (of 15,000 assistant teachers) was to be completed by September 2013. The second phase of recruitment (of 7,000 assistant teachers) was to be completed by December 2013 and the remaining recruitment will be completed by 2016.

The DPE provided a one-day orientation session on PPE for all field-level officials of the DPE and the head teachers of the GPS and of the RNGPS and community schools that are being converted into GPS. The initial group of newly recruited teachers (15,000) were to receive 15-days of PPE training by December 2013 and a further 7,753 teachers who received the interim package training in the past will also receive this training.

Box 1 illustrates the three phases in the historical development of pre-school and early childhood education in Bangladesh.

### Box 1: Chronology of Early Childhood Education in Bangladesh

#### Phase I

- 1972: Spontaneous and informal “baby classes” started in government-run primary schools in a sporadic manner.
- 1974: The Qudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission Report was published. Though written about 30 years ago it is still visionary, relevant and applicable to ECCD today. Some key features of the Commission Report related to ECCD include:
- ✓ Recognition of early years, from birth to age 5, as a critical stage of human development.
  - ✓ The need for day care for children aged a few months to 3 years of age and kindergarten for children aged 3 to 5.
  - ✓ The necessity of appropriate and relevant teacher training (including child psychology, nursing, teaching techniques and interaction with and management of young children).
  - ✓ A proposal for establishing a research institution on Early Childhood Education.
- 1976: The Bangladesh Shishu Academy was established for orienting children on cultural activities and performing arts, such as songs, drama, poetry, dance etc.
- 1981: A needs-based curriculum was developed by the NCTB for government-run baby classes but a lack of interest meant that the curriculum was not followed.

#### Phase II

- 1991: Pre-school activities imparting pre-reading, writing and numeracy skills, within the Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme, were implemented through NGOs on a limited scale.
- 1992: An Early Childhood Education and Development component in the EFA First National Plan of Action encouraged continuation of existing “baby classes” through non-government and community initiatives but did not provide the necessary support to formalize and institutionalize these classes.
- 1994: A GOB circular was sent out encouraging primary schools to organize “baby classes”, but with no provisions for a separate teacher or a structured curriculum.
- 1995: The Bangladesh Shishu Academy began district-level pre-school activities in each of their district level offices but these were limited only to basic reading, writing and arithmetic.



- 1997: As a solution to the shortage of teachers and physical facilities and resource constraints, the National Committee on Primary Education proposed considering the first six months of grade 1 to help children prepare for primary school. But this proposal did not materialize and “baby classes” continued as before.
- 1998: The GOB planned to expand and support operation of “baby classes” through PEDP I (1998–2003). But no clear information is available about its implementation.

### Phase III

- 2001: The GOB initiated the Early Childhood Development Project through the Bangladesh Shishu Academy as a pilot project for innovative and comprehensive ECCD, in partnership with NGOs, as a stepping stone to create awareness about holistic child development.
- 2002: Selected NGOs received approval from the MoPME to organize pre-primary activities in government primary schools.
- An effort was made by GO-NGO and development partners to establish an ECD Network.
- 2005: The ECD Network was launched.
- 2007: The GOB continued the Early Childhood Development Project through Bangladesh Shishu Academy and re-named it the Early Learning for Child Development Project.
- 2008: An operational Framework for pre-primary education was launched by the MoPME.
- ECD was included in undergraduate and post-graduate medical education and nursing colleges and was approved by the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.
- 2009: Development of a PPE interim curriculum was initiated by the NCTB and DPE in collaboration with NGOs.
- 2010: A National Education Policy was launched by the Ministry of Education that includes pre-primary education as the first component of primary education and specifies that PPE is a one-year requirement for children aged 5 years, prior to entering grade 1 of primary school.
- The DPE began implementing the interim PPE curriculum in all GPS and distributed the curriculum package to all RNGPS. By 2011, 40,915 teachers had received training on this interim PPE curriculum.
- 2011: The National Pre-Primary Curriculum was approved by the MoPME.
- 2012: The resource and supplementary materials were to be developed by October and there were plans to test it in the field in 2013.

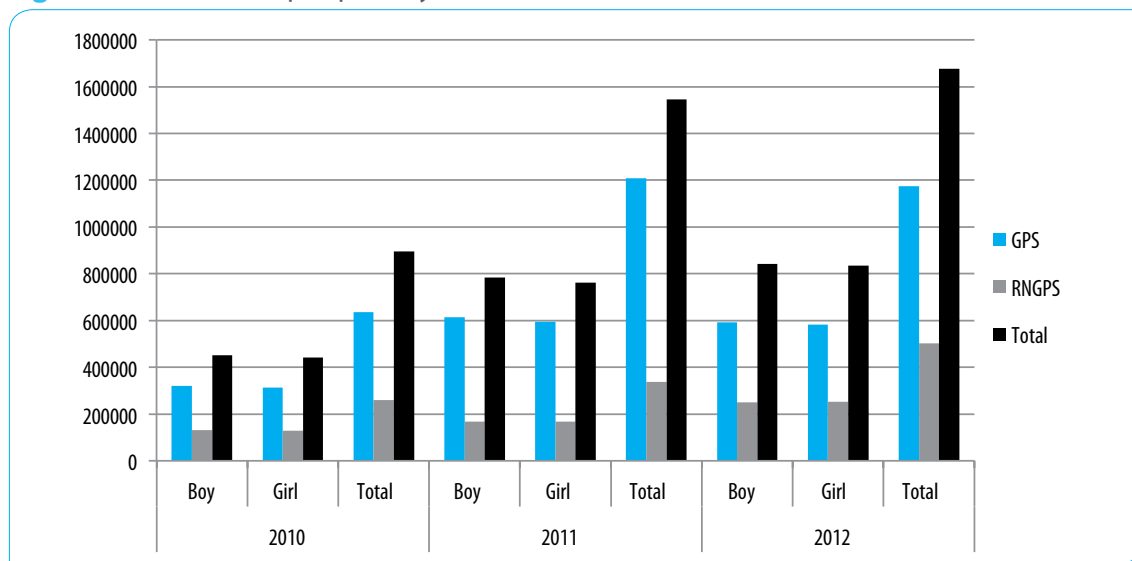
*Source:* Akhter, M., 2012

Figure 1 shows the level of enrolment in the “baby classes” in all GPS and in the RNGPS that are in the process of being brought under government management. The numbers for 2012 are much higher than for 2010 and 2011, with the overall total for boys and girls in GPS and RNGPS rising from 895,524 to 1,545,828 between 2010 and 2011 and up to 1,672,260 in 2012, which represents almost a doubling of enrolment in three years (GOB, 2013).



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**Figure 1:** Enrolment in pre-primary education, GPS and RNGPS (2010–2012)



Source: Annual School Census 2010, 2011 and 2012

Education management information system (EMIS) data collected by DPE in 2013 indicate that out of 4.5 million children enrolled in grade 1 of primary school at the beginning of 2013, 2.5 million children had participated in pre-primary education before enrolling. The EMIS data indicate that about 55 per cent of grade 1 students in 2013 have had pre-primary education experience.

The figures for 2013 suggest that actual participation in pre-primary education was substantially higher than indicated by data reported by primary schools. Apart from the growth in enrolment between 2012 and 2013, the difference may be explained by the fact that there are NGO-run pre-school programmes not attached to primary schools as well as private pre-schools and kindergartens that are gaining popularity and about which reliable statistics are not available. The data also suggest that there is a growing demand for pre-primary education from parents, a demand which is not being met so far.

