

Roundtable
CAMPE/CREATE/GCE

**Right to Education:
Access with Equity and Quality –
The Big Picture in Bangladesh**

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Hotel Shonargaon, Dhaka
7 May 2011

Progress to build on

- Close to universal intake in primary
- Gender gap closed in primary and secondary enrolment
- Successful second chance NFPE pioneered and run on scale by NGOs
- National Education Policy 2010 adopted
- Political commitment expressed in vision 2021
- Substantial external assistance and cooperation commitment
- Civil society and NGOs effectively engaged – e.g., CAMPE, *Education Watch*, several NGOs with strong capacity and track record.

Major deficits in system outcomes

- Over 40 % dropout class 1-5 and 60 % dropout class 6 to SSC
- Basic reading, writing and math skills not achieved by majority of primary students
- At least a quarter of primary and secondary students “silently excluded.”
- Large inequalities in participation and learning outcomes based on geography, economic poverty, ethnicity/mother-language, special needs, type of school.
- Education system re-inforcing inequality – no longer a vehicle for social mobility.

Deficits in system operations

- **Age-in- grade gap – over a quarter are enrolled late by 2 years or more, who are low performers , repeaters, irregular in class, prone to dropout; mostly from poor families, with uneducated parents, suffering health/nutrition deficits and lacking in basic home conditions.**
- **Quantity deficits in teachers – 50% more primary and secondary teachers needed to ensure manageable class size and raise teaching hours to average international level;**
- **Quality deficits in teachers – not enough capable people in teaching, no pre-service teacher preparation; current in-service training makes little difference in classroom practices and student learning.**
- **Over-loaded curriculum, poor/scarce learning materials and teachers' guides, and exams encouraging memorization, failing to measure competencies.**
- **No financing formula aimed at input standards for different types of schools and students in them.**
- **Highly central planning/management with little authority/accountability at local/school level.**

Initiatives to address problems

- Cash for poor primary students, stipends for rural secondary girls.
- Free textbooks - all at primary and some at secondary
- Salary enhancement for non-govt. teachers; recruitment practices improved
- Learning assessment measures – primary completion *shomaponi*, “creative” tests
- More classrooms, teachers, teacher-training, supervision, curr. revision, teacher training reform, head teacher training, etc.
- Carried out under PEDP II, PEDP III in preparation and secondary education projects - with mixed results

Partial responses with partial results

Incremental changes within present centralized decision-making and implementation structure.

Poor targeting, management/corruption problems, not based on serious assessment of options, e.g., stipends

- **Not responsive and adapted enough to specific circumstances at school/community/student level and not intensive enough to make enough difference**
- **Not making enough use of the assets/strengths – e.g. NGOs NFPE, or coordinated/comprehensive planning and implementation at upazila with all providers/actors**
- **Primary Education SWAp partial – a centralized “mega-project” rather than a genuine program approach**
- **Per student investment cannot provide essential quality inputs.**

Education policy 2010 – opportunity to chart new course

Basic premise of Education Policy is ensuring rights and opportunities for all ending all inequalities in education – *Preface Policy 2010, Minister of Education*

- ***Free and compulsory primary education up to grade 8:***
- ***Pre-primary education:*** Preschool education for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- ***Multiple delivery modes with common core curriculum and standards.***
- ***Establishing a core of equivalency:*** Between public and NGO and private schools, formal and non-formal basic education, and between general schools and madrasa.

...**Key policy provisions**

- ***Student assessment to discourage rote learning:*** Assessment of learners' achievement through public examinations and continuous evaluation in various domains.
- ***Teachers' status, incentives and training to improve quality:*** centerpiece of quality assurance; a Teacher Recruitment and Development Commission.
- ***Governance and management:*** Major decentralisation to upazial/ district/institution with accountability and stakeholder involvement.
- ***Enhanced education resources:*** Public expenditure for education should increase from the present 2.27 percent of GDP.
- ***Inclusive education:*** Enabling all primary children to complete good quality basic education. Access will focus on girls, children with special needs, working children, those in difficult situations, and belonging to ethnic minorities and from remote areas.

Implementing the policy

Structural changes essential in education planning/management - moving to decentralization to districts, upazilas, and institutions.

- Upazila-wise planning for equity with quality in all types of institutions, with targets for UPE to grade 8 in a decade, ensuring core quality standards in all types of institutions
- ***Rigorous trial and piloting involving research, academic and NGO practitioners for this purpose.***
- A quantum leap in quality possible if ***NGOs with track records*** are made partners in government assisted primary/secondary schools – providing government funds for agreed results.
- ***Larger government support can be conditional on schools becoming accountable to parents/ communities.***

Implementing policy

Professional capacity-building in pedagogy, curriculum / learning materials, supervision and assessment of learning.

- **Unlike most countries, there is no pre-service teacher training in Bangladesh; limited technical capacity in curriculum and learning materials development, and capacity for research and trial in learning assessment.**
- **This professional deficit has to be recognised as a key problem and change begun in *human resource policy, planning and management* for the education system.**
- **Short-term and long-term measures needed to professionalise management and technical support of the education system. We need to get out of the “deputation” culture.**

Implementing policy

Financing of education for equity with quality –

- **Much larger resources for education; a minimum target is 5 percent of GDP in 5-7 years and 20 percent of budget in the shortest time.**
- **Applying a capitation formula – allocating resources with a formula counting number of children in each Upazila and overall economic and ecological situation of the upazila**
- **Use of public resources based on a coordinated and comprehensive plan for equity with quality for each upazila; budget planning and implementation have to be really bottom up.**
- **SFYP and Perspective Plan to be tool for policy action.**

....Implementing policy

Organisational/Institutional measures

Far-reaching changes in Education Policy cannot be achieved by *business as usual*. Three key steps:

- *A permanent statutory commission with technical capacity to guide & oversee progress in policy.*
- *Bringing all pre-university education under one Ministry for essential coordination, articulation and continuity.*
- *A Right to Education Law that specifies rights and obligations of all and supports a decentralised, participatory & accountable national education system with equity and quality for all.*



Thank
YOU