Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity

Access to Education in Bangladesh Country Analytic Review of Primary and Secondary Education

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**Institute of Educational Development
BRAC University**

Consortium for Research on
Educational Access, Transitions & Equity
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The Consortium for Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) is a Research Programme Consortium supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Its purpose is to undertake research designed to improve access to basic education in developing countries. It seeks to achieve this through generating new knowledge and encouraging its application through effective communication and dissemination to national and international development agencies, national governments, education and development professionals, non-government organisations and other interested stakeholders.

Access to basic education lies at the heart of development. Lack of educational access, and securely acquired knowledge and skill, is both a part of the definition of poverty, and a means for its diminution. Sustained access to meaningful learning that has value is critical to long term improvements in productivity, the reduction of inter-generational cycles of poverty, demographic transition, preventive health care, the empowerment of women, and reductions in inequality.

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIR	Apparent Intake Ratio
ASER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BEP	BRAC Education Programme
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BU-IED	BRAC University Institute of Educational Development
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CELS	Child Education and Literacy Survey
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CL	Child Labour
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DFA	Dakar Framework for Action
DHSE	Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
DP	Development Partner
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
DSS	Department of Social Services
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FIVDB	Friends in Village Development – Bangladesh
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNI	Gross National Income
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Government Primary School
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
JARM	Joint Assessment and Review Mission
LC	Learning Centre
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department

MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NAEM	National Academy for Educational Management
NCLS	National Child Labour Survey
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFPE	Non-Formal Primary Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIR	Net Intake Ratio
NPA	National Plan of Action (EFA)
NTRCA	National Teacher Registration and Certification Authority
PEDP	Primary Education and Development Programme
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTI	Primary Teacher Training Institute
RFR	Replacement Fertility Rate
RNGPS	Registered Non-Government Primary School
ROSC	Reaching Out-of-School Children Project
SESIP	Secondary Education Sector Improvement Project
SLIP	School Level Learning Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TQI	Teacher Quality Improvement Project
UEO	Upazila Education Officer
UGC	University Grants Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPEP	Upazila Primary Education Plan
URC	Upazila Resource Centre
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour
WHO	World Health Organization

The Bangladesh National Reference Group
for CREATE

The members of the National Reference Group (NRG), who serve in an individual capacity, are expected to provide general guidance for CREATE activities in Bangladesh, help determine the focus and scope of research, review drafts of reports, and advise the partner institution coordinator on achieving the objectives of CREATE. The members of NRG, as of January 2007, are:

Dr. AMR Chowdhury
Dean, James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University
Convenor, *Education Watch*
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Asian Development Bank
Dhaka, Bangladesh

FOREWORD

This review has been developed to explore key issues in access to education, to examine recent research, and to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding. It is part of a programme of research developed collaboratively by partners in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and the UK. The research has several purposes and seeks to identify children who are excluded from basic education, establish the causes of their exclusion, and identify ways of ensuring that all children complete a full cycle of basic education successfully.

CREATE conceives of access to basic education in four zones of exclusion– children who never attend, children who enrol in primary school but drop out before completion, children in school but attending irregularly and learning little, and children who fail to transit to lower secondary school. There are problems in all these zones in Bangladesh despite the impressive progress made over the last decade within the framework of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals.

This review draws attention to many important aspects of how access has been defined and how it is perceived. It notes that much of the emphasis has been on quantitative measurements of achievement, especially gains in enrolment, and that other aspects of access – effective learning, more equitable access to schooling, progression through to secondary grades – have been given far less attention. It remains the case that 12% or more of children continue to drop out in each year, and larger numbers have their learning impaired by irregular attendance. Over 30% of 11-15 year olds are out of school. Less than 60% of children appear to complete grade 5 successfully and of those that do, about 20% fail to enrol at secondary schools. So the problems remain daunting.

The analysis identifies many different groups whose access to education is currently compromised. It also locates a wide range of provisions, many of which are meeting learning needs in pro-poor ways. Importantly, the review draws attention to two endemic problems – high and persistent drop-out, and low access to quality learning.

The Bangladesh CREATE team proposes research across a number of fronts to address the issues raised in the research literature. These include:

- ❖Developing more accurate assessments, statistically and otherwise, of the extent of exclusion of different groups of children in different zones;
- ❖Refining conceptualisations of access beyond the merely quantitative;
- ❖Tracking exclusion as a process rather than seeing it as an event in order to understand more about its causes and its mitigation;
- ❖Analysing cost and finance issues in relation to sustained access for all children;
- ❖Identifying more and less successful interventions designed to reduce exclusion and researching the extent to which future actions can build on their experiences;
- ❖Deepening understanding of transition issues into secondary schools between grades 5 and 6.

This is an ambitious agenda and one that it is very important to pursue through to new understanding and insights that can influence policy and practice. The Team is to be congratulated on a comprehensive review that helps to define the research agenda for CREATE in Bangladesh and prepares the ground for empirical studies. The research will be an exciting journey with a real prospect of improving the lives of those children whose basic right to education is yet to be realised.

Professor Keith Lewin
Director of CREATE
Centre for International Education
University of Sussex

PREFACE

The country analytic review of access and participation issues for children in the 5 to 15 years age group in Bangladesh is a product of the inception phase in the five-year multi-institution international research consortium supported by DFID. The age group under consideration corresponds approximately to primary and secondary education, courses of five-year duration in each of the two stages in Bangladesh. This study, therefore, is concerned with various dimensions of exclusion and participation in primary and secondary education. Similar country analyses have been undertaken under CREATE auspices in Ghana, India and South Africa.

Although not formally participants in the consortium, researchers and institutions in Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have been persuaded to prepare papers on the state of access to basic education following roughly a common analytical frame. It is expected that the six studies from South Asia will be used to develop a South Asian perspective on issues of access and participation at the basic level of education.

A truly cooperative process has been followed in carrying out the Bangladesh review with a large number of people contributing in different ways. The initial conceptual framework of "zones of exclusion," developed collectively by the participants from the partner institutions, served as a reference point for the review. The international partners commented and provided inputs at different stages of the review.

At the country level, while the Institute of Educational Development at BRAC University (BU-IED), as the partner institution in the consortium, took the lead, a national research team carried the main burden of the work. The senior members of the research team, other than the Coordinator, did not belong to BU-IED, and served in individual capacities. A team of younger researchers drawn from BU-IED performed with great diligence in helping the Coordinator to sift through the piles of information and data, often conflicting and confusing, and putting together the pieces from individual writers, to give the study a coherent shape.

A National Reference Group was formed early to guide the total effort from determining the scope and focus, considering the methodology and sources of data, and reviewing the findings and conclusions. Members of the reference group represented principal stakeholders including researchers, academics, NGOs and practitioners. They gave their support, encouragement and intellectual inputs throughout the study

While the report has been the outcome of a collective effort, and debt and gratitude are owed to a large number of people including the ones mentioned above, the principal authors bear the responsibility for the content of this study and its omissions and errors.

The research team and the members of the National Reference Group sincerely hope that the review will make a contribution to better understanding of access and exclusion and thus help expand meaningful access and eliminate the causes of exclusion.

Manzoor Ahmed
Director, BU-IED
Coordinator of the Study

January 2007

Executive Summary

Background

The country analytic review (CAR) is an inception phase activity of CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity). The CARs are expected to chart the evolution of access over time, undertake analysis of developments over the last 10 years, review recent empirical studies of different aspects of access to identify what is known about key issues including poverty, gender and other forms of disadvantage, identify policy implementation constraints, locate subsequent empirical studies, and generate conclusions which prioritise key issues and frame research activity in the next phases of CREATE.

Methodology

The present study, an attempt to construct a baseline of information and analysis for further research on access, equity and participation in education, is based entirely on secondary sources – published and unpublished research reports and analyses, government documents, and database and information with education authorities, which have been made available to the research team for this report.

The research team, headed by the coordinator of CREATE in the Bangladesh partner institution, consists of people who have been involved in research and analysis of aspects of access issues in Bangladesh. They are well-informed about the data and information that are available and have access to the relevant sources. The team initially prepared an outline for Bangladesh CAR, identifying the key components of the report and formulating a structure for it, based on CREATE generic guidelines for the CAR.

The draft outline was reviewed by a National Reference Group whose members represented key stakeholders in basic education and are respected education professionals in their own right. The research team members took responsibility for different components of the study and prepared and submitted their drafts to the coordinator. The pieces were integrated into a unified text by the coordinator who added missing elements and missing links among the pieces to shape a complete draft. This draft was reviewed by team members and by the reference group. A final draft incorporated the comments from the review. A group of younger researchers from BU-IED assisted the coordinator.

Key Findings:

The overarching findings about the state of access is three-fold:

a) Very high dropout, both at the primary and secondary levels, makes high gross and net enrollment rates and even higher initial intake rates virtually meaningless as indicators of access and participation;

b) Virtual or silent exclusion from engagement in learning of those who continue to be enrolled nominally is as serious a problem as open exclusion, but this phenomenon remains largely un-investigated and un-quantified;

c)Spectacular progress has been recorded since the beginning of the decade of the 1990s in closing the gender gap in primary and secondary school enrollment. At the secondary level, girls' enrollment has surged ahead of boys'. The significance of this progress cannot be underestimated, even though girls still remain behind in completing the secondary stage.

Key findings from the analysis of the state of access in primary and secondary education are presented below.

Access in Primary Education

- EMIS data collected by DPE for primary education indicate that cohort dropout between grade one and five was 48 percent in 2004. This is substantially higher than 33 percent dropout in primary education reported for the last several years and has been taken as the basis for planning major interventions, such as PEDP II, and setting targets, such as those for the MDGs. This suggests a systemic problem with collecting, analysing and reporting relevant data and using these for planning and policy-making.

- Official primary education statistics do not include over 30,000 one-room, one-teacher schools run by NGOs, serving more than a million children. Exclusion of these numbers introduces distortions in officially reported gross and net enrollment ratios.

- Population data and projection show that the growth of the primary school age population has slowed down. The total fertility rate is projected to come down to the replacement level within the next decade. Resources, therefore, can be redirected to quality improvement rather than expansion of facilities to cater to additional new students.

- The gap between gross and net intake rate has been narrowing, but remained at 14 percentage points in 2004. Achieving universal primary education by ensuring access to all require that measures be taken to ensure entry at the specified age. Mandatory birth registration, provisions for school facilities of acceptable quality within easy access for young children, and awareness raising about primary education age regulations are necessary measures for increasing participation of children in primary education within the designated age-range.

- The existence of at least 11 types of primary education institutions, besides non-formal primary education, makes the definition and conditions of access – access to what – a critical issue. Development of quality standards and criteria for learning facilities and other provision, and area-based planning to ensure access to facilities of acceptable standards, constitute the major access challenges in primary education in Bangladesh. These should apply regardless of where children live, what socio-economic circumstances they come from, and what types of institutions they go to.

Transition to and Participation in the Secondary Level

- Transition from primary to secondary level (defined as proportion of grade 5 students enrolled in grade 6 in the following year) appears to be around 83 percent in 2004. High cohort dropout in primary school implies that the high transition rate does not mean a high enrollment ratio at the secondary stage. Recent initiatives to introduce public examinations at the end of grade five and requirement of an admission test in secondary schools are likely to affect transition in a positive way.

- There is a large gap of 20 percentage points between gross and net enrollment ratios (65 and 45 percent respectively) at the secondary level (grades six to ten) suggesting much overage enrollment.

- Internal efficiency at the secondary level is very low even by comparison to the low record in primary education. Only 20 percent of those enrolled in grade six are able to complete grade ten and pass the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination.

- Participation in both primary and secondary education is strongly affected by socio-economic status of the families of children. On a net basis, 25 percent of the eligible children from households with "always in deficit" staple food security status attended secondary school compared to 59 percent in families with a "surplus" food security status. At the primary level, children from families with a "deficit" food security status are five times more likely to drop out than children in the "surplus" category.

- Enrollment of girls has surged ahead of boys by 11 percentage points; however, this initial gain is not sustained till the end of the secondary cycle, since boys surpass girls by 11 percentage points in completing the secondary stage. Large rural-urban disparity and disparity by socio-economic category of households prevails, both in initial entry and continuing participation for both boys and girls.

Categories of Exclusion and Vulnerability

- *The identity and characteristics of the excluded* - By definition, routine education data do not provide information about those who remain outside the system and are excluded. Although overall proportions or ratios of enrollment and non-enrollment can be estimated from education statistics, the identity, characteristics and distribution of the excluded are not usually available or are not investigated systematically. Available information from various sources suggests overlapping categories and characteristics of the excluded groups in terms of socio-economic and other attributes, as noted below.

- *The extreme poor* – This constitutes the largest category of those excluded from primary and secondary education, because of the large proportion of the population falling below the "poverty line." The number of children from families in this category far exceeds children never enrolled in primary education.

The pertinent questions then are: i) To what extent is there an overlap between non-enrolled and children from families in the extremely poor category? ii) Why do some children from the extremely poor category enroll and others do not, and what happens to the children who enroll in respect of their participation and progress in school?

- *Participation beyond initial entry* –Both school-related factors and household and socio-economic circumstances of children affect continuation in school and dropout. Government statistics and EMIS do not provide data on the socio-economic background of students. Only specific studies such as the *Education Watch* (2003/4 and 2005) shed light on vulnerability to dropping out. Evidently, better understanding of the factors influencing participation beyond initial access, as well as a systematic process of reflecting this understanding in effective measures, is necessary to deal with the massive problem of dropout both at the primary and the secondary level.

- *Virtual/silent dropout* - Children physically present in class but psychologically and intellectually absent, and therefore not participating and engaging in learning, is a phenomenon that affects a large proportion of children, both at primary and secondary levels. Although precise quantitative estimates do not exist, in magnitude this issue is next to open dropout, but definitely much larger than non-enrollment and non-transition from primary to secondary level. Yet this area has not been given specific attention in programmes and strategies and its quantitative and qualitative dimensions are not well understood.

Interventions to Address Access and Participation

A brief account of major interventions in the public sector and by non-government providers of education services shows a wide variety of interventions by the government and non-government actors. A few preliminary comments can be made based on the summary description of the interventions.

- The sub-sector programme (PEDP II), although labeled as a sector-wide approach, is confined to formal primary education in the public sector. It does not deal with the madrassa stream, which is also supported by the government, non-formal approaches of NGOs, and private sector provisions. Although the mainstream public sector caters to 85 percent of the children enrolled in primary education, the non-government providers and the madrassas attempt to reach the groups who are at the margin and the most difficult to reach. These are most critical from the point of view of widening access and participation.

- The present pattern of parallel and separate development activities, covering the mainstream schools in the public sector and the rest in the hands of NGOs, precludes the possibility of synergy, complementarity and mutual support that could benefit all and promote creative and imaginative actions and approaches.

- Experience from the past regarding major public sector assistance projects, the overall poor results from predecessor projects, the basic limitations in design and strategy of the current projects, and the record of progress so far suggest that major re-orientation and redesigning in the current public sector activities are needed to respond effectively to access, equity and participation problems in the education system. Such a re-orientation needs to be accompanied by change in perceptions and attitudes about collaboration and partnership between government and other actors, especially NGOs and community-based organizations.

- External donors, both multilateral and bilateral, are involved as substantial financial contributors to both public and NGO programmes and in influencing policies such as the adoption of SWAP. This situation bestows a good measure of responsibility on the external development partners for both success and failure of the national effort. It requires them to examine critically the effectiveness of their assistance including their interaction with government and non-government actors, the premises underlying strategies such as SWAP and the scope and targets of assistance, and coordination within their collective efforts to support national education development.

Financing of Primary and Secondary Education

A brief overview of public sector funding of primary and secondary education and household contributions shows a picture of overall inadequacy of resources on the one hand and, on the other hand, the need for strategic thinking about making optimal use of the available resources to support access, equity and quality goals in education.

Government spending on education stagnated in real terms in the first half of the 2000s, although it is now showing signs of increase. The budget share allocated to primary education has declined, which is particularly true for the recurrent budget. Conversely, the share devoted to secondary education has increased. These findings reflect in part recent declines in primary school enrollment and continued enrollment growth at the secondary level.

Government funding varies enormously across different providers of education services and these differences are generally reinforced by private expenditures on education. The current modality of government education financing gives rise to a segregated education system that is not serving the needs of the poor effectively. The facts regarding availability of resources from public and other sources, how they interact and what the effects are with respect to education participation, equity and performance of students, need to be examined further.

Research Issues and Priorities

The conclusions regarding research needs and priorities can be noted under five headings.

Narrow Conceptualization of Access and Inadequate Monitoring of Access

- Conceptualization of access which includes its various dimensions and nuances remains a major issue. The simple perception of access as initial enrollment

gives insufficient attention to the progress of children in school and the programming and planning actions in the education sector needed to ensure completion and learning. This defeats the purposes and objectives of EFA.

- EMIS and routine monitoring and reporting in public education systems remain inadequate in methodology, capacities, human resources and the will to provide and make use of relevant information and data related to key dimensions of access.

The Four Zones of Exclusion: A Strong Analytical Framework

- The "four zones of exclusion" serve as a powerful conceptual framework for investigating and analysing different aspects of access, participation, equity and transition. In the context of Bangladesh, while the problems of the first zone are far from being resolved, the second and third zones are critical, both in respect of the size and their complexity.

- While conceptually and analytically it is useful to separate the zones and look at them as distinct categories, it is necessary to be alert to and probe the interactions between zones in respect of programme interventions. An integrated approach is likely to be essential in most situations.

Lack of a Dynamic and Longitudinal Perspective

- The understanding of the dynamics of participation and exclusion in education that can be derived from tracking cohorts of children in a community and in their social context does not exist.

- Cohorts of children in sentinel communities through household and school surveys should be a major focus of CREATE research, taking advantage of a time-frame that extends to at least four years.

Feasibility and Necessity of a Participatory Research Approach

- There is a richness of non-governmental organizations which are addressing problems of exclusion and disparity in education in Bangladesh. They can be partners in research at the field sites - within a common framework of design and methodology with technical support and supervision from the CREATE partner institution.

- The partner organizations can also be partners in communication, dissemination, and policy dialogue arising from the research activities and incorporation of research conclusions and insights into policies and programmes. They will also be the beneficiaries of capacity-building.

Sustainable Intervention Strategies as a Guide to Prioritization of Research

- Understanding and extracting lessons from a spectrum of intervention strategies through a range of formal and alternative institutional models should be included in the research design. This should include preschools, madrassas, post-primary non-formal programmes, and second chance recovery approaches.

- Case studies of intervention packages, especially of NGOs, which reflect a distinct approach and rationale in a particular context, but can provide insight into generic issues, can be considered as a complement to the structured cohort and sentinel site tracking and analysis.

- Cross-national thematic studies may include issues which are of high relevance as policy questions, but may not be captured in cohort tracking. These could include decentralization and accountability, dealing with corruption, resource mobilization and utilization, teachers' remuneration and incentives, professionalizing educational management, and conceptualizing education-poverty reduction linkages.

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Background and Objectives of the Review

The country analytic review (CAR) is an inception phase activity of CREATE (Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity). The CARs in the participating countries are expected to be reviewed, finalized, formally published and disseminated in the concerned countries. The CARs are expected to chart the evolution of access over time; undertake analysis of developments over the last 10 years; review recent empirical studies of different aspects of access to identify what is known about key issues including poverty, gender and other forms of disadvantage, identify policy implementation constraints, and generate conclusions which prioritise key issues and frame research activity in Phase-2.

The intention is to launch the CARs at national level to groups of stakeholders as consultative documents. This has several purposes that include:

- Sensitizing different audiences to issues and encouraging engagement with CREATE's research program;
- Mapping the current status of access to basic education across different Zones of Exclusion and analyzing the problems associated with achieving the MDGs and EFA goals;
- Synthesizing what is known about promising avenues and blind alleys to improve access and locating particularly interesting examples of better practice for further study;
- Identifying gaps in knowledge and understanding that need community and school based empirical research, and those which require other kinds of small scale research on particular issues;
- Widening debate about the conceptualization of access and the policy and practice options for ways forward.

The CARs will provide a baseline from which the country level research will be developed. After the research outputs become available towards the end of phase 3 they will be updated to review how access has changed in recent years and contribute to realistic country action plans which should be articulated with relevant national planning structures – e.g., sector reviews, PRSPs, Country EFA plans etc. The CAR will identify key research issues and provide the rationale for empirical work.

1.2 Methodology

The present study is an attempt to construct a baseline of information and analysis for further research on access, equity and participation in education. It is based entirely on secondary sources which include published and unpublished research reports and analyses, government documents, and databases and other information from education authorities which have been made available to the research team for this report.

The research team, headed by the coordinator of CREATE in the Bangladesh partner institution, consists of people who have been involved in research and analysis of

aspects of access issues in Bangladesh. They are well-informed about the data and information that are available and have access to the relevant sources. The team prepared an outline for Bangladesh CAR, identifying the key components of the report and formulating a structure for it, based on CREATE generic guideline for CAR.

The draft outline was reviewed by a National Reference Group whose members represented key stakeholders in basic education and are respected education professionals in their own right. The research team members took responsibility for different components of the study and prepared and submitted their drafts to the coordinator. The pieces were integrated into a unified text by the coordinator who added missing elements and missing links among the pieces to shape a complete draft. This draft was reviewed by team members and by the reference group. A final draft incorporated the comments from the review. A group of younger researchers from BU-IED assisted the coordinator.

The draft, on receiving comments and suggestions from the CREATE Director and other colleagues, was edited for publication and is planned to be launched for public dissemination.

1.3 The Primary and Secondary Education Scenario in Bangladesh

In 1971, when the country became independent, the adult literacy (population 15+) rate was only 17.6 percent (BBS, 1981). Adult literacy increased from 25.8 percent in 1974 to 29.2 percent by 1981, and to 35.3 percent by 1990. Progress was reported to be faster during the 1990s. The Population Census 2001 estimate of adult literacy rate (for 2001) was 48 percent (male 54, female 41). The number of adult illiterates by the census count was 68 million in 2001. Other estimates based on the application of simple literacy tests on representative national samples indicate an even higher level of illiteracy. *Education Watch* survey in 2002 reported the literacy rate for population 11 years and above to be 41.2 percent, which is consistent with the estimates for literacy reported in UNESCO and U.N. documents (M. Ahmed et al 2002) .

The latest available official statistics of the number of institutions, enrollments and teaching staff at various levels are given in Table 1. It should be noted that Table 1 does not include non-formal education institutions, mostly one-teacher one-class centres, which serve about 8 percent of the primary age-group children. The official category of primary schools include the ibtidayee madrassas (which are madrassas only with primary grades), primary (ibtidayee) classes attached to secondary and higher madrassa, and primary classes in junior high schools and high schools. The madrassas include both secondary and tertiary level programmes. The Intermediate Colleges and Cadet Colleges offer secondary and higher secondary courses (grades 6 to 12). Degree colleges generally offer a five year programme including two years of higher secondary education. (See the diagram on the education system in Annex 1.)

Growth of Primary Education. In 1947, there were about 19,000 primary schools in the region of Bangladesh. The number rose to 29,000 by 1971.   After emergence of Bangladesh the growth was faster. The yearly growth rate was 7.7 percent during 1972-76, but growth in the number of schools slowed down during 1981-90 to less than one percent per annum. The growth rate accelerated again to rise to 4.1 percent during 2000-03.

Table 1: Number of institutions, enrollments and teaching staff at different levels in Bangladesh 2003/2004

Level of Education	Number of Institutions	Enrollment			Teaching Staff		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
I. Primary (grades 1-5)	82,868	9,046,433	8,906,867	17,953,300	232,124	120,811	352,935
II. Secondary Junior High Schools (grades 6-8)	3,982	373,942	568,927	942,869	22,816	5,531	28,347
Secondary Schools (grades 6-10/6-12)	13,404	3,429,852	3,753,641	7,183,493	142,568	35,642	178,210
Intermediate Colleges (grades 11-12)	1,579	168,407	155,757	324,164	23,442	5,775	29,217
Cadet College (grades 6-12)	10	2,435	295	2,730	263	47	310
III. Tertiary Degree Colleges (grades 13-15/13-17)	1,215	712,997	41,206	754,203	32,970	8,308	41,278
Universities (grades 13-17)	73	97,249	32,870	130,119	7,207	1,376	8,583
(Public)	21	72,285	23,402	95,687	4,760	875	5,635
(Private)	52	24,964	9,468	34,432	2,447	501	2,948
IV. Madrassa grades (6-17)	8,410	934,007	911,934	1,845,941	90,687	37,210	127,897

Source: (i) For primary education – DPE, 2004; (ii) Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics, 2003; (iii) UGC, Annual Report, 2004

The increase in primary school enrollment was much faster than the growth of schools. The enrollment increased steadily in the 1990s, but has slowed down in recent years (Table 2). During the 1990s, it is noticeable that non-government schools grew rapidly so that their number exceeded that of government schools; however, since on average non-government schools are smaller, this section continued to count for a minority of total enrollments. The decrease in enrollment in the latter period is attributed in part to reduction of the school age population. The growth of girls' enrollment was spectacular and surpassed the increase in enrollment of boys.

The number of teachers increased in the early part of the 1990s, declined in the mid-decade, but increased again since 2001 (Table 2).