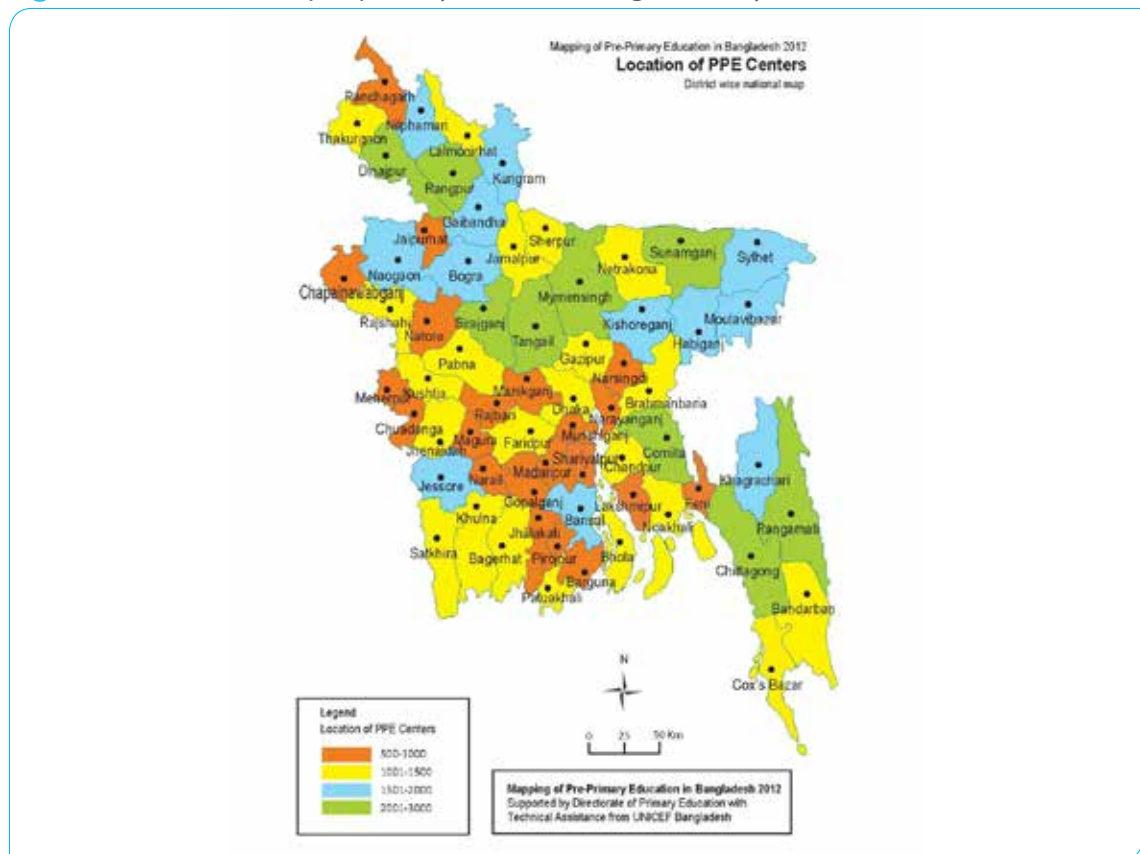
The government has demonstrated its support and commitment to PPE by stating its intent to universalize pre-primary education in association with NGOs, which have lengthy experience in providing PPE services in Bangladesh. PPE is now an integral part of PEDP III. The government, under sub-component 2.1.2. (pre-primary) of PEDP III, has pledged to provide one year of free pre-primary education at GPS to all children aged between 5 and 6, in a phased programme. In addition, NGOs may be involved in helping GPS to set up pre-primary facilities and train pre-primary teachers (GOB, PEDP III Programme Document).



Despite the increase in enrolments, estimates indicate that there are still between 0.9 million and 2.7 million children that are not currently able to access pre-school education (PPE-mapping, based on DPE data. and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics population census-based data). The population-census-based data appear to be compatible with the 55 per cent coverage indicated by EMIS data.

It has been estimated that 121,983 pre-schools, with an average enrolment of 30 children per class (with a teacher student ratio of 1:30), are required, in order to ensure all PPE-aged children can access pre-school education (Mostafa, 2012). The government plan under PEDP III is to open one pre-primary class at each of the country's 37,672 GPS. Support has also been given to the opening of pre-primary classes by recruitment of teachers in some RNGPS, which number over 23,000 and are now being brought under government management and are entitled to the same government support as GPS. In addition, there are over 20,000 pre-schools with secured funding until 2015 that are being run by NGOs. Thus, it appears that there is a gap of over 60,000 PPE classes (or second shifts or second sections of existing pre-primary classes) for universal PPE coverage (Mostafa, 2012).

**Figure 2:** Distribution of pre-primary centres in Bangladesh, by district



*Source:* Akhter, M., 2012

Among major service providers, the DPE serves the most children, with 73 per cent of the total enrolment, according to DPE administrative data. The DPE has two types of interventions: classes in GPS and classes in RNGPS. The GPS have 50 per cent of the total enrolment and RNGPS 23 per cent.

The government also conducted a project with UNICEF support called the Early Learning and Child Development Project. This project was recently re-named the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) project and is planned to be run between 2013 and 2016. The project, run by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, has two parts: one is operated by Bangladesh Shishu

Academy, in selected urban locations, and the other, the Integrated Community Development Project, is operated by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board. Both of these are of two-year duration, targeting children aged 4 to 6. Altogether, these two initiatives comprise just over 1 per cent of total ECD enrolment. The latter initiative's activities are significant in the Hill districts, a relatively disadvantaged area where the majority of the population belong to ethnic minority groups. The major part of PPE services have been provided by the DPE through GPS and RNGPS and by NGOs. Table 1 shows the types and numbers of PPE classes.

**Table 1:** Government-managed pre-primary services (2013)

Pre-primary classes	Number of pre-primary classes	Number of students
GPS	36,325	N/A
RNGPS ( converted into GPS)	21,387	N/A
Community Schools	523	N/A
Experimental Schools	26	N/A
Total school-based pre-primary classes	58,261	25,000,000*
Para Kendro (Chittagong Hill Tracts)**	3,500	58,811
Pre-Primary (Shishu Bikash)**	982	29,460
Total centre-based pre-primary classes	4,482	88,271
Grand Total	62,743	25,088,271

**Notes:** \* Estimate. \*\* 2-year course.

**Source:** Directorate of Primary Education Administrative Data 2013; Bangladesh Shishu Academy Administrative Data 2013; Integrated Child Development Project Administrative Data 2013

The Bangladesh ECD Network, established in 2005, is a forum for all implementing partners working with early childhood development in Bangladesh. The network created an initial ECD programme database in 2010 with information from 230 member organizations, comprising NGOs, international development organizations, government-run offices (the Bangladesh Shishu Academy and the Institute of Child and Mother Health), and education and research institutions. Currently more than 240 NGOs are providing pre-primary education in Bangladesh through their respective projects and activities.

Table 2 shows the number of pre-primary centres being implemented by each of the key NGO actors in the field.

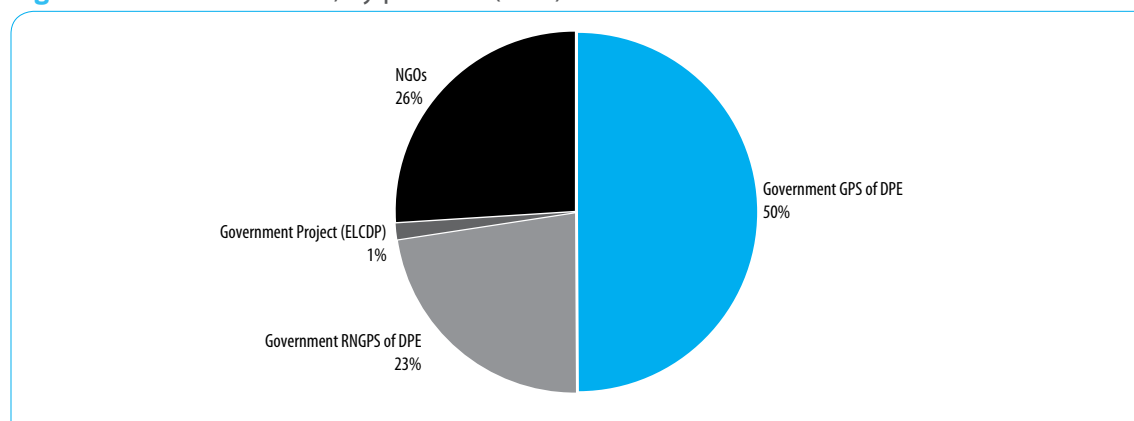
**Table 2:** Pre-primary centres of NGOs (average enrolment of 30 students in each)

Organizations/Projects	No. of Centres
Save The Children (USA) SUCCEED	1,200
PROTEEVA	2,520
Plan Bangladesh	486
BRAC	15,000
Dhaka Ahsania Mission	337
FIVDB (Excluding PROTEEVA)	452
RDRS (Excluding PROTEEVA)	44
VERC (excluding PROTEEVA)	40
GSK	65
Caritas	170
Action Aid	326
Total	20,640

**Source:** "Mainstreaming Pre-Primary Education in Bangladesh: Bringing It Together," DPE, November 2010; BRAC database.

NGOs organize pre-primary classes for children aged 5 and 6. Some of these are established on the premises of primary schools (both government and non-government) and many are in the community. Class sizes range between 25 and 35 children. Classes are two and half hours long and are offered six days a week. Teachers are recruited at the local level and are provided with pre-service, on-the-job and monthly refresher trainings. The classes are supervised on a regular basis by field staff of the respective organizations. BRAC is the largest provider, with long experience in non-formal primary education. It provides pre-primary education in 15,000 PPE centres either attached to GPS or at the community level. Figure 3 shows the overall distribution of pre-primary services by the major providers.

**Figure 3:** Enrolment in PPE, by provider (2012)



**Source:** Directorate of Primary Education Data, 2012; Early Learning Child Development Project; Survey of Selected NGOs, 2012

### 3.3 PPE in government primary schools

As noted above, the government’s PPE initiative began first in the government primary schools in 2010 and today these schools serve the largest number of children (compared to other PPE service-providers), reaching the children through more than 37,000 primary schools.

The research team visited 10 pre-primary classes based in primary schools (in urban, semi-urban and rural areas), to obtain a sense of how these classes function (see Annex 5 for the list of schools visited). This section summarizes the findings from the school visits.

The research team found that government primary school teachers and management committees at the surveyed schools were, in general, committed, sincere and motivated. The team found teachers to be interested in this relatively new initiative and many of them already quite knowledgeable about the teaching techniques, teaching-learning materials and games appropriate for pre-school. The teachers assigned to conduct sessions in the pre-primary section were mostly enthusiastic, and used the required teaching methods and techniques.

