

BANGLADESH

EFA MDA NATIONAL REPORT 2001-2005

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Acronyms / Abbreviations

ADP	Annual Development Program
AE	Adult Education
ALR	Adult Literacy Rate
ASER	Age-Specific Enrolment Ratio
ATI	Agricultural Training Institution
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BEHTRUWC	Basic Education for Hard-to-Reach Urban Working Children
BNFE	Bureau of Non-Formal Education
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSA	Bangladesh Shishu Academy
BSCIC	Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
BU-IED	BRAC- Institute of Educational Development
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CBA	Center Based Approach
CBEP	Community Based ECCE program
CEC	Community ECCE Centers
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CLS	Child Labor Survey
CPEIMU	Compulsory Primary Education Monitoring Unit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
C-in-Ed	Certificate-in-Education
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DFA	Dakar Framework for Action
DNFE	Directorate of Non-Formal Education
DD	Deputy Director
DP	Development Partner
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education

DPT	Diphtheria Polio Tetanus Triple Vaccine
DSS	Department of Social Services
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECCED	Early Childhood Care Education and Development
ECDRC	Early Childhood Development Center
EFA	Education for All
ECNEC	Executive Committee of the National Economic Council
FICAE	Fifth International Conference on Adult Education
FSSP	Female Secondary Scholarship Program
FY	Financial Year
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GIR	Gross Intake Rate
GIS	Geographical Information System
GNP	Gross National Product
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GPS	Government Primary School
HAP	Harmonization Action Plan
HBP	Home-based ECCE Program
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HP	Health Professionals
ICDDR,B	International Center for Control of Diarrhoea Diseases and Research, Bangladesh
ICDP	Integrated Community Development Project
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
LGD	Local Government Division of the MOLGRDC
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LLP	Local Level Planning

IMED	Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division
MDA	Mid-Decade Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MIS	Management Information System
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MLE	Multi-Lingual Education
MoCHT	Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoI	Ministry of Industries
MoLGRDC	Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
MoYDS	Ministry of Youth Development and Sports
NA	National Assessment
NAPWA	National Action Plan for Women's Advancement
NCPE	National Committee on Primary Education
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NCWD	National Council for Women's Development
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NFEPF	NFE Policy Framework
NFoWD	National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled
NGO	Non Government Organization
NIR	Net Intake Rate
NPA	National Plan of Action
OECD	Organization for Economic Coordination and Development
ORT/S	Oral Rehydration Therapy/Salt
PE	Pre-primary Education
PEDP-II	Second Primary Education Development Program-II
PFA	Platform for Action
PKSP	Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation

PLCE	Post-Literacy and Continuing Education
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSQL	Primary Schools Quality Levels
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
PTI	Primary Training institutes
RHF	Recommended Home Fluid
RNGPS	Registered Non-Government Primary School
SBEP	School-based ECCE Program
SBK	Shishu Bikash Kendro
SESDP	Secondary Education Sector Development Plan
SESIP	Secondary Sector Improvement Project
SWAP	Sector-wise Approach Program
TAG	Technical Assistance Group
TLM	Total Literacy Movement
TPR	Teacher-Pupil Ratio
TQI-SEP	Teaching Quality Improvement Project in Secondary Education Project
TR	Transition Rate
TTC	Teachers Training Center
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPEP	Upazilla Primary Education Plan
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VTI	Vocational Training Institutes
WID	Women in Development
WIDFP	WID Focal Point

Foreword

The Mid-Decade Assessment, 2007, of the 6 Goals of Education for All in Bangladesh has been undertaken, on commission by the UNESCO, Dhaka Office, and UNICEF Bangladesh, by a team of consultants with Prof. Muhammad Sirajuddin as the Lead Consultant, who was responsible for making assessment of Goals 1 & 4, writing the Introductory Chapter on Bangladesh and editing the entire report to make it into one coherent whole. Nurul Islam Khan, UNICEF consultant, made assessment of Goals- 2& 6. Dr. Anwara Begum, UNICEF consultant, made assessment of Goal-3 and Prof. Mahbuba Nasreen PhD, UNICEF consultant, assessed Goal-5.

This Bangladesh EFA MDA, 2007 contains an Introduction to Bangladesh- the Land and the People, Language, History and Culture, Political and Administrative System, National Education System and its management and funding. The introduction on Bangladesh is followed by assessments of EFA Goal-1: Early Childhood Care and Education, EFA Goal-2: Achieving Universal Primary/ Basic Education, EFA Goal-3: Life Skills and Lifelong Learning, EFA Goal-4: Literacy, EFA Goal-5: Gender Parity and Equality, and EFA Goal-6: Quality Education.

The Assessments have followed the template as developed by Regional Technical Support Group (RTSG), for preparation of the Bangladesh Country Report on the six (6) EFA Goals and include all the policy/ system indicators, core indicators, and additional indicators.

The Assessments have used the RTSG template for data collection/compilation within the framework of the theme. To the extent that the RTSG template has been designed to support collection/ compilation of qualitative data, the present consultants have supplemented qualitative data sets with other relevant quantitative and qualitative data as well as qualitative information. The assessments have been based on the available data and on the basis of discussion with stakeholders, both from the government agencies and with the NGOs.

The Assessments have examined at length what the Government of Bangladesh had planned to do between 2001-2015 with regard to the EFA Goals in the National Plan of Action-II and what have been done during 2001-2005. The Assessments have also indicated the future course of action to be followed to ensure that the EFA Goals have been achieved by 2015.

The consultants will feel gratified if this Bangladesh EFA MDA, 2007 is found useful for education reforms, planning/ re-planning EFA Goal activities and re-charting the future course of EFA Goals activities for achievement of Dakar commitments.

The consultants deeply appreciate guidance and assistance provided by Mr. M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Secretary, Mr. A S Shameem Ahmed, Joint Secretary, Mr. F M M Jalaluddin Al-Quaderi Joint Secretary, Ms. Shamima Ahmed, Deputy Chief, Ms. Quamrun Naher Siddiqua, Senior Assistant Secretary, Ms. Qurratul Ayen Safdar, Senior Assistant Chief -all of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Government of Bangladesh, Dr. Malama Meleisea, Director and Representative, Mr. Hassan A. Keynan, Program Specialist, UNESCO, Dhaka Office, Mr. Nabendra Dahal, Chief Education Section, Mr. Hassan Ali Mohamed, Program Officer, and Mr. Shamim Ahmed, Program Officer, UNICEF, Bangladesh.

Prof. Muhammad Sirajuddin
Lead Consultant, Bangladesh EFA MDA, 2007

Glossary

Adult Literacy Rate (ALR): In Bangladesh a person is literate if he/ she has “the ability to read, understand, interpret, communicate and compute in verbal and written forms in varying contexts. It involves a continuum of learning that enables individuals to develop their potentials and knowledge-base and to participate fully in community affairs and wider social and developmental context”. ALR is defined as the percentage of the population aged 15years and above who can both read and write with understanding short simple statement related to everyday life.

Age-Specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER) is an indicator that measures the percentage of the population of a specific age who are enrolled, irrespective of the grade. It shows the extent of participation of a specific age cohort in educational activities.

Apparent (gross) Intake Rate (AIR) is the total number of new entrants in the first grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the official primary school entrance age.

Basic Education refers to a whole range of educational activities that take place in different settings and that aim to meet basic learning needs as defined in the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990). It thus comprises both formal schooling (primary and sometimes lower secondary) as well as a wide variety of non-formal and informal public and private educational activities offered to meet the defined basic learning needs of groups of people of all ages.

Basic Learning Needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning contents (such as the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning.

Buddhist Tol is a Center for religious education in Pali language, especially for Buddhists.

Child Friendly School (CFS) framework refers to five key dimensions of quality, namely, inclusiveness, effectiveness, safe/ protective/ healthy, gender friendliness, and involvement of community parents and students.

Class Size refers to number of students in a class.

Coefficient of Efficiency is a measure of the internal efficiency of an education system obtained by dividing the ideal number of pupil-years required for the output (graduates) of a pupil cohort to complete a level or cycle of education (e.g. the primary level) by the actual number of pupil-years spent by the output from the same pupil cohort. The reciprocal of the coefficient of efficiency is the input: output ratio.

Completion Rate refers to primary education cycle completion i.e. output or promote of grade-5 expressed as a percentage of input i.e. enrolment in grade-1.

Compulsory Education refers to the number of years of the age-span during which children and youth are legally obliged to attend school.

Disadvantaged Children refers to various groups of children who may suffer from disadvantages due to geographical location of habitat, age, sex, mother's education, ethnicity, language, income quintile, and disabilities.

Drop-out Rate refers to primary education cycle drop-out i.e. total number of students dropping-out from grade 1 through grade 5 expressed as percentage of enrolment of grade 1.

Ebtedayee refers to the level of madrasah system offering education equivalent to the primary level of general education. It offers both religious and general education instructions to Muslim students.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) means providing all the supports necessary for every child, within family and outside, to realize his/ her right to survival, to protection, to care and to education that will ensure optimal development from birth to age six.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs offer a structured and purposeful set of learning activities either in a formal institution (pre-school) or as part of a non-formal childcare program. ECO programs generally focus on children from three years of age and include organized learning activities that constitute not less than 30 per cent of the overall program of care. For the purposes of this Assessment, ECD programs involve children for at least two hours per day and 100 days in a year. This would include, for instance, all pre-school programs.

Educational Institution has as its sole or main purpose the provision of education. Such institutions are normally accredited, or sanctioned, by some public authority.

Educational Wastage is the incidence, in a country's education system, of dropout and repetition taken together.

English medium refers to an education system in Bangladesh that follows a ladder system, starting with child-centered Kindergarten (Montessori), moving to Standard, O and A levels (General Certificate of Secondary Education or GCSE), with English as the medium of instructions. O and A level examinations are conducted under supervision of the British Council in Dhaka.

Gender Development Index (GDI) refers to a composite index measuring achievement in the three basic dimensions, namely, a long and healthy life, knowledge, and decent standard of living.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total value of goods produced and services provided within a country during one year.