Table 2: Number of govt. and non-govt. registered primary schools, teachers and students (1990-2004)

Years	No. of schools			No. of teachers			No. of students		
	Govt.	Non-govt.	Total	Govt.	Non-govt.	Total	Govt.	Non-govt.	Total
1990	37,655	8,262	45,917	158,113	31,395	189,508	10,128,293	1,811,656	11,939,949
1991	37,694	11,845	49,539	158,663	47,805	206,468	10,410,025	2,459,085	12,869,110
1992	37,740	12,574	50,314	165,327	50,596	215,923	10,714,043	2,461,409	13,175,452
1994	37,763	39,052	76,815	158,704	150,439	309,143	11,392,239	5,384,585	16,776,824
1995	37,763	40,331	78,094	185,908	133,204	319,112	11,600,305	5,533,393	17,133,698
1996	37,763	40,832	78,595	161,764	163,039	324,803	11,769,132	5,811,284	17,580,416
1997	37,763	39,922	77,685	158,311	158,172	316,483	11,816,060	6,215,613	18,031,673
1998	37,762	41,960	79,722	153,522	156,071	309,593	11,711,507	6,625,889	18,337,396
1999	37,762	41,064	78,826	149,785	162,460	312,245	11,034,507	6,587,224	17,621,731
2000	37,730	40,284	78,014	154,405	154,532	308,937	10,843,958	6,824,027	17,667,985
2001	37,724	40,402	78,126	162,345	158,349	320,694	10,842,255	6,816,965	17,659,220
2002	37,724	40,639	78,363	157,487	157,568	315,055	10,680,530	6,881,298	17,561,828
2003	37,724	49,013	86,737	162,364	191,921	354,285	10,677,187	7,754,133	18,431,320
2004	37,725	45,143	82,868	162,472	190,463	352,935	10,372,426	7,580,874	17,953,300

Note: Govt. primary schools include experimental schools in Primary Teacher Training Institutes. Non-govt. schools include Regd. NGPS, Non-regd. NGPS, Ebtedayee Madrassa, Kindergarten, NGO school (complete), Community School, Satellite School, primary classes attached to High Madrassa and to High School.

In absolute numbers, between 1980 and 2004, enrollment in primary education more than doubled from 8 million to 18 million, revealing demand for access to education and the pressure for expansion of educational facilities. In the decades of the 1980s and the 1990s, the government efforts have been concentrated more on primary education, which has helped to build a comprehensive network of primary education. Secondary education, having received relatively less attention in the past, is under pressure because of the growing demand for secondary education from larger numbers of primary education completers.

Population projections indicate that the trend of growth in school age population will reverse as early as in a decade and numbers are expected to drop significantly by 2020, relieving the pressure for expansion (see Annex 9). This indicates that investment in education can be redirected in future towards improving the quality of education rather than on expanding access.

The situation regarding primary level institutions, their enrollment and numbers of teachers in 2004 are shown in Table 3. It shows that there is a wide variety in primary education institutions. However 80 percent of the enrolled students were in two types – Government Primary School (GPS) and Registered Non-government Primary School (RNGPS). Teachers' salaries for the latter are paid by the government, although at a lower level than for government schools.

Table 3: Primary level institutions with enrollment and teachers 2004

Type of Institution	Number of Institution	Teachers		Enrollment		Pupil Teacher Ratio
		Total	Female	Total	Girls	
Govt. Primary School	37,671	162,220	66,725	10,359,813	5,223,613	64:1
Regd. NGPS	19,814	77,206	21,184	4,079,119	2,034,548	53:1
Non-regd. NGPS	1,699	6,612	3,145	297,249	146,124	45:1
Experimental	54	252	95	12,613	6,435	50:1
Ibtidayee Madrassa	6,723	28,119	2,972	846,092	399,947	30:1
Kindergarten	3,745	21,928	12,030	226,635	108,060	10:1
NGO (Complete)	447	1,828	1043	78,482	39,426	43:1
Community	3,218	12,641	6,920	436,122	212,316	35:1
Attached to High Madrassa	8,214	31,691	2,176	1,128,342	491,577	36:1
Attached to High School	1,283	10,438	4,521	488,833	244,821	47:1
Total	82,868	352,935	120,811	17,953,300	8,906,867	51:1

Source: DPE and MOPME Official Records
Note: Non-formal primary education institutions run by NGOs serving about 1.5 million children are not included in official statistics.

1.4   How Access is Viewed

This section reviews *access* to basic education as conceptualized by government and as it evolved over time and was reflected in the official statements and documents in Bangladesh.

In the pre-independence Bangladesh region, two Acts laid the legal foundations for formal primary education. The first was the Primary Education Act 1919, which specified responsibility of the provincial government in primary education and mentioned universal primary education as an eventual goal. The Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act 1930 followed, which sought to introduce universal primary education and provided details of how to establish and administer primary schools under local management. The purpose was stated to be the universalization of primary education by widening access to all school-age children to primary education and encourage local and private efforts for this purpose. The government in post- liberation

Bangladesh repealed these two Acts by an Ordinance in 1973. Under the same Ordinance, all primary schools were taken over by the government complete with assets, funds, and properties. All employees, until then under the District Primary Education Boards, became national government employees (GoB, 1973).

The Primary Schools (Taking Over) Act 1974 replaced the 1973 Ordinance and re-affirmed the taking over of primary schools and the status of primary school teachers as government employees. It abolished "all committees or authorities managing and administering the affairs of the primary school," giving the government the management responsibility for the nationalized primary schools. The purpose of nationalization was to improve management of schools and thereby accelerate access (GoB, 1974). The same theme was emphasized again in the Primary Education Act 1981 which sought to "provide for better organization of primary education and efficient administration and management of the affairs of primary schools" (GoB, 1981)

The 1981 Act was an initiative to bring back a degree of decentralization in management of primary education. It introduced a new tier of Local Education Authorities for each local area with powers of appointing teachers, supervising the functioning of primary schools, regulating the work of teachers, establishing primary schools, and preparing and submitting annual budgets to government and conduct primary school final examinations. It aimed to re-introduce the school management committee. The intention here was to improve access and strengthen the quality of management, learning achievements and local participation. Unfortunately, the innovative features of the 1981 law were not implemented and school management reverted through an ordinance promulgated in 1983 to a more centralised pattern.

The Primary Education (Compulsory) Act 1990 made primary education compulsory in respect of both enrollment and attendance. It made provision for setting up a six-member 'compulsory primary education committee' in the lowest tier of local government, the union (a collection of villages) and wards (urban neighbourhoods) within the upazila (sub-district) and the municipal committees respectively. The committee was to "ensure admission and regular presence of all children of the area in primary schools" (GoB, 1990).

The 1990 Act also kept provisions for penalties for non-compliance. If the local committee failed to discharge the assigned responsibilities, "each member of the committee would be fined not more than taka two hundred". Moreover, "if any guardian fails to follow the directives" of the committee "three times consecutively" regarding admission or absence of a child for seven days from school, "then he will be fined not more than taka two hundred." Primary education was made compulsory under this Act, first in 68 upazilas (sub-districts) in 1992, and throughout the country from 1993. The penalty provision of the Act, however, has never been applied, despite large-scale non-enrollment, non-attendance and dropouts. There was no penalty for the state's failure to provide education services of acceptable quality.

Following the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) of 1990 at Jomtien, Thailand, Bangladesh developed the first National Plan of Action (NPA) on EFA. The targets set and achieved on enrollment and completion rates are shown in Table 4 below.

Access was perceived as equivalent to enrollment as the above Acts and other documents consulted show. In discussions, education officials often made two remarks. First, that the government's responsibility was to establish or maintain the school and it was for the families and parents of children to arrange their admission and to see that children attended school. Secondly, the first task was to enroll children and to place them in school, improved quality of education would follow in time. The NPA appears to have reflected this view. The gross enrollment ratio target for 2000 was to raise it by twenty percentage points from 75.6 percent in 1990/91.

Table 4: NPA-I targets and achievements (in %)

Indicator	Benchmark	Projected Targets		Achievements	
	1991	1995	2000	1995	2000
Gross Enrollment	75.6	82.0	95.0	92.0	96.6
Boys' Enrollment	81.0	85.0	96.0	94.5	97.0
Girls' Enrollment	70.0	79.0	94.0	89.6	97.0
Completion Rate	40.0	52.0	70.0	52.0	67.0

Source: NPA I (MOPME, 1995) and DPE Annual Reports 2001 and 2002

Although the EFA objective was to increase enrollment and promote quality of education, the focus was more on achieving enrollment targets than on quality. The large gap between enrollment and completion at the benchmark level of 1991 was recognized and a target was set for improving completion by 1995 and 2000.

By the year 2000, the enrollment targets, at least in gross terms, were achieved and surpassed. With regard to completion, progress was made, but the achievement fell somewhat short of the target for 2000. Implementation of laws regarding introduction of compulsory primary education and the national action plan for EFA indicate how access was understood, conceptualized and practiced:

- Registering children on the school roll was the main focus.

- Targets were set in terms of gross enrollment, without any mention of net enrollment and without systematic targeting of children specifically at entry age and the designated age group for primary education. Statistics were not systematically collected for age-specific net enrollment.

- The issue of equity was not emphasized, except for gender. Targets were not set for addressing disparities in terms of economic status, urban-rural and other geographical differences, and ethnic and linguistic characteristics, although substantial disparities in terms of these categories existed.

- Completion rates, i.e., children's survival in school from grade one through the end of grade five, served as the proxy for what happened to children in their school life, including drop-out, repetition, attendance or non-attendance, and achievement in terms of learning. It was a crude measure, because it literally meant only survival to the end of the cycle, since there was no public examination at the end of the primary stage to assess what children achieved.

Chapter 2
Enrollment and Internal Efficiency in Primary Education

2.1 Enrollment in Primary Education

In Bangladesh, primary education is of five years' duration. The official entry age for grade 1 has been fixed at 6 years. Children of age 6-10 years are supposed to be the students of primary schools, but in reality, the age-range is much wider. According to MOPME, the gross enrollment rate was higher than the net enrollment rate by more than 10 percentage points in 2004. Children of age 5, 11 and even 13 are found as students of primary schools. However, with overall rise of enrollment the difference has been decreasing over time.

At least 11 types of institutions impart primary education (Annex 2). However, the main providers are the government primary schools, registered non-government primary schools, ibtidayee madrassas, and NGO operated non-formal schools. Table 3 above showed the number of institutions, teachers, enrollment and pupil-teacher ratio for 2004.

Table 5 and Figure 1 show that during the period 1996 to 2004, gross and net enrollment ratios grew significantly. The growth rate for girls was more than three times higher than for boys.

Table 5: GER and NER in primary education (1996-2004)

Year	GER			NER		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1996	97.0	93.0	95.0	83.0	81.0	82.0
1997	97.0	94.0	95.6	83.0	82.0	82.1
1998	98.0	94.0	96.2	84.0	82.0	83.0
1999	98.0	95.0	96.3	84.0	84.0	83.1
2000	97.0	97.0	96.6	83.0	86.0	84.0
2001	97.0	98.0	97.5	83.0	87.0	85.0
2002	97.0	98.0	97.3	83.0	87.0	85.0
2003	101.0	108.0	104.1	87.0	99.0	92.4
2004	98.0	106.0	101.6	84.0	96.0	89.7

Source: Calculated from DPE data.

Figure 1: GER and NER in primary education (1996-2004)
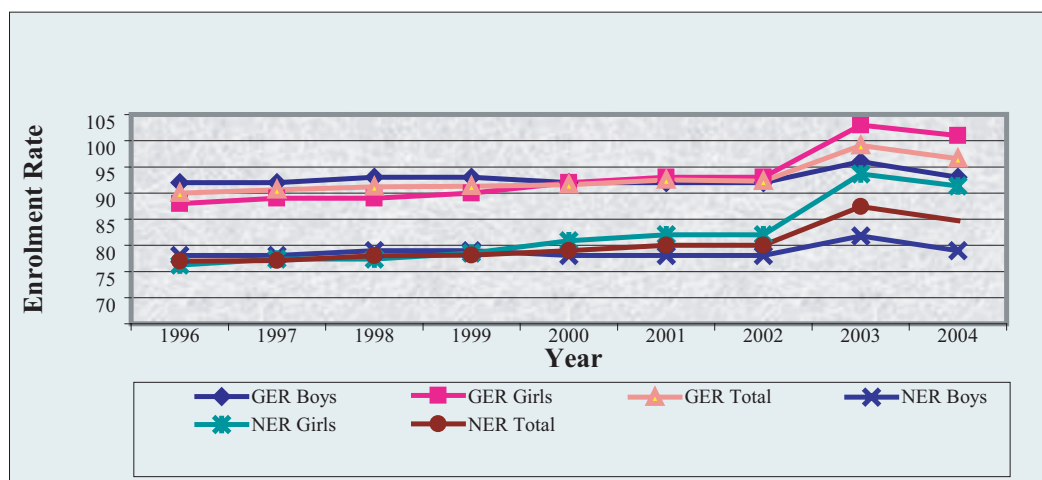
NER during this period grew from 82 percent to almost 90 percent. The year 2003 with 92 percent net enrollment ratio appears to be a statistical aberration. The growth of NER for boys was less than 1 percent; while for girls it was 2.6 percent, indicating a steady improvement in the enrollment of girls in primary education.

In order to examine different aspects of enrollment and participation in primary education, it is necessary to look at entry age, age-specific enrollment, grade-wise promotion, grade-wise repetition, dropout, and completion by pupils of the primary stage of education. Collectively, these measures indicate the internal efficiency of the primary sub-sector of education.

Entry of children into the first grade of primary education is statistically represented by apparent or gross intake rate or AIR (counting children of any age registering for grade one) and net intake rate or NIR (counting children of age six, the official entry age, registering for grade one). AIR and NIR, derived from DPE data, are shown in Table 6 and are graphically represented in figure 2.

Table 6: Apparent (gross) intake and net intake rate in primary education

Indicators	2002			2003			2004		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
AIR	113	112	112	110	111	110	109	110	109
NIR	95	94	94	94	94	94	95	95	95

Source: DPE data

It is interesting to observe that AIR has started decreasing. This is because NIR has increased and stabilized at 95 percent.

Figure 2: Apparent (gross) and net intake rates in primary education
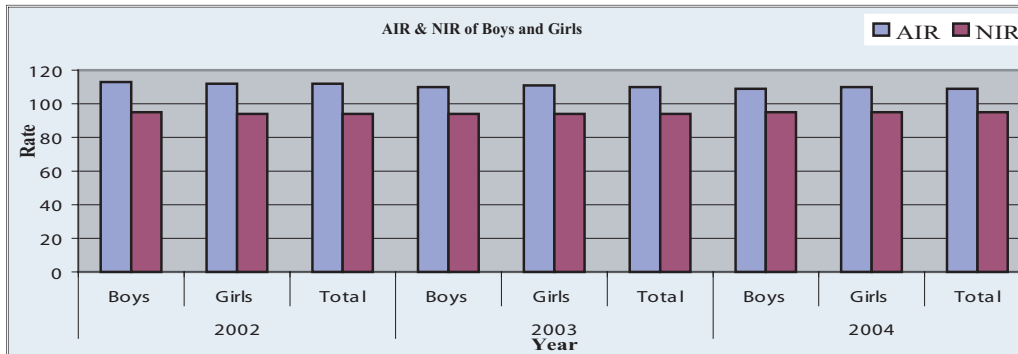
Age-specific enrollment by class is shown in Table 7. The range of ages of children in most classes covers 3-4 years or more.

Table 7: Age-specific enrollment 2004

Age	Class 1		Class 2		Class 3		Class 4		Class 5		Class 1-5	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
5	354,042	161,572									354,042	161,572
6	3,598,701	1,914,801	299,911	137,220							3,898,613	2,052,021
7	565,550	151,229	3,048,480	1,626,212	273,207	126,021					3,887,237	1,903,463
8	92,587	45,454	479,080	128,438	2,777,047	1,493,481	238,668	109,755			3,587,383	1,777,127
9	22,595	10,898	78,431	38,604	436,425	117,954	2,425,979	1,300,711	200,614	93,209	3,164,044	1,561,376
10	14,457	6,687	19,140	9,256	71,447	35,452	381,253	102,729	2,039,156	1,104,633	2,525,453	1,258,757
11	2,238	1,053	12,246	5,680	17,436	8,500	62,416	30,877	320,462	87,243	414,798	133,351
12	1,436	675	1,896	895	11,156	5,216	15,232	7,403	52,463	26,222	82,184	40,410
13	289	129	1,216	574	1,727	821	9,745	4,542	12,803	6,287	25,780	12,352
14	133	33	245	110	1,107	527	1,509	715	8,191	3,857	11,186	5,242
15	9	3	113	28	223	101	968	458	1,268	607	2,580	1,196
Total:	4,652,038	2,292,533	3,940,759	1,947,015	3,589,775	1,788,072	3,135,770	1,557,190	2,634,957	1,322,058	17,953,299	8,906,868

Source: DPE Records

For effective monitoring of and planning interventions for access, it would be important to analyse the trend in ASER. Data collected and recorded by DPE, with adequate quality control, can serve this purpose.

Grade-wise promotion, dropout and completion of the whole cycle of primary education are important indicators of efficiency of the system. These are discussed as much as available data permit.

2.2 Promotion

The available data on promotion rates by grade and gender show that the rates have not changed significantly over time. Table 8 shows that in 1990 the promotion rates varied from 75 percent to 83 percent; the highest was for Class II and the lowest for Class I students. In 2004 the range was 75 - 84 percent; the highest was for class 5 and the lowest was for class 3 students. The promotion rates appear to have remained largely unchanged for almost 15 years – in other words, no change in wastage and inefficiency in the system.

Table 8: Promotion rates by grade and gender in primary education

Year	Grade									
	I		II		III		IV		V	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1990	73.7	73.9	85.6	81.7	77.5	77.5	81.2	84.2	78.6	82.1
1992	77.5	76.4	87.5	87.0	79.8	79.6	86.4	86.4	86.1	86.7
1994	84.4	84.5	85.9	85.4	82.2	82.5	87.6	87.0	91.6	91.6
1998	86.1	86.8	83.3	85.7	81.2	83.3	86.4	88.0	85.7	88.6
2002	80.7	81.3	81.5	82.4	77.8	79.2	78.7	80.1	88.5	89.0
2003	80.1	81.2	80.6	81.7	77.9	79.7	77.1	78.5	90.7	91.4
2004	79.3	81.0	84.1	84.5	74.8	75.6	75.3	77.2	91.9	92.8

Source: DPE records for government and registered no-government primary schools

2.3 Repetition

Comparing class wise repetition rates of 2004 with those of 1990 we find that there has been no significant change over the period (see Table 9). The situation worsened somewhat in Grades I, II, III, IV while it improved slightly for girls in V.

Table 9: Repetition rates by grade and gender in primary education

Year	Grade									
	I		II		III		IV		V	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1990	4.7	5.1	4.7	5.3	5.1	7.4	5.7	7.8	3.9	6.9
1992	3.5	3.3	4.5	4.6	6.2	5.7	6.6	6.3	5.9	5.4
1994	3.6	3.1	4.1	4.0	5.8	5.4	5.4	5.8	5.4	5.4
1998	2.1	3.2	2.7	4.2	9.1	8.1	8.7	6.0	5.8	4.8
2002	8.2	8.0	7.0	6.9	9.8	9.7	8.6	8.4	5.8	5.5
2003	7.5	7.3	6.7	6.6	8.6	8.4	7.6	7.4	4.7	4.4
2004	7.6	7.4	7.4	7.1	10.4	9.9	8.6	8.3	5.5	4.6

Source: DPE records for government and registered non-government primary schools

2.4 Drop-out

Table 10 provides the trend of dropouts in primary education over the period 1990-2004. In 1990, class wise variation was quite prominent. The average dropout rate was about 15 percent in each grade. Since 1990 the dropout rate started decreasing. There was a sharp reduction in dropout rate in 1998 and since then it showed an upward trend. In 2004, the average grade-wise dropout was 12 percent. (Table 10) The reasons for the sharp fall in dropout rate in 1998 are not clear. These dropout rates may underestimate the extent of dropouts, especially if they do not account fully for dropout between years rather than within years.

Table 10: Dropout rates by grade and gender in primary education

Year	Grade									
	I		II		III		IV		V	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1990	21.6	21.0	9.7	13.0	17.4	15.1	13.1	8.0	17.5	11.0
1992	19.0	20.3	8.0	8.4	14.0	14.7	7.0	7.3	8.0	7.9
1994	12.0	12.4	10.0	10.6	12.0	12.1	7.0	7.2	3.0	3.0
1998	11.8	10.0	14.0	10.1	9.7	8.6	4.9	6.0	8.4	6.6
2002	11.1	10.7	11.5	10.7	12.4	11.1	12.7	11.5	5.7	5.5
2003	12.4	11.5	12.7	11.7	13.5	11.9	15.3	14.1	4.6	4.2
2004	13.1	11.6	8.5	8.4	14.8	14.5	16.1	14.5	2.6	2.6

Source: DPE records for government and registered non-government primary schools

Promotion, repetition and dropout percentages for a grade in a year should add up to 100. This is not always the case in the above tables, which suggest weaknesses in the data collection and recording system.

Cohort dropout rates provided a better picture of how effectively the system works. It is seen that in 1991, out of 100 students admitted in Grade I, 60 dropped out before completion of Grade V. Table 11, based on data from DPE management information system collected from the field, shows that the cohort dropout rate has

decreased steadily from 60 percent in 1991 to 54 percent in 1994 and further to 48 percent in 2004. The cohort dropout rate was constructed by using the "reconstructed cohort analysis technique" suggested by UNESCO (UNESCO, 1994a), based on actual data for two consecutive years and assumptions, drawn from the actual data, applied to other years.

Table 11: Cycle (cohort) dropout rate

Year	Cycle (Cohort) Dropout Rate (%)
1991	60.00
1992	57.00
1993	54.80
1994	54.10
1995	54.00
1996	53.30
1997	51.00
1998	49.90
1999	49.60
2000	48.30
2001	47.20
2002	46.40
2003	49.40
2004	48.00

Source: DPE data for government and registered non-government primary schols

DPE data collected through its education management information system show a gradual improvement in the situation, but almost half of the students in primary education still dropped out. In official statements and documents, cohort dropouts of one-third of the students in primary education were being reported for recent years. There are weaknesses in the system of data collection, analysis and reporting, which have provided unreliable estimates for one of the key indicators of performance of the system. A sustained effort as well as a commitment is needed to improve analysis and reporting of data for critical indicators and their use for planning and management.

2.5 Coefficient of Efficiency

Coefficient of efficiency is the ratio of expected (ideal) number of pupil years for completion of a stage of education and total pupil years actually taken counting dropout and repetition. It is related to survival of pupils from grade 1 of primary education to grade 5 (the final year in Bangladesh). Without a public examination at the end of the primary stage in Bangladesh (now under consideration), completion rate is approximately the same as the rate of survival to grade 5.

2.6 Survival Rate to Grade 5

The percentage of a cohort of pupils who enrolled in the first grade of primary education in a given school year and who eventually reaches Grade 5 is the survival rate.

Table 12: Coefficient of efficiency and survival rate in primary education (1991-2004)

Year	Coefficient of efficiency (%)	Survival rates (%)
1991	51.6	55.3
1992	61.1	46.0
1993	54.5	62.5
1994	53.4	62.0
1995	59.9	48.0
1996	59.7	55.5
1997	60.1	60.6
1998	60.3	63.6
1999	64.5	53.1
2000	61.9	62.8
2001	61.9	63.1
2002	63.5	57.2
2003	62.2	53.3
2004	62.6	53.5

Source: DPE calculation from records for government and registered non-government primary schools

The trend in coefficient of efficiency shows a slow improvement, but survival rates have been fluctuating without showing any sustained improvement. (Table 12 and Figures 3 and 4). It is evident that the methodology and system of collecting, recording, analyzing and reporting data about indicators of efficiency need to be examined and ways of enhancing their validity, reliability and mutual consistency considered.

Figure 3: Coefficient of efficiency in primary education (1991-2004)
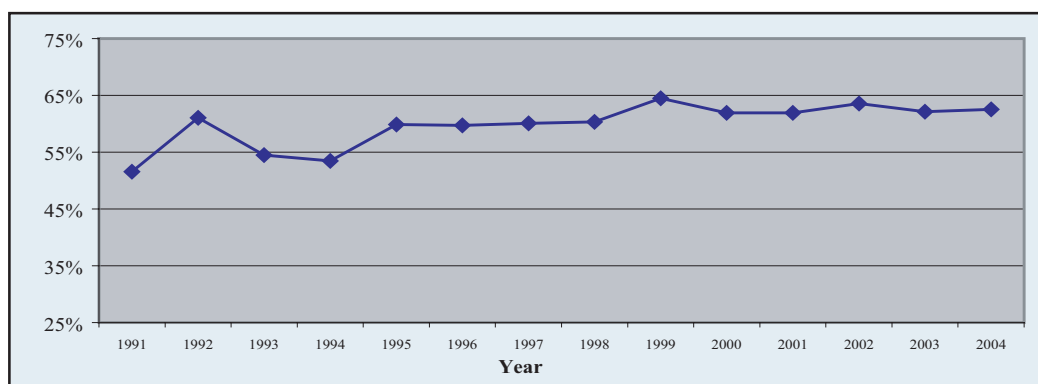
Source: Calculation from DPE data.

