

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Bangladesh	Project Title:	Supporting Fourth Primary Education Development Program
Lending/Financing Modality:	Results-based lending	Department/Division:	South Asia Department Human and Social Development Division

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Targeting classification: general intervention (GI)

A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy, and Country Partnership Strategy

The Government of Bangladesh identified ensuring completion of quality primary education for all children as a key element in poverty reduction in its National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction for 2009–2011. The National Plan of Action (2003–2015) committed the government to improving quality while retaining the focus on equitable access to basic education. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the government continued the commitment via the Seventh Five-Year Plan (FY2016–FY2020) and its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In response to the government’s strategy focus and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), through the country partnership strategy, 2016–2020 for Bangladesh, prioritizes the improvement of human capital by enhancing the quality of the workforce through better education, as well as the promotion of gender equality and inclusive growth by providing women with equal access to education. Building on the joint experience from the previous primary education subsector interventions, the government and development partners will continue the sector-wide approach for the Fourth Primary Education Development Program (FY2019–FY2023). The approach includes supporting pro-poor interventions such as reaching hard-to-reach, out-of-school populations, and aims to improve quality and equity of primary education in the country, all of which aligns with the goals of universal primary school participation and completion articulated in the National Education Policy (2010). ADB’s proposed results-based lending for Supporting Fourth Primary Education Development Program (the proposed program, FY2019–2023) will align with the country partnership strategy and the government’s commitments to improving quality and equity of primary education.

B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during Assessment of the Program and its Systems

1. **Key poverty and social issues.** The proportion of people living below the poverty line declined from 58.8% in 1992 to 24.3% in 2016. Substantial progress in expanding access to primary education also reduced the disparities in access across income groups. The primary education net attendance rate for the poorest quintile of households rose to 80% in 2014 (from 58% in 2005), compared with 88% (80% in 2005) for the richest quintile. However, several challenges remain: (i) about 9.3% of school-age children have never enrolled in any type of school; (ii) while the dropout rate decreased from 39.8% in 2010 to 19.2% in 2016, a significant portion of students still prematurely terminate their primary education because of various constraints at home and at school; and (iii) a large percentage of those who complete primary education leave with insufficient learning achievements. The 2015 national student assessment (NSA) reported that only 23% of grade 5 students performed at grade level in Bangla, and only 10% in math. The NSA results also highlight that inequities in learning are significant.

2. **Beneficiaries.** Generally, all school-age children will be primary beneficiaries. About 18.6 million children will be enrolled in primary schools, of which 50% will be girls. The program will also support children with special education needs through targeted measures for inclusion and by providing education to out-of-school children (OOSC). 34,000 teachers at the government schools will directly benefit, of which 60% will be women. Teacher educators, planners and administrators, policy makers, and school management committees (SMCs) will also benefit from training and capacity development. The program will support ethnic minority communities by ensuring schooling of their children; providing textbooks and teaching and learning materials in minority languages; and recruiting teachers from a related ethnic background to the schools located in these regions, as per government regulation. The indirect beneficiaries include more than 90 million family and community members all over the country.

3. **Impact channels.** The program directly impacts the poor, girls, and other marginalized groups through expansion of equitable access to quality education. It will increase enrollment of OOSC in learning centers; improve cohort survival rates; and enhance outcomes for boys and girls, including from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds. Human capital is expected to improve, thereby contributing to poverty reduction.

4. **Other social and poverty issues.** The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME), the executing agency of the proposed program, is implementing the separate government programs on stipends and school feeding to support schooling of children from low-income families.

5. **Design features.** The proposed program’s key interventions promote inclusive education by (i) targeting OOSC in regular government activities through expanded partnerships with nongovernment agencies; (ii) improving the capacity of teachers and staff for meeting inclusive education needs; (iii) providing instructional materials and other essential items for minority ethnic teachers and students, and children with special education needs and disabilities; (iv) implementing a communication and social awareness strategy to garner wide support for better quality and equity of primary education; (v) updating the school level improvement plan (SLIP) and *upazila* (subdistrict) primary education plan (UPEP) to increase student enrollments and *upazila* education performance; and (vi) allocating resources to ensure inclusive education.