In many classes, however, the teacher-student ratios were found to be significantly higher than the suggested or desirable ratio. The number of students taught by a single teacher in some of the pre-primary classes was found to be between 60 and 80, making it difficult to conduct meaningful learning. The explanation given for this was that the demand for the services was high and the planning and managing guidelines for running pre-primary classes are still to be clarified and fully enforced. The research team found that there was much variation in class size, however, from school to school. A small number of schools had classes with only around 10 students, but many schools had classes with as many as 80 students.

The schools are supposed to conduct classes in two shifts so as to manage the large numbers of students with existing infrastructure and facilities, but as of 2013 the schools were yet to begin second batches of pre-primary classes, except in a very small number of schools in urban areas, mainly in the capital city, Dhaka.

The research team found that the head teachers, despite their low budgets and limited human resources and logistics facilities, lead the pre-primary classes competently in most of the surveyed schools. Most of the government schools were found equipped with good infrastructure facilities, including accessibility ramps, and other facilities such as safe drinking water, toilets, playgrounds, recreational facilities and teaching-learning materials.

The head teachers expressed, however, that the large class sizes and, in many cases, the absence of a dedicated classroom or space for pre-primary classes, did not allow for the creation of the necessary physical ambiance, including play space, activity corners and placing of decorations on the walls. This, they said, is an impediment to providing high quality pre-primary education.

The study found that the small annual fund (BDT5,000 or USD63) provided to each school by the government for PPE incidental costs, allowed the GPS to procure teaching-learning materials and other essential supplies, including floor mats, pencils, colouring pencils, erasers, sharpeners, plastic sets of animals and alphabets and plastic balls. This funding was supplemented in many cases with part of the SLIP grant.

### 3.4 Non-formal PPE

Field visits and interviews conducted at pre-primary classes run through the BRAC programme found that the teachers of these classes had good rapport with students and were generally able to handle learning activities in the class and students' learning problems. Some BRAC personnel felt that conceptual and developmental aspects in students' learning were not reaching BRAC expectations of a satisfactory level, however. BRAC was therefore considering recruitment of teachers with a higher level of formal secondary education qualification instead of the current practice of recruiting former BRAC school graduates as pre-primary teachers.

The research team found that non-formal schools have smaller PPE class sizes and less variation in class size among the schools, compared to PPE classes at GPS. When comparisons were made with private kindergartens, however, the team found that the average class sizes in the private kindergartens were smaller, but they found that school-to-school variation in class size was highest in those kindergartens.

The study also found that not enough effort has been made so far to extend pre-primary classes to *ibtedayi madrasas*, which serve a significant number, estimated to be about 7 per cent, of children at primary-level.

### 3.5 Summary and Conclusions

Since 2010, the MOPME and the DPE have taken several steps towards provision of pre-primary education to all eligible children. PEDP-II laid the foundation for the introduction of PPE by orienting education professionals and introducing pre-primary into GPS. The GOB then developed and approved a national PPE curriculum in June 2011. The government also approved a GO-NGO collaboration guideline for PPE in June 2011, which created scope for NGOs to work together with

the government to universalize good quality pre-primary education. Based on the experience and progress under PEDP II, PPE became an important sub-component of PEDP III. The aim then became to create permanent structures for PPE in the primary education system and gradually provide standardized services for all children.

It is evident that PPE is a popular and promising intervention relating to achieving the EFA goals in Bangladesh. The National Education Policy 2010 recognized PPE as an essential part of primary education. A major expansion of the one-year pre-primary education initiative has taken place in the period of three years since 2010. Enrolment of children in some form of pre-primary education rose from 23 per cent in 2009 (multiple cluster indicator survey, 2009) to 55 per cent of grade 1 entrants in 2012. It should be noted, however, this data needs to be treated with caution because the statistics are not comparable and comprehensive. A substantial number of enrolled children are either under or over the age limit for PPE and there is also some duplication in reporting by Government and NGOs. Nevertheless, the data indicate a clear upward trend in enrolment in PPE.

There is clearly a need for better collection, recording and analysis of data regarding pre-primary education services, covering both government and non-government provisions. This is necessary for making one year of pre-primary education of acceptable quality to all children in the country. This is also necessary for coordinated sub-district-based planning for pre-primary education and setting up a reliable management information system for this purpose. A precondition for reliable data, identification of 5-year-old children, and projection of their numbers requires better enforcement of birth registration regulations.



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# 4

## The school learning improvement plan initiative

### 4.1 Background

The School Learning Improvement Plan initiative, initially named the School-Level Improvement Plan and re-named under PEDP III, aims to improve learning outcomes and primary completion rates through increasing school-level and community involvement in school management. SLIP was introduced with the intention of improving the quality of primary education through developing child-friendly



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schools and enjoyable classrooms for children. Gradual improvement of the learning environment in schools is the major focus of SLIP. PEDP II envisaged decentralization as an implementation strategy to encourage the active involvement of stakeholders at the grassroots level in planning, implementing and monitoring educational activities for children.

The key components of the SLIP initiative are: decentralization of school-level planning; facilitation of the preparation of school plans at the local level, based on the priority demands of each school; creation of child friendly teaching-learning environments, promotion of inclusive education; bridging the divide between teachers and the parents and local communities; increasing knowledge and skills in planning and management among stakeholders at the local level; and increasing the NER to 100 per cent.

A complementary programme is the Upazila Primary Education Plan (UPEP) initiative, which aims to help reduce disparities in educational participation within sub-districts, leading, eventually, to a reduction of disparities between the sub-districts. The objectives of UPEP include: improving *upazila*-level skills, in particular improving officers' skills in local planning and management; increasing community participation; assisting in the implementation of the SLIP initiative; documenting school-level needs through consolidating the SLIPs from all schools; and developing the sub-district office as the hub of primary education related data.

The UPEP programme is seen as a mechanism for decentralizing the planning and management of primary education to the local government (*upazila*) level, based on plans prepared at the school levels as per SLIP guidelines. UPEP requires involvement of relevant stakeholders in the locality, including local government authorities. It focuses on identifying the overall goal for educational development in the sub-district and the strategies for achieving that goal. It also includes budget planning for activities directed towards meeting the assessed needs.

Under PEDP II, bottom-up planning processes were expected to be promoted through the preparation of SLIPs and UPEPs. The expectation was to establish a system of preparing annual operational plans, which would be based on the consolidation of UPEPs and reflecting the needs identified through SLIPs and situation analyses in each sub-district.



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A qualitative evaluation of SLIP, conducted in 2010 for UNICEF, indicated that the grants provided under the programme have enabled schools to plan and implement some improvements in their physical environments and move towards creating a welcoming learning environment for children. The evaluation also found, however, that the SLIP initiative had made limited progress in supporting fuller decentralization of education management functions, including those which impact directly on teaching and learning (Bernard, 2010).

## 4.2 Evolution of the SLIP initiative

The SLIP initiative was derived from the experiences of two projects, the Effective Schools Through Enhanced Education Management (ESTEEM) project and the Intensive District Approach to Education for All project, supported as part of PEDP I, which also aimed at strengthening school and community management (Bernard, 2010).

SLIP began as a pilot in 13 sub-districts in 2007, preceded by a pre-pilot phase in six sub-districts in 2006 to trial the core procedures. Under PEDP II, around 40 UEOs were established in 2008 and 2009 to support the expansion of SLIP in the remaining sub-districts of Bangladesh. Scaling-up began in 2009, providing sub-districts with technical and financial support for overall improvement in the quality of primary education. PEDP III aims to take the SLIP initiative further and to promote the decentralization of a more extensive set of functions.

The SLIP initiative was supported by the provision of school-level improvement planning grants, which were continued and scaled up under PEDP III. In financial year 2012/13, 31,807 schools, comprising 20,800 GPS and 11,007 RNGPS, were each provided with annual SLIP grants of BDT30,000, approximately USD400, (a total of BDT955 million or USD 12 million), covering 53 districts and 280 sub-districts. Fifty sub-districts in 26 districts were also provided with training and with funding for UPEP preparation costs at the rate of BDT10,000, approximately USD120 per sub-district (a total of BDT500,000 or USD6,300).

Through the SLIP grant, GPS receives BDT28,350 after deduction by the authorities of the value-added tax. These funds are used as “seed money” and the SMCs, parents, teachers and community are expected to contribute funds or in-kind services to the overall improvement of education in their respective schools.

Monitoring of the SLIP initiative is conducted mainly by the Upazila Education Offices, School Social Audit Committees, District Education Offices and, occasionally, by the DPE and development partners. How, and how quickly, to pursue the scaling up of SLIP (and UPEP) in PEDP III remains unclear because of the far-reaching policy implications and complexity in implementation.

## 4.3 The SLIP initiative

The study found that the SLIP initiative seems to have played a significant role in increasing SMC members' engagement in school management. Examples of such actions observed in field visits include SMC's decisions to build boundary walls for the schools, to construct additional classrooms and to install water facilities, toilets, electric fans and other infrastructure for children.