Figure 4: Survival rates in primary education (1991-2004)
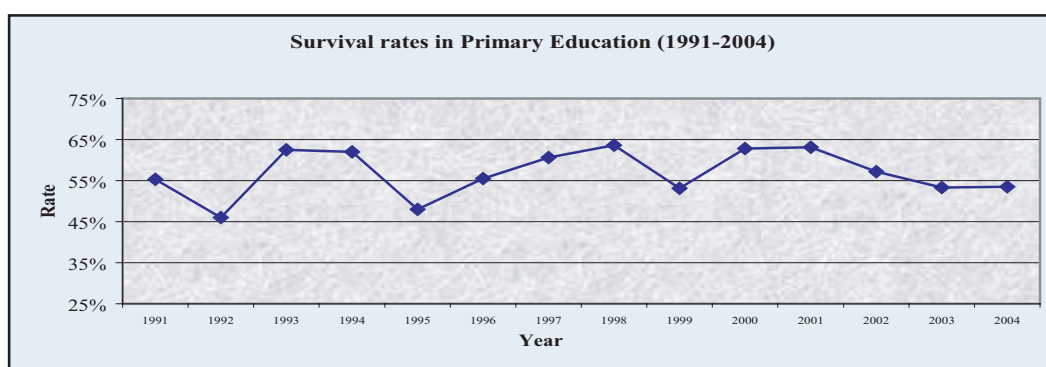
Source: Calculation from DPE data.

Having considered changing patterns of enrollment and internal efficiency, we now turn to analyse recent changes in transition rates and access to secondary education.

Chapter 3
Transition and Access to Secondary Education

The institutions imparting secondary education to most of the students are the non-government junior and high schools (which receive substantial government subvention and constitute 98 percent of general secondary schools), the government junior and high schools, cadet colleges, madrassas and English medium schools. These come under the purview of the Ministry of Education, whereas primary education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.

In 1988, there were 10,157 schools (2,267 junior and 7,890 secondary schools). The number rose to 17,386, in 2003, with the increase registered mostly for junior schools. The average annual growth rate was 3.6 percent. Enrollment in secondary education was 2.8 million in 1988, which rose to 8.1 million in 2003, indicating an annual growth rate of 7.3 percent.

The most distinct feature in secondary enrollment in the 1990s was that girl's enrollment increased at more than double the rate for boys. The growth in enrollment surpassed the growth of schools and teachers. Consequently, quality has been adversely affected.

3.1 Transition from Primary to Secondary Education

A student completing grade five from a primary school is eligible for admission to grade six in a secondary school. In principle, this is without the application of further selection criteria or an entry requirement.

Table 13: Transition rate from primary to secondary education (Percentage of grade 5 students enrolling in grade 6)

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2002	82.0	95.0	88.4
2003	88.7	96.2	92.4
2004	80.0	86.6	83.3

Source: BANBEIS (2004a), MOE and DPE official record

Figure 5: Transition rate of primary to secondary education (2002-2004)
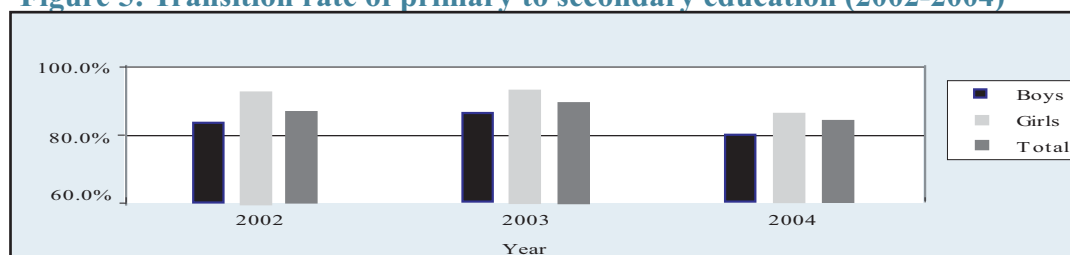
As Table 13 and Figure 5 show, in 2004, almost 17 percent of the children failed to move on to grade six from grade five. There appears to have been deterioration in transition compared to the previous two years. The transition rate is calculated as the percentage of students enrolled in grade six against students who were enrolled in grade five in the previous year. How dropout in grade five and actual completion and passing of the school-based annual examination at the end of grade five is taken into account are not clear. There is no public examination for primary education and formal screening or entry test for admission to grade six, except for any selection procedure used by individual schools when demand for admission is greater than accommodation. This is common in urban schools and schools with a good reputation.

3.2 Participation in Education of Secondary School Age Children

The gross enrollment ratio (number of children in grades 6-10, per 100 children of age 11-15) is given in Table 14.

Table 14: Gross enrollment ratio in secondary education, 1999 – 2005

Year	1999	2001	2003	2005
GER(Boys & Girls)	40	43	45	65
GER(Girls)	43	46	49	69
GER(Rural)	NA	NA	NA	63
GER(Urban)	NA	NA	NA	76

Source: BANBEIS, 2005 and *Education Watch* 2005

GER shows persistent growth during 1999-2005. The growth has been higher in case of girls compared to boys. The girls were ahead of boys and the urban children were ahead of rural children. *Education Watch* 2005 reveals marked variation between administrative divisions, highest in Khulna (70 percent) and lowest in Sylhet (43 percent) (Ahmed et al, 2006).

Table 15: Net Enrollment Ratio at Secondary Level, 2005.

Category	Rural		Urban		Bangladesh			Deficit Household	Surplus Household	Mother's Education	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Both			No Edn.	Graduates.
NER	38	50	51	57	40	51	45	25	59	31	86

Source: *Education Watch* 2005

Net Enrollment Ratio (Table 15) reflects participation and exclusion of children in the designated age-group. The official information system does not provide net enrollment figures at the secondary level. Data presented here for 2005 are based on a national sample survey conducted by *Education Watch*. The survey reveals a significant gender disparity in enrollment - in this case 11 percentage points advantage in favour of girls – as well as rural-urban gap, poor-rich gap, and parental education gap.

Education Watch 2005 survey also shows the distribution of children in the secondary age-group in different types of educational institutions (Table 16). Almost a quarter of secondary school age children are in primary school. As many as 28 percent of children were not enrolled in any school at any level.

Table 16: Percentage distribution of 11-15 years old children by schooling status

Schooling status	All (14,664)	Girls (7,340)	Boys (7,324)	Rural (11,293)	Urban (3,371)
Pre-primary	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Primary	24.4	23.9	24.9	25.6	17.3
Junior secondary	32.3	35.9	28.7	31.7	35.5
Secondary	12.9	14.8	11.0	11.9	18.5
Non-graded madrassas	1.9	0.7	3.1	2.1	0.9
Out of school	28.4	24.6	32.1	28.5	27.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figures in parentheses indicate number of children aged 11-15 years in the sample.
Source: *Education Watch* Household Survey, 2005.

More than three quarters of the students study in non-government secondary schools. Madrassas constitute the next largest provider of secondary education (Table 17).

Table 17: Percentage distribution of students by type of school, area of residence and sex

School type	All Bangladesh			Rural Bangladesh			Urban Bangladesh		
	Girls	Boys	Both	Girls	Boys	Both	Girls	Boys	Both
Dakhil madrassa	10.7	11.5	11.0	12.0	13.3	12.5	3.9	2.4	3.2
Higher madrassa	2.8	3.7	3.2	3.1	4.2	3.6	1.4	1.7	1.5
Junior secondary	1.8	1.2	1.5	2.0	1.4	1.7	0.8	0.3	0.6
Non-govt. secondary	76.1	73.6	74.9	77.4	75.5	76.6	69.1	64.0	66.7
Government secondary	5.5	6.5	6.0	3.8	3.5	3.7	14.2	21.5	17.6
School & college	2.4	2.2	2.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	8.5	7.1	7.9
Others	0.7	1.3	1.0	0.4	1.0	0.7	2.2	2.9	2.5
N	4,422	3,751	8,173	2,178	2,735	6,013	1,144	1,016	2,160

Note: Others include English medium, vocational and trade schools.
Source: *Education Watch* Household Survey, 2005.

3.3 Gross and Net Enrollment by Food Security Status at the Secondary Level.

Enrollment and socio-economic status are inversely related. The food security status of families, i.e whether they have an adequate supply of staple grains throughout the year for family consumption, is used in the *Education Watch* household survey as the proxy for socio-economic status of households. The enrollment level is lowest for the poorest group and highest for the surplus group. (Figure 6)

Figure 6: Net and gross enrollment rates by food security status (secondary level)
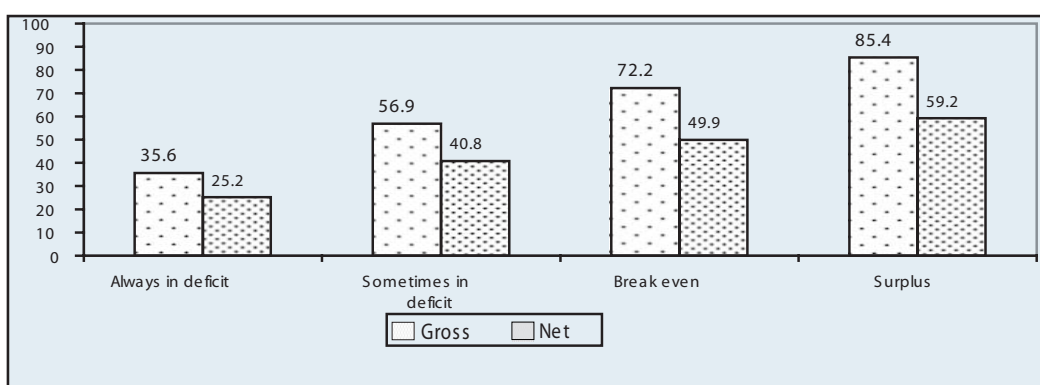
Source: *Education Watch* Household Survey 2005

3.4 Internal Efficiency in Secondary Education

This section examines completion, drop-out, survival, co-efficient of efficiency, promotion, repetition rates in different classes, attendance and also performance of students in the SSC and HSC examinations.

Bangladesh secondary entry education has a high drop-out rate, and consequently a low completion rate. The drop-out rates of children entering secondary grade six and completing grade ten were reported in data provided by BANBEIS to be 65 percent in 1999, and 83 percent in 2003 (Table 18). The situation was worse in the case of girls and appears to have been deteriorating substantially over time, although no specific explanation was provided in the official sources.

Table 18: Completion, drop-out, survival rate and coefficient of efficiency in Secondary Education, 1999-2003

Year	Gender	Completion rate	Drop-out rate	Survival rate	Coefficient of efficiency
1999	Both	35.3	64.7	62.3	40.3
	Male	38.5	61.5	62.6	44.1
	Female	31.7	68.3	61.9	36.0
2001	Both	17.2	82.8	57.3	25.2
	Male	20.3	79.7	58.7	24.0
	Female	14.0	86.0	55.7	15.8
2003	Both	16.6	83.4	49.4	20.2
	Male	19.5	80.5	50.8	23.7
	Female	13.7	86.3	48.3	16.7

Source: BANBEIS 2005

3.5 Promotion, Repetition and Grade-wise Dropout in Secondary Education

Data on promotion rates (Table 19) show higher promotion rates in grades 6, 7 and 8 and lower in 9 and lowest in grade 10. In lower classes girls' performance was better, while in higher classes it was worse compared to boys. The trend was erratic, first improving and then worsening in the beginning of the decade since 2001, especially in grade 10.

Table 19: Promotion rates by classes and gender in secondary education

Year	Grade									
	VI		VII		VIII		IX		X	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1990	87.0	80.1	81.0	77.7	71.0	70.6	73.0	72.7	65.0	63.3
1993	87.0	80.3	88.0	82.0	81.0	81.0	83.0	82.7	64.0	57.7
1996	92.0	87.0	90.0	87.4	83.0	86.1	85.0	85.3	77.0	68.7
2002	87.3	89.1	87.6	92.1	88.5	83.9	71.3	66.8	35.9	29.2
2003	84.0	84.2	83.9	87.0	84.9	80.3	68.1	68.4	27.6	23.3

Source: BANBEIS

Repetition is a chronic phenomenon in secondary education and has been a major source of wastage. Table 20 shows that the situation has been improving in lower grades, but worsening in grade ten.

The overall attendance rate was 71 percent in 2003 with no variation between boys and girls. Attendance was slightly better in lower classes compared to higher classes. *Education Watch* 2005 survey shows a significantly lower rate of 50 percent, estimated on the basis of a head count in sample classrooms. It reveals that attendance was the lowest in junior schools, low in non-government schools and Madrassas and better in government schools. However, the overall high non-attendance is a matter of concern for improving the quality of education.

3.7 SSC and HSC Examination Pass Rates

In 2001, only 35 percent students passed the SSC examination. The situation improved over the years, but not uniformly. Boys did well compared to girls. (Table 23)

Table 23: SSC and HSC examination pass rate

Years	Percent pass in SSC		Percent Pass in H.SC	
	Both	Girls	Both	Girls
2001	35	34	28	30
2002	41	38	27	28
2003	36	34	38	38
2004	48	46	48	47
2005	53	50	-	-

Source: BANBEIS 2005

The gender difference shows that boys were slightly ahead of girls in SSC examination, while in HSC girls performed better in 2001, 2002, but worse in 2004. Large year to year variation indicates weaknesses in the validity and reliability of the secondary level public examinations.

3.8 Retention Rates at Various Grades of Secondary Education

Retention rates at various grades are important indicators designed to measure internal efficiency. The rates sharply declined at higher grades. Among children enrolled in class 6 only 20 percent successfully completed secondary education by passing the public examination at the end of grade 10. (Table 24 and Figure 7)

Table 24: Retention rates in secondary education by grades and gender, 2004 – 2005

Stages	Sex		
	Girls	Boys	Both
Class 6	100.0	100.0	100.0
Class 7	84.4	82.1	83.4
Class 8	71.2	72.4	71.7
Class 9	63.6	68.8	65.8
Class 10	45.4	51.2	47.8
Pass in test exam.	32.4	49.7	39.8
Pass in SSC/Dakhil Exam	15.5	26.4	20.1

Source: *Education Watch* Survey, 2005

Retention figures and the indicated cohort dropout of 80 percent revealed by the EW survey in 2005 (Ahmed et al, 2006) are consistent with official data for completion and dropout cited above.

Figure 7: Survival and completion in types of secondary institutions
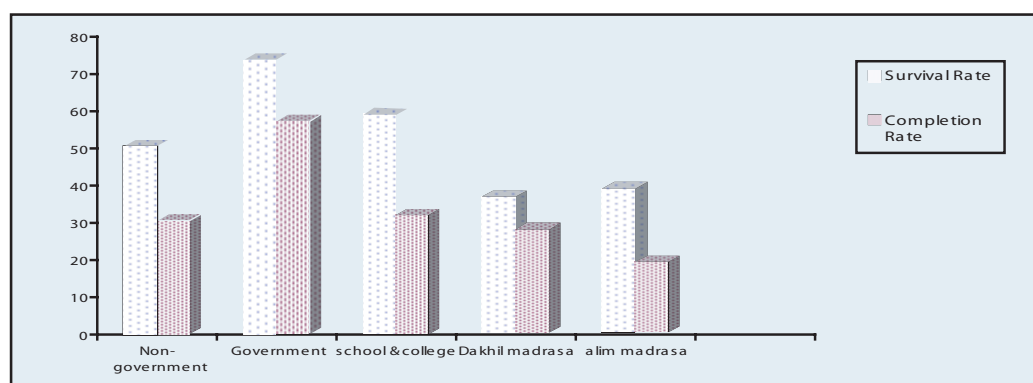
Source: *Education Watch* Survey 2005

Survival rate is the percentage of students enrolled in grade six who are eventually selected for the SSC examination. Completion rate is the percentage of students enrolled in grade six who passed SSC examination.

Chapter 4

Review of Access by Zones of Exclusion and Vulnerability

In this section the data on access and participation presented above will be examined further by applying the analytical categories of four zones of exclusion articulated in developing the conceptual framework for research in CREATE. The four zones of exclusion or vulnerability refers to i) non-access at the age of entry and, therefore, those who never enrolled in primary education, ii) dropout before completion of the primary level, iii) nominally enrolled but intellectually not engaged in learning – therefore, virtually excluded and vulnerable to dropping out, and iv) not progressing to lower secondary education after completing primary education.

4.1 Exclusion Zone 1: Children without Access

Exclusion zone 1 refers to children of primary age group who are out of school and have never enrolled themselves in any type of primary level institution at the entry level.

As noted earlier, according to official data, at least ten percent of the children in the primary school age group of six to ten years were not enrolled in 2004. Although overall proportions or ratios of enrollment and non-enrollment were provided in official staistics, the identity, characteristics and distribution of the excluded were not investigated systematically. Available information suggests overlapping characteristics and categories of the excluded groups in terms of socio-economic and other attributes, as described below.

4.1.1   Extreme Poor

It is generally agreed that poverty has hindered access to education. Bangladesh has witnessed a modest reduction in poverty by about one percentage point a year in recent years. It came down from 58.8 percent of the population in 1991/92 to 49.8 percent in 2000 (BBS HIES, 2000). During 1999-2004, poverty had shrunk further to between 40 percent and 42 percent (MOF, 2005). There are, however, the hardcore poor or "ultra poor" who constituted between 20 percent (PRSP) and 27 percent (other sources) of the population. In absolute numbers, the size of the hardcore poor stood between 28 and 37.8 million persons, depending on the estimate accepted. By UNDP MDG poverty line measures covering the period 1990-2003, 36 percent of Bangladesh population lived on an income of less than US $1 a day and 82.8 percent on US $2 or less a day (UNDP, 2005). Applying the ratio of primary school age population in the total population (14 percent), the number of children of primary school age in the population characterized as the extreme poor in 2004 was between 3.9 to 5.3 million. Assuming that, as noted earlier, 10 percent of children do not enrol, the number of children between 6 and 11 years old who had never enrolled in 2004 can be estimated to be 1.7 million. These numbers suggest at least two important questions which deserve investigation: i) To what

extent is there an overlap between non-enrolled children and children from families in the extremely poor category? ii) Why do some children from the extremely poor category enroll and others do not and what happens to the children who enroll in respect of their participation and progress in schools?

4.1.2   Women-Headed Families

The PRSP mentions the high vulnerability of women-headed families. The population census 2001 (BBS, 2003a) reveals that 3.8 percent of the population (140 million in 2006) or 5.3 million were widows. Another 0.36 percent or 0.50 million were divorced or separated females. Together they added up to some 5.8 million female-headed households. The assumption of a hardcore poverty ratio of 25 percent in this population would yield a number of 1.45 million extremely poor households. Counting one school-age child per family provides a number of 1.45 million children who could be vulnerable to being deprived of access to formal schools. This number is not an actual estimate of vulnerable children in women-headed families, but it suggests an order of magnitude and indicates the need for further investigation.

4.1.3   Working Children

According to ILO, child labour is work "that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of opportunity to attend school by obliging them to leave school prematurely or by requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work" (ILO/IPU, 2002). National Child Labour Survey[1] (NCLS), 2002-03 estimated that the 5-14 age group child population was 35 million in January, 2003. The survey found 5.05 million of these children were in child labour. Among the child workers, 1.3 million (0.12m girls) were engaged in "hazardous work" or "Worst Forms of Child Labour" under ILO Convention 182 of 1999. Bangladesh ratified this Convention in 2001. The Child Labour Survey revealed that 17.8 percent children engaged in child labour did not attend school as their parents were "unable to bear the educational expenses", 8 percent were "weak" in education, 2.4 percent were physically disabled, and 4 percent did not attend school by the families' choice. (BBS, 2003c)

4.1.4   Street Children

NCLS excluded children living in the streets and those in institutions (prisons, orphanages, etc). These are highly significant groups in terms of deprivation of access to education. One definition of the street child cited in a BIDS (BIDS/DSS, 1999) study is: "A street child is any minor for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, it also meant unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become his/her habitual abode and who is without adequate protection". UNICEF defines "street children are those who are of the street and on the street." This group of children is in the most critical situation without any protection from a hostile environment. UNICEF labels them as 'children in difficult circumstances' or 'children at high risk'. (UNICEF, 2005)

A BIDS survey in 2002 covering the six metropolitan cities and five major district towns found 429,813 street children, with a boy: girl ratio of 79:21. A Department of Social Services (DSS) of the Ministry of Social Welfare survey in 1999 found the boy: girl ratio to be 53:47. Using head and informant counting and trend analysis BIDS projection shows that the street children population in 11 major cities would rise to 760,000 in 2014 (BIDS/DSS, 2004). About 100,000 children attend drop-in centers offering non-formal education run by the Department of Social Services and some NGOs. That left out more than 300,000 children in need of access to basic education.

4.1.5 Children with Special Needs

By WHO standards, 10 percent of the population suffer one or another type of disability. Children with special needs include those challenged by physical disability such as loss or impairment of limbs and impaired vision, hearing and speech; and mental disability like autism, memory impairment, etc. The population Census 2001 (BBS, 2003b) gives a figure of 2.84 percent of the population below age 65 who have one or another disability. BBS Health and Demographic Survey 2000 (BBS, 2001) found that 6.04 persons per 1000 suffered some disability of physical or mental nature.

There are children discriminated by social norms, such as children of sex workers and children from families involved hereditarily in sanitation work. Estimates of numbers of these children excluded from education due to social prejudices are not available.

Children in the age of group 5-15 years with physical disabilities amount to 0.33 percent or about 450,000. No reliable estimate is yet available about the number of children with autism or other mental challenges. NGOs working with physically challenged groups provide much higher figures for their clientele groups. The PRSP also considers the census figures as too low. It suggests that the Health sector should undertake development of a database, which should be disaggregated by types of disabilities, age groups and gender. The Ministry of Social Welfare has undertaken a survey of physically challenged persons. Its outcome should provide a baseline that can be updated periodically in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with the support of BBS.

4.1.6 Ethnic/Language Minorities

There are more than 45 different ethnic communities in Bangladesh who live in isolated or remote areas of the country. They form just under 2 percent of the country's population and in absolute number come close to two and half million. The majority of them are in the three Chittagong hill districts. Clusters of others are found in greater Sylhet and Mymensingh districts, and North and Southwestern regions and coastal areas. Some groups follow one of the three major religions in the country and others are animists. Ethnic communities have their own languages and dialects and a rich and colourful cultural heritage. However, most of their languages have no script. UNICEF supported ECCE programme in the hill districts is using ethnic

languages where possible in classrooms. The need for using ethnic languages in basic education programmes has been raised in NPA and other education forums.

Going by the fact that the 5-15 age group forms 28 percent of the population, children in this group among the ethnic communities would come to about 686,000, who live in small, isolated and remote communities. The terrain of the hill areas poses a problem for children, if they want to go to regular schools, as they would have to traverse distances without easy access to roads. All indigenous children are not in the same situation regarding education services. It is necessary to assess the availability and quality of services as well as the different dimensions of access to education of indigenous children.

4.1.7   Inhabitants of Remote/Inaccessible Areas

Groups within the population live in isolated and remote areas, such as *chars* (new land mass formed by alluvial deposits), *haor/baor* (large inland water bodies) areas, and coastal and island areas. These people are engaged in fishing and seasonal agriculture. Mainstream schools are far away from their habitations. It is very difficult for children in these groups to cross the water bodies or negotiate the long distances to reach school. Exact numbers of these populations and the educational and other social services available to them have not been properly assessed.

4.2 Exclusion Zone 2: Dropout/Pushout

This zone deals with the dropout phenomenon which affects the largest proportions of children among both primary and secondary school students and the respective age groups. Dropout has various facets. Some children dropout for reasons of poverty – the family's inability to bear the costs. The other side of this is the opportunity cost. Children in poor families generally help with household chores, running errands, caring for the younger siblings and so on. The child's absence from home for the school hours hampers these essential family activities. Some children help with the family's income earning activities and absence from these means loss of income. Other children actually work for wages and earn an income for the family.

Push-out can occur because of overcrowding in schools, harsh and un-friendly learning environments, and peer problems. A new phenomenon is also at work, which is under-reporting or double reporting. Some children enrolled in GPS in January dropout by March and may register with an NGO learning centre. The school continues to report the number of children who were on roll at the beginning of the year. Since the children in NGO centres do not appear on government records, they are caught in a statistical black hole. There is also some cross enrollment between regular schools and madrassas.

Government statistics do not provide data on the socio-economic background of students. Only specific studies such as the *Education Watch* 2003/4 and 2005 (Ahmed et al, 2005 & 2006) shed light on vulnerability to dropping out, as shown in Table 25.