II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR

1. **Participatory approaches and project activities.** Different types of consultation were undertaken at different levels. Continuous dialogue and collaboration were maintained in a planned manner with the development partners and various government ministries as well as implementing agencies to develop and agree on a macro framework and coverage of the program. Nongovernment organizations (NGOs) were involved to capture good practices and design a partnership mechanism for working together under the framework. At the community level, consultation and workshops were held for (i) social and environmental assessments, (ii) assessment of the requirements for inclusive education, and (iii) needs-based infrastructure development. Local institutions were also consulted on various aspects of the program, such as fiduciary management, SLIP and UPEP development, and institutional strengthening. The participation mechanisms of the Third Primary Education Development Project (FY2012–FY2018, the previous project)—e.g., SMCs, NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs), and local institutions—will be continued under the proposed program.
2. **Civil society organizations.** National NGOs are organized in the Campaign for Popular Education, and international NGOs in the I-NGO forum. Both bodies were actively involved in the design of the proposed program. CSOs are expected to play an active part at various levels of the proposed program's implementation.
3. **Forms of civil society organization participation envisaged during project implementation.** (M) Information gathering and sharing (M) Consultation (H) Collaboration (H) Partnership.
4. **Participation plan.** Yes No. – A separate consultation and participation plan is not required because a wide and ongoing participatory process is already embedded in the design and monitoring of the proposed program. Involvement of the government, development partners, communities, teacher associations, SMCs, NGOs, and other stakeholders is essential for the success of the program. For example, SMCs will receive capacity-building training to improve the planning and implementation of SLIP.

III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: effective gender mainstreaming (EGM)

1. **Key issues.** The National Education Policy emphasizes women's advancement and rights by allocating funds for female education at each level. Bangladesh was one of the few nations that had achieved gender parity in enrollment up to secondary education by 2005. The net enrollment rate in primary education for girls reached 98.8% in 2016, slightly higher than 97.0% for boys. The government has acknowledged that gender equality in the teaching force is needed to promote women's empowerment and subsequent participation in education management. The primary education subsector now has 60% women teachers, as per the government quota system for teacher recruitment. However, although dropout rates are declining overall, they remain high: 15.0% for girls and 20.9% for boys in 2016. MOPME implements specific policies every year to reduce school dropouts (such as through the separate school feeding and stipend programs) and bring them back to education. A new reality in Bangladesh today is that boys are at risk of being left behind: (i) boys from poor households are more likely to drop out and attend paid work and (ii) boys obtain lower learning results than girls (as shown in the NSA). Meanwhile, the country still needs to reinforce the mainstreaming of gender and inclusive education in the system, ensure gender equality factors in the content of curricula and textbooks, renew the teaching and learning approaches to de-stereotyping gender, enable boys and girls to equally access information and communication technology (ICT) and e-learning resources for their adaptation to future skills, and provide a school-friendly environment for children with special education needs and disabilities. The Fourth Primary Education Development Program will implement a gender and inclusive education action plan to address all relevant aspects. Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the plan is critical to update and map the remaining gaps in gender-equal and inclusive primary education.
2. **Key actions.** A disbursement-linked indicator (DLI) matrix is part of the program design, with gender-related elements and definitions of indicators. Gender actions Other actions or measures No action or measure
The key actions include (i) building sex-segregated water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) blocks to ensure availability of a separate girls' toilet at each school; (ii) establishing an integrated education management information system (EMIS) with sex-disaggregated data; (iii) implementing the updated student-focused SLIP and needs- and performance-based UPEP aimed at improving enrollment and retention; (iv) scaling up interventions for OOSC, of whom the majority are boys; and (v) implementing and reporting on gender-related program actions that focus for instance on (a) including gender equality elements and contents in curriculum, textbooks, and teaching–learning materials for all grades; (b) providing gender sensitization training for teachers; and (c) ensuring equal access to and use of ICT resources and e-learning materials in schools for boys and girls.

IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES

A. Involuntary Resettlement

Safeguard Category: A B C

1. **Key impacts.** No involuntary resettlement is envisaged for the program; infrastructure construction will be mainly limited to additional classrooms, (head) teacher rooms, WASH blocks, and water sources, which are small in scale and within school premises. MOPME and the Directorate of Primary Education have confirmed that any school requiring land acquisition will be excluded from the program scope, which will be ensured by using the government's primary education properties management information system for planning. In a few exceptional cases, additional land may be required to extend school facilities beyond existing premises. MOPME confirmed that these works will be covered by discrete infrastructure projects under its management separate from the Fourth Primary Education Development Program.