A UNICEF report (2009) similarly noted that SLIP has been successful in meeting the modest objective of providing "a small-scale, guaranteed fund to enable schools to plan and implement limited improvements in their physical environment, toward creating a more welcoming learning space for children". The report also noted that "It was apparent from all of the school authorities and SMCs interviewed that SLIP is making a major difference to their status as managers; they can now not simply make expenditure plans, but also act on them". The same UNICEF report, however, also drew attention to the fact that the gains of the SLIP initiative may be fragile and will need consolidating.

Another study reported that the SLIP funds have been used mainly for such things as adding new teachers' rooms which eased classroom space shortages; furniture for teachers' rooms; school benches; new chairs; repairing benches; cleaning and repair of toilets and septic tanks; playfield filling; buying fans and re-wiring; repainting and repair of walls; repair of televisions; organizing sports days, repairing and replacement of blackboards, and repairing classroom floors and windows (Swedish International Development Agency, 2010). It appears that a direct impact of the modest financial support through SLIP has been to compensate for the schools' lack of budget and funds for regular maintenance and repair work.

From the field visits, it was observed that schools utilized the SLIP funds both in infrastructural improvement and to procure teaching-learning materials. In one of the schools visited, the SMC had painted the school building, purchased ceiling fans and repaired doors and windows. Schools had also procured podiums, education materials, pushpin boards, hanging stands, tool boxes for schoolyard maintenance, play materials, wall clocks, toilet cleaning materials, notice boards, flash drives, school bags and uniforms as well as geometry boxes containing compasses, sextants, scales and other requirements for geometry practice.

A head teacher reported that the SLIP had facilitated the development of skills among the teachers and senior students to prepare low and no-cost teaching aids from junk and natural materials. Such skills were perceived as perhaps being helpful in PPE as well as in primary education.

The study found that a sense of ownership had increased among the community people, including SMC members, after they were included in SLIP planning and monitoring. An SMC chair remarked, "We feel this is our school and we need to provide maximum efforts on improving the quality of education in school". Similarly, a head teacher noted, "We have been able to raise funds at the local level through using our network".

It was evident from the FGDs with the teachers, parents and SMC members that all had some understanding of SLIP and PPE and their significance for improving the quality of education, though this understanding varied in level and degree. Although parents were less aware of SLIP than teachers and SMC members, they expressed their interest in working closely with SMCs and teachers to improve the quality of primary education and promote gender parity.

The present study found that the decentralization agenda, which was indicated in the operational guidelines for the SLIP initiative, is yet to be translated at the local level to the extent necessary



to prepare UPEPs or to institutionalize SLIP as a component of sub-district-level planning or transferring significant finance and budget management to the school level.

It can be said that, on the whole, the SLIP initiative has a positive impact in terms of promoting access, equity and improving the quality of education, but the specific level of that contribution is difficult to measure.

## 4.4 The UPEP initiative

As noted above, the Upazila Primary Education Plan is a sub-district-level mechanism for the decentralization of planning and was first conceptualized during the implementation of the ESTEEM project under PEDP I (2000–2005). With relatively user-unfriendly guidelines, UPEP preparation was first tried in 20 sub-districts covered under the project. Eventually, it was halted when the ESTEEM project ended. Under PEDP II an attempt



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was undertaken, side by side with SLIP, to develop operational guidelines for the preparation and implementation of UPEP. These guidelines were finalized and approved by MoPME in 2008, along with a training manual. A group of 25 master trainers, who were DPE personnel (director to assistant director level), was trained in 2008 at the DPE. Training of officers at the sub-district level in the preparation of UPEP took place in late 2009 (Mannan, 2012).

The DPE agreed to pilot UPEP in the 13 SLIP pilot sub-districts in 2008. After some delay, it took off in financial year 2009/10. Officers from 243 sub-districts were given training and, subsequently, each sub-district received a block grant of BDT5,000. This money was intended to meet expenses for organizing workshops and meetings related to plan preparation.

Many of the master trainers who provided UPEP preparation training to the sub-district officers found it difficult to grasp the issues of UPEP preparation. These master trainers mostly depended on the UPEP guidelines for information as the concepts and methods were somewhat new and they themselves had received inadequate training.

Although the deadline for submitting UPEPs to the DPE was 31 May 2010, SLIP-UPEP cell records indicate that by 31 October 2010 only 101 UPEPs had been received from the 500-plus sub-districts in the country. An analysis of selected UPEPs that were submitted paints a disappointing picture of the level of planning skills at the sub-district level. Overall, the UPEPs had simply provided general information about the sub-districts along with the results of a situation analysis.

Processing the plans for final approval was then delayed. According to the officials, the reasons for the slow approval were a lack of adequate manpower to process the data and consolidate the information; a lack of logistics support, such as appropriate software for processing the data; and a lack of commitment on the part of the existing staff, mainly because of work overload (Mannan, 2012).

The results of a school review and aggregated SLIP data from the schools found that data was generally lacking. Furthermore, the “rolling plan” approach was rarely followed. The study found that few sub-district officials seem to have a good understanding of plan preparation and budget making. All this suggests the need to undertake effective training programmes for all *upazila*-level officers, who eventually would develop the plans, in consultation with other members of the UPEP Committee. This has to be preceded by the formation of strong trainer and technical support teams who could work with the sub-districts (Mannan, 2012).

# 5

## Conclusions

This study examined two initiatives: the programme to introduce pre-primary education to enhance school readiness of all children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, known as the PPE initiative; and the programme to increase involvement and responsibility of school-level stakeholders for the improvement of school and learner performance, the SLIP initiative.

The main findings and conclusions of the study are summarized below.

- Looking at the larger context of EFA challenges, the critical question at this time in Bangladesh is how the primary education development in the country will be shaped in the lead up to 2015 and beyond; how the government will position itself to implement a relatively comprehensive sub-sector programme for primary education under the Third Primary Education Development Programme (2011–16); how national capacities and resources can be fully mobilized for this purpose; and how development partners can support this effort. These questions have to be considered in the light of the new education policy announced in 2010 as well as the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2011–16) and the longer term national perspective of Vision 2021.
- The large majority of children in Bangladesh enrol in some form of education. Children attend a variety of school types (government schools, NGO schools, *madrasas*, etc.). These schools vary in terms of teacher quality and performance, buildings and facilities and teacher-student ratios. The same variation can be found in the schools' provisions for pre-primary education. Overall, the performance of all types of schools is less than acceptable in terms of meaningful participation and learning outcomes (Ahmed et al., 2011).
- The high student-teacher ratio and low contact hours are major factors in poor student performance. These deficits can be explained by the low overall public resources allocated for all education including the primary stage and pre-primary education. For primary education including pre-primary, it has remained less than 1 per cent of gross domestic product in recent years, one of the lowest worldwide, even among developing countries (Ahmed et al., 2011).
- While urban people in general are better off than their rural counterparts with regard to access to educational services, the rapidly-growing population of poor urban slums has been underserved by both the government and NGOs. There is a subset of households that are extremely poor (roughly the poorest quintile), for whom the costs of even the cheapest education are prohibitive (Cameron, 2011).



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- Field-level observations and evidence from past NGO- and government-supported programmes confirm the benefits for PPE participants in terms of a smooth transition from home to school, continuation and good performance of children in school, and self-confidence and poise of children in school. Recognizing the benefits of good quality pre-primary education, the government pledged to provide one year of free pre-primary education to children aged between 5 and 6 in all primary schools. One year of PPE was introduced formally in 2008 and such classes are now being accessed by more than 55 per cent of the children in the target age group.
- After making major progress in expanding services and laying the ground with essential conceptual, organizational and operational steps, work is needed to continue the extension of PEP to all children in the age group, and to ensure acceptable quality of the services with well-trained, motivated and dedicated teachers. It is clear that efforts have to be intensified to reach those who remain unserved, paying special attention to the disadvantaged population groups. This study has found, however, that the quality of services remains uneven.
- The SLIP initiative was introduced as a step towards greater participation and involvement of school personnel, community and parents in improving learning environment and performance of schools. Begun as a pilot project in 2008, it has now spread to most government schools in 60 per cent of the sub-districts in the country. The initiative provides small annual financial grants to schools. Although the financial support is modest and the scope of activities is small, the initiative has become an effective vehicle for promoting participation and accountability of community stakeholders in school performance and learning improvement. Funds distributed among the schools have made the SMCs more confident in planning and management of their schools. An overall improvement in educational achievement was noticed among the schools in which SMCs have taken a lead role in the preparation and implementation of school learning improvement plans. By decentralizing many school management functions and making schools responsive and accountable to parents and local community, the SLIP initiative has helped to lay the ground for further significant progress in this area.
- Although not deliberately linked with PPE, the SLIP initiative also supported the assessment of the PPE situation, and the planning and implementation of PPE in government primary schools.
- The capacity built among the teachers and SMCs under SLIP initiatives, including training and orientation, with support from the Upazila Resource Centres and the Upazila Primary Education Offices, has improved teacher performance in classrooms both in primary and pre-primary education. SLIPs also serve as an input at the sub-district level to preparing UPEPs as a supportive action in implementing PEDP III.
- The study found that the SLIP initiative has received enthusiastic support from the central level and has made an impact at the school level. The SLIP initiative appears to have responded to a need felt by stakeholders at the school and community level.
- It can be concluded from the study findings that UPEP has not had the same level of commitment that SLIP has seen, and there is relatively little understanding of UPEP's relevance at the national and sub-district levels. In addition, the inter-connection between SLIP and UPEP has not been appreciated or adequately highlighted. It is clear, however, that UPEP and SLIP both have a role to play their respective as well as mutually complementary roles if the aim to decentralisation of school management is to be pursued seriously.