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is a composite index measuring gender inequality in three basic dimensions of empowerment, namely, economic participation and decision making, political participation and decision making, and power over economic resources.

Gender Parity Index refers to ratio of female to male rates.

Grade is a stage of instruction usually covered in one school year (January-December).

Graduate is a pupil or student who successfully completes a level of education, such as primary education, elementary education, etc.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is the total enrolment of pupils in a grade or cycle or level of education, regardless of age, expressed as percentage of the corresponding eligible official age-group population in a given school-year.

Gross Intake Rate refers to total number of new entrants in the first grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the official primary school-entrance age. The gross intake rate (GIR) reflects the general level of access to primary education.

Gross National Product (GNP) is the total value of goods produced and services provided by a country during one year, plus the net income from foreign investments (e.g. remittances by expatriate Bangladeshi).

Hindu Tol is a center for religious education in Sanskrit language, especially for Hindus.

Inclusive Education means that all students (disabled and non-disabled children and young people) in a school study together, regardless of their strength or weakness in any area and become part of the school community.

Infants with low birth weight refers to children born with a birth weight less than 2500 g. Low birth weight children suffer increased morbidity and mortality and have associated cognitive defects. Low birth weight is often a reflection of poor maternal health and nutrition which implies constants to maternal care and nurturing.

Internal Efficiency of education describes the optimal relationship between input (e.g. resources spent to keep one pupil in school for one year) and output (e.g. promotion of a pupil to the next grade). To an educational planner internal efficiency is an efficient activity in which an optimum output is obtained for a given minimum input.

Kindergarten refers to a system that follows a child centered approach to education (e.g. Montessori) in a nursery school.

Labor Force consists of employed plus unemployed people during a relevant reference period.

Literacy is the ability to read and write with understanding a simple statement related to one's daily life. It involves a continuum of reading and writing skills, and often includes also basic arithmetic skills (numeracy).

Literacy Rate is the number of literate adults expressed as a percentage of the total adult population, 15 years of age or older.

Mass Education in Bangladesh refers to non-formal education for the children, who are outside school system and illiterate youth and adults in basic literacy, simple numeracy and life skills.

Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) is the number of pupils in the official school age-group in a grade, cycle or level of education in a given school year expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population of eligible official age-group.

New Entrant is a pupil who enters primary education grade-1 for the first time.

Net Intake Rate (NIR) is the ratio of new entrants in the first grade of primary education who are of the official primary school- entrance age, to the total population of the same age expressed as a percentage.

Non-formal education refers to any organized and sustained educational activity that does not correspond exactly to the above definition of formal education. Non-formal education may take place both within and outside educational institutions, and may cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational programs to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life-skills, work-skills, and general culture. Non- formal education programs do not necessarily follow the 'ladder' system, may have varying duration, and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved.

Parenting Education means education of parents in parenting, that is, instructions that educates parents about requirements of early childhood care and education of their children.

Performance Indicator refers to a measure or gauge of the performance of a system or the implementation of a program. It describes the dynamics of a system using available data which constitute an important component of the management information system.

Pre-primary Education refers to programs at the initial stage of organized instruction, which are designed mainly to introduce groups of very young children, usually 3-5 years age-group, to a school-type environment, i.e. to provide a bridge between the home and the school. Such programs are variously referred to as infant education, nursery education, pre-school education, early childhood education, or early childhood care and education.

The official definition of ECCE is: *Early Childhood Care and Education means providing all supports necessary for every child, within family and outside, to realize his/her right to survival, to protection, to care, to education that will ensure optimal development from birth to age six.*

Primary Education (formal) refers to education, as determined by the Government, for the children of age group 6+ to 10+ years in grades 1 to 5 having prescribed national curriculum, textbook and school hours and the school year which begins in January and ends in December.

Primary School refers to school offering primary education to the age group 6 to 10 years in grades into 5, ranging for 5 years with new annual intake provision in grade 1 at age 6. There are three types of primary schools, namely Government Primary School, Registered Non-Government Primary Schools and Community Schools. In addition, there are Satellite Schools for the children of grades 1 and 2 in un-served and remote areas, which serve as the feeder schools to Primary schools. Government Primary Schools are fully financed by the Government and managed by the local School Management Committee (SMC), while Registered Non-Government Primary Schools receive only salary subvention at a maximum rate of 80% of the basic salary of government primary school teacher. Community Schools are also Non- Government institutions having a partial salary subvention to the teachers from Government. Satellite Schools are housed in rented houses in the villages, the teachers having a fixed honorarium from Government.

Promotion Rate is the percentage of pupils promoted to the next grade in the following school year. Some countries practice automatic promotion, meaning that all pupils are promoted, regardless of their scholastic achievement.

Pupil-Cohort is a group of pupils who enter the first grade of a level of education in the same school year and subsequently experience promotion, repetition, dropout each in his or her own way.

Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) is the average number of pupils per teacher in a grade or cycle or level of education in a given school-year. In calculating pupil teacher ratios, other educational personnel such as administrators and support staff are not taken into account.

Pupil Textbook Ratio (PBR) refers to the average number of textbooks available per pupil.

Pupil Year is a non-monetary measure of educational inputs or resources. One pupil year denotes the resources spent to maintain a pupil in school for one year.

Repetition Rate is the percentage of pupils/ students who enroll in the same grade/ year more than once to the number of pupils/ students enrolled in that grade/ year during the previous year.

Stunting is a measurement of whether a child has achieved his/ her potential for height growth. Deficits in height growth are usually an indication of multi-faceted deprivations. The process that leads to stunting is thought to occur pre-natally and post-natally during the first 2 or 3 years of life.

Survival Rate is the percentage of pupil cohort that enters together in the first grade of primary education and that reaches a given grade (e.g. Grade-5) or the final grade of an education cycle either with or without repeating a grade.

School-age Population: number of children in the officially defined primary school age-group, whether enrolled in school or not.

Transition Rate is the percentage of primary school graduates enrolled in grade-6 of Junior Secondary Education level.

Under-five Mortality Rate is the probability (expressed as a rate per 1000 live births) of a child born in specified year dying before reaching the age of five (5) if subject to current age-specific mortality rate.

Universal Primary Education (UPE) means full enrolment of all children in the primary school age-group, i.e. 100% net enrolment ratio.

Youth Unemployment Rate refers to the percentage of individuals aged 15 to 24 in the labor force who are unemployed.

BANGLADESH EFA MID-DECADE ASSESSMENT, 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Country

Bangladesh is located in the north-eastern region of South Asia. The area of the country is 147,570 sq. km. The population of the country is 138.6 million, with 71 million males and 67.6 million females. The density of the population is 939 per sq. km.

The dominant faith-groups are Muslims (89.7 percent). Other faith-groups are Hindus (9.2 percent), Buddhist (0.7 percent), Christian (0.3 percent) and others (0.2 percent). The ethnic minorities constitute 1.01 percent of the total population.

Bangla is the mother language of majority population. It is the official language of the state. The second important language is English. Ethnic minorities speak about 47 languages. The medium of instruction is in Bangla. English medium schools use English and Bangla, madrasahs use Bangla and Arabic, and ethnic minority students follow multi language curriculum.

Bengalees are an ancient people, tracing history back to 1600 BC. In historical times, Bangladesh was ruled some times by dynasties from northern South Asia, and some times by independent rulers.

Bangladesh is a multi-party democratic polity. The form of government is unitary and parliamentary. The Prime Minister is the chief executive of the government. Administratively, the country is divided into six regions. Bangladesh has a three tier local government system.

Bangladesh is rated as a developing country (UNDP, HDR 2005). It has a growth rate of 6.5% in terms of Gross Domestic Product. The per capita GDP in Bangladesh is US\$ 456.

National Education System

Education system in the territory, now Bangladesh, was Guru-griha based, that is, pupils used to accept tutorship of teachers, mostly Brahmins, stay with teachers and learned education and life skills. During about 5th century BC, education was formalized into structured ladder system.

During the Medieval period (1200-1757), Bangladesh had a ladder system of education which was widely practiced. Though Persian was the official language, Bangla language was used as medium of instruction.

The British Raj (1757-1947) Europeanized education system with introduction of British system of education and establishment of educational institutions to meet the requirement of public servants of the colonial government as also common education with curriculum in English and Bangla. The present education system in Bangladesh is a continuation of the British Raj education system, with changes to suit the requirements of an independent sovereign country.

The stages of general education and duration of courses and official age-group of students are provided below:

Stages of General Education and Official Age of Student

Stage of General Education	Duration	Official Age
Early Childhood Education	1/ 2/ 3 years; no course duration	3-5 years
Primary Education Grades 1-5	5 year course	6-10 years
Junior Secondary Education Grades 6-8	3 year course	11-13 years
Secondary Education Grades 9-10	2 year course	14-15 years
Higher Secondary Education Grades 11-12	2 year course	16-17 years
Bachelor's Degree (General Education)	2/ 3/ 4 years	18-19/ 20/ 21 years
Master's Degree (General Education)	1/ 2 years	19/ 20-21/ 22 years
<i>Source: Education for All: National Plan of Action, GoB</i>		

In addition to above system of education, Bangladesh has introduced non-formal education programs to cater to the same learning needs as the schools to those children who cannot or do not get enrolled in primary schools, those who drop out from schools, the adolescents who relapse into illiteracy or those young and adult people who have never benefited from any schooling.

Management of Education

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and organizations attached to it manages primary and mass education that includes education related to ECCE, UPE, Literacy and partly Gender and Quality Education goals of EFA.

The Ministry of Education and organizations attached to it manages secondary, tertiary, and technical education, including faith-based education. EFA Goal-3 (Life Skills and Lifelong Learning), Goal-5 (Gender), and Goal-6 (Quality) come within the sphere of MoE responsibility.

In addition, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is involved in education related to gender and early childhood care and education. It has program for development of life skills for women. The Ministry of Youth Development and Sports manages programs related to EFA Goals 3 & 5. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare manages some programs related EFA Goal-1, that is ECCE. The Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs involved in managing some programs related to almost all goals that aim at education of the ethnic minorities.