Table 25: Children (6-10 years) currently non-enrolled and dropouts by food security status

Enrollment status	Percentage of children by food security status (Total numbers in sample in parentheses)			
	Always in deficit	Sometimes in deficit	Break-even	Surplus
Enrolled	67.6 (142)	87.4 (1,030)	90.8 (2,087)	95.3 (1,435)
Dropout	7.1 (15)	3.1 (37)	2.8 (68)	1.3 (19)
Never enrolled	25.2 (53)	9.4 (111)	6.4 (148)	3.5 (52)
Total	100 (210)	100 (1,178)	100 (2,299)	100 (1,506)

Source: *Education Watch* School Catchment Area Household Survey, 2004

Table 26: Distribution of dropout children of age 6-14 by grade and sex

Grade last attended	Boys (n=438)	Girls (n=261)	Both (n=699)
Pre-primary	0.9	1.9	1.3
Grade I	17.8	13.8	16.3
Grade II	13.9	10.0	12.4
Grade III	18.5	12.3	16.2
Grade IV	11.9	10.7	11.4
Grade V	20.8	29.9	24.2
Grades VI-VIII	13.7	18.4	15.5
Grades IX-X	1.1	3.1	1.9
Non-graded religious	1.4	0.0	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *Education Watch* 2003/4 School Catchment Area Household Survey

Figure 8. Grade-wise retention rate based on reconstructed cohort analysis
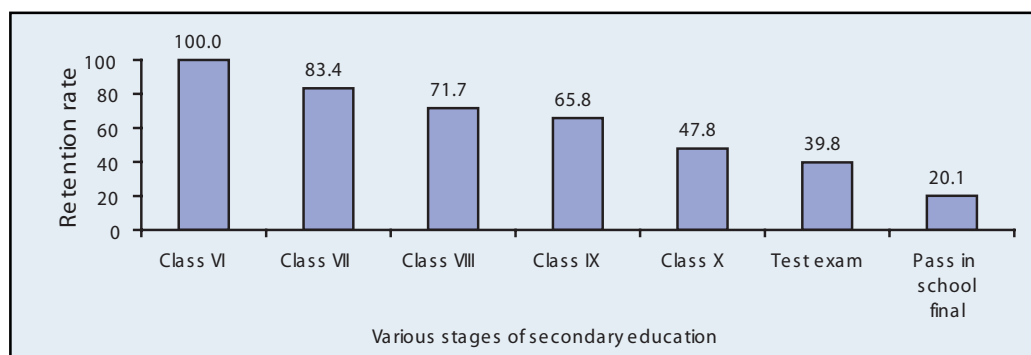
Source: *Education Watch* 2005, Figure 6.3

Table 26 shows that children dropped out from all grades in the school, but there was a peaking at grade 5, the last grade of primary school. This suggests an effort by children and their families to continue in school, and not to give up, until the obstacles to continuing in school, from their perspective, became overwhelming. A larger proportion of girls dropped out from grade 5, despite incentives such as free tuition and stipends in secondary schools for girls from rural areas. Social and economic barriers to a girl's continuation in secondary education including distance from home to a secondary school are yet to be fully overcome.

Figure 8 shows a steady decrease in participation from grade six to ten – of every 100 who began class six, only twenty completed 10th grade.

4.3 Exclusion Zone 3: Virtual/ Silent Dropout

Children physically present in class but psychologically and intellectually absent and therefore not participating and engaging in learning, is a phenomenon that affects a large proportion of children, both at primary and secondary levels. In magnitude, it is next to dropout (exclusion zone 2), but definitely much larger than non-enrollment (zone 1) and non-transition from primary to secondary level (zone 4). Yet this area has not been given specific attention in programmes and strategies and its quantitative and qualitative dimensions are not well understood. This area is appropriately seen as a domain of quality of education, but it clearly has access and participation implications. In this third zone of exclusion, access and quality issues interact and overlap most directly.

Factors which have impact on virtual exclusion originate in both school and home and often interact to magnify the adverse consequences. *Education Watch* 2003/4, based on a survey of households and schools in ten sample upazilas (sub-districts), indicates a number of such factors:

•47 percent of the mothers and 43 percent of the fathers of primary school children in the upazilas were without any schooling. Both parents were without education for a third of the children. Almost half of the children can be regarded as "first generation learners" if the criterion regarding

mothers' education is applied. Inability of parents to guide and help their children, and the likely economic disadvantage of these families, affect how the first generation learners perform in school.

- Private tutors for primary school children have become a norm. Forty three percent of the children had private tutors; they paid an average of Tk. 152 per month for eight months in a year. Eighteen percent of the children from "deficit" families and 57 percent from "surplus" families (in respect of supply of staple food for the family) had private tutors. Children who most needed extra help with their studies received the least help from private tutoring.

- Low average school attendance, about 60 percent, encapsulated many factors related to both the operation of the school and the family situation of the child. Causes identified were children's need to help at home either regularly or for seasonal farm work, ill health or sickness of the child or a parent, acute family economic problems, and falling behind in lessons with no help to catch up from teacher or at home. Without the capacity of school and willingness or ability of teachers to help the child to catch up, any disruption set in motion a vicious spiral of further lag, more absences, and eventual dropping out.

- Children with special needs, especially those with disabilities, and children of ethnic minorities whose mother tongue is not Bangla, form a special dimension in the picture of deprivation in primary education (Ahmed et al, 2005).

4.3.1 Absenteeism and Repetition

The *Education Watch* 2003/4 survey roughly matched the official estimate of about 60 percent average attendance in class - with a higher rate for GPS and non-formal school, and lower attendance rate in RNGPS and madrassas. (Table 27)

Table 27: Primary school attendance rate by school type and sex

School type	Boys	Girls	Both
Government	64.7	67.2	66.0
RNGPS	58.0	59.4	58.7
Madrassa	54.3	58.9	56.5
Non-formal	65.9	64.1	64.9

Source: *Education Watch* 2003/4, Annex Table 5.4

Teachers recognised absenteeism as a problem and saw this as a precursor to dropout. Focus groups identified the following causes behind absenteeism:

- Children, especially those from poor families needed to help parents at home. This became a more acute problem seasonally in relation to farm work.

Natural disasters such as floods and heavy rain caused disruption in school and kept children from class, which affected the poor families more severely.

- Lagging behind in lessons, not able to do home work and the fear of being punished or abused for this reason were seen important causes for staying away from school. Once this happened, this became the beginning of a slippery slope.

- Lack of parental care and support. Teachers were of the view that the absence of parents' concern, support and guidance, when the child faced any problem at school or in school work, was a major factor that led to absence, repetition of years, and dropping out. The lack of parental concern often actually was lack of ability to help children and understand how the child could be helped - again often a problem related to family socio-economic and education status.

- Visiting relatives and social obligations. Social and family obligations, visiting relatives and attending to family duties, were seen as a cause for absenteeism. This again related to parents' lack of understanding about the child's educational needs.

- Ill health and sickness. When these causes kept children from school, normally there was no opportunity to make up and catch up in school unless a special arrangement was made with the help of private tutors (Ahmed et al, 2005)

4.3.2   Child Labour

Child labour and the ability and opportunity to participate in education are closely linked. The status of child labour in the upazilas and how it related to children's participation in education was examined in the *Education Watch* household survey. Child labour was defined as "participation in any type of work for at least three hours during three successive days prior to the interview."

Table 28: Child labour by economic status among children aged 6-14 years

Economic status	Number of students	Only student (%)	Both student & worker (%)	Only worker (%)	Neither (%)
Always in deficit	353	41.4	25.2	17.8	15.6
Sometimes in deficit	2,010	51.3	31.2	11.4	6.0
Break even	3,836	56.8	30.3	7.4	5.4
Surplus	2,590	61.8	30.7	5.3	2.2
Total	8,789	56.5	30.4	8.1	5.0

Source: *Education Watch* 2003/4, Table 5.5

Table 28 shows that 43 percent of the children of age 6-14 years were engaged in child labour as defined in the survey. Thirty percent of the children were both students and workers simultaneously. However among the very poor, ("household always in food deficit"), over 40 percent were students who did not work, and one-third were in child labour or without employment, but not in school. A quarter of the children in this category were both students and engaged in work. By contrast, in the "surplus" households, 62 percent were only students, 31 percent were both students and workers, and only 7.5 percent were non-students. The data did not specifically establish if and how child labour affected children's education.

4.3.3 Other Factors Related to Virtual Exclusion

There could be a variety of reasons for being inattentive, absent-minded or non-participant in class. On one extreme could be autism or other psychological conditions which teachers, even with PTI training, are not equipped to recognize. It could also be due to a number of other problems, such as the child being hungry, problems at home, peer group problems, and other social and psychological factors. Above all are the classroom teaching-learning practices, which may not engage and motivate the child. These factors call for further investigation to complement available sporadic evidence. (See *Education Watch* 2003/4, ch. 6, "Ensuring Better Learning")

There is no systematic and agreed mechanism in the primary and secondary education levels for assessing and monitoring participation and learning of pupils. At the primary stage, there is so far no end-of-cycle public assessment. A public examination for primary education is planned to be introduced. No standard achievement benchmarks exist for skills by grades in key subject areas such as mathematics and language. These could be used to assess how far students are engaged in learning and how students, teachers and schools are performing.

4.4 Exclusion Zone 4: No Transition to/ Early Dropout from Secondary Stage

As noted earlier, available data suggest a relatively high transition rate from primary to secondary level, but effective participation beyond initial entry into secondary school remains low. *Education Watch* 2005, in the absence of collection and analysis of relevant information through a management information system, provides some insight into the state of participation in secondary education:

- Enrollment of girls has surged ahead of boys by 11 percentage points at 50.6 percent compared to 39.6 percent for boys on a net basis. This has been a broad-based progress across geographical areas and socio-economic strata.

- There remains a large urban-rural gap of 10 percentage points – at 43.6 percent net enrollment in rural areas and 54.0 percent in urban rates. Slums in large urban cities fare the worst with only 18 percent net enrollment.

- Economic status and parental education are closely correlated with education participation. Children of households with "surplus" food availability have more than double the chance of being in school than children in "deficit" households. (Table 29) Three quarters of children of mothers with secondary education are in secondary school compared with 31 percent for mothers with no formal education.

●On reasons for non-participation, two responses stood out – "scarcity of money" or poverty, and children's "dislike of school", which indicates problems in respect of classroom practices. The third most frequent response was the need for the child to work, which is linked to poverty. Poverty appears to be the predominant cause of non-participation in secondary education as shown in Tables 29 and 30. (Ahmed et al, 2006)

Table 29: Net enrollment rate at secondary level by gender and yearly food security status of household

Food security status of household	Gender			Level of significance
	Girls	**Boys**	**Both**	
Always in deficit	29.4 (1,167)	21.3 (1,240)	25.2 (2,407)	p<0.001
Sometimes in deficit	46.1 (2,010)	35.8 (2,045)	40.8 (4,055)	p<0.001
Break-even	56.0 (2,400)	43.7 (2,388)	49.9 (4,788)	p<0.001
Surplus	64.0 (1,742)	54.2 (1,628)	59.2 (3,370)	p<0.001
Level of significance	p<0.001	p<0.001	p<0.001	

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate number of children aged 11-15 years
Source: *Education Watch* 2005, Table 4.6

Table 30: Percentage distribution of 11-15 years out-of-school children by causes of non-enrollment, residence and gender

Causes	All Bangladesh (%)			Rural Bangladesh (%)			Urban Bangladesh (%)		
	Girls	**Boys**	**Both**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Both**	**Girls**	**Boys**	**Both**
Scarcity of money	50.0	46.6	48.1	46.8	45.8	46.2	66.8	52.2	59.5
Child dislikes school	14.7	30.3	23.6	15.7	30.1	24.0	9.4	31.5	20.4
Child works at/outside home	7.2	11.1	9.4	7.7	11.9	10.1	4.6	5.1	4.8
Marriage	8.3	0.2	3.7	8.8	0.2	3.8	5.7	0.0	2.9
Unsuccessful in exam	2.9	2.6	2.7	3.1	2.6	2.8	2.2	2.6	2.4
Disability	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.3	0.4	2.6	1.5
School is too far from home	3.1	1.5	2.2	3.6	1.6	2.4	0.7	0.2	0.4
No use of education	1.5	2.2	1.9	1.5	2.3	2.0	1.7	2.0	1.9
Security concerns	3.2	0.0	1.4	3.6	0.1	1.5	1.3	0.2	0.8
Admission refused in school	1.4	0.5	0.9	1.4	0.4	0.9	1.3	0.9	1.1
Others	5.5	2.8	4.0	5.5	2.8	3.9	5.9	2.6	4.3
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: *Education Watch* 2005, Table 4.11

4.5 Some Common Factors Affecting Exclusion

4.5.1 Learning Provisions and Facilities

At the primary level, there is a serious insufficiency of provision, creating a deficit of the order of 50 to 60 percent in terms of schools, classrooms and teachers, if criteria for acceptable quality for provisions are applied. The present situation strongly indicates the need for a process and mechanism for upazila-based comprehensive and participatory planning, with local analysis of needs and circumstances, for rational and adequate provision to ensure quality primary education for all children (Ahmed et al, 2005)

Only about a half of the secondary schools have science laboratories of varying quality; only 15 percent of the institutions have a library with a collection of books that could be regarded as adequate. Half of the physical facilities (roofs, walls, floors, doors, and windows) of secondary education institutions could be considered adequate, one third were in poor condition and 18 percent were in damaged or seriously dilapidated condition. Nearly 60 percent of institutions had electricity connections, but two-thirds of classrooms and half of teachers' rooms had no electricity.

Three quarters of schools were with separate facilities for boys and girls; but a quarter of the toilets were in a seriously unhygienic condition (Ahmed et al, 2006)

MOPME policy and PEDP II seek to have a distribution of primary schools with a distance of 2 kilometers between them. At present, the average distance between two schools works out to be close to 2 kilometers, although in specific circumstances, depending on the terrain, the distances can be much greater. PEDP II further aims that: i) Classrooms should be properly constructed with durable materials, provide well-lighted and properly ventilated environment for learning. Construction standards should be same for rural as for urban areas; and ii) Classrooms should be of sufficient size and furnished to suit the age and size of children and encourage the use of student-centered activity and enquiry based methods (GoB, 2003).

The National Education Commission 2003 (GoB, 2003) recommended establishing a primary school for every 1500 population. This target for school provision would require adding 10 to 12 thousand schools in addition to the current 82,000. Improving facilities in over 7,000 ibtidayee madrassas, over 3,500 community schools and an estimated 2,000 non-registered primary schools can meet in part the demand for additional schools.

The PEDP II principle is to reserve 20 percent of new school construction in each Upazila for remote and un-served areas. NFPE provisions of NGOs such as those of BRAC are based on the premise that a school in the neighbourhood in proximity to children's home is necessary to reach children who are not attending formal primary school for various reasons. The proposed PRSP strategy for increasing access to primary education is to "recognize, encourage, facilitate and support the role of non-formal and complementary second chance primary education". However, a plan has not been developed so far to initiate coordinated and area-based local planning of education provisions involving government and non-government providers.

The secondary schools have on average a catchment area of 8.5 km² each. A major objective of Secondary Education Sector Improvement Project (SESIP) is "expanding equitable access to secondary education through provision in underserved areas and stipends for girls in rural areas".The PRSP target is to increase gross enrollment rates by 50 percent for all levels of secondary education; at junior secondary level from 60 to 90 percent and at secondary level from around 45 percent to 66 percent. New schools in underserved areas and area-based planning at the local level should help bring secondary schools closer to the homes of children.

4.5.2   Teachers

Insufficiency of teachers in primary schools is a common problem. The GPSs are overcrowded, with a teacher student ratio of 1:66. RNGPSs are slightly better with a ratio of at 1:54, but the teachers are generally less qualified. In 2005, about 92 percent of the GPS and almost all RNGPSs were run on double shifts that results in reduced contact hours.The PEDP II goal is to increase the number of schools with a single shift to over 30 percent by 2009, thereby increasing contact hours. If this goal is achieved on time, which is not likely, 70 percent of the schools would still operate in double shifts.

According to the *Education Watch* Survey 2004, in 10 upazilas, eighty percent of the schools had four or less teachers, 21 percent three or less. On an average, 30 percent schools had more than 60 students per teacher; over two-thirds had more than 40 students per teacher. The average teacher student ratio in the ten upazilas surveyed by *Education Watch* was 1:53 – somewhat better than the national average. There was a substantial variation in this ratio among the upazilas. The range was 37 to 90 students per teacher for GPS and 34 to 95 students per teacher for RNGPS (Ahmed et al, 2005)

A low level of academic achievement of teachers in secondary institutions was widespread. Eighty-four percent of secondary teachers had a bachelors or higher degrees; however, 57 percent of the teachers claiming the Bachelors degree were placed in the third division or even did not take the degree examination. The same was the situation with 78 percent of those who claimed Masters' qualifications. More than half of the secondary teachers had no professional pedagogic training.

The nominal student-teacher ratio was 29. However, with a shortage of teachers for key subjects and absences (10 percent on an average day), the effective student teacher ratio was substantially higher. This was offset by student attendance rate of only 50 percent (Ahmed et al, 2006)

The PEDP II aims to apply the principle of one teacher per classroom and to train all teachers to C-in-Ed standard before sending teachers to carry out teaching independently. PEDP II strategy for teacher development emphasizes that:

- All teachers should be trained to at least Certificate- in- Education (C. in Ed.) standard, and no untrained teacher should be in un-supervised charge of a class or grade level.

- The minimum qualification for entry to teacher training should be Higher Secondary Certificate (H.S.C.) level.

- Initial pre-service teacher training should include both theory and practice and involve regular periods of supervised practicum in schools, specifically designated and supported for training purposes.

- All teachers, irrespective of school type, should receive regular, annual in-service training, together with sub-cluster training, and

- All teachers should be provided with the texts, teacher guides, aids and equipment, for each class and subject taught. (GoB, 2003)

At the secondary level, the Ministry of Education has established a Secondary Teachers Registration and Certification Authority in 2005 and plans to set up an apex body to serve as the National Teacher Training Authority.

4.6 Causes of Non-Enrollment and Dropout- View from Families

Data regarding reasons for not enrolling in or dropping out from primary schools collected from the *Education Watch* school catchment area household survey are presented in Table 31. (Ahmed et al, 2005) About a quarter of the never-enrolled children did not enroll due to "scarcity of money" or poverty of the household. Over forty percent of who dropped out indicated poverty as the reason for dropping out. This cause for not enrolling or not continuing in school was strongly endorsed in focus group discussions and interviews.

Table 31: **Reasons for non-enrollment and dropout of children of age 6-14 (Percentage distribution by gender)**

Reason	Never enrolled			Dropout		
	Boys (N272)	Girls (N193)	Both (N465)	Boys (N433)	Girls (N253)	Both (N686)
School is too far from home	1.5	5.2	3.0	1.2	2.0	1.5
Scarcity of money	21.0	29.5	24.5	39.9	43.7	41.3
School refused admission	19.9	21.8	20.6	1.6	3.1	2.2
No use of education	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.1
Has to work at home or outside	0.7	2.6	1.5	5.8	8.3	6.7
Child does not like school	21.7	8.8	16.3	45.9	23.2	37.5
Too young to go to school	14.3	14.0	14.2	NA	NA	NA
Insecure road to school	7.4	5.2	6.4	0.5	2.0	1.0
Marriage	NA	NA	NA	0.0	6.7	2.5
Disability	9.9	7.8	9.0	1.2	2.0	1.5
Others	2.9	4.7	3.7	4.1	8.7	5.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: *Education Watch* 2003/4 School Catchment Area Household Survey

Refusal of the school authority to admit the child was cited as the second most important reason for never-enrollment. Probing this question further in focus groups, it was found that there were more children seeking admission in schools which had earned a name as a "good' school or were located in a densely inhabited locality than the school could accommodate. The availability of stipends in primary school also increased demand for admission. Some schools required a birth certificate to be presented in order to verify the child's age and eligibility for stipend, which became an obstacle (since birth registration is not customary and a universal system of registration is still not operational). Whenever there is greater demand than supply for a service, the poor and the less influential in society are at a disadvantage, which was the case here also.

Children's not "liking school" was an important cause for not enrolling and the most important reason for dropping out. If a child did not like school even before he or she set foot in a school, this suggests a perception about school and its value, which is fostered in the family, and is related to the socio-economic status of the family and the education level of parents. When the child "tastes" school and dislikes it enough to discontinue, the reasons mostly lie with the school and how it functions. There is also an interaction between factors related to school and family and society. Social and economic disadvantage of the child and the school's response to this is a key element in this interaction.

Focus group discussion and interviews revealed that poorer parents who sent their children to school often fell into seasonal economic difficulties. They then could not meet different school expenses like examination fees and cost of school dress or copybooks. According to teachers, losing interest in school was more prevalent among the first generation learners. Children in this category did not get help at home and could not "go with the flow of the school." These children, it was conceded by some teachers, were likely to be verbally and physically abused in school for lagging behind and "not behaving properly."

Both parents and teachers in focus groups noted the relationship and rapport between teachers and students as an important factor in children's learning and continuation in school. Verbal and physical abuse of students in class was mentioned as a common occurrence. Many teachers and parents saw nothing unusual or unacceptable about it. But others spoke about cases when students left school permanently after being beaten by teachers.

Discouragement and undermining the self-esteem of children were seen as a common problem. Some parents said that teachers advised them that their children did not have "the brain" to continue in school and it was better that they discontinued study. The parents felt that some teachers had a bias in favour of children of the well-off. Teachers, it appeared, are often unaware of their own attitudes and behaviour and how these affected children. The question of teacher-student relationship and the social distance between teachers and students merits systematic research.

The gender dimension of causes of non-enrollment and dropout are shown in Table 31 above. No significant difference was found in this respect except on one item. The household survey respondents indicated that dislike of school as a cause for not going to or dropping out from school did not apply to girls as often as to boys. Common sense and pragmatism appear to have had a greater influence on girls than on boys.

Chapter 5

Interventions in Primary and Secondary Education

This section will briefly present major interventions by the government and complementary efforts by non-governmental organizations to address the issues of access and participation in primary and secondary education. Significant initiatives in pre-school and non-formal education which may have an impact on access and participation in primary and secondary education are also noted.

The purpose is not to provide a comprehensive description and analysis of all major primary and secondary education and other related development activities, but to indicate the range and characteristics of the initiatives and to form a broad judgment regarding the adequacy of the efforts in relation to the issues of access, equity and participation in education opportunities presented in the previous sections.

The major on-going development activities in primary and secondary education in the public sector are presented first. These include the Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II), Reaching Out-of-School Children Project (ROSC), Secondary Education Sector improvement Project (SESIP) and Teacher Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEPP). Stipend projects for students at primary and secondary levels, a major government intervention to influence demand for and participation in education, are also presented here and further discussed in chapter 6 on Financing Basic Education.

BRAC's pre-school, primary school, post-primary and continuing education project, and the Education Support Programme for cooperation with smaller NGOs are briefly described next. BRAC, the largest national development NGO in the world, has pioneered wide-ranging interventions in pre-school, primary and secondary education outside the public sector.

Finally, a sample of initiatives in pre-school and primary education by a number of NGOs are presented. The Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), the umbrella forum of NGOs active in Education in Bangladesh, lists in its directory over 700 NGOs which have education projects of varied scope and size (CAMPE, 2004) The half dozen projects described here cannot be considered a representative sampling of the variety and range of NGO contribution to education. However, they provide a taste of significant initiatives and suggest the potential of NGO involvement and GO-NGO collaboration in addressing access, equity and participation challenges.

Some of the information about both government and NGO activities, where no citation is made, have been collected through discussion with relevant personnel and perusal of project records.

5.1 Public Sector Interventions

5.1.1 The Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II)

Background

The Second Primary Education Development Programme (known as PEDP II) was launched as a sequel to PEDP I with the aim of expanding access to quality primary

education for all eligible children in Bangladesh. More than two dozen separate projects carried out under the umbrella of PEDP I had been seen as suffering from weak coordination and duplication. To overcome these identified weaknesses, a "macro plan" for PEDP II was jointly formulated in 2002-2003 with the participation of the concerned ministry, directorates and Development Partners (DPs). It was visualized as a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) for the major public sector development initiatives in primary education. It covered the period July 2004 to June, 2009, but was officially launched by the Prime Minister on 8 September 2004. PEDP II is financed jointly by the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and 11 DPs, with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) serving as the lead agency.

Programme Content

The PEDP II implementation mechanism consists of a Programme Coordination Unit headed by the Director General of Primary Education and supported by a team of international and national consultants and a Programme Liaison Unit managed by ADB on behalf of the development partners. In practice, all decision-making is subject to approval and referral to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, which is the *de facto* operating agent. The focus on the public sector and formal primary education of PEDP II has deliberately excluded the possibility of the involvement of the non-government sector in planning and implementation of PEDP II or the opportunity for promoting synergy between government and non-government providers of education or between formal and non-formal modes of programme delivery.

Recognising the fact that Bangladesh has made significant progress in increasing enrollment in the decade of the 1990s without tangible improvement in quality of education, the emphasis of PEDP II has been on primary education goals that combine access and quality. The programme has four major components: (i) Quality improvement through organisational development and capacity building at the central and field levels, (ii) Quality improvement in schools and classrooms, (iii) Quality improvement through infrastructure development, and (iv) Improving and supporting equitable access to quality schooling, paying attention to children with special needs and others chronically neglected or left out by the public system. The PEDP II programme characteristics, as enumerated in the macro plan, includes:

- A focus on both quality and access to primary schooling.
- A guarantee of essential primary school quality levels (PSQL) to safeguard the rights of all children to a basic level of inputs in the primary school.
- A child-centred approach, defining key interventions in terms of the requirements for the child to access, persist and achieve in school.
- School-level and school-focused interventions concentrating on improving both the quality and quantity of resources.
- Development of the upazila education office and the upazila resource centre (URC) as key outreach and support mechanisms.
- Systemic reform, capacity building and organizational reform at all levels in order to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery of primary education nationwide.

- Integration of the PEDP II programme within the organisational and operational systems of the Ministry and DPE to ensure that policy, procedures, processes and resources are harmonised to support project activities and to ensure institutionalisation and sustainability.

