



Save the Children

THE AGENDA OF **INCLUSIVE** **EDUCATION** IN THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL **BUDGETS** OF BANGLADESH



Background

Despite all the progress attained by Bangladesh in the primary education sector during the last couple of decades, many children are still out of formal school system due to poverty, geo-location, disability, social exclusion, poor teaching quality and many other discriminating factors. More than 4 million children aged 6-10, representing one fifth of the children in this age group, are 'out-of-school' in Bangladesh. Among these children, the ones with disability are the most affected by this discrimination. At the national level, less than 20% of children with disabilities have access to education.

Although local governments are required to ensure people's participation in the planning and implementation of various development projects, this is seldom practiced in the study areas. It has been found that Upazilla Parishad budget is prepared without having any participation of the local people, let with disabilities. On the other hand, although Union Parishad budget is prepared through Ward Shavas and an Open Budget Session, issues related to children with disabilities and other out-of-school children are not discussed at all in those meetings as the UPs assume that the sole responsibility of addressing those issues rest on the national government. Same is true for Upazilla Parishad. These two important local government units do not allocate any resources to those issues in question.

This study aims to explore national and local budgets from education perspective.

National Budget and Inclusive Education

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW) are two important ministries that exclusively deal with issues related to children with disabilities and other out-of-school children. For FY2016-17, total Budget of these two ministries were of BDT 264.4 billion. A trend analysis over the last five years shows that, in terms of actual allocation as well as in share of national budget, a small improvement in resource allocation is evident for the two ministries.

Indicators	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
MoPME Budget As % of Govt. Budget	5.0	5.5	5.2	6.4	6.5
MoPME Budget as % of GDP	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
MoSW Budget as % of Govt. Budget	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3
MoSW Budget as % of GDP	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2



The issue of inclusiveness in primary education is currently addressed in a sector-wide program called Third Primary Education Development Program commonly known as PEDP- 3 with a total budgetary allocation of USD 9.8 billion (BDT 765 billion) for 6.5 years (2011-17). Of the total amount, 17% has been allocated for addressing the needs of ensuring inclusiveness in general and out-of-school children and children with disability in particular.

Besides, in FY 2016-17, the government is implementing 3 specific projects under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) with a total budgetary allocation of BDT 21 billion to address the issue of out-of-school children.

Name of Program/Activities/Projects	Duration	Allocation for FY2016-17 (Billion BDT)
School Feeding Events for Poverty stricken areas (1st Phase)	2010-17	4.3 (5.8%)
Reaching out of school children(ROSC) project (2nd phase)	2013-17	2.7 (3.6%)
Primary Education Stipend Program (3rd Phase)	2015-17	14.0 (19%)
Total		21.0 (28.4%)



The three projects are exclusively designed to retain the students in schools by providing meals/snacks and cash money to them. Available statistics show that currently 13 million students are getting stipends, mostly in rural areas and snacks are provided to 3.7 million students in 15,700 schools in 93 Upazillas (MoPME: 2016).

On the other hand, the issues related to children with disabilities are exclusively addressed by 2 projects under the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW) with a total budgetary allocation of BDT 5.9 billion.

Name of Program/Activities/Projects	Allocation for FY2016-17 (Billion BDT)
Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled	5.4
Stipend for Disabled Students	0.5
Total	5.9

Education and Local Government Budget

With very limited resource mobilization jurisdiction, the local governments (Union Parishad) budgets are miniscule to meet the local demand. Consequently, children's share in that budget, to one's expectation, is very low, ranging between 2-9% in the project area.

Within the budget of the Union Parishads (UP), there is a specific line-item called 'education development' where certain amount of money is allocated for education purposes. The amount is spent for the development of all types educational institutions (i.e. primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and Madrasas) within the jurisdictions of respective UPs. Following table shows total and education budgets of the six for FY2016-17.

Figures in Million BDT

Name of Union	Budget for FY2016-17	Education budget	% allocation for Education
Pathalia	28.6	2.7	9.4
Dhamsona	87.9	4.5	5.1
Vangabari	27.8	0.6	2.2
Dhukuriabera	18.7	0.8	4.3
Gujadia	13.4	0.7	5.2
*Noabad	n/a	n/a	

- No budget prepared for the year at the time of study

Local Awareness and Participation in the UP Budget Making Process

As the study findings reveal, local people as well as the local civil society are not aware of budget allocations, both for central allocations and for local (UP) allocations and thus lacks any idea of budgetary allocation for out-of-school children, including children with disabilities. Everyone knows that the Ministry of Education is responsible for all matters related to education. They have very little or no knowledge of the budget making process at the national or local level. They are aware of Ward Shava and Open Budget Sessions that take place in the UP where community members can participate, but they do not find any scope for meaningful engagement with the UP to impact the local budget. However, all community



members consulted under the study are of the same view that they should take part in Ward Shava and Open Budget Sessions and initiate discussion on education in those meetings.

Recommendations

- A strong advocacy needs to be in place with the local government authorities including the Local Government Division aiming for increased budgetary allocations for UPs to locally address the issues of inclusive education with particular focus on addressing the issues of children with disabilities and other out-of-school children.
- Parents, students and local leaders should be sensitized to attend and actively take part in the discussions at both Ward Shava and Open Budget Sessions organized by UPs in order to ensure their voices on inclusive education are heard, demanding for increased budgetary allocation for education by the UPs.
- The local realities demand for increased revenue generation authorities by the UPs to ensure greater resources at their disposal. However, an accompanying support to strengthen human resources of the UPs also need to be ensured in this regard.
- Project interventions should seek to create an effective demand for decentralized planning and budgeting system by working with both national and local civil society and elected representatives.



Holistic approach towards Promotion of Inclusive Education' (HOPE) project aims to strengthen policies and practices of inclusive education and create enabling environment through multi-agency coordination, capacity building, advocacy and other school and community based activities.

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