Financing Education

Education in Bangladesh is basically state financed. Government leans on donors support for development of education. Between 15-20 percent of total public expenditure is spent on education. Per capita public expenditure on students in government primary schools is Tk. 1728 or US\$ 25.

The parents contribute between 59 and 71 percent of the education of their wards, and the single most item of this cost occur on account of coaching by private tutors- 43 percent of GPS students.

EFA Goal Targets

NPA-II (2001-2015) contains targets for EFA Goal-1: ECCE (formal and non-formal), Goal-2: UPE/ Basic Education, Goal-4: Literacy, and Goal-6: Quality Education (in part). Specific targets for Goal-3: Life Skills and Lifelong Learning, Goal-5: Gender Parity and Equality, and Goal-6: Quality Education have not been included. This suggests that the NPA-II has included activities and targets of EFA goals that are managed by the MoPME.

Early Childhood Care and Education

The population of the age-group 3-5 years has been estimated to be 11.02 million in 2005. The target for coverage by 2005 has been set at 1 million under formal ECCE and 1.04 million under non-formal ECCE.

As compared to the target the Gross Enrolment Rate under formal ECCE has been found to be 1.1 million or 11.4% of the ECCE age-group 3-5 years. This means that target under formal system is on track.

Achieving Universal Primary Education

The population of the formal primary education age-group 6-10 years has been found to be 17.32 million during 2001-2015. Out of this population, the Gross Intake Rate (GIR) during this period has been found to be 108.4% with GPI of 1.05. The Net Intake Rate (NIR) has been 94.7% with GPI of 1.03.

The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) has been found to be 93.7% with GPI of 1.05. The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) has been found to be 87.2% with GPI of 1.07.

The Repetition Rate has been found to be 11.2% with GPI of 0.95. The Survival Rate has been found to be 52.9% with GPI of 1.16.

Life Skills and Lifelong Learning

Under the Rules of Business the Ministry of Education manages technical and vocational education and training (TVET). But the Ministry of Overseas Employment, the Ministry of Youth Development and Sports, the Ministry of Industries, and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs are some other Ministries involved in TVET of some kind.

The target population of this goal is students of 8+ years for non-government institutions and 12+ years for government institutions. The NPA-II has not set any quantitative target for coverage under this goal. However, it aimed at establishing a knowledge-based and technologically-oriented competent society.

During 2001-2005, TVET institutions (2728 public and 2548 private) enrolled 241336 students (48267 public and 193069 private). The GPI has been 0.94.

Literacy

The literacy program under the NPA-II consists of (i) non-formal basic education for post-primary 11-14 years age-group, (ii) out-of-school adolescent and youth of 12-19 years age-group, (iii) young adults of 15-24 years age-group, (iv) adults of 25-45 years age-group, and (v) post-literacy and continuum education (1995) program's 30% of target population of 11.6 million.

The number of literacy/ non-formal education related programs is 16 implemented by the Bureau of Non-Formal Education under MoPME and some organizations of other Ministries.

During 2001-2005, the Adult Literacy Rate has reached 54.8% with 60.31% males and 48.9% females. The Gender Parity Index is 0.81. The Youth Literacy Rate (15-24 years) has been found to be 72.73% with 75.03% of males and 70.36% of females. The Literacy Rate among the ethnic

minority varies between 91-92%. The number of completers/ learners in literacy programs has been estimated to be 4.5 million. Public expenditure on literacy is 3.7% of the Education Sector.

Gender Parity and Equality

Bangladesh has enjoyed success in achieving gender parity and gender gap is closing at an impressive pace. For example, the total number of female students in all types of institutions of primary education is 8134437 or 50.13% of all students.

Participation of female students at the national level has Gross Intake Rate of 111% as against 105.9% male students, with a Gender Parity Index 1.05. The Net Intake Rate is also impressive - 96.1% of females as against 93.3% males, having GPI of 1.03.

The Gross Enrolment Rate of female students at the national level has been found to be an impressive 96.2% as against enrolment of 91.2% of male students, with GPI of 1.05. Net Enrolment Rate of female students is 91.6% as compared to net enrolment of 87.1% of male students, having GPI of 1.05.

Survival Rate to Grade-5 of the primary education has been 53.9% with SR of females at 56.1% and SR of males at 51.7%, having a GPI of 1.09.

Transition Rate to secondary education is also in favor of achieving gender parity. For example, TR for female students is 86.6% as compared to TR for male students at 80%, having a GPI of 1.08.

Enrolment of female students in Technical and Vocational institutions is much lower than that of male students. In Polytechnic Institutions enrolment of female students is 14.32% and that in Vocational Training Institutions is 10.36%.

Quality Education

The NPA-II has envisaged that all primary level institutions, formal and non-formal, would offer standardized and quality basic education to provide a strong foundation to the pupils so that they can face challenges in higher education.

Core indicators regarding quality of education show the following:

- Survival Rate from grade-5 to secondary level is 53.9% (boys 51.7% and girls 56.1%).
- Required academic qualifications for female teachers is SSC and that for male teachers is HSC; but a large number of teachers have higher academic qualifications.
- Attain average 72% of teachers in GPS and RNGPS hold certificates in education.
- The Pupil-Teacher Ratio is 54:1.
- The Pupil-Class Ratio varies between 40 and 100 pupils per class.
- Drinking water available in 90% GPS and 89% in RNGPS.
- 37% of GPS have separate toilets for girls.
- 40% of pupils have mastered nationally defined basic learning competencies.

BANGLADESH EFA MID-DECADE ASSESSMENT, 2007

AN INTRODUCTION TO BANGLADESH

- Professor Muhammad Sirajuddin

1.0 Introduction

This Mid-Decade Assessment of EFA Goals in Bangladesh during 2001-05 is part of the process to continually monitor the progress and gaps in achieving the EFA Goals. It seeks to find out what had been intended to be done during 2001-2005 under EFA 2001-2015, what have really been done, under the six (6) EFA Goals during the period under assessment, what did go wrong, if any, and what are needed to be done to ensure achievement of the goals, as planned?

The Assessment has followed the template as developed by Regional Technical Support Group (RTSG), for preparation of the Bangladesh Country Report on the six (6) EFA Goals and include all the policy/ system indicators, core indicators, and additional indicators.

The MDA has used the RTSG template for data collection/ compilation within the framework of the theme. To the extent that the RTSG template has been designed to support collection/ compilation of qualitative data, the present consultants have supplemented qualitative data sets with other relevant quantitative and qualitative data as well as qualitative information.

The MDA Report is in six sections, containing introduction to Bangladesh- the country, the people, brief history of the country, evolution of education system, its structure and management, etc. The Report also discusses in brief the EFA gains in terms of the six EFA Goals up to 2000. It enumerates the targets set with reference to the six goals including the process of target-setting. The Assessment then investigates into what have been achieved with regard to the targets set and the process through which the stakeholders acted. The Assessment examines at length what has gone wrong, and why. Finally, the Assessment contains a set of recommended actions for remodeling/ re-deigning the National Action Plan-II for achieving the six EFA Goal (2001-2015) targets.

2.0 Bangladesh: The Land and the People

Land

Bangladesh lies in the north-eastern part of South Asia between 20°34' and 26°38' north latitude, and 88°01' and 92°41' east longitude. The country is bounded on the west, north and north-east by India and on the south-east by Myanmar. The Bay of Bengal is on the south. The area of the country is 147,570 sq. km. It is a riverine country. Three great rivers- the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, and the Meghna - and their 230 tributaries with a total length of 24140 km flow down to the sea through Bangladesh, thus making the deltaic plane a fertile land mass. The total land, excluding river and forest, is about 116,252 sq. km. The Sundarbans, a UNESCO Heritage Site, is a mangrove forest lying on the south/ south-west Bangladesh, and is rich in flora and fauna. The Royal Bengal Tiger and the Spotted Deer are the two big attractions of the Sundarbans. (Statistical Pocket Book, BBS, 2005).

Rice is the dominant cereal crop and the main staple food. Rice is grown in three seasons- Aus (monsoons), Amon (autumn) and Boro (winter). Other cereal crops are wheat, corn, and barley. Jute, tea, sugar-cane, potato are major cash crops.

Location of Bangladesh



People

The people of Bangladesh constitute a homogenous group and have common traits and life style with people of northern areas of South Asia (Pakistan, and India).

The population of the country is estimated to be 138.6 million, with 71.0 million males and 67.6 million females. The Gender Parity Index is 0.95. The density of population is 939 per sq. km, the highest after the city- state of Singapore. The urban population is 33.6% and the rural population is 66.41%. The annual growth rate of population has been 1.42% (BBS, Statistical Year Book, 2006).

Muslims constitute 89.70 percent of the population; the rest 10.30 percent are composed of Hindus (9.20 %), Buddhists (0.70 %), Christians (0.30%) and others (0.20%). The ethnic minorities constitute 1.41 million (1.01%) of the total population. The ethnic people belong to all religious faiths plus animism. Disabled people are 605855 (0.47%) of which the blind constitutes 126044 (17.4%), the deaf and dumb 131960 (20.7%), the crippled 199477 (32.93%), and the mentally retarded 148374 (24.5%).

Language

Bangla is the mother language of the dominant majority of the population, and is also the state language. Bangla language evolved from Prakrit language which again was an off-shoot of Sanskrit language. Bangla is also the dominant language of West Bengal and Tripura states of India. It is one of the major languages used in Meghalaya and Assam states and Andaman Islands of India. Bangla is a very rich language, and poet Rabindra Nath Tagore won Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his Bangla poetic work, Gitanjali.

It is pertinent to mention here that the UNESCO has paid tribute to the sacrifice of martyrs for Bangla language movement of 1952, by way of proclaiming 21 February the Mother Language Martyrs Day, as “International Mother Language Day” to be observed every year in all the UN member states and at UNESCO Head Quarters.

Other languages/ dialects of Bangladesh are Chakma (population = 0.25 million), Marma (= 0.03 million), Saontal (= 0.04 million), Garo (= 0.01 million), Khasia (= 13412), Tripura (= 0.8 million), etc. Chakma, Marma, Garo and Khasia dialects have scripts which have been revived in recent times for use as medium of instructions for ethnic minority students at ECCE/ primary level students.