- Coordination and integration of the activities and projects of development partners within PEDP II *(PEDP II Final Plan p. 45, January 2003)*

Progress

In the first two years of the five year programme, the major activities undertaken have been in respect of personnel and physical infrastructure. Some 11,000 staff employed under PEDP I projects with development budget allocations have been brought under the revenue budget, thus ensuring their continuation as government personnel. The recruitment of 14,200 new teachers has been undertaken for the government primary schools. The C-in-Ed training of primary teachers has continued as has the printing and distribution of textbooks for primary school students. Progress has been made in the construction of 35,000 new classrooms.

The Joint Annual Review Mission (JARM) 2005 identified 32 items under 8 key activity areas that need special attention and effort for their expeditious implementation. While the majority of these activities are underway and have made progress in the past year, certain activities still need to be closely monitored according to the review. These particularly include organizational and institutional analysis, action plans for inclusive education, development of an HRD Plan, and operationalization of SLIPs (School Level Improvement Plans) and UPEPs (Upazila Primary Education Plans).

Significant progress has not been made in respect of most of the quality imperatives of the programme in the first two years of implementation. JARM pointed out that compliance with the following assurances, to which the government is committed, is now important for achieving the access-with-quality goals for primary education envisaged in PEDP II:

- Establishment of the primary education cadre (a dedicated civil service sub-category for primary education);

- Filling of vacancies in Primary Teacher Training Institutes (PTIs), district primary education offices (DPEOs), Upazila Education Offices (UEOs), and Upazila Resource Centers (URCs) with simplified procedures to expedite the process;

- Completion of the draft decentralization/devolution plans for comments and finalization, with focus on effective implementation of school improvement plans (SLIPs), Upazila Primary Education Plans (UPEPs) and school support funds;

- Strengthening of the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) as an apex training and research institute;

- Restructuring of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) especially the Primary Curriculum Wing; and
- Implementation of innovation grants.

Along with the above activities, JARM also emphasized the formulation of the HRD strategy, preparation of the innovation grant manual, development of the communication strategy, and adoption of the inclusive education strategy. All these are critical steps to ensure that implementation of field level activities will begin in earnest in FY 2006-2007 in order to demonstrate progress in key areas of quality change before the mid term review in 2007.

5.1.2 Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC)

Background

The Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) project was developed to supplement PEDP II by addressing the needs of the large numbers of out-of-school children. It is funded by the World Bank and an SDC grant. Since PEDP II focuses solely on the formal system, it has little or no chance of including out-of-school children deprived of access to formal education due to poverty and other reasons not addressed well by the formal school. The non-formal primary education provision offered by NGOs serves 7 to 8 percent of the children participating in primary education. The ROSC project signifies the recognition by the government of the need and legitimacy of non-formal approaches, so far supported only by NGOs, as an essential complement to formal schools.

ROSC supplements PEDP II by identifying children who are not yet in schools, focusing mainly on areas where enrollment is low and poverty incidence high. The project attempts to enroll out-of-school children in some 14,000 Learning Centres (LCs) and provides education allowances (of either $11 or $14 depending on grade) as incentives for students to complete the primary education cycle. Thus the key objective of the project is to reduce the number of out-of-school children through improved access to primary education.

Project Content

With the goal of enrolling half a million out-of-school children in non-formal schools, ROSC seeks to attract the most disadvantaged children into primary education. As such, the project emphasizes both demand and supply side interventions. The project has adopted this strategy to encourage out-of-school children to attend LCs, and to improve the quality of these centres. Key performance indicators include the following:

- The number of out-of-school children reduced by about 0.5 million;
- Not less than 65 percent of students reaching expected competency level *based on teacher's assessment* in Bangla and mathematics;
- Average annual student attendance rate not less that 75 percent;
- Student grade completion rate not less than 80 percent;

- Average teacher attendance rate not less than 90 percent;

- Students in each grade to have on average the same number of textbooks as those in corresponding grades in the formal primary education system; and

- Student transition rate to public and NGO schools to grade 4 (from 3) not less that 80 percent, or to grade 6 (from 5) not less than 70 percent.

Progress

ROSC hopes to achieve these targets through four different components:

- *Improving Access to Quality Education for Out-of-School Children:* The objective of this component is to support schooling and completion of primary education for half a million out-of-reach children through (i) education allowances to eligible students and (ii) grants to learning centres/schools.

- *Communications and Social Awareness:* Raise community awareness, mobilize families, communities, and local education service providers to open and run LCs, disseminate information on operational guidelines and assess the effectiveness and "reach" of activities.

- *Project Management and Institutional Strengthening:* Establish a strong structure for management and implementation of the project; develop and strengthen the capacity to deliver quality primary education to out-of-school children; and establish a network of participating education resource providers.

- *Monitoring, Evaluation and Research:* The objectives of this component are to develop an effective management information system, and to provide an effective monitoring and evaluation system to monitor the use of grants and education allowances, and evaluate the impact of these interventions.

The pedagogic premises and approach of ROSC appears to be inspired by and are similar to the successful non-formal primary education programmes of BRAC and other NGOs (See below). It, however, differs from the proven model of the NGOs in two ways: (i) a financial incentive for students has been included, which does not appear to be necessary in the NGO model and (ii) the management of ROSC has been in the control of the MOPME hierarchy with the Upazila Education Office playing a key role and little direct planning and management involvement of the major NGOs who pioneered the non-formal model of primary education.

5.1.3 Secondary Education Sector Improvement Project (SESIP)

Background

SESIP is a long term sub-sector development project of the MOE of Bangladesh supported by ADB. It is in its first phase (2001-2006) and the second phase is expected to follow uninterrupted. The project recently gained adverse public attention for offering a unitrack curriculum for grades IX & X (for mainstream

secondary education only), eliminating current "tracking" of students into science, humanities, business and vocational education starting from grade ten. Many educationists and parents opposed the policy, claiming that this intervention for secondary education would ultimately downgrade the quality of science education. Others were concerned that the curriculum may not be achievable for slow learners or for learners who do not excel in science and mathematics. Most educationists involved in the dialogue agreed that the preparation had been inadequate for introducing significant changes in the system with a new curriculum. Teachers were ill-equipped and a good number of schools did not have the required number of subject teachers and facilities for teaching the common curriculum. Articulation issues with the preceding grades (6 to 8) and the higher secondary grades (11 and 12), where the separate streams would continue, also were not sufficiently considered. In light of these obstacles, the Ministry postponed the introduction of the unitrack curriculum.

Project documents underscore the necessity of the secondary education sector improvements to address such critical issues as weak and overlapping policy and planning structures; poor learning outcomes; low internal and external efficiency; high financial demands on government budgets without adequate performance accountability for the vast majority of non-government schools; and limited access and equity particularly in rural areas. A major objective of the project is to increase relevance of secondary education to the workforce. To achieve these goals, the project has set out the following targets:

- Reduced dropout rates;
- Attendance rates increased;
- Low repetition rates;
- Levels of female participation maintained;
- SSC exam pass rates increased;
- HSC exam pass rates increased; and
- Employment rates of grade 10 / grade 12 graduates increased.

Project Content

To meet these targets, SESIP is divided into the three major components:

- Management Systems and Capacity
- Quality Support Systems
- Equitable Access

Each component includes specific activities which were determined as necessary to advance the project's primary objectives. These component-based activities are briefly described below.

Management Systems and Capacity

- *Improved policy support and strategic planning*: A new unit was planned to undertake policy studies, long term strategic planning and budgeting, the evaluation of programs and projects, and the assessment of school performance against agreed targets.

- *Decentralized performance-based management system designed and introduced.*

- *Strengthened school management and academic supervision*: Studies have shown that principals are unable to exercise effective academic leadership to provide the support required by teachers to do their job and to continue their professional development, or to hold them to account for the quality of their work.

Quality Support Systems

- *Strengthened curriculum development capacity*: An enhanced curriculum development wing was to be created through internal reorganization, the creation of a new specialized education cadre, and the recruitment of additional staff. A new curriculum for grades 9 and 10 was developed, but its introduction was delayed as noted above.

- *Improved secondary textbook and learning materials*: The aim is to publish new government-approved textbooks by private companies at competitive prices. The textbooks are expected to be improved in terms of content, design and physical qualities.

- *Reformed student assessment and public examinations*: First, the introduction of school-based assessment should enable teachers and their students to better understand the level and nature of student achievement. Second, a specialist unit has to be created to develop improved test items for HSC, which would test higher order skills such as the ability to analyze and evaluate information.

- *Reformed secondary teacher education*: Recommendations include an enhanced planning and management capacity of the DHSE, rationalizing the professional qualifications of teachers, and improving the quality of pre- and in-service teacher education training courses.

Equitable Access

- *New and redeveloped schools and school facilities*: Construction will take place in some 115 new schools together with 225 additional classrooms and the reconstruction of 300 flood damaged schools.

- *Improving learning environment*: The learning environment would be improved in some 350 schools.

- *Increased female access*: A stipend programme for 765,000 girls students in rural secondary institutions in 53 upazilas (Besides this stipend component of SESIP, there are three other stipend projects funded from other sources, as described below.)

As the first phase of SESIP closes in 2006, the results can be described at best as mixed. A thorough and objective assessment of this phase is necessary and lessons must be extracted for better outcomes in the next phase of reform and development in secondary education.

5.1.4 Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP)

Background

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) has implemented the Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP) to enhance the quality of secondary education in Bangladesh by improving the quality of teaching. The project is supported by ADB and CIDA. The purpose of the project is to provide good quality initial and in-service teacher training, including continuing professional development, to all eligible teachers of grades 6-10 in government and non-government secondary schools. The major objectives of this project are to:

- Help the Government to establish a Non-government Teacher Registration and Certification Authority (NTRCA) for registration, certification and deployment of qualified and competent teachers in non-government secondary schools, thereby enhancing the quality of secondary education;
- Help to establish an integrated national secondary teachers' training network and improve the teachers' training system, thereby contributing to the quality of teaching-learning at secondary level;
- Expand the scope of quality initial and in-service teachers' training including continuing professional development for the teachers serving in government and non-government secondary schools, thereby enhancing their professional competency;
- Improve the overall standard of management of teacher training centres and increase significantly training access in under-served and disadvantaged areas, thereby ensuring quality teachers for all;
- Help the enhancement of professional competence and quality of teachers, trainers and concerned officials; and
- Build upon an appropriate integrated system for linking the Ministry of Education with its other stakeholder institutes and make the stakeholder institutes aware of their roles and responsibilities and thereby contribute to educational quality.

TQI-SEP attempts to reach these goals through the four components of:

- *Improving teaching quality through organizational development and capacity building*: In this component, NTRCA has been established and the future of NAEM is actively being discussed. Head Teacher (HT) training and 55 core trainers have been developed. 1,087 HTs have completed a 21-day training programe.

- *Improving teacher training facilities*: Project personnel have visited most of the key institutions that provide teacher training to secondary level teachers.

- *Strengthening in-service and pre-service teacher training*: Three out of ten subject matter based programmes have been developed thus far for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and 72 ToT have been trained.

Table 20: Repetition rates by classes and gender in secondary education

| Year | Grade | | | | | | | | | |
| | VI | | VII | | VIII | | IX | | X | |
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1990	8.0	7.6	9.0	8.2	10.0	9.3	9.0	7.9	13.0	11.3
1993	8.0	8.2	6.0	4.9	7.0	5.8	7.0	5.6	5.0	10.1
1996	5.0	4.4	5.0	4.2	5.0	3.7	4.0	4.6	4.0	9.6
2002	4.6	4.1	4.4	4.1	4.6	4.0	4.3	4.0	16.2	17.4
2003	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.3	4.8	4.5	4.6	4.5	16.9	18.0

Source: BANBEIS

Dropout is one of the important factors determining the efficiency and wastage of the education system. Data in Table 21 show that dropout was and still is a major source of wastage. Dropout rate increases at higher grade levels.

Table 21: Dropout rates by classes and gender in secondary education

| Year | Grade | | | | | | | | | |
| | VI | | VII | | VIII | | IX | | X | |
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1990	5.0	12.3	10.0	14.1	19.0	20.1	18.0	19.4	22.0	25.4
1993	5.0	11.5	6.0	13.1	12.0	13.2	10.0	11.7	31.0	32.2
1996	3.0	8.6	5.0	8.4	12.0	10.2	11.0	10.1	19.0	21.7
2002	8.1	6.8	8.0	3.8	6.9	12.1	24.4	29.2	47.9	53.4
2003	11.3	11.2	11.4	8.7	10.3	15.2	27.3	27.1	55.5	58.7

Source: BANBEIS

3.6 Attendance Rate

Access to school is meaningless without attendance in classes and a central issue in examining access, teacher-student interaction and performance of students in school. BANBEIS provided data on attendance for grades 6-10 for 2003. (Table 22)

Table 22: Attendance rates by grade in secondary schools, 2003

Grades	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	All Classes
Total	72	71	71	70	69	71
Girls	74	72	72	69	68	71

Source: BANBEIS

The development of learning materials for the newly developed B.Ed curriculum is underway. Some preparatory steps have already been taken to introduce a three-month certificate course which is waiting for approval from the National University.

- *Improving equitable access and community involvement*: A gender action plan covering all TQI-SEP activities has been completed. A document is planned to be prepared on the policy of teacher deployment, incentives and improved access to teacher education in rural and underserved areas.

Progress

Adequate assessment of implementation of the multiple components of the on-going development programme in the secondary education sub-sector and their results are still not available. Progress has been recorded in implementing the public sector interventions which can be said to have a positive impact on access and participation. At the same time, as the controversy about the unitrack curriculum and questions about the alternative use of limited resources now devoted to transfer payments through girls' stipends (see below) illustrate, the challenges of equitable access to quality secondary education remain formidable.

Attention to poverty reduction, emphasized in the national Poverty Reduction Strategy, has brought out in sharp relief the high degree of inequity in respect of access and participation in education. Maintaining acceptable quality in education is a simultaneous concern, since access to education without the guarantee of a minimum level of quality is meaningless.

Development initiatives and an education sector reform programme supported with international assistance have been aimed at addressing the problems of quality and equitable opportunities in secondary education. The success of these initiatives will depend on understanding the dimensions and depths of the problems and designing actions that are realistic, implementable and responsive to specific needs and circumstances.

5.1.5 Primary Education Stipend Program

Since the 1990 Primary Education (Compulsory) Act, the Government of Bangladesh has instituted several measures to address the negative impact of poverty on primary education. These have included the elimination of official school fees, the provision of textbooks free-of-charge, and incentives to encourage the participation of vulnerable children (Tietjen 2003). Among the incentive measures, the Food for Education Programme (FFE) was introduced in 1993 to increase enrollment, attendance and progression rates of children from very poor and landless families. The programme provided a free monthly allocation of rice or wheat to poor families in rural areas, if their children enrolled in primary school and maintained an 85 percent attendance rate. Ultimately, the programme covered some 27 percent of the children, but was discontinued in June 2002 due in part to the high prices of food commodities and the difficult logistics of distribution.

In July 2002, the government replaced the FFE with the Primary Education Stipend Programme (PESP), which aimed to increase participation of primary school-aged children from poor families by providing cash payments to targeted households (Ahmed et al, 2005). PESP was designed to:

- Increase the enrollment rate among primary school-aged children from poor families;
- Increase the attendance rate of primary school pupils;
- Reduce the drop out rate of primary school pupils;
- Increase the cycle completion rate of primary school pupils;
- Enhance the quality of primary education;
- Ensure equity in the provision of financial assistance to primary school-aged children; and
- Alleviate poverty.

The programme began its first year of operation in January 2003 with the goal of supporting more than 5 million pupils throughout rural Bangladesh. Forty percent of students from rural GPS, RNGPS and some madrassas are eligible to receive Tk. 100 stipend per month, to be disbursed by six designated national banks on a quarterly basis to authorized parents/guardians (with preference given to mothers). To remain eligible for the stipend, students have to attain 40 percent marks in term examinations and have 85 percent monthly class attendance.

Achievement

Although PESP is envisioned as an equity-promoting intervention, investigations into its operation have raised questions about proper targeting, administration and application of eligibility criteria. Data from the 2003-04 *Education Watch* household survey in ten upazilas found that stipend recipients were more or less evenly divided among four socio-economic categories based on food security status (always in deficit, sometimes in deficit, break-even or surplus). Further suggesting poor targeting, over two-thirds of children from the poorest category were not selected as recipients, while 27 percent of children from the most affluent households received the stipend (Ahmed et al, 2005). The survey found that on average recipients did not receive the full amount, students from GPS received more than those attending other eligible schools, and boys received more than girls. Focus groups discussions also pointed to the manipulation of eligibility criteria by school managing committees and head-teachers, and to management problems such as "cuts" being taken from the stipends.

Moreover, though PESP seeks to increase enrollment, regular attendance and progression among children from poor families, it has been revealed that these children may in fact have genuine difficulty in meeting the eligibility criteria (Ahmed et al, 2005). It has also been suggested that age and non-financial considerations may also work to undermine the stipend's effectiveness in ensuring attendance and progression in particular. Because both direct and opportunity costs increase as a child ages, the stipend may not be sufficient in offsetting these costs. Considerations other than monetary such as disinterest in schooling and dissatisfaction with the quality of schools may also be resistant to financial incentives (Tietjen, 2003).

5.1.6 Nationwide Female Stipend Program

Background

In January 1994, the Government of Bangladesh launched a nationwide stipend programme to increase participation of rural girls in secondary education. The stipend programme is implemented through four different sectoral projects through the Ministry of Education:

- The government-financed Female Secondary School Project (FSSP) in 270 + 19 (madrassa only) upazilas;
- The World Bank (IDA) assisted the Female Secondary School Assistance Programme (FSSAP) in 119 upazilas;
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) assisted the Secondary Education Sector Improvement Project (SESIP) in 53 disadvantaged upazilas; and
- The NORAD assisted the Female Secondary Education Stipend Project (FESP) in 19 upazilas (GoB, 2006).

All four components of the program share the same objectives, which are: to increase girls' enrollment in grades 6-10; to assist them to pass their SSC examination so that they become qualified for employment as primary school teachers, agricultural extension agents, health and family planning workers, NGO field workers, etc; and to hold them in school and thereby prevent early marriage (GoB, 2006).

The program provides monthly stipends of Tk. 25 to 60 depending on grade, which are awarded in two installments per year directly to the girls through their accounts in upazila branches of a nationalized bank. Stipend recipients are exempted from tuition charges for which schools are reimbursed by the government; the girls also receive a payment of Tk. 250 in grade nine as a book allowance and Tk. 500 in grade ten for examination fees. To be eligible, girl students must attend 75 percent of classes in a year, must obtain on average 45 percent marks in half yearly/annual examinations and must remain unmarried.

Achievement

The stipend programme has undoubtedly succeeded in encouraging girls' transition from primary to secondary education, and has been an important factor in the advances in girls' enrollment at both the primary and secondary levels. Recent surveys have found that on average 54 percent of rural girls enrolled in secondary schools and dakhil madrassas are stipend recipients (Ahmed et al, 2006). Moreover, the direct payment to girls through their own bank accounts is viewed as an empowering experience in the male dominated public domain. It is also hoped that this system will minimize leakages and hidden costs since school authorities are not directly involved except for certifying compliance with stipend eligibility and performance criteria.

Although the programme has contributed to increased girls' enrollment, it has been argued that the stipend covers only a part of the direct costs. As a result, there is

likely to be unintended exclusion of the poorest girls because the stipend amount is too low to cover all costs of sending a girl to school (Mahmud, S. 2003, 7). A related question is whether the eligibility criteria are difficult to meet for disadvantaged sections of the population, further aggravating disparity. The stipend programme also fails to reach girls in underserved areas due to poor private investment in educational institutions in those areas.

In the revised budget of fiscal 2003-2004, taka 4,325 million was allocated for girls' stipends. This represented 57 percent of total development allocation for secondary education and 19 percent of direct government allocation to secondary level institutions. While stipends helped attract girls to schools, at least two critical questions arise: Whether stipends starve out important inputs necessary for quality improvement; and whether the disadvantaged groups, who are intended to be helped, can meet the conditions to qualify for and remain eligible for stipends (Ahmed et al, 2006).

In light of these questions as well as the issue of financial sustainability, it has been suggested that the current system of universal stipends be modified to better target disadvantaged girls. The Government of Bangladesh has recently undertaken initiatives to commence a pro-poor pilot stipend program under the World Bank funded FSSAP-II. The pilot program is conceived as a two-pronged strategy to: (a) expand the outreach activities in remote areas to allow greater access to disadvantaged girls; and (b) introduce a self-targeting scheme in which project institutions can participate voluntarily with increased stipend rates only to poor students, with different selection criteria.

5.2 Non-Government Interventions

5.2.1 BRAC Basic Education Activities

As one of the largest non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Bangladesh, BRAC believes that raising the educational level is one of the most effective ways to achieve its overarching goal of alleviation of poverty and empowerment of the disadvantaged people. BRAC thus developed the Non-formal Primary Education Programme (NFPE) to ensure continued access to cost-effective and quality primary education for poor children, with particular focus on girls, ethnic minorities, children with special needs and ultra-poor children. BRAC's NFPE Programme is now known more broadly as the BRAC Education Programme (BEP) with activities in pre-primary, primary, secondary and continuing education.

5.2.1.1 BRAC Pre-Primary Schools

Background

While the private education sector of Bangladesh has provided early childhood education opportunities (kindergartens) since the 1980s, the government education system has yet to introduce a systematic pre-primary programme. Realising the significance and necessity of pre-primary/early childhood education, BEP started its pre-primary schools programme (BPPS) to improve the quality of the formal primary education system by enhancing preparedness of young children for primary education.

The BPPS began in 1997 as a pilot project with 40 schools aimed at preparing 5-6 year-olds to enter Grade I of the formal system by sparking their interest in learning and by developing their social, cognitive, language and motor skills. The preschool cycle is one-year in duration, with each class consisting of 25-30 learners (at least 60 percent girls) who attend two hour classes, six days per week. After completing pre-primary education, children of BPPS are enrolled in the nearest formal primary schools (BRAC, 2004a/b/c, 2005a and 2006). Classes were originally held in BRAC NFPE schools currently known as BRAC Primary Schools (BPS). Based on study findings (Akter 2000), BRAC began to locate more BPPSs in or within easy walking distance of a Government Primary School (GPS) by either renting or renovating an existing room, or by using community matching funds to construct a new classroom.

Operation

A BPPS employs and trains two adolescent girls or young women from the village as teachers. The teachers must have completed at least Grade VII; preference is given to former BPS teachers and graduates of BPS/Adolescent Development Programme (ADP). In return for shouldering the responsibility of the class, the girls earn an honorarium that helps cover some of their own continued education expenses.

The curriculum includes teaching students how to read and write the Bengali alphabet and numbers. They also learn to read and write a few easy words, and participate in about 40 small group games that involve counting and other basic skills. In addition, they are taught about cleanliness, healthy and unhealthy environments, fresh air and safe drinking water.

While the BPPS are in session, BEP staff monitor and follow up with regular classroom supervision, parents' meetings, teachers' refreshers and sharing of experiences with the community. After BPPS students transfer into GPS, staff continue to monitor enrollment, retention and performance with the aim of prolonging the students' educational gains.

Achievement

The BPPS programme now operates some 21,000 schools with 588,000 students (about 65 percent girls), in most of the upazilas in the country. About 400,000 students were admitted to GPS in January 2006 after the completion of a pre-primary course with BPPS in the previous year. There are 42,000 teachers and 2,100 BPPS supervisors working with the programme, and all of them are female (BRAC, 2006).

Research findings (Begum et al, 2004) documented that in Grade I BPPS children performed significantly better than those who did not have any pre-primary orientation. By Grade II, however, these differences of performance were not significant. Even so, BPPS students were more participatory in teaching-learning activities and other non-academic performances than their non-BPPS counterparts. These activities include regular and timely presence in class; enthusiasm for participation in class activities; preparation for class lessons; listening to teacher's instruction; participation in games and co-curricular activities; and responding to teacher's questions.

From a modest initiative in 1997, BPPS has developed into a powerful vehicle for BRAC to share information and develop a relationship with GPS, SMC, teachers and local government officials in order to improve the quality of GPS and reduce dropouts. BPPS is poised to become the second largest component of BEP, covering about a third of all GPS by 2009.

5.2.1.2 BRAC Primary Schools (BPS) & BRAC Adolescent Primary School (BAPS)

Background

BRAC's Non-formal Primary Education (NFPE) model began in 1985 as a three-year programme for poor children aged 8 to 10 who had never enrolled in any school or who had dropped out of formal school. In 1987, the Basic Education for Older Children (BEOC) or Kishor-Kishori (KK) school model was developed to cater to poor children aged 11 to 14 who had dropped out of or never attended school. These schools covered a condensed version of Grades I-V in three years, under the assumption that older children would be able to grasp the material more quickly than younger children.

In both cases, the schools were opened to cater primarily to girls (70 percent) as girls in rural villages were often kept out of school for various reasons (e.g., male teachers, schools too far from home, education too costly an investment for female children, etc.). Since 2004, both NFPE and BEOC/KK schools provide a full primary education, covering competencies included in the formal government curriculum. As a result, the names of these schools have changed to BRAC Primary School (BPS) and BRAC Adolescent Primary School (BAPS) (see Annex 3 for a comparison between BRAC and government primary school models).

The opening of a BPS is based on an extensive survey process that takes into consideration community demand, availability of eligible students and qualified teachers, and selection of a cluster of villages (so that the schools can be easily monitored by a nearby team office and teachers do not have to travel long distances to attend refresher courses). If the village meets all the selection criteria, a teacher is hired

and students are enrolled (after rigorous cross-checking with the local government school to ensure that the students are not enrolled in the formal system and after obtaining a 'no objection certificate' from the government school).