2. **Strategy to address the impacts.** A harmonized social management framework (SMF) will apply and provide the basis to prepare and implement impact mitigation plans and ensure that physical works in schools will not cause adverse

impacts on communities, including private landowners and public land users.
3. Actions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program safeguard systems improvements <input type="checkbox"/> No action
B. Indigenous Peoples Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C
<p>1. Key impacts. The proposed program triggers the ADB Safeguard Policy Statement requirement 3 on indigenous peoples. By improving access to quality primary education, the program will increase the participation and learning opportunities of indigenous peoples, i.e. small ethnic communities (SECs). No major negative impacts are expected. The program outputs are deemed to have positive impacts on SECs. However, there is a need to monitor the school-specific impacts.</p> <p>Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. The SMF will guide the implementing agencies to ensure that the program activities in general, and the civil works in particular, do not adversely affect SECs, and that SECs receive culturally compatible social and economic benefits. The SECs' participation will be ensured during the preparation of the annual plan as well as in other consultations during the implementation of the civil works. The program will ensure that textbooks and teaching-learning materials in minority languages will be developed in a culturally appropriate way. The grievance redress mechanisms, and compliance with ADB information disclosure and consultation requirements, are well documented in the SMF and will be adequately disseminated among SECs.</p> <p>3. Actions.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program safeguard systems improvements <input type="checkbox"/> No action</p>
V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS
A. Risks in the Labor Market
<p>1. Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M) unemployment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (M) underemployment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (L) retrenchment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (L) core labor standards.</p> <p>2. Labor market impact. The proposed program will increase direct employment opportunities for teachers and administrative staff. Short-term labor opportunities will be created for local people, including the poor, in infrastructure activities.</p>
B. Affordability. The proposed program aims to expand the 1-year free-of-charge pre-primary education to all children and continue the free and compulsory primary education from grades 1 to 5. More resources will be allocated to SLIP and UPEP, which improve the autonomy for schools and <i>upazilas</i> in planning and management. Timely provision of free textbooks to all children was achieved under the previous project and will continue to be funded by MOPME through a separate budget. Meanwhile, school-feeding and stipend programs are ongoing and implemented by MOPME separately with government budgets. All these will contribute to the pro-poor dimensions and affordability of primary education.
C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks
<p>1. The impact of the following risks are rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA): <input type="checkbox"/> (NA) Communicable diseases; <input type="checkbox"/> (NA) Human trafficking; <input type="checkbox"/> (NA) Others (please specify)</p> <p>2. Risks to people in program area. No social risks are associated with the program.</p>
VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION
<p>1. Targets and indicators. The design and monitoring framework and the DLIs cover gender indicators and targets for (i) better learning outcomes in Bangla and math for both boys and girls; (ii) higher national survival rate for both boys and girls; (iii) less disparity in the net enrollment rates across districts for both boys and girls; (iv) construction of sex-segregated WASH blocks; (v) establishment of an integrated EMIS with sex-disaggregated data; (vi) at least an equal number of women teachers receiving teacher education and continuous professional development as male teachers do; (vii) equal opportunity for boys and girls to access OOSC education services; and (viii) women teachers benefiting from ICT and e-resources. The program action plan monitors gender-related actions (Section III-2).</p> <p>2. Required human resources. Sufficient and adequately qualified human resources for timely data compilation and analytical reporting will be ensured. Primary education offices will be strengthened both centrally and locally, including their monitoring and evaluation capacity. An institution strengthening plan will be implemented for these purposes.</p> <p>3. Information in program implementation document. The document includes details on joint consultation missions by development partner for DLI verification, and their joint annual review missions for monitoring program implementation progress. The document also outlines how joint financing arrangement will work in financing, monitoring, and reporting on the proposed program under the sector-wide approach.</p> <p>4. Monitoring tools. The annual primary school census is the core monitoring instrument for measuring schools' and students' progress, complemented by the NSA, primary education completion examination, and education household survey. Based on these, the annual sector performance report is generated to document and analyze key performance indicators and primary school-quality level indicators. The SLIP and UPEP guidelines will be revised, and fund management systems will be updated, to ensure compliant fund usage. Social audits will be conducted for schools receiving SLIP funds. The EMIS-generated key school data will be disclosed in public areas of schools using school report cards.</p>

Sources: ADB. 2016. *Country Partnership Strategy: Bangladesh, 2016–2020*. Manila; Government of Bangladesh, Directorate of Primary Education. 2017. *Annual Sector Performance Report*. Dhaka; and Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. 2018. *Fourth Primary Education Development Program*. Dhaka.