English is used widely in Bangladesh; it can be stated to be a second national language. Urdu is also spoken by a small minority; but widely understood.

History and Culture

Bangladesh is part of South Asia, historically, socially, and culturally. The land was originally inhabited by a mix of ethnic people of Proto-Australoid/ Mongoloid/ Austric origin; but throughout history immigrants came from all directions to this land of bounty. The dominant groups that invaded Bangladesh by land routes are the Greeks, Romans, Turks, Arabs, Persians, Central Asians, Chinese, Cambodians, Thais, Burmese, etc. By sea routes came the Arabs, Dutch, Portuguese, French, and English.

In Ancient Times (1600 BC- 1200 AD), Bangladesh was sometimes part of a dominant central government from the west (notably from Delhi/ Allahabad/ Patna of India), and sometimes formed an independent country (eg. Pala: 750-1165/ Sena: 1095-1205 Empires). During the later part of this period, a homogenous Bangla speaking Bangalee population emerged.

In Medieval Times (1200-1757), the Muslims emerged as dominant rulers of South Asia. During this period, Bangladesh was ruled sometimes by the central government from Delhi by Turko-Afghan Sultans and Mughal Emperors, and sometimes by independent rulers of Bengal (=Vanga = East Bengal = Bangladesh).

The British East India Company wrested control of the government of this region from a local Nawab (ruler), and gradually conquered and took control of the whole of South Asia. The period from 1757 upto 1947 is considered to have been the Modern Age in South Asia.

At the end of British Raj in 1947, Bangladesh, then East Bengal, formed eastern wing of Pakistan, but could not stay long with Pakistan which virtually converted this territory into a colony. In 1971, Bangladesh emerged, through a War of Liberation, as an independent country.

Political System

Bangladesh is a multi-party democratic polity. It has a unicameral Parliament of 330 members, of whom 300 members are elected directly by the people on universal adult franchise basis, men and women. The rest 30 members are women only and are chosen by the majority members of the Parliament.

The form of Government is unitary and parliamentary. The Rashtrapati (President) is the Head of the State. He is elected every five years by the Jatiya Sansad (Parliament). He acts on advice by the Prime Minister who is the leader of majority members of Parliament. The PM is the chief executive officer of the government.

Bangladesh has a distinctive arrangement of having a Care-Taker Government on completion of a 5-year term of an elected government. The CTG, constituted by a retired Chief Justice and 10 neutral prominent citizens, carries on day to day work of the government and conducts election for formation of a next elected government to whom it hands over charges.

The Judiciary, headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, administers civil and criminal justice. It is independent of the executive branch of the government.

Public Administrative System

The Executive Branch of the Government of Bangladesh is constituted by Ministries headed by a Minister who is accountable to the Parliament through the Prime Minister. One Minister may hold charge of more than one Ministry. The Minister is assisted by a (permanent) Secretary to the Government. Under the Rules of Business, functions of each Ministry are described. As CEO, the PM coordinates activities of the government through a Cabinet Secretary and the PM's Secretariat.

The Secretary is a public servant, who is assisted down the ladder by Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Assistant Secretary. The Assistant Secretary is the basic officer who is recruited by competitive examination by the Public Service Commission, a constitutional body. Other posts up the ladder are filled-in on promotion basis.

The public administrative system in Bangladesh is featured by the presence of the Central Government down to the household level, meaning that normal administrative and development activities are conducted and services provided by the Central Government through its own functionaries and local government representatives.

At the Division level, the chief executive officer is the Commissioner. He is a public servant and the agent of the Central Government for co-ordination of development activities, collection of revenue and maintenance of good order. He collects land revenue for the central government through Deputy Commissioners in their capacity as District Revenue Collectors.

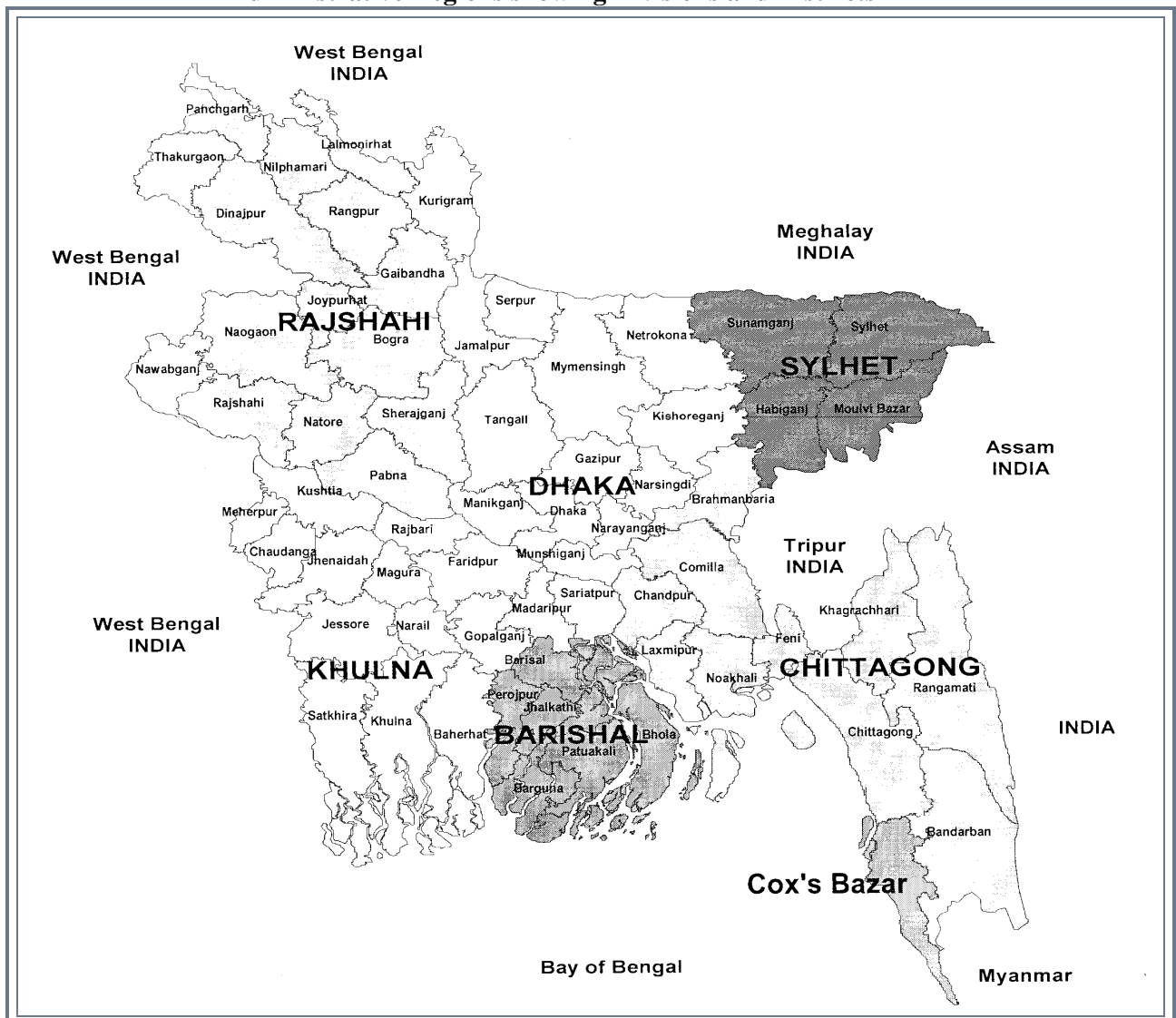
The Deputy Commissioner, a public servant, is the virtual agent of the Central Government within the territory of a District. For maintenance of law and order, he functions as District Magistrate with limited judicial powers, even though the chief judicial officer for both civil and criminal justice in a district is the District and Sessions Judge. In this respect, the police assists the District Magistrate and the District and Sessions Judge. The Deputy Commissioner also co-ordinates all inter-sectoral development activities within the district.

The District is geographically sub-divided into sub-districts, presently known as Upazilla for administrative purposes. The head of the Upazilla is the Upazilla Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO), a public servant, who is the agent of the Central Government for the purpose of maintenance of good order, collection of land revenue, and co-ordination of all inter-sectoral development activities. The Officer-in-Charge of the Police Station within the upazilla assists the UNO in matters of maintenance of good order.

It may be noted that at Division, District and Upazilla (sub-district) levels, the central government has representatives of inter-sectoral development departments/agencies, including education, responsible for implementation, linear supervision, and co-ordination of socio-economic development projects under various sectoral programs.

There is no administrative unit below Upazilla/ Thana level, even though an Upazilla is demarcated into local government units known as Union Parishad and are managed by elected representatives. However, some Upazilla level offices of some government agencies (eg. Family Health Assistant) have outfits down to the union/ village level.

Administrative Regions showing Divisions and Districts



Local Government

There is a three-tier local government system in Bangladesh. The bottom-tier consisting of a few villages of 25000± population forms the Union Parishad. The President and the members are elected by the people on the basis of universal adult franchise. One-third members of the Union Parishad are females elected from seats reserved for women on female-quota basis; but females may also get elected direct from the general quota, as a citizen- male or female- on universal adult franchise basis. This means that females have a unique advantage to get elected as a general member and as a member reserved for women- only.

The next higher-tier in the local government system is the Upazilla Parishad, which also is an elected body. However, representatives of government departments/ agencies sit in the Upazilla Parishad as non-voting, facilitating members. (It may be noted that, because of special circumstances, the Upazilla Parishad presently stands suspended, and is administered by the chief officer at the Upazilla level i.e. the Upazilla Nirbahi officer.)

The Zilla Parishad is the apex body of elected representatives at the district level with representatives of the government departments and agencies. The head of the Zilla Parishad is the Chairman. (However, it may be noted that the Zilla Parishad presently stands suspended, and is administered by the chief officer at the Zilla level i.e. the Deputy Commissioner.)