BPS consists of one class of between 30-33 students and one teacher. The teacher is usually a married woman from the village with at least 10 years of schooling. Once the school is opened, the same teacher is responsible for the same cohort of students for the full three-year cycle. However, the cycle was extended to four years for BPS in 1999-2004 to accommodate contents for Grades IV and V, and similarly extended to four years also in BAPS in 2004. When the four-year cycle is completed, the survey process is undertaken again. If there are enough children available in the village, the school is re-opened for a second cycle, using the same teacher.

Operation

The teacher is given a 12-day basic training course prior to the school opening, followed by monthly refresher training and need-based subject training. The capacity of teachers is thus developed throughout their service period. Teachers are also given supplementary learning materials and teachers' guides to help them, and their feedback is used to constantly improve the materials and curriculum. The curriculum encourages a learner-friendly and participatory approach, and is relevant to rural life. Class hours are flexible: classes are held for three to four hours each day, six days a week, and 276 days a year. Class hours are decided upon in agreement between teachers and parents, making allowances for seasonal work. Rather than formal examinations, a weekly and monthly assessment system is pursued to continuously monitor students' progress. In the light of students' background (mostly first generation learners) and their involvement in chores, minimal homework is required, and there is no long vacation.

Parental and community involvement is critical to the functioning of the schools. Each school has a community leader and the teacher, and a School Managing Committee (SMC) responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the school. The SMC and the other parents help maintain the school and ensure the children's regular attendance. Parent meetings are held once a month in each school to encourage guardians to take an interest in their children's education. The children's progress, attendance, cleanliness and hygiene, the responsibility of parents toward their children, and any school problems requiring parental attention are discussed. The schools are closely monitored and supervised by BEP field staff. The field management structure is designed to support the supervising staff with appropriate training on how to monitor schools, while providing pedagogic support to teachers and learners in order to ensure quality in the school.

Achievement

At the end of 2005, BEP was operating 31,877 primary schools (including 5,500 education support programme schools described below), providing access to education to a total of more than 1.4 million children of the rural poor (65 percent of whom were girls). (Annex 4)

Examination of the proportion of students achieving all 27 competencies tested in

Education Watch 2000 shows that, at the national level, less than two percent of the students achieved all 27 competencies. The achievement level was highest among the students of non-formal schools of NGOs (6 percent for all and 9 percent for BRAC schools), followed by government (1 percent) and non-government (0.9 percent) schools. The same study shows that, at the national level, the mean number of competencies achieved by the students was 16.1 percent whereas non-formal students achieved 17.4 percent. Non-formal students comprised 8.5 percent of students going to primary level institutions, of which 76 percent came from BRAC (Chowdhury et al, 1999).

5.2.1.3 BRAC Post-Primary Basic and Continuing Education (PACE Secondary Schools)

With slow progress in the expansion of effective adult literacy and continuing education opportunities, it was realised that post- primary and post-literacy services were needed by a large segment of the rural population. With this goal in mind, a new programme was launched in 1995 named the Continuing Education Program (CEP). Under this programme, community-based libraries called Gonokendros (GK) were established at the union level, which aimed at providing access to reading for rural people. In addition to GKs, several other activities began to take place under the CEP, such as the Information Technology (IT) Project, the Mobile Library, etc. The members of GK are also provided with various types of skill development training for trades such as poultry and livestock, fish culture, vegetable cultivation, and computer and electrical training in cooperation with the relevant government departments.

During BEP Phase III (1999-2004), BRAC began to work with the non-government secondary schools of Bangladesh under a programme named post-primary Basic Education (PBEn). The aim of the programme was to develop the teaching skills of teachers of the rural non-government secondary schools in core subject areas (English, mathematics, and general science) and to improve school management through training and workshops. From March 2003, these programmes (CEP and PBEn) were combined and renamed 'Post Primary Basic and Continuing Education' (PACE).

5.2.1.4 Post-Primary Basic Education (PBEn)

By studying the existing problems within secondary schools and by tapping into its experiences with non-formal primary education at both the school and community level, BEP developed a preliminary model for strengthening the capacity of secondary schools to deliver quality education. This model involved two basic elements:

- Teachers should be given the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge and teaching skills. This is based on the assumption that most existing teachers can become better teachers if given effective training.

- An environment that facilitates and values good teaching and learning needs to be created within schools. This will ensure that teachers get the level of support needed to use their skills to the best of their abilities.

The PBEn programme started on a pilot basis providing subject-based and management training to teachers of secondary schools. The activity began with a commitment to supplement government initiatives towards achieving quality education. BRAC obtained agreement of the Ministry of Education to provide training to secondary school teachers to enhance their professional capacity. For this purpose, BRAC selects only existing secondary schools that have a management committee, that receive government grants, and that are willing to work with BRAC.

The PBEn programme arranges training for head and assistant head teachers on school management, community participation, academic supervision, and monitoring aspects which are necessary for quality improvement. The subject teachers' training in different subject areas (English, Math, and science) comprises teaching-learning techniques of these subjects, in-depth understanding about the subject topics, micro teaching sessions, and use of teaching aids in the classroom.

By early 2006, 919 Non-Government secondary schools have been selected for intervention. Altogether 2,020 head teachers and assistant head teachers from the 919 schools attended a 3-day orientation workshop and a training course on education management. In order to sensitise School Management Committee members about the core issues in their schools, 2,064 members from those schools also went through an orientation session.

As far as subject training is concerned, 3,098 Mathematics, 3,059 English and 1,019 Science teachers from the 919 schools have received 3-week long residential training in relevant subject areas. In order to improve students' participation in the teaching-learning process and to develop their potential, 717 teachers from the 919 schools received Values Education training and on their return introduced mentoring of students in their own schools. (Annex 5)

5.2.1.5 Gonokendros

Gonokendros represent a multi-purpose learning centre for the wider community. Their services include library operation for both adults and children, skill development training for adolescents, information technology related training, and organization of socio-cultural activities for its members. The uniqueness of Gonokendros is their self-financing mechanism developed through strong community participation.

The aims of the PACE programme are to increase access to reading materials, promote computer literacy, and empower community-based committees to deliver a comprehensive range of educational support activities. PACE serves to lay the foundations for a knowledge-based and technologically-oriented learning society. PACE will continue to support these aims by ensuring that the Gonokendros provide a convergence of services, that its IT programme increases the professionalism of post-primary teachers, and that its mobile libraries promote a culture of lifelong learning which is inclusive and attentive to the needs of all communities.

5.2.2   BRAC Inclusive Education at Primary Level (EIC, CWD)

5.2.2.1 Education for Indigenous Children (EIC)

Ethnic groups constitute slightly more than one percent of the population of Bangladesh, with most living in the three hill districts of Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban. The members of the ethnic communities are marginalized in numerous ways including a lack in education opportunities. The rate of participation in education among these groups is significantly less than the national average (BRAC, 2005a). With regard to literacy, it was observed that adult males in 47.4 percent of the households and adult females in 65.6 percent of the households in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) were not able to read or write a letter. It was also found that 41.4 percent of households did not have a single literate member (Rafi and Chowdhury, 2001). To improve this situation, BEP established in 2001 the Education for Indigenous Children (EIC) unit charged with the responsibility of including children of ethnic minorities in BRAC schools while preserving their rich cultural heritage.

The EIC programme was thus designed to meet the specific educational needs of the ethnic communities, with a critical aspect being the use of ethnic mother tongues as the language of instruction in the early grades. The main objectives of the project are: increased access to cost-effective, quality pre-primary education for ethnic children; progress towards the development of a model for primary education for ethnic children; increased access to and retention of ethnic children in quality post-primary basic education; better access to library and community development services (e.g. IT) in the ethnic areas; and improved quality of the formal primary education system (BRAC, 2005b). Although the primary goal of the EIC unit is to increase the enrollment of ethnic children in BRAC schools, its long-term impact is expected to be an increase in self-esteem of ethnic minorities and better social acceptance of these communities by mainstream Bengalis.

BRAC Primary Schools (BPS) for ethnic minorities cater to children of 8-10 years (including dropouts) from poor families, who have been left out of the formal primary education system, by providing them a full five-year primary education within a four-year cycle. In the first year of schooling, 4 months is included for a preparatory phase where only the mother tongue is used. The preparatory phase is the first step that leads gradually towards mainstreaming into Bangla. The national competencies are followed in each grade and ethnic issues are reflected in the materials. Besides, community and cultural contents are introduced in teachers' guides. These contents are given adequate time in each class hour.

In addition to the 1,861 ethnic schools funded by a consortium of donors, which are included in the overall number of schools, BRAC also ran in early 2006 an additional 300 schools. Together, these schools had a total of 52,149 students and 2,947 teachers. In schools that have students with more than one mother tongue, BRAC employs two teachers, one from each community, to address the needs of students. BRAC organizes workshops for community leaders and teacher and staff training on ethnic issues including aspects of pedagogy, management and

supervision. The training contents for the EIC programme are also included in the modules of mainstream training to foster an environment of mutual respect and cooperation between the mainstream Bengali and ethnic cultures.

Technical assistance and research support are also sought in designing the programme and preparing the curriculum and supplementary materials, as in establishing linkages with formal primary schools.

5.2.2.2 Children with Disabilities (CWD)

BRAC began its CWD initiative in 2003 with a focus on building awareness amongst BRAC staff and community members regarding issues of disability and the concept of inclusive education. The first step was to create an environment that enabled access for disabled children in the classroom. BRAC's current focus is on expanding the range of disabilities (mild to moderate) that their staff is capable of facilitating. BRAC employs a holistic approach in its educational programme for disabled children. Both the head office and field staff have been provided training and have been given technical support from consultants with extensive experience in inclusive education.

In total, 14,471 children with special needs were enrolled in more than 8,000 BRAC schools by the end of 2005. Some of these children were given assistive devices such as wheel chairs, crutches, artificial limb, hearing aids and glasses. Initiatives were taken in all BEP regions to build ramps to the schoolhouses and to place a coloured line around the blackboard to assist disabled students. Where necessary, BRAC sponsored corrective operations for students with disabilities such as cleft palate and lips. In total, 181 disabled children underwent successful surgery (BRAC, 2005b).

5.2.3   BRAC Supported Small NGO NFPE (ESP)

Background

BRAC's Education Support Programme (ESP) works with small NGOs to support their work in the non-formal education process through the establishment of schools to expand educational opportunities for disadvantaged children. Many of these NGOs are selected by BRAC for their work with target populations such as ethnic minorities. The programme provides the NGOs with technical and financial support to implement the BPS model (the 3-year course) with adaptations as needed. Many of these small partner NGOs are able to reach segments of BRAC's target population located in geographically remote areas and/or difficult working conditions that BEP could not otherwise reach. For example, in 1999-2004, ESP catered to twice the number of non-Muslim students as other BPSs (Nath, 2000) and worked in 48 upazila/thanas where BRAC was not otherwise operational.

Children selected for enrollment in ESP schools are of age 8-10 years, have never enrolled in school or are dropouts, have no literacy or numeracy and come from poor and deprived families. Children in ESP schools are taught a 3-year curriculum consisting of literacy, numeracy and social studies. English is also taught in grades

II and III. In terms of student achievement, ESP students have done as well as or better than their BPS counterparts (Nath, 2000). The ESP's current course completion rate is 99 percent with 99.5 percent of ESP graduates going on to enroll in formal schools. Around 98 percent of these children mainstream into the public system.

In order to avoid duplication with the BEP, no partner NGO is selected and no schools opened without a referral to the corresponding BEP office. In addition, partner NGOs pay part of their own administrative costs (BRAC ESP pays only 5 percent of the school operation costs as overhead to the partner NGO) which makes ESP schools more cost-effective. The estimated cost per child per year in the ESP schools is Tk. 760 or approximately US$ 12.19 as of 2003, compared with US$19 for BEP schools. Partner NGOs are carefully chosen based on a number of selection criteria, including formal structure (registered, secular, law-abiding), financial probity, location of work, reputation, honesty, and commitment. They are also carefully monitored through BRAC's monitoring department, the ESP's Monitors, monthly visits by the ESP Technical Support Specialists (TSSs), written reports and financial statements.

Operation

A large share of the credit for the successful implementation of the ESP schools can be attributed to the ESP's continuous and efficient monitoring system. Programme Organisers (PO) of partner NGOs submit weekly and monthly school visit reports, monthly reports on teacher refreshers and parent meetings and quarterly reports on student dropout. These reports provide information about student attendance, progress of lessons, frequency of school visits by the POs, number of school days during the reporting period and student dropout. POs of partner organisation/NGOs are also required to submit semi-annual stock and financial statements giving information on the use of materials and money provided by ESP.

The ESP staff usually visits partner NGOs and their schools once a month. They check the validity of the reports, provide feedback on the progress of project activities and suggest measures to improve the quality of the programme. ESP has developed a monitoring cell of its own to crosscheck and validate partner NGO's reporting systems.

Achievement

At the end of 2005, ESP was working with 616 partner NGOs, supported by the BEP donor consortium. ESP now operates 4000 schools with 119,934 students. In addition, there are 1500 schools with 44,966 students funded by Norway. ESP schools have a gender ratio of 71 percent girls among its learners. A total of 234,456 students have graduated to date from ESP schools. (Annex 6)

5.3 Other Selected NGO Basic Education Activities

5.3.1 Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)

DAM has gained a wealth of experience in more than two decades, piloting as well as implementing on a longer-term basis educational projects mostly in the

non-formal sector. The target groups have been children, adolescents, and adults. Some of these projects have given special emphasis to women, who make up the most deprived population groups with respect to education and other rights at family and community levels. The common thrust of the varied projects is to support disadvantaged population groups to have their basic learning needs fulfilled and to enhance capacity to promote upward economic and social mobility.

Among recent DAM educational initiatives, noteworthy projects include:

- Continuing education for economic and social empowerment of the rural poor and disadvantaged;
- Basic and continuing education for the urban poor;
- Technical and vocational training for the urban poor adolescents;
- Empowering adolescent girls to work for change in community;
- Education, skill training and support for gainful employment toward elimination of the worst form of child labour; and
- Community-based demonstrations on improving quality of primary education.

Continuing Education

DAM establishes community-based institutions for planning and managing activities for education, learning and comprehensive community development to fulfill the needs that the people themselves prioritise. The institution, in both rural and urban settings, usually known as a community learning centre or "Gonokendra," empowers the poor by providing facilities for education and skill training, and in addition establishes linkages and networks to facilitate and promote access to various service providers. It organises the people to claim, and secure as their right, access to services from government agencies. Local government institutions and some other government agencies tend to use the Gonokendra as a convenient community-based organisation to deliver services such as immunisation, or to administer activities such as registration of marriage, birth and death.

Gonokendra seeks to operate as an institution for continuing education with a view to promoting the concept and practice of lifelong learning. Thus Gonokendra establishes facilities for community people to access different kinds of learning materials with relevance to their practical lives and improving their living condition. Wherever possible Gonokendra promotes use of IT facility for increased access to information.

Basic Education

One of the objectives of the NFE projects for children, adolescents and youths is to help learners gain access into mainstream education for continuation of their education in the formal system. Mainstreaming has taken place so far at both primary and secondary levels. An equivalency programme is also being implemented as a pilot initiative to address the learning needs of young boys and

girls who could not pursue further education, primarily because of poverty. Under this programme, learners are provided necessary supports in terms of books, materials and tutors to guide them. They are enrolled in formal schools and some take the opportunity to complete SSC and HSC through the Bangladesh Open University under an agreement with DAM.

Technical-Vocational Education

DAM has acknowledged the limitation of NFE focused on basic literacy skills of adolescents, youths and adults in retaining the interest of intended learners, because of its weak links to practical daily needs. As such, literacy and continuing education have been given a broader meaning by including vocational preparation to increase earning capacity. Support services are provided for income-earning activities through the provision of micro credit or linkages with credit-giving organizations wherever possible and through management capacity building among community people to run Gonokendra.

The particular projects on technical-vocational skill training for the urban poor aim at preparing learners for the world of work, following their basic education through DAM's NFE centres or for those who have dropped out of formal schools at the primary or secondary level. Both groups are given the opportunity to develop their capacity as skilled/semi-skilled workers to enhance their chances of better employment.

Adolescent Girls

The project for adolescent girls is based on the recognition that they make up a special population group, and that their specific needs and problems are very often ignored or not properly understood. Adolescent girls especially in poor rural families, deprived of education, life skills and basic health services, are most vulnerable to various exploitative social practices including early marriage, divorce, pregnancy/ motherhood at a young age and resultant health risks. Activities under the project cover basic and advanced level education, social and legal awareness, family life education, vocational training and micro-finance provision for income generation, provision of reproductive health services, and social mobilization through Community Learning Centres for continuing education to protect and promote the interests of adolescent girls.

Working Children

The education and skill training project for working children is another variation of DAM's initiatives to ensure that children enjoy the right to basic education and opportunities for adequate preparation prior to entering the world of work. The immediate objective of the initiative is to create opportunities for children to leave work situations that are harmful to normal physical development and that impede the full realisation of intellectual and emotional potential.

Improving Quality of Primary Education

The community-based demonstration project to improve the quality of primary education is an innovative project, which replicates on a wider scale an earlier pilot

project implemented in collaboration with Plan Bangladesh. This project seeks to establish a model of school management with the participation of teachers, parents and the community to improve the quality of learning of the students. Within the project intervention, specific activities include parenting for early childhood education and development, creating a child-friendly community environment to establish effective teaching-learning in schools and arranging special support to slow learners as a joint effort of teachers, parents and the community.

The present project was implemented in 2005 in three districts, has drawn upon previous experience, and seeks to provide answers to the prevailing national concern of improving the quality of primary education. Community-level activities are organized by the Gonokendra, and school-level activities are strengthened through technical support from the professional expertise built into the project for both government and registered non-government primary schools. The project lessons will be used to advocate the introduction of the useful elements of the model in the national system.

5.3.2 PLAN Bangladesh

Plan Bangladesh, the Bangladesh chapter of Plan International, started operations in late 1994. Plan Bangladesh has developed programmes in the major areas of learning, health and livelihood. The Community Learning Programme (CLP) is geared towards raising awareness in communities and helping them work towards self-development by providing community learning opportunities. CLP has three components: Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), Community Learning Assistance Project (CLAP) Basic Education and CLAP Alternative Education (Adolescents and Adults). A long term objective of Plan is to establish Community Learning Forums that will provide learning opportunities for people at all educational levels. (See Annex 7.)

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)

ECCD issues are considered an integral part of the overall child development, learning and health programme. All ECCD interventions are community managed and aim to address children's survival and early health needs and to prepare them for learning in school. The demonstrated ECCD interventions are also geared to promote community demand for school improvement. Plan's current programme interventions ensure sequential development of children from conception to age six, and include the following.

Parenting/Care-giving Training: The purpose of the Parenting/ Care-giving training is to raise parents' and caregivers' awareness and understanding of Early Childhood Care and Development so that they may better relate to their children. Through a course of 24 sessions, parents and caregivers are introduced to issues of development, child rights and child nutrition. This is based on experiential and participatory learning, provided by trained facilitators. Key features of the programme include:

- Number of mothers/ caregivers per group is 25-30.
- Mothers of children below the age of three are given preference

- A community tutor/ health worker/ ECCD supervisor facilitates sessions.
- An ECCD technical officer and community supervisor oversee sessions.
- Sessions are conducted at the participants' convenience once or twice a week, or once or twice a month.
- Each session lasts for one and a half hours.
- Meeting locations are chosen by the participants at their convenience.

Shisu Bikash Kendra (Home Based Child Development Centre): The purpose of the centres is to promote the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of three to five year old children by enhancing parents' and caregivers' childcare knowledge and skills. Key features of the SBK centres are:
- Age group: children of 3-5 years old.
- Size: approximately 8-15 children per centre.
- Supervision: supervisors from Plan and the community each supervise 10-12 SBKs.
- Duration: centres run for 2 hours per day, 5 days per week.
- Meeting venue: meetings take place in a caregiver's house.

Shishu Bikash O Jatna Kendra (Day Care Centre): The purpose of Shisu Bikash O Jatna Kendra (SBJK) is to provide a safe environment for the children of working mothers. Key features of SBJK centres are:
- Locations: Dhaka slums.
- Age: six months to five years.
- Time: from 7:30am to 5:30 pm.

Besides being cared for, children are given the opportunity to engage in development activities. They participate in play groups, recite rhymes and listen to and learn to tell stories and poems. They are fed thrice daily and six days a week throughout the year. The cost of food is shared between the mothers and the centre.

Pre-School: Plan Bangladesh has been implementing pre-school programmes since 1997. In addition to emphasizing academics, such as writing, reading and math, attempts have been made to encourage children's holistic development. Through play activities, children are given the opportunity to learn about nature, recite rhymes, sing, draw and paint, make toys, and listen to and tell stories. Key aspects of the pre-school programme are:
- Children from the age of five and above are enrolled.
- The number of children per centre is 25-30.
- One teacher facilitates each pre-school.
- A resource trainer is available to provide quality pedagogical support for six to ten pre-school classes.
- Pre-schools are supervised by a community resource person along with other ECCD interventions.
- Classes continue for 2 and a half hours per day, 6 days per week.
- Communities offered low-cost schoolhouses, or classrooms in a primary school are used as the pre-school venue.

Plan currently runs 730 parenting groups, 1099 SBK, 310 preschools and 20 Day Care Centres in seven of its programme unit areas. Plan has also established partnerships for promoting ECCD with organizations ranging from local to national NGOs such as BRAC, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Grameen Shikkha, Surovi, Phulki, Care Bangladesh and CAMPE. One of the significant initiatives of Plan Bangladesh is the establishment of the ECD Resource Centre within the BRAC University Institute of Educational Development to train ECD practitioners, produce quality learning materials and modules, undertake research and serve as a forum for advocacy and networking.

Community Learning Programme (CLP) Basic Education

CLP is a targeted initiative to empower disadvantaged communities to directly address the low effectiveness of teaching and learning in primary schools and to self-manage a mechanism that improves the learning achievement of their children. The CLP intervention is based on the core issues of poor quality teaching and lack of community participation in schools. The major objectives of CLP are to:

- Establish a sustainable programme of community managed learning activities to improve children's performance in schools;
- Create a public forum for discussion of quality education among children, parents and school authorities; and
- Assist local schools to adopt innovative teaching-learning methods and materials to improve teacher effectiveness and student performance.

CLP has three components of *Sopan*, School Quality Improvement and Learning Camp. Sopan (foundation step) is a supplementary course for early grades (Grades 1 & 2) aimed at increasing enrollment, attendance and performance of children, as well as at minimizing the gap between first generation learners and their more advantaged counterparts. Through School Quality Improvement, school-based plans are prepared and implemented. The community takes on a greater role in monitoring and managing schools while Plan provides technical support. This is an evolving concept creating opportunities for reflection for both the community and schools. Learning Camp is an 8-month long learning assistance course for school goers, usually Grades 3 to 5 children (especially those whose classroom teachers describe them as "back benchers" and "lost cases"). The course is remedial, emphasizes self-learning, and is held before school hours on the same premises.

Learning Camp's core activities include a series of learning improvement courses (4-month basic course, 2-month self-learning course and 2-month creative learning course) for groups of twenty students who have been identified through testing as the lowest performers in class III, IV and V. The process begins with a dialogue between Plan Bangladesh, the local community and the primary school to analyze the causes for children's poor learning achievement. The dialogue often leads to a joint venture to create scope for struggling learners to learn better. The community develops a partnership with schools where schools provide the classroom facilities to hold the Camps outside school hours and the parents of participating children agree to share the instructional costs of a community tutor.

Trained by Plan Bangladesh in innovative teaching methodologies, the tutors offer opportunities for accelerated learning through cooperative small and large group activities with innovative support materials and methods. The tutors follow a curriculum designed by Plan's technical team as a supplement to the government curriculum. The curriculum is structured to improve basic reading, writing and computational skills needed to achieve terminal competencies prescribed at each grade level by the Government of Bangladesh. The tutors receive ten-day foundation training and participate in fortnightly discussion meetings for reflection and further training. Apart from training tutors, Plan provides the learning materials and support technical resource persons who monitor the technical components.

Up to 2004, Plan operated 1,230 learning camps serving 27,212 children in six programme areas. Through partnership with Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), 48 additional learning camps were established in three districts in 2004 with 1,050 children (Plan Bangladesh, 2005).

A recent evaluation report (BAFED, 2003) documented an encouraging improvement of Camp participants in achievement. The mean score obtained in a scholastic test by the children who had attended Camps was 31.63 whereas the mean score of the children of control schools was 29.09. Compared to their classroom peers, students who attended Camps had an average score of 41 percent, while non-camp students had an average score of 45 percent. Although the average score in this case was lower, the results can be considered promising, given participants' past records as underachievers. Successful results have encouraged a growing number of poor families to evaluate the state of learning of their children; to motivate them to stay in school; and to follow up with their performance. Although Camps were initiated to meet the needs of "underachievers," they have been extended to support all children in many communities, because of demand from the communities.

5.3.3 Concern Worldwide

For over 30 years, Concern Worldwide (CW) has provided direct services in education. It has established, financed and managed formal and non-formal primary schools, and has directly implemented projects in early childhood, adolescent and adult education. In 1998, CW decided to phase out its own schools and direct implementation activities and began to define a new approach of working through civil society and government partners. CW's premise is that in order to have a lasting impact on primary education in Bangladesh and to support the government effort in this area, it must work with partners within the current formal primary education system rather than create parallel structures. In view of this approach, CW developed an action research project named the Community Participation in Education (COPE), implemented during the period 2003- 2005.