- The two concerns of enhancing school readiness of children, especially children of the more deprived segments of the population, and making schools assume greater responsibility and accountability to improve their performance are being addressed by the PEP and SLIP initiatives. The PPE and SLIP initiatives have contributed to Bangladesh's effort to achieve EFA goals, especially, Goal 2, Goal 5 and, to some extent, Goal 6. There is still much to be done, however.

The following chapter outlines recommendations for future actions in pursuing quality with equity objectives in education in Bangladesh.

# 6

## Lessons learned and recommendations

The lessons learned from this study's examination of the PPE and SLIP initiatives and this study's recommendations for further action can be grouped under two categories: general recommendations and recommendations that are specific to the future of the PPE and SLIP initiatives.



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### 6.1 General recommendations

These recommendations relate to general policy measures as well as specific actions to accelerate EFA progress.

**Birth registration:** The absence of mandatory application of birth registration is a source of confusing and conflicting statistics regarding enrolment. This has been found to be a problem in projecting and planning pre-primary requirements and in recording data about the children served. Likewise, completion and dropout data necessary for proper planning and management of the system are inadequate. Measures should be taken through local government agencies to enforce registration of new births, which is required by health and local government regulations but is not rigorously enforced. Retroactive birth registration of children aged between 5 and 6 should be undertaken as part of the plan to bring these children to pre-school and primary school. Annual campaigns for awareness-raising and registration drives should be carried out at local and national levels jointly by education and health authorities, local governments, NGOs and civil society.

**Respond to the issues faced by poor families:** The relationship found between non-participation in education and poverty-related variables, including food security status and household income indicates that attention must be paid to respond to the issues faced by poor families. Stipends to poor students at primary and secondary levels remains a government strategy to promote equity in education opportunities, but the constraints perceived by parents and teachers suggest that funds spent for stipends could be better used in providing essential quality-enhancing inputs, including school meals, which would decrease the opportunity cost of keeping children home from school and of dropping out of school. Lessons learned from this study of the SLIP initiative indicate that there are possibilities for increasing the quality of education through initiatives at the school level with the availability of larger resources. This question needs to be examined rigorously, including the possibility of options for schools and local communities to experiment with alternatives, especially because of the major budgetary implications of choices made.

**Address the issues faced by poor urban children:** Expanding education services for the urban poor, with special financial allocations to compensate for serious disparities in provisions and quality of services, is essential to increase enrolments of poor urban children and to ensure their

continued participation in education. Collaboration between the national authorities, the larger city corporations, NGOs and the private sector is necessary to overcome the special constraints and complexities of the urban slum settlements. Expansion of pre-primary education of acceptable quality has to be one of the measures given priority in this effort.

**Develop and trial sub-district-based universal primary and pre-primary education planning and management:** A systematic trial should be designed, involving local government and all service providers, in selected sub-districts, as a key feature of the national education development strategy, in order to rationalize provisions for good quality basic education for all children with greater authority and accountability of schools and local authorities. This issue has assumed greater urgency with the education policy recommendation and the government plan to extend primary education up to grade eight, from the present level of grade five. School and community-based actions to support the poor and the silently excluded and to clarify perceptions about the role of non-government and community organizations in education should be a part of the development and trial, which could eventually be replicated widely. UPEP, supported by SLIP, indicates possibilities that must be tried out and further developed through effective piloting followed by wider replication. Effective PEP services for all children and in all kinds of primary education institutions call for such an approach.

**Greater authority with accountability at school level:** Along with area-based coordination and planning, it is necessary to move with a greater sense of urgency and seriousness towards larger authority and responsibility at the institutional level for organizing teaching-learning, managing personnel, giving due attention to underperforming children and their specific difficulties, and using financial resources better with transparency and accountability to parents and community. The SLIP initiative has indicated the possibilities of school-level action, so far on a limited scale. These possibilities need to be broadened in scope and promoted by earmarking larger resources and appropriate policy support.

**Tackle silent exclusion:** This problem needs to be probed further in order to analyse the different types and reasons for silent exclusion. In a sense, this situation is a manifestation of basic weaknesses in the quality and style of teaching-learning. Along with the overall effort to improve pedagogy, given the difficulties in identifying the silently excluded and specific circumstances for individuals in this category, research could focus on identifying and quantifying this phenomenon and probing the specific factors at play. Responses to this situation should entail specific actions at the school and community level, as indicated under the recommendation for sub-district-based planning and management.

**Significantly increase public expenditure for education:** We cannot but come back to the question of public resources for education, given the low share of gross domestic product (2.2% as of 2009) allocated for education in Bangladesh, particularly the low allocation for primary and pre-primary education, which is inconsistent with the goal of education with quality and equity. Substantially greater public resources should be committed within the framework of the sixth five-year plan and the new education policy, in order to ensure a minimum level of quality and the application of equity principles in educational services. Equally important is the effective use of scarce resources. Cases in point are the sub-district-based capitation formula for budgetary allocation to ensure public allocations with greater fairness based on the number of children in each sub-district, and planning and optimal use of resources, including stipend expenditure, at the school level. In sum, more resources are needed at the school level along with greater discretion with accountability in their use. The question of affordability of additional resources for education should be turned around to ask whether we can afford not to make the necessary investment in pre-primary and primary education with quality and equity.



## 6.2 Specific recommendations for PPE and SLIP

**Dedicated space and teachers for PPE:** Field visits to pre-school classes in government schools and NGO centres clearly indicated that exclusive classrooms or spaces are essential to create and maintain the necessary learning environment for effective pre-primary education. Besides meeting concerns for the safety and comfort of children, the classrooms must be physically designed for PPE. Use of the same space for primary classes disrupts the arrangements made for PPE. Moreover, maintaining a PPE class size under 30 often requires multiple shifts of PPE classes; thus the space needs to be used for PPE for most of the school day. By the same token, the teachers trained specifically for PPE should be exclusively used for PPE. The difficulties in terms of shortages of personnel, classrooms and resources and thus achieving the aim of dedicated classrooms and teachers for PPE cannot be underestimated. This is an essential condition for ensuring acceptable quality of PPE and has to be an essential feature for planning the expansion of PPE with quality and equity – giving priority to reaching the goal of dedicated classrooms and teachers within a short time frame.

**An effective coordination and collaboration approach in PPE:** In line with the PPE operational framework and GO-NGO collaboration guidelines, comprehensive and detailed plans should be prepared at the sub-district and union levels for PPE implementation. The aim would be to ensure that all eligible children are brought within the purview of PPE that is of acceptable quality. The framework and principles of an expansion plan at the national level have to be fleshed out at the sub-district and union level with the involvement of all actors, including government and non-government providers of primary education, *ibtedayee* madrasas and private schools. Making available a curriculum package under preparation would only be a first step in implementing the expansion plan. Training and support for teachers, school level planning to serve all children in the neighbourhood, and maintaining oversight regarding quality and equity cannot just be the task of the government functionaries. A collaborative and cooperative approach, involving all actors, has to be developed with seriousness and a sense of urgency.

**Support for RNGPS and *ibtedayee* madrasas in extending PPE services:** About a quarter of children attending school are enrolled in these institutions. Though a decision has been announced by the government to eliminate the distinction between GPS and RNGPS, how and in what time frame this process will be completed is not clear. Furthermore, how these and the *madrasas* will be brought under PPE expansion remains uncertain. One way would be to develop a collaborative programme with NGOs such as BRAC and others that have experience and a credible record in providing PPE to support RNGPS and *madrasas* in extending PPE services. Funding has to be provided for this purpose from PEDP III. In addition, the government should encourage international development partners, including interested international NGOs, to provide funding support. The work of interested international NGOs can make a significant contribution if their work is planned within the framework of a government expansion plan for PPE. The government authorities, working with concerned civil society including the Bangladesh ECD Network, need to be proactive in resource mobilization for this purpose and in ensuring effective use of the resources.

**An expanded SLIP tryout to deepen and broaden school level authority with accountability:** As a part of an *upazila* trial of coordinated and comprehensive planning and management of UPE and PPE, a trial of an expanded SLIP with more personnel and greater financial, and academic responsibility, should be carried out in selected schools in different regions of the country. The option of trying out alternative use of stipend resources can be a task of the trial. The tryout



can address key concerns, such as collaborative planning with NGOs and other actors to bring all children in the school neighbourhood into quality PPE services, and overcoming various obstacles to access and participation of all children in school (including issues of silent exclusion, extreme poverty, late enrolment, large class sizes, and those identified to be special concerns in the particular school or locality). Academic and research institutions and NGOs active in the field and possessing appropriate capacity can be involved in the trial of expanded SLIP.