The Economy

The economic structure of Bangladesh is such that Services Sector has emerged as the dominant sector. During 2006-07, it contributed 49.12% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), followed by industry (29.77%) and agriculture (21.17%). The annual growth rate of the economy during the same period has been estimated to be 6.51% at constant price of 1995-96. The per capita GDP is US\$ 456 (at current market price of Bangladesh Taka 69 for a dollar). The per capita national income is estimated to be US\$ 482. Bangladesh is rated as a developing country.

Based on food energy intake (FEI) and using consumption based nutrition (CBN) method, it has been found that incidence of poverty at the Upper Poverty Line has declined from 48.9 percent in 2000 to 40 percent in 2005; and the same at the Lower Poverty Line level has declined from 33.7 percent in 2000 to 25.5 percent in 2005 (Source: Bangladesh Economic Review, 2006/ BBS, 2006).

Health and Social Services

Bangladesh has achieved considerable progress in health and social services sectors. Through good planning and efficient management, reproductive rate has been reduced substantially, which now stands at 1.48%. Crude Birth Rate per thousand population has been 20.9 in 2003 and Crude Death Rate per thousand population was 5.9 in the same year. Infant Mortality Rate per thousand live birth has been estimated at 53. Total Fertility Rate has been estimated at 2.57 per fertile woman. Contraceptive Prevalence Rate is 55.1%. Life expectancy at birth (1998) is 64.9 years. Women live a little longer (65.4 years) than men (64.3 years).

As regards health services, 4109 persons share one hospital bed (including dispensary). One registered physician is available 3866 patients. Usage of safe drinking water is wide spread (96.3%) among both urban and rural population and that of sanitary latrine is 52.6%. (Source: Bangladesh Economic Review, 2006)

An important micro nutrient, iodized salt is consumed by 84% of households in Bangladesh. (Source: BBS, MICS, 2006)

3.0 National Education System in Bangladesh

History

As a cultural entity, Bangladesh is part of South Asian culture. During the Vedic Age (1600 BC-500AD), access to education was limited strictly to the two highest castes in Vedic society- ruling oligarchy of Brahmins and Kshatriyas- of philosophers and generals, who interchanged their positions regularly. The Brahmin was theoretician of the Vedic society, cleric of religion, performer of all religious rites, teacher (Guru) of all rulers and the supporting governing business elites. The Kshatriya (fighter) was the ruler/ king and general. The Brahmin used to teach his pupils in the premises of his homestead, called Ashram/ Guru-Griha or Tol. Education meant teaching skills, which included language and literature, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, art of war, skills for production, and everything that one needs to be an elite in the society and to have a decent living. For the low castes, education was strictly prohibited; they were to serve the rulers. During this ancient period, Sanskrit was the imperial court language.

At a later stage, with Gautam Buddha's liberal teachings (c. 570-300 BC) education was liberalized by the Buddhist rulers, specially during the time of Asoka the Great, when under the guidance of Buddhist monks education was made available for the common people. During this period (500-300 BC), education was imparted through learning at the homestead and Buddhist Vihar or residential centers of worship and learning. The great university of Nalanda was attached to one of such Vihars of the period. Both Sanskrit and Pali were used as medium of instructions; but Pali was the lingua franca.

During the Medieval Period (1200-1757), Persian, the language of the new Muslim rulers in India (including Bangladesh) became official language, as also the medium of instructions. Education was made available to all people who could afford it. Scores of thousands of schools (Jamia Madrasah) were established by the Muslim rulers, and introduced a ladder system of education. The Muslim rulers also encouraged vernacular education in various regions relevant to the mother languages. As a matter of fact, Bangla as a language got a fillip from the patrons of the Hossian Shahi Dynasty.

The Muslim rulers patronized Hindu and Buddhist education through priests. In child education centers (Shishu Path Shala) learning was imparted in literacy, numeracy and religious education. Education was free for everybody. Higher education curriculum included among such subjects as religion, ethics, philosophy, jurisprudence, grammar, literature, sociology, etc. During Mughal rule, schools were established almost in every place. The official language and the medium of instructions was Persian, the court language.

Under the British Raj education was Europeanized. The British Indian government introduced the system of education similar to that of England; but kept the Indian systems of education in vogue. Thus, two systems of education were reconciled through establishment of Calcutta Madrasah (1781), Banares Sanskrit College (1789) and Fort William College (1800). Later on, the British took initiatives for running the government day today by a mixed system, British and Indian for higher education through creation of Department of Education in five provinces, including Bangla (1855) and establishment of Calcutta University, Bombay University and Madras University (1857). These initiatives were followed by stages in the form of enactment of law (eg. Primary

Education Act, 1919/1930), establishment of schools, colleges and educational institutions. The initiatives also included early primary education for children of 3-6 years age and adult education through, such as, Bengal Rural Reconstruction Movement (1938). By 1937 the number of primary schools was 192,244, secondary schools 13,056, colleges 271 and universities 15. The number of students was 10.2 million in primary schools, 2.29 million in secondary schools and 86,273 respectively in primary schools, secondary schools and colleges¹.

During Pakistan period (1947-71), the first initiative on education was taken in a National Conference on Education held under the initiative of the UNESCO (1947), when a recommendation was made to make primary education universal compulsory and free for children of age-group 6-11 years. In 1951, a decree was issued through government notification making primary education in 4 (four) grades for children of age-group 6-9 years, as it was before 1947. It was later on (1952) revised to consist of 5 (five) grades.

The first adult literacy program was introduced in 1953 through Village Agricultural and Industrial Development (V-AID). About this time mosque-based Literacy Program was introduced.

Post-Independence Period

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Article-17) obligates the Government to adopt effective measures for the purpose of:

- (a) establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law;
- (b) relating education to the needs of the society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs; and
- (c) removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law.

The GOB has taken a good number of measures, including taking over the management of private primary schools in 1973 under the Primary Education (Taking Over) Act, 1974. Later on, the program of Universal Primary Education (UPE) has been initiated and a separate Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) has been created (1981) with its administrative structure down to the Upazilla level. This action has been followed further through promulgation of Primary Education (Compulsory) Act, 1990 and creation of Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) in 1992, which provided administrative support to policies and programs for universalization of primary education (UPE) and removal of illiteracy.

The Government also created a Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit (CPEIMU) in November 1990, firstly, as an integral part of MOE and, later on, of PMED (now MOPME), to help monitor the implementation of CPE and also to carry on the Child Education and Literacy Survey biennially. CPE committees have been established at Ward, Union, Upazilla, and District levels for social mobilization in favor of primary education at grass root levels.

For the implementation and management of non-formal education (NFE), a separate Directorate of Non- Formal Education (DNFE) was established in 1995, which has now re-designated as the Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE).

¹ *Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin in Education in this Country: Which Way, as quoted in Management of Literacy and Continuum Education Programs, edited by: Rasheda K. Chowdhury and Prof. Shafi Ahmed, CAMPE, 2005.*

Education Structure in Bangladesh

The education system in Bangladesh is characterized by co-existence of three (3) separate streams of education, namely, (i) main stream, (ii) Madrasah or Islam biased stream, and (iii) English medium stream. The main stream is the vernacular based secular education system carried over from the British and Pakistani colonial past. Another stream is a separate religious system of education which is a legacy, and at the same time successor to education of the Muslim period and akin to Calcutta Alia Madrasah (1781). It emphasizes upon religious education in the context of modernity. Based on use of English as the medium of instruction, the third stream is modeled after the British General Certificate of Education. However diverse the three streams apparently may look, these have certain common elements, follow the ladder system, and graduates of one stream find scope for reintegration into other streams at different levels (Figure-1).

Figure-1: The Structure of Education in Bangladesh

Age year	Grade	Main Stream Education						English Medium Education	Madrasah Education						
25	XX	PhD/ Post Doctoral		PhD (Medical)	PhD (Engr.)	PhD (Agri.)	PhD in Technical Education	PhD	Post-Kamil Study						
24	XIX			Masters Degree in Medicine	MSc. (Engr.)	MSc. (Agri.)	Masters Degree in Technical Education								
23	XVII				M. Phil		M Phil								
22	XVII	1-year Masters Degree course in respective Bachelor courses		4-year Degree course in Medicine	4-year Degree: IBA/BSc . Engr. B D S BSc. Agri. BSc. Text. BSc. Leat.	BSc Engr	Degree courses in Technical Education/ Trade courses	1-year Masters Degree	Kamil						
21	XVI	3-year Bachelor Degree Course in Social Science, Law, Commerce, Pure Science, Technology, etc.								Diploma courses in education, Agriculture, Engineering, Glass & Ceramics, Textiles, Leather, etc.	3- year Degree course as in main stream	Fazil			
20	XV	Higher Secondary Education											TRADE Certificate	A' Level Cambridge	Alim
19	XIV	Higher Secondary Certificate Examination													
18	XIII	Secondary Education		JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION	Standard	Ebtedayee									
17	XII	Secondary School Certificate Examination					PRIMARY EDUCATION	KG							
16	XI	Secondary Education		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring									
15	X	Secondary School Certificate Examination					Standard	KG							
14	IX	JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION		PRIMARY EDUCATION	KG										
13	VIII	PRIMARY EDUCATION					PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring						
12	VII	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring									
11	VI	PRIMARY EDUCATION					PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring						
10	V	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring									
9	IV	PRIMARY EDUCATION					PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring						
8	III	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring									
7	II	PRIMARY EDUCATION					PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring						
6	I	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring									
5	-I	PRIMARY EDUCATION					PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring						
4	-II	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring									
3	-III	PRIMARY EDUCATION					PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION : ECCE	Nursery	Home tutoring						

Source: Muhammad Sirajuddin, based on Bangladesh Education Statistics, 2006, BANBEIS.

Main Stream Education System

The main stream education system (MSES) in Bangladesh is structured in a ladder of 6 (six) steps, namely, (i) early childhood education for children of 3-5 years age-group, (ii) five-year compulsory primary education for children of 6-10 years age-group, (iii) junior secondary education for children of age-group 11 class, (iv) secondary school certificate level for children of age-group 16+, (v) higher secondary level for students of age-group 18+, and (vi) post-graduate education of 2-4 years. Institutions available for MSES primary education are government primary schools (GPS), registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS), non-registered non-government primary schools (NRNGPS) and civil society/ community/ NGOs schools.

Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education for children of 3-5 years age-group is imparted, besides family, in one or two year pre-primary education institutions. This can happen in private nursery schools/ kindergartens/ “baby classes” or pre-primary sections attached to primary schools (government/ registered non-government/ non-registered non-government). The students of Qur’anic/ Maktab classes are also in this bracket.

Primary Education

Five-year compulsory primary education for the 6-10 year age-group is imparted mainly in government and non-government primary schools, registered and non-registered. In urban areas, particularly metropolitan cities, children from middle and lower strata of the income groups normally study in government and non-government primary schools, and children from higher middle and high income groups generally study in highly graded private/ missionary schools. Children of very rich and solvent families normally study in English medium schools but it may so happen that children for this upper stream may also study in highly graded private/ missionary schools. Unfortunately class distinction starts at this level.

There exists a good number of NGO run non-formal schools catering mainly for the drop- outs of the government and non-government primary schools. Some NGOs also impart education for the full 5-year primary education cycle for children from poor families. In case of drop-outs or lateral-entry students in NGO run schools, students can re-enter, through competency tests, government/ non-government primary schools at higher classes on completion of their primary education in 2-3 years’ time. NGO run schools differ from other non-government private schools, to the extent that private schools operate like private enterprises often guided by commercial interests, while NGO schools operate mainly in areas not served either by the non-formal, government or private schools. The basic objectives of the NGO run schools are essentially to meet the educational needs of vulnerable groups in the society. They usually follow an informal approach to suit the special needs of children from the vulnerable groups.

Junior Secondary Education

On completion of primary education, students (11+) enroll for junior secondary education that spans over 3 years from grades 6-8. At the end of this phase, students generally continue in the main stream in government and non-government secondary schools for a 2 year secondary education in their respective areas of specialization i.e. humanities, science, commerce, etc. At the end of their secondary education, the students sit for their first public examination (S.S.C.) under the supervision of six education boards in six regions.

Some students, however, branch out to join the vocational stream, offered at Vocational Training Institutes (VTI) and Technical Training Centers (TIC) run by the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Labour and Employment respectively. There are also institutions for technical education and other life skills in the private sector. Students studying in private sector technical/ vocational institutions can improve their educational qualification by enrolling themselves in higher level institutions.

The students of religious education and English medium streams also sit for their respective public examinations. Dakhil, and O level, conducted by the Madrasah Education Board, and General Certificate of Secondary Education of UK respectively, facilitated by the British Council in case of the latter.

Secondary/ Higher Secondary Education

After 10 years of schooling at primary and secondary levels, students (16+) who succeed in passing the Secondary School Certificate (S.S.C.) examination have the option of joining a college for a 2 year higher secondary education in their respective areas of specialization. After 2-years higher secondary education, a student has to sit for another public examination called Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) Examination conducted by the Education Boards to qualify for further education.

Some students prefer to enroll in technical/ poly technical institutes or private sector run technical education/ technical training centers in various life skills. Such student can appear in HSC examination as private student.

Students of Religious and English Medium streams also sit for their respective public examinations, Alim, and A' level, conducted by the Madrasah Education Board and GCSE of UK through British Council respectively to qualify for further education.

Tertiary Education

Under-graduate education of various duration (2 to 4 years) are offered to 18+ students in a number of public and private universities/ degree colleges/ technical colleges/ specialized institutions. Successful completion of a degree course is a pre-requisite for appointment to a white-collar job.

Post-graduate education, normally of 1-2 year duration, is provided at universities and selected degree colleges and institutions, both public and private throughout Bangladesh. However, higher education beyond master's level is pursued only in universities, both public and private.

Summary

Counting normal academic sessions, 16 years of regular study is supposed to be required from entry into the primary school to completion of Master degree for general education or Bachelor degree for professional education, except for medicine which requires one more year. Without repetition in any class or loss of any academic year due to any reason, a student male or female, taking admission to grade 1 of a primary school at the age of 6 should get his/her MA/ M.Sc. degree at 21/22 years of age. For the drop-out provisions exists for lateral entry into different grades on competency test basis. This provision has encouraged NGOs to run schools for students of different age-groups.

There is provision for students of English medium and Madrasah streams to get into main stream education grades/ courses on the basis of competency test.

The stages of general education and duration of courses and official age-group of students are provided in Table-1 below:

Table-1: Stages of General Education and Official Age of Student

Stage of General Education	Duration	Official Age
Early Childhood Education	1/ 2/ 3 years; no course duration	3-5 years
Primary Education Grades 1-5	5 year course	6-10 years
Junior Secondary Education Grades 6-8	3 year course	11-13 years
Secondary Education Grades 9-10	2 year course	14-15 years
Higher Secondary Education Grades 11-12	2 year course	16-17 years
Bachelor's Degree (General Education)	2/ 3/ 4 years	18-19/ 20/ 21 years
Master's Degree (General Education)	1/ 2 years	19/ 20-21/ 22 years
<i>Source: Education for All: National Plan of Action, GoB</i>		

Non-Formal Education

Education implies learning, irrespective of where and how the learning takes place. Education is also a life long process, assuming different forms, of which formal schooling is only one form. As distinct from hierarchically structured and chronologically graded formal education system, an accepted definition of Non- Formal Education is:

“That form of education which consists of mostly assortment of organized and semi-organized educational activities operating outside the regular structure and routines of formal system, aimed at serving a great variety of learning needs of different sub-groups of population, both young and old”. [Education for All: National Plan of Action, GOB, 1995]

It is recognized that some non-formal education programs cater to the same learning needs as the schools and could provide for alternative channels of education which cannot be covered by formal schooling. While the non-formal approaches have room for flexibility and innovation, their efficacy and wide acceptance is dependent on maintaining quality and standards. Those children who cannot or do not get enrolled in primary schools, those who drop out from schools, the adolescents who relapse into illiteracy or those young and adult people who have never benefited from any schooling, would perpetually remain in darkness unless some non-formal opportunities are opened up for their education. Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE), (now BNFE) took initiatives to design programs to cater to the needs of these segments of the population (e.g. Integrated Non-Formal Education Program) and engages NGOs on contract to impart basic education. Side by side, a good number of NGOs have taken up programs for basic education with donor grants (Source: DNFE records, 1998, and CAMPE Records, 1995).

Management of Education

Management of formal education in Bangladesh vests primarily with the two Ministries- the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and the Ministry of Education (MoE). The MoPME is responsible for pre-primary and primary education, whereas the MoE is responsible for

other sub-sectors/ activities. Besides, there are other Ministries in the government that are involved with education sector. For example, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, etc. are running educational institutions, mostly technical, and implementing investment/development programs/ projects related to such EFA Goals as ECCE, UPE, Life Skills and Life Long Learning, Literacy, and Gender.

Early Childhood Care and Education

Early Childhood Care is managed at home for the age-group 0-3 years by the family, and some times with assistance of government officials at the out-reach level. Early Childhood Education is managed in the public sector in baby classes/ pre-primary baby sections of primary schools managed by School Management Committees under supervision of local public servants. The Education Policy 2000 has recognized the need for Early Childhood Education, and accordingly, the NPA-II has targeted for gradual introduction of school based formal ECCE program under the management of government primary schools.

Considering the importance of ECCE, the NGOs have also undertaken programs managed by the sponsoring NGO and its outfit down to the out-reach level. However, Parenting Education and Multi-lingual Education are at present available only with NGOs.

Universal Primary Education

The constitution of Bangladesh has made management of Universal Primary Education a state responsibility. As a consequence, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) is the apex body for management of primary (and non-formal education) in Bangladesh. The MoPME is involved in formulation of policies, while the Directorate of Primary of Education (DPE) is responsible for implementation of development programs/ projects (e.g. Primary Education, Development Project-II). The DPE has outfits at division, district and upazilla level with Deputy Director (DD) at the division level, District Primary Education Officer at the district level and Assistant Upazilla Education Officer at the upazilla level. The DPE and its officers are responsible for management and supervision of primary education. The responsibilities includes management of personnel, including teachers, in-service training of officers and teachers, distribution of free text books and other reading materials, management of stipend, distribution of schools uniform and school tiffin, etc.

The responsibility of school construction, repair and supply of school furniture lies with the Facilities Department under the Ministry of Education and the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (LGRDC).

The National Curriculum and Text Book Board (NCTB) under the MoE is responsible for development of curriculum and production of text books.

CPEIMU, another MOPME agency, in addition to other functions, administers salary subvention to registered Non-Government Primary Schools RNGPS and honorarium to teachers of Community Schools.

Non-Formal Education

Non-Formal Education in the public sector, specifically administration of NFE, is the responsibility of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) which is a successor organization of the Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). The change of status indicates that a full government organization has become semi-autonomous and can work more independently. The BNFE has outfit in each district which supervises program activities awarded on contract to NGOs.

The BNFE draws its funds from and is accountable to the MoPME for its performance.

Secondary and Higher Education

The MoE is responsible for formulation of policies in respect of secondary, higher secondary, madrasah education, technical education and tertiary levels of education. At the secondary level, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) is responsible for implementation of policies, programs and projects of secondary and higher education sub-sector. The Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) is responsible for planning, development and implementation of technical and vocational education in the country. The Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Boards, the Madrasah Education Board and the Technical Education Boards conduct the SSC, HSC, madrasah education and technical education examinations respectively.

The NCTB develops curriculum and publishes standard text books.

Tertiary Education

The National University grants affiliation to tertiary level colleges and other educational institutions, except public and private universities. It also develops curriculum, conducts examinations at Bachelor and Masters Levels and awards degrees/ diplomas.

Universities of Bangladesh are autonomous bodies administered by respective statutory bodies (Syndicate, Senate, Academic Council, etc.) in accordance with provisions of legal instruments in respect of each university.

The University Grants Commission allocates government grants and supervises performances of the universities.

Financing Education in Bangladesh

Education in Bangladesh is basically state financed. Government allocations to the education sector are made from the Revenue (recurring) and Development (one time/ investment) Budgets. The sources of fund are government's own and external aid from development partners. External assistance can be in the form of loan and grant in Taka (Bangladesh currency), cash foreign exchange, Project Aid, etc.