Background

With the goal of contributing to quality Education for All in Bangladesh, COPE aimed to develop and test a model approach to building the capacity of School Management Committees (SMCs). The assumption was that by working with the SMC, the quality of education could be improved and participation of extremely

poor and excluded children in the government primary education system could be increased. (Concern Worldwide, 2003). The project expected to accomplish the following:

- Strengthened organizational capacity of CW to work with government and civil society institutions in the formal primary education system;
- Increased communication and collaboration among SMCs, schools and government representatives;
- Improved quality of education and a strong implementation of SMC roles and responsibilities in target schools;
- Increased participation of extremely poor and excluded children and families in primary education activities that are initiated by SMC members; and
- Development and dissemination of practical tools and models of effective SMC and community participation in primary education.

Operation

The project was implemented in 30 schools (24 government and 6 registered) in two upazilas, Bhedergonj and Gosairhat, in Shariatpur district located in Central Bangladesh, covering 600 representatives of SMCs, teachers, government officials and community leaders. The ultimate target beneficiaries of the project are the poorest families, guardians and children of primary school age in the target areas – those who have been left out of the formal primary school system or are most likely to be absent frequently or drop out before the end of the five-year cycle (Concern Bangladesh, 2003).

Achievement

Project evaluation (Ahmed and Lohani, 2006) based on the available information indicated positive impacts in terms of increased enrollment, participation, attendance and completion, higher pass rates, a child-friendly environment in schools, better examination scores and improvements in school grade rating. The project demonstrated that enormous untapped potential existed at the community level for improving participation of children and their learning performance in primary education. Project interventions contributed to developing a positive attitude among SMC members and to strengthening SMC capacity. Concern has undertaken a follow-up project to expand and institutionalize the COPE methodology to help improve management and performance of primary schools in partnership with local NGOs and the local education authorities.

5.3.4 Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)

FIVDB has been active in a variety of basic education activities including early childhood development, primary education, literacy and adult education and community learning centres.

Child Education Programme (CEP)

FIVDB has been operating the Child Education Programme (CEP) since 1985, providing primary education to the children of its group members in poor rural

communities. The success of the Active Learning Methodology (ALM), piloted since 1994, has led to the redefining of CEP's goal.

CEP aims to develop quality primary education based on an active learning method and to demonstrate that quality education can be implemented on a significant scale resulting in measurable impact on children's learning achievement. The impact of the programme is measured in terms of pupils attaining competencies specified in the national curriculum. With this aim, CEP has adopted the following strategies:

- Provide a package of primary education service that emphasizes quality.
- Reach out through provisions of training, technical and material support to extend the benefit of the programme beyond its direct intervention area.
- Undertake networking and lobbying to stimulate policy changes in favour of quality education and to improve primary education services available to disadvantaged sections of the population.

The key features of the programme include:

- Schools cater to children aged 5-11 years.
- Active learning methodology (ALM) based teaching aids are used in all primary classes. Children are actively engaged with their own learning. They are not just passive receivers of knowledge but children construct their own knowledge through group work and discovery based activities.
- A range of learning materials support the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) curriculum to enable children attain designated competencies.
- A well designed teaching-learning supervision structure comprises adequate staff with appropriate training.
- A central programme unit includes task based units for curriculum and material development, training, field operations and quality assurance.
- 110 schools have been built (318 teachers and 14,000 pupils) with DFID support, comprising permanent physical structures consisting of three classrooms and one teachers' room in the most disadvantaged rural areas where other primary education service is not available.
- The programme offers 6 years of schooling, from "reception" to class 5, in an interactive and hygienic school environment. There is a maximum of 30 students per class, which enables teachers to give children individual attention. The active learning approach encourages creativity and individuality.
- The community (through SMC) is trained and takes responsibility for land donation, managing school fund, teacher recruitment, enrollment, attendance and reducing dropout.

FIVDB is providing primary education in poor rural areas at a cost that compares favourably with the government system and other NGOs. The cost of providing primary education to each child, at the optimal scale of operation, is $19 for one year and $115 for the whole course of five-year primary education.

As a result of demonstrated effectiveness of its programme, FIVDB has been able to develop partnerships with other NGOs based on its active learning methodology. A number of organizations has received teacher and supervisor training for their primary education programmes. Save the Children (SC) USA has adopted the methodology and CEP is running six primary schools in their impact area in the Brahmanbaria district. SC-USA is implementing a USAID supported project aimed at building community, children and schools' preparedness for quality education for which the CEP schools are used as quality demonstration centres. SC-UK/Sweden is planning a piloting of the Community Based Education Information System in government and FIVDB school catchments focusing on inclusion and quality of education.

SUCCEED (Early Learning for School Success Programme)

FIVDB is implementing the SUCCEED programme in Sylhet Sadar, Zakigonj and Sunamgonj Sadar with funding from USAID. The mission of the programme is to bring innovation into the education system that enables all children including those disadvantaged by poverty, ethnicity and disability to be successful learners. SUCCEED has five components:

- Early Childhood Development (ECD): SUCCEED offers a pre-school model that demonstrates how well all children can perform in primary school if provided with effective early learning opportunities. The SUCCEED pre-school is attempted to be made sustainable with the use of low-cost materials and trained community teachers. The parenting component assures that children get added support from home and that the community has skills to manage the ECD programmes. Combining two home-based pre-schools with one school-based pre-school in a community, an entire cohort of children can begin first grade ready to succeed.

- Early Primary Education (EPE): SUCCEED is implementing transition activities with primary schools to create a child friendly and welcoming environment and increased use of child-driven learning, characteristic of ECD programmes. SUCCEED identifies community based initiatives to stimulate learning for children outside of school.

- Education Equity (EE): While gender parity in primary school enrollment has been achieved, education equity remains a challenge for children of some 45 ethnic communities in the country, 1.6 million children who suffer from disability, and for all children of poverty who have access to school without access to learning. Issues of the gender gap continue to affect both girls and boys in different ways.

- Communication and Advocacy (C&A): Communication is one key to both innovation and sustainability, and thus has high priority for SUCCEED. Activities are rooted in a systems view of change in communities. Consistent, complementary and compelling messages are directed to multiple audiences of stakeholders, via multiple channels, based on convincing evidence, form

credible sources to create a synergy that leads to collective as well as individual change.

- Monitoring and Research (M&R): SUCCEED recognizes the challenges and importance of preparing children for schools, schools for children, and community support for learning. By close supervision, monitoring and research, this programme can be made a successful one.

SUCCEED currently operates 360 pre-schools with 8,046 children. Through monitoring and research, a study was conducted on community learning centres in conjunction with the EPE and C&A components. Moreover, partnerships have been forged with two organizations working with disabled children, which will help to support disabled children in the programme's working areas.

Hard to Reach Programme & Urban Slum Children Education Programme (USCEP)

FIVDB has implemented the Hard to Reach programme of the Directorate of Non-Formal Education, supported by UNICEF. It operates 100 centres in urban slums for working children. Moreover, in collaboration with UNICEF, FIVDB started the Urban Slum Children Education Programme in July 2004. Under the programme, 200 learning centres with 30 children each are operating in the urban slums of 22 wards in Dhaka city. The CEP-developed curriculum and methodologies are followed in this programme.

5.3.5 Save the Children USA – Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Save the Children – USA (SC-USA) supports ECD in Bangladesh with the objectives of increasing access and of improving knowledge, attitude and skills of caregivers and parents related to the optimal development of young children. SC-USA directly implements ECD programmes in Nasirnagar, and works in partnership with five renowned partners in five divisions under the *SUCCEED* project.

SC-USA also works to advance capacity-building and community mobilization through the formation of parenting groups and the establishment of *Home Based Early Learning Opportunity (HBELO) Centres* and *Home Based Pre-Schools (HBPS)*. The ECD programme as a whole is primarily implemented through the capacity-building of facilitators/caregivers and teachers. SC–USA provides Basic Training and Material Development Training to the caregivers, teachers and programme supervisors. These enhance the quality of the programmes, and develop both skilled staff and organization. The main activities implemented by SC-USA itself and in partnership with local organizations are briefly described below (see Annex 8 for numbers of SC-USA programme centers and participants).

Home Based Early Learning Opportunity (HBELO) Centre

In order to ensure children's overall optimal development, Home Based Early Learning Opportunity (HBELO) Centres are seen as a practical option in terms of sustainability and scalability. An HBELO Centre provides early stimulation and

early learning, and is organized by two volunteer caregivers who facilitate a two-hour session six days a week for a group of 15-20 children of 4-5 years of age. Sessions are conducted in living rooms or verandas provided by the community. This one-year course for children emphasizes all areas of child development – physical, cognitive, socio-emotional and communicative. Children are involved in corner activities, indoor-outdoor play, rhymes, songs and story telling sessions. Facilitators receive a week long basic training on HBELO Centres and material development along with regular monthly refreshers and follow-up training.

Home Based Pre-School (HBPS)

An HBPS is the second step of the early learning intervention of SC-USA. The HBELO is upgraded to a HBPS after a year. One teacher facilitates the HBPS for three hours to prepare the children for grade one of primary school. Again, sessions are conducted in a living room or veranda provided by the community, and make up a one-year course for the children. A trained teacher runs the HBPS and is responsible for carrying out various child development activities as well as pre-academics, which include pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-math. The programme has a well developed monitoring system and is monitored on a regular basis following an Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale.

Reading for Children (RfC)

Reading for Children (RfC) is one component of HBPS. Parents borrow story books from the centre and read with their children, which helps to develop child communication skills. SC-USA provides 50 books for this purpose to every HBPS. RfC is also implemented with some HBELO and Shishu Classes on a pilot basis.

Shishu Class (Young Child Class)

Shishu Class is a similar initiative to HBPS but is situated in existing primary schools to prepare children for Grade I as well as to make the pre-school a part of the school system. SMCs recruit teachers from the community to supervise the Shishu class. SC-USA then trains the teachers and supplies materials. Primary school teachers are supportive of running the Shishu class as the children are then ready for Grade I.

ECD Centre

SC-USA has an ECD centre, which is responsible for research, capacity-building, material development, networking and advocacy. The Centre has developed and printed 110 story books, flip charts, instruction materials and a collection of rhymes books containing 100 rhymes. It conducted 4 regional and national workshops and is working on furthering ECD activities and the Reading for Children initiative.

This chapter has reviewed a range of interventions in primary and secondary education developed with and without NGO participation, all designed to improve access and participation. Our analysis now turns to questions of financing, which need to be considered in order to support further improvements.

Chapter 6

Financing Basic Education

This chapter provides an overview of government financing and household costs for basic education and their implications for access and participation.

At the macro-economic level, resource allocation by the government to the education sector in the last decade rose in nominal terms, but its share in the national budget remained relatively stagnant since 1995/96 until 2003/4 and recorded a decline since then up to 2004/5. There is a sign of reversal of the trend since 2005. (Table 32 and Figure 9)

6.1 Level of government support for different providers of education services

Table 32 provides an outline of the main education providers in Bangladesh and the level of government support provided.

Table 32: Government financing modalities in primary and secondary education

Types of School	Primary Education (Class 1-5)		Secondary Education (Class 6-10)	
	Level of government funding	Public recurrent per pupil budget 2005/06 (Tk)	Level of government funding	Public recurrent per pupil budget 2005/06 (Tk)
Government schools	Government funded school costs supplemented by direct costs incurred by households	1,742	Government funded school costs (and a high level of direct household cots)	6,554
Registered non-government schools	Government funds up to a maximum of 5 teachers (for schools with more that 400 students) at 90% of the basic government teacher salary and limited allowances (house rent, medical, head teacher, dearness and 0.25 festival allowances). Stipends and free textbooks.	747	Government funds at least 9 teachers at 90% of the basic government teachers salary plus limited allowance (house rent, medical and 0.25 of festival allowances)	1,769
Government Alia madrassa	Fully government funded	n/a	Fully government funded	7,902
Recognized non-government Alia madrassa	Attached ibtidayee sections of higher madrassas government funds teachers at 90% of the basic government teacher salary. Free textbooks for students.	n/a	For Dakhil madrassas (grades 1-10) government funds for 13 (4-5 for the ibtidayee section) teachers at 90% of the basic government teacher salary plus limited allowances (house rent, medical and 0.25 of festival allowances)	2,577
Unrecognized Alia madrassa	No government funding		No government funding	
Independent ibtidayee madrassa	Teachers receive a lump sum of Tk. 750 per month with no other benefits. Free textbooks and stipends.	62		
Private schools	No direct government funding although those following national curriculum receive free textbooks		No government funding	
NGO schools	No direct government support unless following the national curriculum where free textbooks are provided		No government funding	
Community schools	Teachers receive Tk. 750 per month. Stipend and free textbooks for student	233		

Source: Calculated from Ministry of Finance budget tables and BANBEIS enrollment data, cited in Samarrai 2007

Note: Public demonstrations and demands by teachers in the summer of 2006 led to increase of government subvention to RNGPS teachers to 100 percent of starting salary in the government school salary scale. An increase also has been granted to government payment to Community School teachers

Per pupil budget shown in Table 32 has to be taken as order of magnitude, since the exact figures will vary from year to year depending on enrollment numbers and budget allocations which are not based on a capitation formula. Information in Table 32 shows that:

- Primary education is dominated by GPS, RNGPS and madrassas. There are very different levels of government funding per pupil for different types of schools. Government school students receive slightly more than 2.5 times of government spending for RNGPS students.

- In secondary education, a large difference exists between per student government spending in favour of the relatively small government system (both general and madrassa) and the non-government system.

- The best funded institutions appear to be government madrassas. However, there are only three, representing a negligible part of the system.

- Overall, there are large differences in public support to different providers. In the primary system GPS receive nearly 30 times the per pupil funding that independent ibtidayee madrassas receive. In secondary, government madrassas receive more than four times the level of support as non-government secondary schools.

- Furthermore, comparing across the two sub-sectors of primary and secondary education, it can be seen that the largest providers of primary and secondary education, namely government primary schools and non-government secondary schools, receive similar levels of per pupil funding. Secondary level costs internationally are usually a multiple of costs at the primary level.

What is the rationale behind these different levels of support? A clear rationale based on consideration of options and their implications has not been provided in a public policy statement. It can be speculated that:

- Non-government institutions are only subsidised and are expected to obtain further support from parents and local communities to narrow the resource gap. If total resources from all sources were compared the differences would be substantially lower.

- The education offered by providers is different and the costs associated with providing these different types of education is different. Given limited resources and contending political pressures, the government takes the path of least resistance and supports a system of provisions offering different qualities of education, regardless of equity consequences.

These issues need to be explored further.

6.1.1 Proportions and trends in government budget devoted to education

Figure 9: Education as a proportion of the overall budget
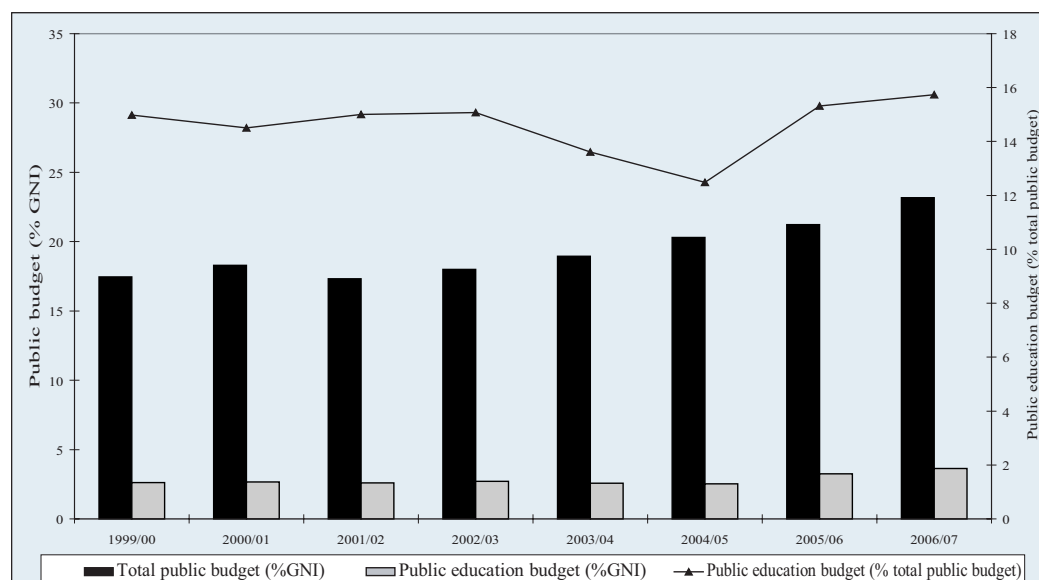
Source: Budget in Brief (MoF, various years), Annual Development Programmes (Planning Commission, various years) and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics for GNI data

Notes: All figures are for revised budget reflecting actual implementation except some figures for 2000/01 (total development and education development budget) and all figures for 2006/07 which are budget allocation figures.

Total public budget figures exclude debt repayments, loans and advances, food operations and structural adjustment spending. The total budget figures for 2005/06 and 2006/07 include programmes financed by the non-development budget (commonly 1-2% of the overall budget) whereas other figures do not. Total budget figures for 1999/00 and 2000/01 are not completely comparable with other figures but the differences are small.

Figure 9 shows that:

- The public budget has been increasing steadily as a proportion of GNI suggesting that public spending is rising at a slightly faster rate than economic growth. In fact since 1999/00 public budget has been growing at an average rate of 6.5% at current prices.The public revenue as a proportion of GDP is significantly lower, around 10.5 percent in 2005. The difference is bridged by external assistance and domestic borrowing, which raises complex issues about government capacity to increase public spending substantially for education.

- There is somewhat of a jump since 2004/05 because of the introduction of new pay scales which increased the revised recurrent budget by about 20%.

- Public education spending as a proportion of GNI has remained relatively stagnant at around 2 percent in recent years, although there has been an upturn

during the last two years (perhaps associated with upcoming election). This proportion is low when compared with other countries in the region and developing countries more generally. For example, the average percentage of GNI devoted to public education spending in 2002 was 4.5 per cent for developing countries as a whole and 3.8 per cent for countries in South and West Asia (UNESCO, 2006). The capacity of the government to increase public expenditure for education remains, as noted above, a major issue.

•The upturn in resources devoted to education in 2006 perhaps suggests a reversal of decline in the share of the public budget devoted to education. However, by 2006/07 the share going to education was only slightly higher than the share devoted at the beginning of the previous decade (15 percent 1999/00 compared to about 16 percent in 2006/07). See Figure 9 and Table 33.

•Interestingly, the proportion of the budget appropriated for education is comparable with other developing countries and slightly higher than for other countries in the region. For example, the average percentage of total public spending devoted to education in 2002 was on average 16 per cent for developing countries as a whole and 14 per cent for countries in South and West Asia (UNESCO, 2006). This suggests that low levels of GNI devoted to education is not necessarily an issue of insufficient prioritisation of education in the government budget but the problem of a relatively small public sector.

Table 33: Government budget for primary and overall education 1991/92-2004/05 (in Crore Taka)

Fiscal Year	Primary Education				Overall Education			
	Revenue	Development	Total	% of national budget	Revenue	Development	Total	% of national budget
1991/92	670	345	1,015	6.7	1,382	527	1,909	12.7
1995/96	950	790	1,740	7.8	2,151	1,371	3,522	15.8
1996/97	998	806	1,804	7.4	2,296	1,552	3,848	15.9
1997/98	1,148	682	1,830	6.9	2,696	1,483	4,179	15.7
1999/00	1,312	936	2,248	6.4	3,257	1,982	5,239	15.0
2003/04	1,630	965	2,595	5.3	4,475	2,283	6,758	13.7
2004/05	1,804	838	2,642	4.7	5,072	2,049	7,121	12.8

Source: BANBEIS, MOE, Bangladesh Educational Statistics

6.1.2 Intrasectoral allocations of public education expenditure

Figure 10: Sub-sectoral budget allocations for education 1999/00-2005/06 (constant 1996 prices)
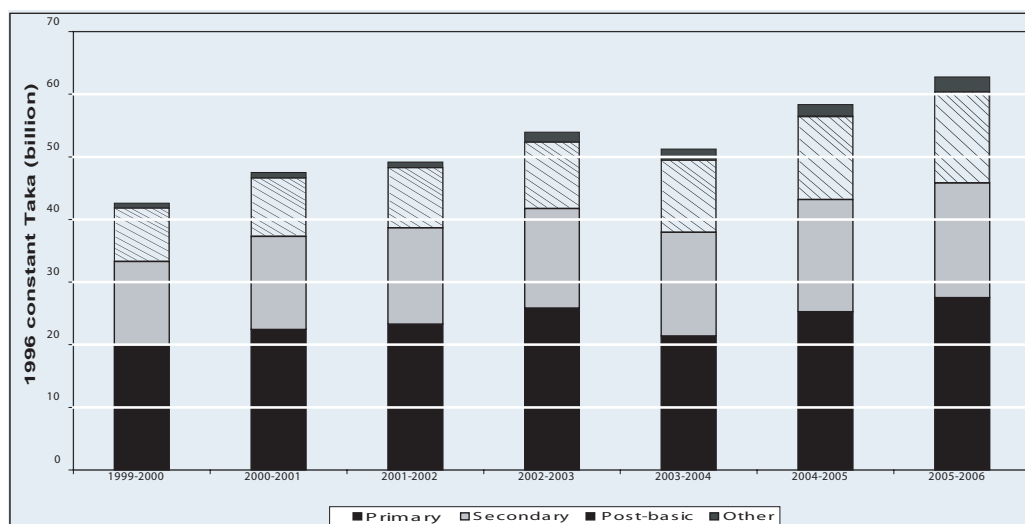
Source: Detailed budget estimates (MoF various years) and ADPs (Planning commission various years), cited in Samarrai 2007

Notes: Revenue budget data is based on the revised budget (except for 2006/07) whereas the development budget is not. A time series of the revised development budget broken down by project was unavailable. Primary education is based on MoPME budget going to government primary schools, registered non-government primary schools and small repairs (from MOPME budget). It also includes support to independent ibtidayee madrassas from MOE.

In 2003-05 approximately 38 percent of enrollment in dakhil, alim, fazil and kamil madrassas supported by government, were in the ibtidayee section (BANBEIS 2005; DPE 2006). Therefore the 38 percent of the MOE budget going to these types of madrassas is assigned to primary. The remainder is assigned to higher secondary and above. Higher secondary and above also includes PTI budget from MoPME.

The decline in real resources to education in 2003-04 is primarily driven by a substantial decline in the ADP for primary education. A large project (ADB's development of primary education in Chittagong, Sylhet and Barisal) was completed the year before and other projects began to wind down, with spending much less than in the previous year. In addition the primary stipends scheme allocation was much smaller in this year. In 2004/05 the introduction of PEDP II significantly reversed this decline. However, the original allocation of Tk. 700 million in the 2004/05 ADP was revised to just Tk. 240 million.

As Figure 10 shows:

• Real public resources to education (including primary and secondary) have been increasing although the share devoted to basic education has declined slightly; in 1999/00 basic education received 74 percent of the budget while in 2005/06 it received 71 per cent. Within basic education the first five grades receive approximately 60 per cent of the resources available with the secondary grades receiving 40 percent.

•Total budget hides some larger shifts in the revenue budget away from basic education, offset partially by development budget.

Figure 11: Sub-sectoral recurrent or revenue budget allocations for basic education (% of total education recurrent budget)
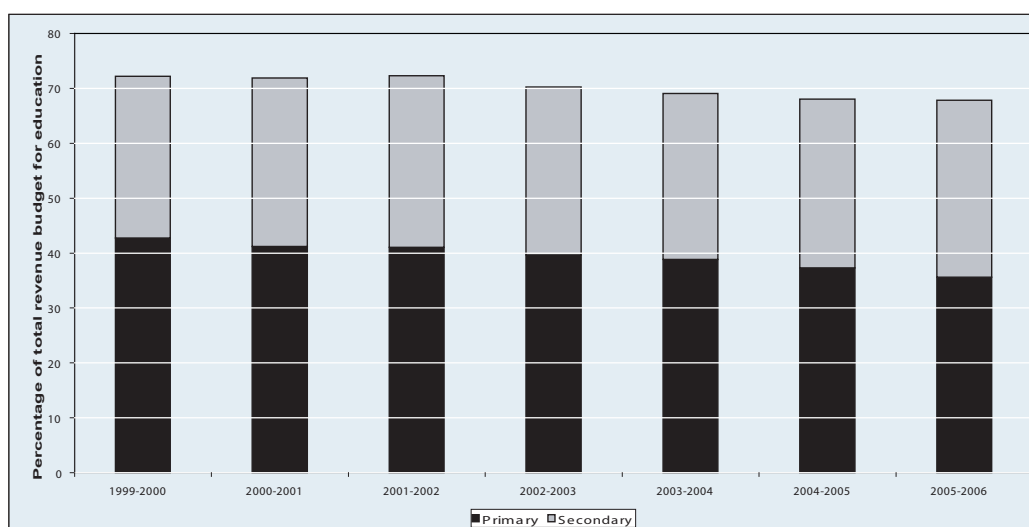
Source: Detailed budget estimates (MoF various years), cited in Samarrai 2007
Note**:** Revised budget data for each year is used.