It is generally agreed that once the policy makers and implementers from the main and secondary stakeholders become adequately responsive, children will obtain maximum benefits from any new initiative. The PPE and SLIP are not different in this respect from other initiatives. Hence, policy makers from the government and concerned development partners, staff members of the DPE and MoPME at the central level, and the DEOs, UEOs, Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs) at the district and sub-district levels need to be responsive to ensure implementation of all related policies, plans and programmes. Finally, the teachers, head teachers, parents, SMCs and communities also need to be supportive and responsive to effective implementation of government initiatives. All of the concerned primary, secondary and key stakeholders need to be involved in monitoring and supervision of school-level activities as per the annual education plans and other relevant plans.

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# Annexes

## Annex 1: Analytical framework

### Analytical framework for the Bangladesh case study

The following chart provides a provisional framework of the documents for analysis used in the Bangladesh case study of EFA good practices.

Sl.	Areas to be explored	Specific areas of assessment	Proposed indicators	Sources of information	Research techniques and tools
1.	Examining the context, rationale and background of introduction of pre-primary education and the School Level Improvement Plan.	Analysis of the relevance of PPE and the expected outcome and impact envisaged in PEDP II and PEDP III statements of goals, objectives, strategies and results as well as strategies to achieve related EFA goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy, strategy, objectives and results statements in PEDP II and III documents and other relevant policy and strategy-related documents such as the education policy as well as implementation plans.</li> <li>Quantitative and qualitative status of progress towards achieving universal primary education c. 2001-05 as baseline for quality-with-equity in primary education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of documents, including PEDP III and III programme documents, LFA and periodical monitoring and progress reports; views and judgments of key informants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review of relevant materials;</li> <li>In-depth interviews with selected key informants (approximately 10) representing major stakeholders, including policy and decision-makers, civil society members, academics and the research community.</li> </ul>
2.	Initiatives taken and roles played by government and NGOs in preparing the ground for introducing and implementing the PPE and SLIP initiatives.	Exploring the roles, initiatives and contributions of GO-NGO dialogue, collaboration and forms of involvement in introducing and implementing PPE and SLIP in PEDP II and III.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Records of dialogues, workshops, research reports and commentaries on the development of PPE and SLIP objectives and implementation processes and steps involving government, civil society, academics and the research community and development partners; reflection of the dialogue in policy and planning statements of PEDP II and III.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents, research reports and related documents.</li> <li>Views of key informants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review.</li> <li>Selected in-depth interviews.</li> </ul>
3.	Evidence and results in respect of expansion and outreach of the PPE and SLIP initiatives, using qualitative and quantitative information about PPE and SLIP.	Analyzing the historical evolution, expansion and results and impact of PPE and SLIP, especially in quantity and quality of coverage and access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusiveness in classroom environments.</li> <li>Physical accessibility in classrooms.</li> <li>Child-friendly learning environments</li> <li>Efficiency of teachers in transferring knowledge and skills.</li> <li>Effective communication techniques of teachers in classrooms with children.</li> <li>Impact of PPE on achieving good quality education among all children considering gender, ethnicity, disability and other diversity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review of relevant research and documentary evidence.</li> <li>Fieldwork through purposive sampling of schools, teachers, parents, SMC members and students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systematic analysis of reports and documents.</li> <li>FGD with parents, teachers and SMC members.</li> <li>School visits and classroom observations</li> </ul>

4.	Examining the contribution of PEP and SLIP to achieving EFA goals, especially Goal 2 (UPE), Goal 5 (Gender equality) and Goal 6 (quality improvement).  Considering synergy between PPE and SLIP	Analysing how and to what extent the EFA goals were considered in designing, implementing and monitoring PPE and SLIP. Also to what extent synergy between the two in contributing to EFA goals was considered and reflected in design and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection of EFA goals especially 2, 5 and 6, in work plan, guidelines, training, supervision and monitoring and assessment.</li> <li>• Similar reflection of synergy issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents relating to guidelines and training for implementing PPE and SLIP.</li> <li>• Views and judgments of key informants,</li> <li>• A national-level validation workshop to provide inputs regarding contribution to EFA and synergies.</li> <li>• Documents relating to guidelines and training for implementing PPE and SLIP.</li> <li>• Views and judgments of key informants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic analysis of reports, evaluations and assessments relating to PEDP I, II and III.</li> <li>• Validation workshop.</li> <li>• FGD.</li> <li>• Interviews.</li> </ul>
5.	Constraints and difficulties in implementing PPE and SLIP.	Analysing specific constraints and difficulties encountered by concerned stakeholders, how these were tackled, and challenges that still remain in implementing PPE and SLIP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constraints at planning, implementation and monitoring levels encountered by different stakeholders.</li> <li>• Strategies followed to overcome the difficulties in planning, implementation and monitoring by stakeholders.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic analysis of reports, evaluations and assessments related to PEDP I, II and III.</li> <li>• Validation workshop.</li> <li>• FGD</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
6.z	Identify lessons regarding strategies and actions for effective continuation and scaling-up of PPE and SLIP in the context of intensified efforts in the run-up to 2015 and beyond 2015.	Identify positive and negative lessons regarding strategies and actions related to the continuation and scaling-up of PPE in the short term up to 2015 and in the longer term in the post-2015 EFA agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives and strategies reflected in PEDP III based on recent experience in PEP and SLIP implementation.</li> <li>• Challenges and strategies concerning PPE and greater school level authority, responsibility and accountability, identified and discussed in the discourse at national and regional levels for the post-2015 EFA agenda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic document review.</li> <li>• Views of selected key informants.</li> <li>• Outcome of national validation workshop.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports of PEDP I, II and other documents, reports and publications.</li> <li>• FGD</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• National validation workshop.</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: Instruments used in the study

### Annex 2.1 School observation checklist

Name of observer:	
Name of the school:	
Year of establishment:	
Type of school:	
Union/ward:	
Upazila:	
District:	
Signature:	
Date:	

### Section A: School observation parameters

Sl	Areas of school observation	Remarks
<b>1</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	
1.1	Accessible entrance of the school	
1.2	Access to toilet	
1.3	Accessible play ground	
1.4	Access to co-curricular activities including games	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Performance</b>	
2.1	Enrolment	
2.2	Male – female ratio	
2.3	Attendance	
2.4	Number of students awarded scholarship	
2.5	Number of girls students availing stipend	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Trained teachers</b>	
3.1	Number of teachers: Male= Female=	
3.2	Number of teachers trained: Male= Female=	

### Section B: Classroom Observation Checklist

Name of observer	
Class/Grade	
Number of boy children	
Number of girl children	
Contact hour	
Average attendance Male= , Female:	
Class Teacher: Male= , Female:	
Training: attended/not attended	

Sl	Areas of classroom observation	Remarks
<b>1.</b>	<b>Class room environment</b>	
1.1	Safety, security and hygienic	
1.2	Availability of safe drinking water	
1.3	Classroom space and seating arrangement	

1.4	Class room display and decoration	
1.5	Cleanliness	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Teaching learning materials</b>	
2.1	Access to TLM	
2.2	Availability of TLMs	
2.3	Usable	
2.4	Thematic standard	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	
3.1	Accessible entrance to the classroom	
3.2	Mobility within the classroom	
3.3	Adequate light	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Performance</b>	
4.1	Attendance: Male= Female=	
4.2	Participation: Male= Female=	
4.3	Number of students awarded scholarship	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Teacher performance</b>	
5.1	Interaction with children	
5.2	Special attention to the SEN children	
5.3	Following teaching techniques	
5.4	Way of instruction	
5.5	Demonstration	
5.6	Supervision	
5.7	Question- answer	
5.8	Praise children	
5.9	Expression of affection	
5.10	Joyful learning	
5.11	Followed class routine	
5.12	Listening to children	

## Section C: School catchment area - access to pre-primary education

### Initiatives

1. How many students are enrolled in PPE?
2. Is the number of students in PPE in accordance with between PPE class and Class I in Primary section?
3. What are the reasons behind the in- accordance between pre-primary and primary (if any)?

### Section D: Questions

1. Is there any dedicated teacher for pre-primary session?
2. Is there only one session for pre-primary education in a day?
3. What kind of training the teacher received if she is trained on Pre-primary education?
4. Was the teacher trained on any training other than PPE?

### Section E: Questions

1. Is there any dedicated classroom for pre-primary section?
2. Is the pre-primary classroom also used for primary section?



## Annex 2.2: Focus group discussion guide

### Introduction

(One to two minutes) Greetings

Self, ICHD

Why are we here – purpose of our getting together

### About norms

(One to two minutes)

Everybody take part in the discussion – we would really like everyone's participation

One at a time

No right or wrong answer – don't think too much, tell us how you feel!

### Frank opinions

Permission of tape recorder, and taking photographs – Only use for research purpose

### The purpose and process of focus group discussions

(1 minute)

Easy, Normal and General discussion

Not an examination

Experience sharing

### About the participants

(2 minutes)

Participant introductions (one-on-one)

Name

### Warm up questions

(5 minutes)

Do you get any free time? What do you do in that time...any hobbies or interest?