During the Financial Year 2005-06, education sector's expenditure from Development Budget was 14.18% of all sectors. (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2006)

The cost of expenditure on account of government primary schools (100%) and registered non-government primary school teachers (90%) are borne by the government. Besides, non-registered non-government primary schools receive grants from the government.

The government also provides grants for construction and maintenance of non-government school buildings, subvention towards salary, house rents and medical allowances of teachers, training of teachers, stipend to students, special stipend to poor female students, costs towards uniform of poor students, educational materials, etc. The government has special funds to meet special needs of disadvantaged students through such programs as Food for Education/ Cash for Education.

Analysis of public expenditure on primary education suggests that teacher salaries in government primary schools and grants for salary subvention for non-government primary schools taken together account for about 96.7% of total current (revenue) spending on primary education as against 3.3% on account of operation and maintenance.

In case of development expenditure, which is more or less one time investment cost, most of spending is on construction of new physical facilities and renovation/ improvement of old physical facilities.

Revenue and development expenditure from public exchequer during the period 2000-2006, as shown below, indicates that the education sector received between 12.31% and 15.76% of allocation of all sectors, with 14.18% during 2005-06.

Table-2: Public Expenditure of GoB on all Sectors including Education

Year	Revenue and Development Budget		
	All Sector	Education	% of all sector
2000-2001	371330.0	58517.0	15.76
2001-2002	372891.8	58766.5	15.76
2002-2003	419710.0	65037.8	15.50
2003-2004	511014.8	67579.2	13.22
2004-2005	579109.4	71301.2	12.31
2005-2006	669116.8	94876.8	14.18

Source: BANBEIS: Bangladesh Educational Statistics, December, 2006

Besides revenue and development expenditure by the government, a good number NGOs, private sectors individuals and organizations, and parents of students spend large sum of money on education.

The development partners finance education through loans and grants to the Bangladesh Government and also to NGOs and researchers. Statement of expenditure by NGOs is not available; but it is considerable. For example, a UNESCO publication² indicated program support to the government and NGOs on Education to the extent US\$ 1519.8 million, of which BRAC received US\$ 128.5 million and Norwegian Knower 15 million, UCEP received US\$ 9.8 million, Nayantara received US\$ 6.3 million, Save the Children, USA received US\$ 12 million, Center for Mass Education received US\$ 3.8 million, CAMPE received US\$ 3.3 million and USC-Canada received US\$ 4 million.

A recent study³ suggests that public spending on primary and secondary education remains low in comparison with spending on education in other countries. For example, per capita public expenditure on students in government primary schools has been Tk. 1728 (or US\$ 25 @ Tk. 69 per dollar) in GPS and US\$ 664 (or US\$ 9.6) in RNGPS.

² UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS), Bangladesh, UNESCO, Dhaka, 2006.

³ Financing Primary and Secondary Education in Bangladesh, CAMPE, Bangladesh, 2006.

The study has found that meagerness of resources has partially been mitigated by household spending on education. For example, 59 percent of spending per child in GPS and 71 percent of spending per child in RNGPS come from household sources. The single most item of cost on parents occur on account of coaching by private tutors- 43 percent of GPS students and 85 percent of government assisted secondary schools go for private tutors.

PRSP and EFA Challenges for the Coming Decade

Bangladesh formulated an overarching national development strategy in 2005 under the title *Unlocking the Potential* with the twin goals of accelerated poverty reduction and attainment of MDGs. Popularly referred to as the PRSP or poverty reduction strategy paper, it weaves together various sectoral strategies into a coordinated whole so as to maximize overall social gains including accelerated poverty reduction and achievement of MDGs. Commensurate with the Dakar Framework for Action, PRSP has sought to contextualize EFA goals for Bangladesh in the coming decade. It is clear that access to education has been the main pre-occupation of the past decade and a half and this has borne fruit as exemplified by enrolment and gender parity statistics as well as the entry of Bangladesh in UNDP's medium human development league of countries. The success has not only been on the supply side. The demand side too has been as responsive; even the poorest families have come to value education and give high priority to the basic education of their children, boys and girls alike. It is not the case that the access goal has been won on all fronts. Specific segments of the population, particularly within the poor, ethnic groups and in remote locations, and among the disabled, still have to struggle for access. Increasingly, however, research on outcome indicators is driving home the point that access achievements are not necessarily translating into commensurate quality achievements. A paradigm shift towards a pre-occupation with quality while retaining the focus on equity has thus become an urgent necessity. In a way, such a realization has already been spreading but the sense of strategic urgency remains to be galvanized. The PRSP also underscores the point that the development of the quality agenda at primary, secondary and vocational levels is not driven by top-down expert approaches alone, but take its cue equally from an analytically sound reading of the ground realities of school, community and administrative environments in which they are situated.

Targets towards Achievement of EFA Goals under NPA-II (2001-2015)

Recognizing the strategic challenges in meaningful realization of EFA goals, Government of Bangladesh has adopted a program approach towards development of pre-primary and primary education and initiated the Second Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-II), 2003-2009 as a successor program to PEDP-I (1998-2003). The PEDP-II is fully geared to attaining and improving the quality in all facets of primary education. The Government has also developed through an extensive participatory process an NFE Policy Framework to guide and ensure quality in all NFE activities.

For the purpose of bringing all components within a common framework, the Government has initiated an extensive participatory and professional process to review the achievements of the first National Plan of Action-I (1992-2000) framed as a follow up of Jomtien. After the Dakar Framework for Action, the government reviewed the achievements of NPA-I with regard to the EFA Goals and formulated the current NPA-II (2001-2015).

With regard to the EFA Goals the current NPA-II contains targets for the period 2001-2015 in accordance with EFA indicators for (i) formal and non-formal Early Childhood Care and Education, (ii) formal Primary Education, (iii) Non-Formal Education and (iv) Quality (Primary

education). Other EFA Goals, namely, Life Skills and Lifelong Learning (Goal-3), Gender Parity and Equality (Goal-5), and Quality Education (Goal-6 in part) have not been included in the NPA-II.

Table-3: Summary of Targets of EFA NPA-II, 2001-2015

(In Percent)

Indicators	Benchmark 2000	Targets for the Selected Years		
		2005	2010	2015
ECCE (both formal & non-formal)				
Formal ECCE (Primary School Attached)	22	(# 1.0 m)	(# 1.0 m)	(# 1.0 m)
Non-Formal ECCE (Family and Community-based)	-	15	20	15
Primary Education				
Gross Enrolment Rate (Total)	96.5	103	108	110
Gross Enrolment Rate (Boys)	96.0	102	107	110
Gross Enrolment Rate (Girls)	97.0	104	107	110
Net Enrolment Rate (Total)	80	83	92	95
Net Enrolment Rate (Boys)	82	87	91	95
Net Enrolment Rate (Girls)	85	89	93	95
Dropout Rate	33	25	14	05
Completion Rate	67	75	86	95
Quality Achievement in Pry. Education	05	30	65	90
Non-Formal Education				
NFBE – Access/ Coverage	11	19	48	33
Adult Literacy Rate (15-24 years)	66	73	82	95
Adult Literacy Rate (15-45 years)	56	70	78	90

Source: NPA-II

Early Childhood Care and Education: ECCE

Targets of 2001-2015

The population of the children of age-group 3-5 years has been estimated to be 10.38 million in 2001, the bench-mark year. It is estimated to grow up to 11.02 million by 2005, and to 10.76 million by 2010, and to 11.69 million by 2015.

Out of this population, the targets for coverage between 2001-2015 have been set under both formal and non-formal education to the extent as below:

The NPA-II set target to cover 1 million children under formal Primary Education by 2005, another 1 million by 2010 and another 1.31 million by 2015. This means a total coverage of 3.31 million during 2001-2015 under formal education system.

Under the non-formal education system, the coverage of ECCE population has been staggered at the following rate:

2001	40% of the base year population of 10.38 million or 4.15 million
2005	25% of 40% of 2001 or 1.04 million
2010	45% of 40% of 2001 or 1.87 million
2015	30% of 40% of 2001 or 1.25 million
2001-2015	80% of 2001 population or 3.32 million

Thus, the total number of students to be covered under ECCE by 2015 is 6.64 million with a break up of 3.32 million under formal Primary Education, and 3.32 million under non-formal education.

Achievements (2001-2005)

The projected coverage under ECCE, both formal and non-formal, for the period 2001-2005 has been set at 2.02 million (formal 1 million and non-formal 1.02 million).

As compared to the target the Gross Enrolment Rate has been found to be 1.1 million or 11.4% of the ECCE age-group (3-5 years) population in GPS, RNGPS, KG and madrasahs (formal system), and the private center enrolment as percentage of total enrolment in ECCE programs has been 18.09%.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) for GER has been 1.03.

This means that the ECCE targets can be achieved, provided, it is planned, programd and implemented as a thrust sector with proper inter-sectoral coordination and management, including continuous monitoring of stakeholder activities.

Achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE)

In order to ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and compute free primary education of good quality, the government of Bangladesh have set targets indicator-wise with GER at 10.3 percent, NER 83 percent, dropout rate at 25 percent, completion rate 75 percent and Quality Achievement at 30 percent.

The Assessment for the period 2001-2005 shows that the population of the age-group 6-10 years has 17.32 million. Out of this population the Gross Intake Rate (GIR) in primary education has been 108.4% with a break-up of 105.9% for males and 111.0% for females.

The Net Intake Rate (NIR) has been 94.7% (males 93.3% and females 96.1% with GPI of 1.03).

The Gross Enrolment Rate has been 93.7% (males 91.2% and females 96.2% with GPI of 1.05). The NER has been 87.2% (males 84.6% and females 90.1% with GPI of 1.07).

The Repetition Rate has been 11.2% (males 11.5% and females 10.9% with GPI of 0.95). The Survival Rate has been 52.9% (males 49% and females 56.9% with GPI of 1.16).

The co-efficient of efficiency vary, institution to institution, region to region, between 75.2% in Dhaka (males 72.7% and females 77.5%) and 37.1% (males 37.7% and females 36.4%). The wastage (years input per graduate) is considerable, between 13.5 years (males 13.3 and females 13.7 years) and 6.6 years (males 6.9 and females 6.4 years).

Life Skills and Lifelong Learning

The target population for life skills and lifelong learning programs are the students of the age-group 8+ years for non-government institutions and 12+ years for government institutions.

The Millennium Development Goals aims to increase the participation of students in Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions from the present level of 3% to a higher level of 20% by 2020. The NPA-II has not set any quantitative target but aims to establish a knowledge-based and technologically-oriented competent society, to continue access, improve retention, quality and opportunities to pre-school children, young persons and adults.

Vocational education in Bangladesh comprises SSS (vocational), National Skill Standard-III (SS-III), SS-II, HSC (vocational), and Basic Trades. However, private sector institutes, workshops, and skill centers also offer courses of various skill levels.

During 2001-2005, TVET institutions (2728 public and 2548 private) enrolled 241336 students (48267 public and 193069 private). The GPI has been 0.94. During this period 1795 teachers have been trained in 13 public Technical Training Centers.

From primary to lower secondary educational level, the designated curriculum time in the education system is 360 hours for all formal education courses. From higher secondary to technician/craftsman, the designated time is 141 hours (for 160 to 170 credits) with additional 900 hours of practical classes (150 minutes each) for technical courses.

Literacy

The Government of Bangladesh has taken a rights-based approach to literacy in the context of human rights, emphasizing that all illiterate adults, as human beings, should have and inherent right to literacy and continuing education. The GoB has taken it upon itself to ensure that all rights-holders, particularly the unreached illiterate and disadvantaged adults are identified and provided access to quality adult learning, which gives them learning and earning skills to enhance their social and income capability to improve the quality of their lives.

The new literacy program under the NPA-II consists of (i) non-formal basic education for post-primary 11-14 age-group, (ii) out-of-school adolescent and youth: 12-19 years, (iii) young adults: 15-24 years, (iv) adults: 25-45 years, and (v) PLCE: 30% of 11.6 million of DNFE clients of 1995, that is 3.48 million.

The literacy program also includes disadvantaged groups, like primary school drop-outs, never-enrolled adolescent and young adult, children living in remote locations, disabled, ethnic minorities, population suffering from social exclusion, and general illiterate adults.

The number of literacy/ non-formal education related programs is 16 implemented by Bureau of Non-Formal Education under the MoPME and some organizations of other Ministries.

During 2001-2005, the Adult Literacy Rate has reached 54.8% with 60.31% males and 48.9% females. The Gender Parity Index is 0.81.

The Youth Literacy Rate (15-24 years) has been found to be 72.73% with 75.03% of males and 70.36% of females.

The Literacy Rate among the ethnic minority varies between 91-92%.

The number of completers/ learners in literacy programs has been estimated to be 4.5 million.

Public expenditure on literacy is 3.7% of the Education Sector.

Gender

Bangladesh has enjoyed success in achieving gender parity and significantly increasing enrolment of women in primary and secondary schools and gender gap is closing at an impressive pace. For example, the total number of female students in all types of institutions of primary education is 8134437 or 50.13% of all students.

From the Baseline Survey of PEDP-II (2005) and BANBEIS Educational Statistics (2006) show that indicators of access and participation of female students at the national level have Gross Intake Rate of 111% as against 105.9% male students, with a Gender Parity Index 1.05. The Net Intake Rate is also impressive - 96.1% of females as against 93.3% males, having GPI of 1.03.

The Gross Enrolment Rate of female students at the national level has been found to be an impressive 96.2% as against enrolment of 91.2% of male students, with GPI of 1.05. Net Enrolment Rate of female students is 91.6% as compared to net enrolment of 87.1% of male students, having GPI of 1.05.

Survival Rate to Grade-5 of the primary education is of particular interest because the completion of at least four years of schooling is commonly consider a pre-requisite for a sustainable level of literacy. It has been found that overall Survival Rate to Grade-5 has been 53.9% with SR of females at 56.1% and SR of males at 51.7%, having a GPI of 1.09.

Transition Rate to secondary education is also in favor of achieving gender parity. For example, TR for female students is 86.6% as compared to TR for male students at 80%, having a GPI of 1.08.

Enrolment of female students in Technical and Vocational institutions is much lower than that of male students. In Polytechnic Institutions enrolment of female students is 14.32% and that in Vocational Training Institutions is 10.36%.

Appointment of female teachers in primary, secondary, and vocational and technical institutions is not contributive to gender parity. For example, in primary education, secondary education, and vocational and technical education, female teachers are 38/ 36.25%, 20.28%, 9.47% and 10.94% respectively.

Quality Education

Quality is at the heart of education, and what takes place in classrooms another learning environments is fundamentally important to the future well being of children, young people and adults. A quality education is one that satisfies basic learning needs, and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living.

In the NPA-II, it has been envisaged that all primary level institutions, formal and non-formal, would offer standardized and quality basic education to provide a strong foundation to the pupils so that they can face challenges in higher education. This means that drop-outs rates and number of repeaters are significantly reduced, number of completers in primary education enhanced, for which facilities leading to quality education are made available.

For the purpose of quality education, the NPA-II has envisaged (i) to review and improve the curriculum, (ii) establish and equip school libraries with computer and supplementary reading

materials, (iii) review the terminal, subjects, and grade competencies, (iv) provide text books and reading materials free of cost, (v) promote a career path teachers, etc.

General Observations

In Bangladesh policies, programs and activities on some EFA Goals run, in accordance with Rules of Business and allocations of business thereunder, across a number of Ministries and organizations in the government. For example, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives, etc. implement programs aimed at early childhood care and education.

Secondly, Goal-3: Life Skills and Lifelong Learning, is mainly the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Other Ministries like MoPME, MoLGRDC, MoYDS, MoI and organizations under their administrative control are involved in designing programs and activities for development in this goal. Life Skills and Lifelong Learning is equal to employment, wage or self and hence is crucial to country' politics and economy.

As a matter of fact, some of the organizations in the government, like the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) and Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSP) have been established with primary objective of employment generation, and acquisition of learning and skill are pre-requisites for employment.

Thirdly, programs related to gender issues are all pervasive. Every Ministry, every organization in the government has something to do with gender. Strictly speaking, EFA Goal-5: Gender issues are primary concerns of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. MoWCA articulates interests of women and children and advocates issues, policies and programs in their favor. Programs related to education of women and children are primarily planned and implemented by the Ministry of primary and Mass Education and the Ministry of Education. Other Ministries, for example, the Ministry of Youth Development and Sports, the Ministry of LGRDC, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, etc. play important roles.

Fourthly, NGOs and Civil society organizations plan programs/ projects and implement activities related to EFA Goals, specially ECCE, Primary/ Basic Education, Non-Formal Education, Life Skills and Lifelong Learning, Gender, and Literacy. Following the Dakar commitment the GoB is under obligations to plan and implement EFA Goal activities with NGOs and Civil societies as partners in development. The GoB invests own funds in EFA Goal activities and also receives financial support from development partners. The functionaries in the government are used to command and demand compliance from stakeholders within and outside the government. This command and compliance culture is resisted by the NGOs who receive funds from also donors, including international NGOs. They resist the command culture and prefer to go of their own, unless they receive funds from government agencies, for example, the Bureau of Non-Formal Education.

Then, the NGOs are accountable to the donors and they feel obliged to report to the donors only. Any request by the government agencies (or even independent researchers) for information the NGOs feel threatened. They are secretive about expenditure they incur on their organizational and development activities.

It is, therefore, necessary to have some legal instrument under which all agencies, government and non-government, are required to provide information to a central coordinating agency on EFA Goal activity, like the Technical Assistance Group (TAG)/ National EFA Coordinator.

At present, a good number of programs/ projects of the government and non-government agencies is being implemented towards achievement of EFA Goals. At the designing stage of this programs/ projects no consultation takes place. Every agency goes by its own way. The Bangladesh Planning Commission is associated at approval stage of the projects; but the Planning Commission itself is segmented into sectors.

The project document is required to incorporate into the project profile a Logical Framework, in which among other information, Objectively Verifiable Indicators are provided. This requirement facilitates internal monitoring and evaluation of concerned program/ project by the sponsoring agency and external monitoring and evaluation by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) under the Ministry of Planning. If the policy/ system indicators, core indicators and additional indicators are incorporated into the Logical Framework of EFA Goal related programs/ projects at the designing stage, it would facilitate monitoring and assessment of progress made under the respective goals.

The National Plan of Action-II (2001-2015) of MoPME does not at present include review of past experience of Bangladesh with regard to all EFA Goals; the document deals with only those programs/ projects that are within the domain of MoPME as per the Rules of Business. If the NPA-II is revised to include visions, strategies, programs/ projects, targets and monitoring mechanism with regard to all EFA Goals comprising activities of all organizations of the government and NGOs, it would facilitate overall and correct assessment of progress of all EFA Goals at a given point of time.

The MoPME has an MIS unit to monitor the progress program/ project activity of sub-system under its ward. The Directorate of Primary Education has built-in arrangement for collection of information with a Director and EMIS Cell. If the present information system in the MoPME and its sub-systems are re-organized to collect data in accordance with policy/ system, core and additional indicators required for EFA Goals assessment, it would help remove anomalies/ inadequacies in respect of data status and create a new coherent data regime. If this can be done, and why not, the MoPME would save a lot of management time and energy, improve quality of data, and possibly money.

Arrangements as discussed above can be implemented if it becomes binding on all implementing agencies, government and non-government, to comply with the requirements of designing project activities with goal-wise indicators and also reporting to the coordination point in the MoPME, that is, the National Coordinator. In this respect, the donors also may make it a conditionality with all aid arrangement for designing project and reporting achievements to the National Coordinator.

The Technical Assistance Group in the MoPME may be constituted with representatives of all implementing agencies of EFA Goal activities. The National Coordinator may have a full time national consultant with auxiliaries and logistics at donors expense but accountable to the National Coordinator.