### Discussion parameters

(45 minutes)

*Historical evolution*, expansion and results and impact of PPE and SLIP (especially in quantity and quality of coverage and access)

- a) Please let us know about your understanding on the initiatives related to Pre-primary Education and School level Improvement Plan (currently known as School Learning Improvement Plan) (SLIP) taken in primary schools, if you are aware about the implementation of SLIP and PPE in this` school.?

- b) How long these initiatives related to Pre-primary Education and SLIP are functional in primary schools?
- c) What are the specific roles of teachers, parents and SMC in PPE and SLIP? How you are involved in the implementation of PPE initiatives and SLIP?
- d) What benefits all concerned have received from these initiatives, if these are beneficial according to your opinion?
  - i) What tangible changes in the improvement of school infrastructure, facilities etc. occurred, if at all happened?
  - ii) What changes have occurred regarding the improvement of teachers' accountability, school attendance, motivation and use of teaching learning materials?
  - iii) What change(s) have been happened regarding the accessibility of children irrespective of gender, disability, ethnicity, and children from most vulnerable groups?
- e) What are the reasons behind low/no changes after introducing PPE and SLIP?
- f) What initiatives need to be taken to obtain better results from the PPE and SLIP?
- g) Who needs to play what role to obtain better results from the PPE and SLIP?
- h) Whether SLIP and the DPE can support each other and how, if possible in your opinion.

### ***Wrap-up***

Do you have anything else to say on the subject that we have discussed but you were not able to say earlier?

## **Annex 2.3: In-depth interview guide for key informants**

Key informants: Policy and decision makers, civil society members, academics and researchers

Relevance of PPE and the expected outcome and impact envisaged in PEDP II and PEDP III; statements of goals, objectives, strategies and results as well as strategies to achieve related EFA goals.

1. In your opinion what was the relevance of introducing PPE in PEDP II and PEDP III in line with EFA Goal 2 (universal primary education), Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 6 (quality improvement)?
2. In your opinion what was the relevance of SLIP in PEDP II and PEDP- III in line with EFA Goal 2, Goal 5 and Goal 6
3. What are the outcomes of introducing PPE in PEDP II and PEDP III?
4. What are the outcomes of SLIP in PEDP II and PEDP III?
5. What is the impact of PPE in terms of contributing to achieving terminal competency in primary education?
6. What is the impact of SLIP in terms of contributing to achieving terminal competency in primary education?
7. What overall constraints has the government faced in implementing PPE in PEDP II?
8. What overall constraints has the government faced in implementing SLIP in PEDP II?

9. What are the common challenges in implementing and monitoring of PPE to achieve EFA goals 2, 5 and 6?
10. What are the common challenges in implementing and monitoring of SLIP to achieve EFA goals 2, 5 and 6?
11. What are the lessons learned from the implementation and monitoring of PPE in PEDP II?
12. What are the lessons learned from the implementation and monitoring of SLIP in PEDP II?
13. What are your concerns regarding enhancing quality in primary education?
14. What are your suggestions relating to the continuation and scaling-up of PPE in the short term up to 2015 and in the longer term in the post-2015 EFA agenda, in terms of improving the quality of primary education?

## Annex 3: Case studies of selected school Experiences in PPE and SLIP

### Case study 1: Joydevpur Government Primary School

Joydevpur Government Primary School was established in 1937 as a private school and later nationalized as a government primary school. The school is located under Ward 38 of Gazipur Sadar Upazila, in Gazipur District. As of 2013, the school had 630 children enrolled, with a male-female ratio of 47.6:52.4. The head teacher of the school claimed that the attendance rate of the school is not less than 95 per cent.

At the time of the school visit, the school had 10 teachers employed full-time, all female, with a student-teacher ratio of 63:1. The majority of the teachers have received subject-based training as well as pedagogy training and/or a diploma.

As in the case of many other government schools, Joydevpur Government Primary School introduced pre-primary education in 2010. One teacher of the school received the training on interim pre-primary package. A total of 55 students were enrolled in two pre-primary sections in 2013. Out of these 55 pre-primary students, 22 were male and 33 were female.

The school has a dedicated classroom for the PPE class. The PPE classroom was found to be well-decorated with drawings, teaching learning materials, education materials, aids and appliances. The PPE classroom environment was judged as being safe, secure and hygienic. The class teachers seemed to be very dedicated, sincere and committed to their job and their related roles and responsibilities. The teaching method and practices followed by the teacher appeared to be attractive to children. Adequate teaching-learning materials were found in the classroom. The classroom was also found to be accessible. The overall attendance rate of students in the pre-primary class was satisfactory. The close proximity of the school to residences, the bright and cheerful appearance of the classroom, and attractive educational materials were also incentives to students not to miss school. The PPE students attend classes in two shifts. A podium had been built in the classroom, using SLIP funds, to build children's confidence during recitation, reading and storytelling time.

Parents expressed their satisfaction regarding the overall performance of their wards as a result of the teacher's enthusiasm, and the teaching-learning methods used by the teacher. Parents claimed that the students attending PPE classes learned social and personal skills and got along

well with their peers. The parents were found to be motivated to send their children to the PPE class. Teachers at the school claimed that students were more interested in attending school after participating in PPE classes.

The teachers and SMC members of the school were found to be aware of the importance of PPE and SLIP initiatives under PEDP II and PEDP III. The school authority utilized the SLIP funds for the improvement of the school after developing a plan as per the related guidelines. The head teacher, with the support of the SMC, raised a substantial fund for the overall improvement of the school. They also received a fund of approximately BDT700,000 (USD90,000) from the local government level, which was used for infrastructure development and learning materials. Head teachers and SMC members felt the need for on-the-job training of teachers, and regular follow-up and monitoring of teachers to improve quality in both pre-primary and primary education.

SMC members felt the need for community participation for better performance of the school, including the PPE class, and more accountability of teachers to the students, their parents and to the District Education Office and the DPE. The head teacher claimed that the school needs more teachers in order to foster the educational needs of children with diverse backgrounds and needs.

## **Case study 2: BRAC Pre-Primary Centre, Duaripara, Pallabi, Mirpur**

The BRAC Pre-primary Centre is located in a slum of Duaripara, in Ward 92 of Dhaka. The centre began implementing a PPE programme at the beginning of 2013, as a non-formal centre. In 2013, the centre had 60 children enrolled, with a male-female ratio of 40:60.

The centre offers classes in two shifts. Only one teacher is responsible for each PPE shift, under the close supervision of field supervisors and managers. The teachers and supervisors had received PPE training as well as other pedagogic training and orientation about development issues, disaster management and gender relations. The teacher of one shift claimed that the attendance rate of the PPE education programme is more than 98 per cent.

The PPE classroom was found to be well-decorated and colourful, with drawings, teaching-learning materials, education materials, aids and appliances. The classroom environment was found to be safe, secure and hygienic, with an accessible entrance. Adequate teaching-learning materials were found in the classroom. The relationship between teacher and students was warm and friendly. The overall attendance rate of students in the pre-primary class was found to be satisfactory, presumably due to the child-friendly teaching method followed by the teacher, as well as the close proximity of the school from residences, adequate light and ventilation inside the classroom and the availability of attractive educational materials in the classroom. The class teachers seemed to be dedicated, sincere and committed to the job and to the related roles and responsibilities. The children appeared to enjoy their time in the class and the opportunity to engage in activities with peers.

The overall performance of the children was judged as being good, presumably due to the enthusiasm of the teachers, use of relevant teaching-learning methods, a joyful environment and a desirable ratio of teacher to students. The students expressed their interest in continuing on to primary school after completion of PPE classes. The teachers claimed that about 96 per cent of the students later enrolled in the nearby GPS after completion the PPE programme of BRAC, with the support of the teachers and BRAC field staff. Parents claimed that the students who completed or attended PPE classes learned social skills and personal skills that helped them to interact well with other children and with adults. The parents were found to be motivated to send their children to the PPE class.

The teachers and supervisors of the BRAC PPE programme were found to be aware of the importance of PPE initiatives in PEDP II and PEDP III. The supervisors thought more on-the-job training of teachers and regular follow-up and monitoring of teachers was necessary to improve pre-primary education outcomes.

### **Case study 3: Shahid Shritee Government Primary School in Tongi**

Shahid Shritee Government Primary School was established in 1972. The school is located in the Tongi industrial area under Ward 45 of Tongi in Gazipur district. In 2013, the school had 701 children enrolled, with a boy-girl ratio of 44.5:55.5. The head teacher of the school claimed that the attendance rate of the school was not less than 98 per cent.

At the time of the visit, the school had 12 teachers, of which two were male and the remainder were female. A majority of the teachers had received subject-based training as well as pedagogic training and/or a diploma. The teachers were all working full-time. The overall student-teacher ratio was 58 students to each teacher.

The school introduced pre-primary education in 2010. One teacher of the school received training on the interim pre-primary package. A total of 36 students were enrolled in the pre-primary section in 2013. Out of these 36 pre-primary students, 16 were boys and 20 were girls.

The school offers a dedicated space for the pre-primary classroom. The pre-primary classroom was spacious, colourful and decorated with children's drawings, teaching-learning materials, play materials and aids. The classroom is on the 1st floor of the building, so is not accessible to children with disabilities as stairs are the only means of getting to the classroom. The classroom had enough light and cross ventilation with adequate teaching-learning materials and toys. Many of the play materials were made of clay and it was encouraging and noteworthy to see that the students of senior grades participated in producing these materials.

The overall attendance rate of students in the pre-primary class was good, thanks presumably to child-focused teaching methods, a child-friendly environment and good availability to children of play materials. The class teacher seemed to have a friendly and easy rapport with children. She looked very confident and used different teaching-materials to teach in the classroom. There was a big playground in front of the main school building, which was used for outdoor play and games by pre-primary children.

Parents were happy with the overall performance of their children and about the school's effort in supporting their children's development and preparing them for grade 1. Parents said that their children attending pre-primary classes could write and read two-words sentences, and had learned social and personal skills.

The head teacher, teachers and SMC members of the school were found to be aware of the importance of PPE and SLIP initiatives. The school authority utilized SLIP funds for purchasing teaching-learning materials like alphabet charts, display boards, plastic alphabet letters, scales, dresses, a hand-held microphone and filters for safe drinking water etc. for the pre-primary class and primary classes.

The head teacher said that, with support from the SMC, he had raised a significant amount of funds for the overall improvement of school. A community leader who was a member of the SMC, expressed strong support for the pre-primary class. He said that in the previous year he had provided funds for a support teacher to assist the class teacher of the pre-primary class. In addition,

the school received funding of approximately BDT250,000 (USD32,000) for school development from the local government.

The head teachers and SMC members felt the need for better toilet and safe drinking water facilities for ensuring a hygienic environment in the school.

## Case study 4: Mariali Government Primary School in Gazipur

Mariali Government Primary School was established in 1967. The school is located in Ward 26 of Gazipur Sadar Upazila, in Gazipur District. In 2013 the school had 444 children enrolled, with a boy-girl ratio of 41.2:58.8. The head teacher of the school reported that eight students had received government scholarship during the previous five years.

The school had eight teachers, all female, working full-time, and a student-teacher ratio of 55:1. The majority of the teachers had received subject-based training and pedagogy training and/or a teaching diploma.

As in other government schools, Mariali Government Primary School introduced pre-primary education in 2010. As of 2013 there was one pre-primary class for the 43 students taught by one teacher, though two teachers received training on interim pre-primary package. A total of 43 students were enrolled in the pre-primary section in 2013. Of them, 19 were boys and 24 were girls.

This government primary school was the beneficiary of a “Thai Princess Project” support and received BDT15 million (USD190,000) for school development. The head teacher, along with five government officials, visited primary schools in Thailand as part of their training programme. The head teacher was also given a computer that she made regular use of for official communication and correspondence. With Thai assistance, the SMC built nine toilets within the compound, with modern facilities and piped water as well as a water storage tank.

The school has a dedicated classroom for the pre-primary class. The pre-primary classroom was spacious with an accessible entrance. The environment was found safe, secure and hygienic. Adequate teaching-learning materials were found in the classroom, but the classroom display and decoration was not quite satisfactory, with materials scattered in a disorderly way. . The seating arrangement in the classroom was such that boys and girls were separated and were sitting on separate sides of the room face to face. It was explained that this seating arrangement was due to parents’ and community demands.

It seemed teachers and students had very close and friendly relationship. The overall attendance rate of students in pre-primary class was satisfactory due to a joyful teaching-learning environment and free play time in pre-primary classes.

The head teacher reported they had received BDT28,613 (USD350) from SLIP initiative and had purchased a speaker podium, and display, notice and pushpin boards as well as outdoor play materials. They also bought consumable items such as toilet cleaning materials, equipment and tools for the garden, tool boxes, and pen drives for computers. For annual cultural and sports competition events, prizes were contributed by the community. The local community also donated three electric fans for the teacher’s room.

Head teachers and SMC members felt the need for professional training of teachers, including for those conducting the pre-primary class. They also sought greater involvement of community people in a meaningful manner for overall improvement of the school.

## Case study 5: Kitingchor Government Primary School in Manikgonj district

Kitingchor Government Primary School was established in 1939. The school is located under Joymontop Union of Singair Upazila, in Manikgonj District. As of 2013, the school had 452 children enrolled, with a male-female ratio of 52.2:47.7. Thus, at the time of the visit, this school had significantly more boys than girls. Six students had received scholarships in the previous three years, indicating good performance of the school.

At the time of the visit, the school had seven teachers, all female, employed full-time. This indicates a student-teacher ratio of 65:1. Most of the teachers had received subject-based training as well as pedagogic training and/or a diploma.

As with other government schools, Kitingchor Government primary school introduced pre-primary education in 2010. Two teachers of the school received the training on interim pre-primary package. In 2013 a total of 30 students were enrolled in the pre-primary section. Of them, 14 were boys and 16 were girls.

Though the number of pre-primary class students was reasonable, the class room was very congested and crowded. The research team observed that the classroom lacked sufficient light, had inadequate teaching-learning materials, and had unsatisfactory display and decoration. Overall, the attendance rate of students in pre-primary class was not satisfactory, perhaps due to the lack of an appropriate learning environment. Although two teachers had received interim package training, this was not reflected in the pre-primary class activities.

The school authority had received BDT28,350 from the SLIP fund and purchased a monitoring board and benches for grade 5, and a pin board for primary grade classrooms. They used the pre-school grant of 5,000 to purchase a floor mat, pencils, coloured pencils, rubbers, sharpeners, plastic toys (animals and alphabets) and balls for the pre-primary class. .

Parents expressed that they wanted a more spacious classroom for PPE and an overall improvement in the infrastructure of the school. SMC members felt the need of community participation for better performance of the school including PPE class. More accountability of teachers to the students, their parents and to the District Education Office and the DPE was considered necessary.

The head teacher and SMC members felt the need for fundraising in the community. They also talked about creating a *zakat* (religious charity) fund for the overall improvement of the school. The research team felt that strong supervision and on-the-job training of teachers, as well as regular follow-up and monitoring of teachers was needed to improve the quality in both pre-primary and primary education at this school.



## Annex 4: List of the schools visited

1. Jighatola Government Model Primary School, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209
2. Visited on 22 August 2013
3. Bholā Primary Government School, Badda, Dhaka-1212
4. Visited on 24 August 2013
5. BRAC Laghālia pre-primary class in Laghālia Amiruddin Government Primary School (01)
6. Visited on 26 August 2013
7. BRAC Pre-primary class attached to East Chandena Pre-primary School (02)
8. Visited on 26 August 2013
9. BRAC Jogitola Pre-primary community-based school (03)
10. Visited on 26 August 2013
11. Shahid Shreeti Government Primary School, 45 City Corporation, Tongi Thana, Gazipur
12. Visited on 27 August 2013
13. Pagar Government Primary School, 43 City Corporation, Tongi Thana, Gazipur
14. Visited on 27 August 2013
15. BRAC Pre-primary school, Lalmat, Mirpur (04)
16. Visited on 29 August 2013
17. BRAC Pre-primary school, Duaripara, Mirpur (05)
18. Visited on 29 August 2013
19. Kitingchor Government Primary School, Joymontop, Singair, Manikgonj
20. Visited on 31 August 2013
21. Joymontop Government Primary School, Joymontop, Singair, Manikgonj
22. Visited on 31 August 2013
23. Vakum Joymontop Government Primary School, Joymontop, Singair, Manikgonj
24. Visited on 31 August 2013
25. Joydebpur Government Primary School, Gazipur Sadar, Gazipur
26. Visited on 2 September 2013
27. Mariali Government Primary School, Gazipur Sadar, Gazipur
28. Visited on 2 September 2013
29. West Joydebpur Government Primary School, Gazipur Sadar, Gazipur
30. Visited on 2 September 2013

## Annex 5: List of key informants interviewed

1. Mr M. Tariq Ahsan, Associate Professor, Institute of Education and Research, Dhaka University
2. Dr Safiqul Islam, Director, BRAC Education Programme, BRAC
3. Mr Humayun Kabir, Deputy Director, Planning and Development, Directorate of Primary Education
4. Mr Golam Mohammad Yahiya, Deputy Director, PEDP III, Directorate of Primary Education

## Annex 6: Photo gallery



Discussion with Mr Golam Mohammad Yahiya – DPE



Planning meeting of the research team



Discussion with Mr Humayun Kabir – DPE



Discussion with Dr Safiqul Islam – DPE



Discussion with Mr M. Tariq Ahsan – Institute of Education and Research, Dhaka University



Field research team

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**UNESCO Bangkok Office**  
**Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education**

Mom Luang Pin Malakul Centenary Building  
920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong, Klongtoey  
Bangkok 10110, Thailand  
Email: [appeal.bgk@unesco.org](mailto:appeal.bgk@unesco.org)  
Website: [www.unesco.org/bangkok](http://www.unesco.org/bangkok)  
Tel: +66-2-3910577 Fax: +66-2-3910866