Figure 11 shows that:

•The proportion of recurrent budget going to basic education has been gradually declining since 1999; in 1999 it was 72 per cent compared to 68 per cent in 2005.

•There has also been a decline in the share of these resources going to primary education; in 1999, 60 per cent of basic education recurrent resources went to primary but by 2006 almost equal recurrent resources were devoted to both primary and secondary education.

•The relatively stagnant share of primary education shown in Figure 11 implies that the share of the development budget going to primary education has increased. In the later years this has been primarily driven by the introduction of PEDPII.

6.1.3 Composition of public spending on basic education

Figure 12: Composition of public primary education spending in 2001/2 to 2004/5 (revenue and development)
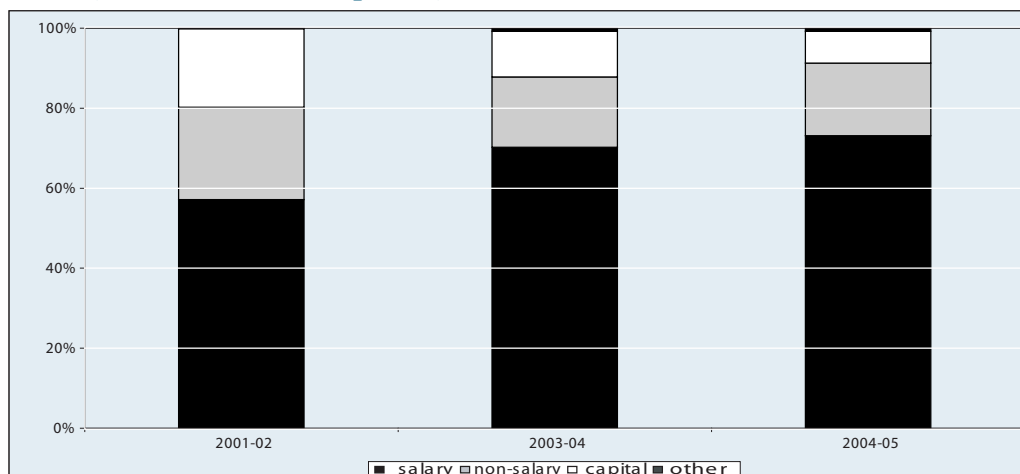
Source: Ministry of Finance Consolidated Government Accounts and MoPME Financial Management Unit Annual ADP reports (2002, 2003 and 2005), cited in Samarrai 2007
Notes: primary education is defined as in previous figures and includes revenue spending on ibtidayee madrassa students.

Figure 12 shows:

- A large proportion of the education revenue budget is allocated to personnel costs. In fact, approximately 98 per cent of the revenue budget allocated for primary education is for salaries and allowances and this has not changed since the beginning of the decade. (The figures here are exclusively for the education budget allocated to government primary schools, petty maintenance and non-government primary schools and ibtidayee madrassas. They do not include administration and PTIs.) A similar pattern prevails in secondary education. With a greater proportion of the budget going to support the salaries of teachers in non-government secondary institutions, over 99 per cent of the revenue budget is for teachers.

- However, a great deal of non-salary recurrent spending occurs on the development side of the budget. Most notably, stipends provided by the budget to basic education students are drawn from the development side of the budget. In primary education, a complete set of textbooks are provided to all students and again this cost is covered by the development budget.

- Combining information on the composition of public expenditure from both sides of the budget reveals that in primary education approximately 20 per cent of the overall budget is devoted to non-salary spending, 65 per cent for salaries and the remainder is spent on construction (see Figure 12).

- Comprehensive information on the composition of development spending is difficult to obtain for secondary education. Financial management units, set up in the education ministries, are responsible for providing this information.

However, reports for all years were not available from this unit in the MOE and it is unclear whether they are continuing to collect this information. CGA accounts also include development spending but crucially do not include Direct Project Aid (DPA) which does not pass through government accounting systems. However, where information is available it does suggest a similar breakdown as primary education.

- Figure 12 also shows an increasing share devoted to salary costs for primary education over time. For example, in 2001 57 per cent of total public primary education expenditure went to salaries compared to 73 per cent in 2004. This is largely due to a drop in construction expenditure in the development side of the budget. However, with the introduction of PEDP II and the large construction spending reported for this project in 2005, it is likely that the share of salaries will begin to decline in the future. In 2005/06 reported development expenditure doubled compared to 2004/05. This doubling in development spending was almost completely accounted for increased construction expenditure as PEDPII began disbursing funds for the construction of additional classrooms in GPS and RNGPS.

6.1.4 Trends in resources by government funding modality

Figure 13: Trends in education budget by education provider (constant 1996 prices)
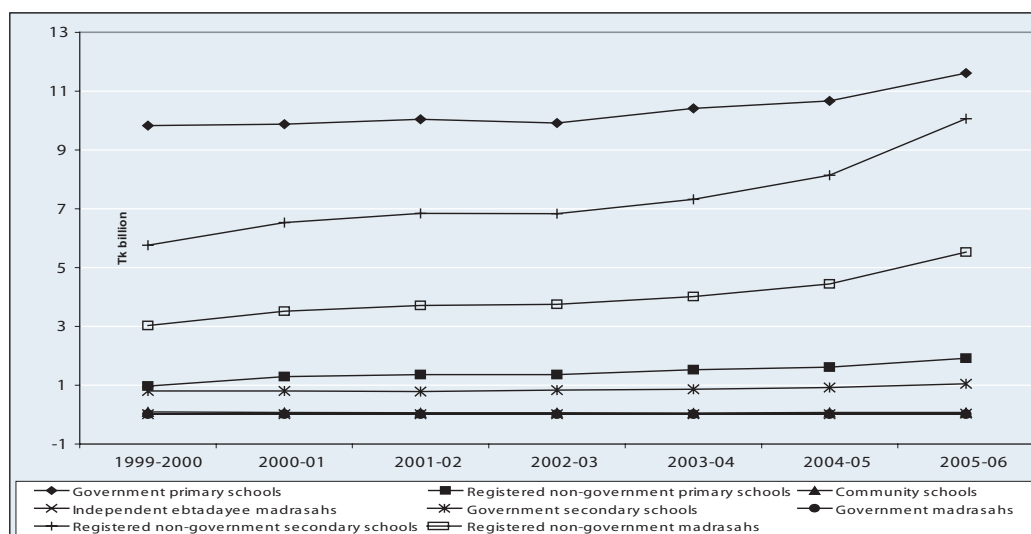
Source: Detailed budget estimates (MoF various years), cited in Samarrai 2007
Notes: Revised budget data for each year is used. Registered non-government madrassas also includes all spending on the ibtidayee and post-basic sections of these madrassas.

Figure 13 presents the trends in government spending for different providers of education.

- Patterns shown in Figure 13 generally follow those shown in Figure 9 for the overall education budget.

- Up until 2004/05 rates of budget increase amongst the different providers were similar. However, after 2004/05 non-government secondary schools and madrassas saw faster increases in the amount of budgetary allocation than the other providers of education.
- It is not clear as to why budgetary allocations, mainly for salary subsidies, has increased recently for non-government secondary schools and madrassa. It could be that more institutions have been registered or that more teachers are now included on the payroll of existing registered madrassas and secondary schools. Further investigation is required.

6.2 Resources at the Institutional Level

Few financial resources, disposable at the school, are available in government primary schools (GPS) and registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS) as a budgetary provision. Schools have very little funding available to be used at their discretion for essential expenses related to their activities. Some primary schools raised funds for small repair, purchase of stationery and entertainment of visitors with contribution made by teachers, collections made from community and by charging students "unofficial" fees.

6.2.1 Household costs

The total government allocation per pupil enrolled in primary school was Tk 583 in 1990-91 for both revenue and development. The allocation rose to Tk, 1,617 in 2002-2003, corresponding to Tk. 900 at constant 1991 prices. Independent studies have assessed direct cost to families for both primary and secondary levels. The mean private expenditure (in Taka) in 2000 for primary level schooling for a period of eight months came to an average of Tk. 614.00 for GPS, Tk. 484 for non-government primary school, Tk. 290.00 for non-formal education and Tk.823 for madrassa education. Interestingly, the madrassa turned out to be more expensive at every grade. The cost per child for eight months by class and school type is shown in Table 34 below. The "annualized" household cost would be approximately one-third higher for different types of primary level institutions in the sample.

Table 34: Mean private expenditure of primary schooling for eight months) by class and school type (in Taka)

Class	Type of school				Significance
	Government	Private	Non-formal	Madrassa	
I	359 (1,237)	297 (405)	220 (103)	475 (151)	p<0.001
II	461 (813)	415 (253)	337 (99)	685 (78)	p<0.001
III	733 (769)	580 (189)	240 (111)	915 (85)	p<0,001
IV	829 (617)	754 (147)	333 (80)	1097 (55)	p<0.001
V	997 (611)	807 (117)	322 (86)	1362 (63)	p<0.001
All	614 (1,047)	484 (1,111)	290 (479)	823 (432)	p<0.001
Significance	p<0.001	p<0.001	ns	p<0.001	

Source: CAMPE, *Education Watch* 2001. Figures in parentheses indicate number of students in sample.

The *Education Watch* survey 2005 examined private expenditure for secondary education. It provides an estimate of expenditure per child per year by major items, sex and location. The major items include costs of private tutors, textbooks/notes or help-books, stationeries, school dress, examination fees, admission/readmission fees and monthly tuition fees. The cost per boy child came to Tk.8,874 and per girl child Tk 7,411. Private coaching took nearly half the cost, 48 percent for boys and 46 percent for girls. There was urban rural variation. The cost in urban areas was much higher than the national average for both boys and girls, exceeding the rural average by 40 percent. Private household spending for secondary education was more than four times higher than public spending. The poor in the "food deficit" households spent one-third less per child for secondary education than those in the "food surplus" households

6.3 Public Sector incentive expenditures

Public budgetary allocations are divided into revenue and development budgets, as noted above. The revenue expenditures are meant mostly for salaries of teachers and managers as well as teacher training. Development allocations are used for new expansion of facilities and initiatives for improvement of the system. Provisions for free textbooks in primary schools and stipends for primary school students and girl students in rural secondary schools are charged to the development budget and have become major components in the development allocations.

As described in the previous section of this report, there are *high incentive expenditures* or conditional transfer payment in the form of stipends and tuition waivers for girls in secondary schools and primary school students identified as poor in rural areas. The development budget expenditure of the government for primary and secondary education is dominated by the payment of stipends. The important policy issue is whether the benefits in terms of participation, equity and quality improvement would not be better achieved by spending directly on improving inputs and performance in school (Knowles 2001). While stipends attracted students to schools, the unanswered questions are: a) Given the overall quality problems in primary and secondary education and low per student expenditure, do stipends starve out important inputs necessary for quality improvement – such as laboratories, libraries, teacher training and stronger supervision? b) Are conditions attached to this transfer payment - which the disadvantaged sections of the population (very poor, first generation learners and girls who have to work to help their families) have difficulty meeting - further aggravating disparity?

Evidence from various sources supports the conclusion that education finance arrangements reinforce *the pattern of inequity* in society. The share of benefits for households from public spending in education rises with income levels of households at all stages of education, but especially in secondary and tertiary education (World Bank 1998).

The above information on education finance for Bangladesh in the public sector over the 2000s shows that government spending on education stagnated in the

first half of the 2000s, although it is now showing some signs of increase. The budget share allocated to primary education has declined and this is particularly true for the recurrent budget. Conversely, the share devoted to secondary education has increased. These findings reflect in part recent declines in primary school enrollment and continued enrollment growth at the secondary level. It is evident that levels of government funding vary enormously across different providers and these differences are generally reinforced by private expenditures on education. The current modality of government education financing gives rise to a segregated education system that is not serving the needs of the poor effectively. The facts regarding availability of resources from public and other sources, how they interact and what the effects are on education participation, equity and performance of students need to be examined further.

Chapter 7
Conclusions: Key Issues in Exclusion and Research Priorities

This analysis of participation in primary and secondary education has attempted to highlight the state of access of eligible populations to these stages of education, equity and disparities in access, and progression and transition within and between primary and secondary education stages. This exercise has underscored limitations about the way access to education is conceptualized, understood and articulated. This has consequences, as the present report illustrates, for the way information and data on access are produced and analysed and how the options on policy and strategy regarding access come to the attention of decision-makers.

The essential facts regarding access and participation beyond initial entry into educational institutions have been presented in the previous section to the extent possible. Key findings are underscored in this concluding section. It also emphasizes the conceptual limitations that characterize the consideration of access in Bangladesh (and perhaps other countries), the problems with methodology and quality of collection and use of relevant data, and the research needs and agenda that arise from these limitations regarding better understanding of access and equitable participation.

7.1 Key Findings about Access and Participation in Education

The overarching findings about the state of access, and a confirmation of what has been observed on the ground and suggested by various studies, are three-fold:

a)   Very high dropout, both at the primary and secondary levels, make high gross and net enrolment rates and even higher initial intake rates virtually meaningless as indicators of access and participation;

b)   Virtual or silent exclusion from engagement in learning of those who are nominally enrolled is as serious a problem as open exclusion, but this phenomenon remains largely un-investigated and un-quantified; and

c)   Spectacular progress has been recorded since the beginning of the decade of the 1990s in closing the gender gap in primary and secondary school enrollment. This gain has been across the board for geographical regions and socio-economic categories. At the secondary level, girls' enrollment has surged ahead of boys'. The significance of this progress cannot be underestimated, even though girls still remain behind in completing the secondary stage

Key findings from the analysis of the state of access in primary and secondary education presented in the previous sections are recapitulated below.

7.1.1 Access in Primary Education

- The present report reveals that cohort dropout at the primary level between grade one and five was 48 percent in 2004 based on EMIS data for primary education. This is substantially higher than 33 percent dropout in primary education that has been reported for the last several years and which has been taken as the basis for planning major interventions, such as PEDP II, and setting targets, such as those for the MDGs in Bangladesh. This is an illustration of a systemic problem about collecting, analysing and reporting relevant data and using these for planning and policy- making.

- Official primary education statistics do not include over 30,000 one-room, one-teacher schools run by NGOs, serving more than a million children. Exclusion of these numbers introduces distortion in officially reported gross and net enrollment ratios. These provisions, labeled as non-formal primary education, offer a full equivalency to government primary schools, have been in existence for two decades and are internationally acclaimed as making a critical contribution to enhancing access and equity in primary education.

- Population data and projection show that the growth of the primary school age population has slowed down. The total fertility rate is projected to come down to the replacement level within the next decade. Under this scenario it should be possible to redirect primary education resources and energy to quality improvement rather than expansion of facilities to cater to additional new students.

- Although there is a designated age-range for primary education and a specified entry age, the actual age-range remains wide. The gap between gross and net intake rate has been narrowing, but remained at 14 percentage points in 2004. Achieving universal primary education by ensuring access to all require that measures be taken to ensure entry at the specified age. Mandatory birth registration, provisions for school facilities of acceptable quality within easy access for young children, and awareness raising about primary education age regulations are necessary measures for increasing participation of children in primary education within the designated age-range.

- The existence of at least 11 types of primary education institutions, besides non-formal primary education, makes the definition and conditions of access – access to what – a critical issue. Development of quality standards and criteria for learning facilities and other aspects of provision and area-based planning to ensure access to facilities of acceptable standards is essential. This should be regardless of where children live, what socio-economic circumstances they come from, and what types of institutions they attend. These are the major access challenges in primary education in Bangladesh.

7.1.2   Transition to and Participation in the Secondary Level

- Transition from primary to secondary level (defined as the proportion of grade 5 students enrolled in grade 6 in the following year) appears to be

around 83 percent in 2004. There is no public examination at the end of the primary stage and open admission, in principle, to secondary school. Because of this and separate data recording by separate Ministries for primary and secondary education, it is difficult to arrive at good estimates of transition. Available data suggest a decrease in transition rate in recent years - from 88 percent in 2002 to 83 percent in 2004. High cohort dropout in primary school implies that the high transition rate does not mean a high enrollment ratio at the secondary stage (See below). Less than half the appropriate age-group at the secondary level, 45 percent, were enrolled in secondary institutions including madrassas. Recent initiatives to introduce public examinations at the end of grade five and requirements for admission tests in secondary schools are likely to affect transition.

- There is a large gap of 20 percentage points between gross and net enrollment ratios (65 and 45 percent respectively) at the secondary level (grades six to ten). Net enrollment rates were derived from the *Education Watch* surveys since there is no official data for net enrollment rates, which are a critical indicator of access.

- Internal efficiency at the secondary level is very low even by comparison with the low rates in primary education. Only 20 percent of those enrolled in grade six are able to complete grade ten and pass the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination.

- Participation in both primary and secondary education is strongly affected by socio-economic status of the families of children. On a net basis, 25 percent of the eligible children from households with "always in deficit" staple food security status attended secondary school compared to 59 percent in families with a "surplus" food security status. At the primary level, children from families with a "deficit" food security status have more than five times the chance of dropping out than children in the "surplus" category.

- The enrollment of girls has surged ahead of boys by 11 percentage points, however this initial gain is not sustained till the end of the secondary cycle. Boys surpass girls by 11 percentage points in completing the secondary stage. Large rural-urban disparities and disparities by socio-economic category of households prevail, both in initial entry and continuing participation for both boys and girls.

7.1.3 Categories of Exclusion and Vulnerability

- *The identity and characteristics of the excluded* - By definition, routine education data do not provide information about those who remain outside the system or are excluded from it. Although overall proportions or ratios of enrollment and non-enrollment can be estimated from education statistics, the identity, characteristics and distribution of the excluded are not usually available and are not investigated systematically. Available information from various sources suggests overlapping categories and characteristics of the excluded groups in terms of socio-economic and other attributes, as noted below.

- *The extreme poor* – In Bangladesh this constitutes the largest category of those excluded from primary and secondary education because of the large proportion of the population falling below the "poverty line." The children from families in this category include those who have entered but left school before completion. Important questions then are: i) To what extent is there an overlap between non-enrolled and children from families in the extremely poor category? ii) Why do some children from the extremely poor category enroll and others do not, and what happens to the children who enroll in respect of their participation and progress in schools?

- *Children in female-headed families* – With the assumption that 25 percent of the women-headed families are in hard-core poverty and that each of these families has one primary school age child, the number of primary school age children from poor female-headed families would be 1.45 million. By comparison, there are 1.7 million children of primary school age who were not in school in 2005. Again, the overlap in these two categories needs to be investigated.

- *Working children* - National Child Labour Survey (NCLS), 2002-03 estimated that in the 5-14 age group, 5.05 million were in child labour. Among the child workers, 1.3 million (9.3 percent girls) were engaged in "hazardous work."

- *Street children* – A BIDS survey projected there would be 760,000 street children in 11 large cities by 2014.

- *Children with special needs* – No accurate estimate of children with special needs exists. The BBS Health and Demographic Survey 2000 found that 6.04 persons per 1000 suffered some disability of a physical or mental nature. NGOs working with physically challenged groups provide much higher figures for their clientele. Educational access for children with special needs is a matter dealt with by the Ministry of Social Welfare, rather than by the two Ministries of Education for Primary and Secondary and Higher Education, and remains extremely limited.

- *Children of ethnic/language minorities* - Going by the fact that the 5-15 age group forms 28 percent the population, children in this group among the ethnic communities would come to about 686,000 in 2005, living in small, isolated and remote communities. All indigenous children are not in the same situation regarding education services.

- *Children living in remote and inaccessible areas* - Exact numbers of these populations and the educational and other social services available to them have not been properly assessed.

- *Participation beyond initial entry* – The magnitude of dropout and factors affecting it have been noted above. As pointed out, both school related factors and households and socio-economic circumstances of children affect dropout. Government statistics and EMIS do not provide data on the socio-

economic background of students. Only specific studies such as the *Education Watch* (2003/4 and 2005) shed light on vulnerability to dropping   out. Evidently, better understanding of the factors influencing participation beyond initial access as well as a systematic process of reflecting this understanding in effective measures is necessary to deal with the massive problem of dropout both at the primary and secondary level.

- *Virtual/silent dropout* - Children physically present in class but psychologically and intellectually absent, and therefore not participating and engaging in learning, is a phenomenon that affects a large proportion of children, both at primary and secondary levels. Although precise quantitative estimates do not exist, in magnitude, it is next to open dropout (exclusion zone 2), but definitely much larger than non-enrollment (zone 1) and non-transition from primary to secondary level (zone 4). Yet this area has not been given specific attention in programmes and strategies and its quantitative and qualitative dimensions are not well understood. This area is appropriately seen as a domain of quality of education, but it clearly has access and participation implications. In this third zone of exclusion, access and quality interact and overlap most directly.

7.2 Interventions to Address Access and Participation

A brief account of major interventions in the public sector and by non-government providers of education services shows a wide variety of interventions ranging from a major multi-donor sub-sector programme in primary education and smaller public sector initiatives to complement the mainstream formal primary education sub-sector initiative to a multitude of NGO initiatives, mostly on a small scale. It was not within the scope of this report to assess the adequacy of these efforts to address the major access, equity and participation problems. A few preliminary comments can be made based on the summary description of the interventions.

- The sub-sector programme (PEDP II) is labeled as a sector-wide approach. It is, however, confined to formal primary education in the public sector. It does not deal with the madrassa stream, which is also supported by the government, non-formal approaches of NGOs, and private sector provision. Although the main stream public sector caters to 85 percent of the children enrolled in primary education, the non-government providers as well as the madrassas attempt to reach the groups who are at the margin and the most difficult to reach. It is therefore most critical from the point of view of widening access and participation.

- The NGOs are clearly more innovative, flexible and responsive to needs and circumstances of the diverse groups they attempt to serve than is the highly centralized and standardized approach in the mainstream public sector formal primary schools. However, the total effort of all the non-government providers do not add up, in quantitative terms, to a major response to the enormous gaps in effective access and participation. This is especially so, because of the lack of enthusiasm or interest in collaboration with and learning from the NGO initiatives on the part of the public sector functionaries.

- The present pattern of parallel and separate development activities covering the mainstream schools in the public sector, and the rest in the hands of NGOs, precludes the possibility of synergy, complementarity and mutual support that could benefit all and promote creative and imaginative actions and approaches.

- Experience from the past regarding major public sector assistance projects, the overall poor results from predecessor projects, the basic limitations in design and strategy of the current projects, and the record of progress so far, suggest that major re-orientation and redesigning in the current public sector activities are needed to respond effectively to access, equity and participation problems in the education system. Such a re-orientation needs to be accompanied by change in perceptions and attitudes about collaboration and partnership between government and other actors, especially NGOs and community-based organizations.

- External donors, both multilateral and bilateral, are involved as substantial financial contributors to both public and NGO programmes, and in influencing policies such as the adoption of SWAP. This situation bestows a good measure of responsibility on the external development partners for both success and failure of the national effort. It requires them to examine critically the effectiveness of their assistance including their interaction with government and non-government actors, the premises underlying strategies such as SWAP, the scope and targets of assistance, and coordination within their collective efforts to support national education development.

7.3 Financing of Primary and Secondary Education

A brief overview of public sector funding of primary and secondary education and household contributions shows a picture of overall inadequacy of resources, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the need for strategic thinking about making optimal use of the available resources to support access, equity and quality goals in education.

The information on educational finance in the public sector in recent years shows that government spending on education stagnated in the first half of the 2000s, although it is now showing signs of increase. The budget share allocated to primary education has declined, which is particularly true for the recurrent budget. Conversely, the share devoted to secondary education has increased. These findings reflect in part recent declines in primary school enrollment and continued enrollment growth at the secondary level.

It is evident that levels of government funding vary enormously across different providers of education services and these differences are generally reinforced by private expenditures on education. The current modality of government education financing gives rise to a segregated education system that is not serving the needs of the poor effectively. The facts regarding availability of resources from public and other sources, how they interact, and what the effects are in education participation, equity and performance of students need to be examined further.

7.4 Research Issues and Priorities

The conclusions derived from the nature of the access data and the limitations they reveal regarding understanding of access as well as the research needs and priorities arising from these limitations can be noted under five headings.

7.4.1 Narrow Conceptualization of Access and Inadequate Monitoring of Access

- Conceptualization of access which includes its various dimensions and nuances remains a major issue. The simple perception of access as initial enrollment gives insufficient attention to the progress of children in school. This defeats the purposes and objectives of EFA so far as they require valued learning outcomes.

- EMIS and routine monitoring and reporting in public education systems remain inadequate in methods, capacities, human resources and the will to provide and make use of relevant information and data related to key dimensions of access.

7.4.2 The Four Zones of Exclusion: A Strong Analytical Framework

- The "four zones of exclusion" serve as a powerful conceptual framework for investigating and analyzing different aspects of access, participation, equity and transition. In the context of Bangladesh, while the problems of the first zone are far from being resolved, the second and third zones are critical, both in respect of the size and their complexity.

- While conceptually and analytically it is useful to separate the zones and look at them as distinct categories, it is necessary to be alert to and probe the interaction. In respect of programme interventions, an integrated approach is likely to be essential in most situations.

7.4.3 Lack of a Dynamic and Longitudinal Perspective

- The understanding of the dynamics of participation and exclusion in education that can be derived from tracking cohorts of children in a community and in their social context does not exist. We have incomplete snapshots of cross-sectional data at a point of time through limited independent surveys. The opportunity for time series and cohort analysis could be provided by EMIS, but it needs to be appropriately organized and managed to serve this purpose.

- Cohorts of children in sentinel communities through household and school surveys should be a major focus of CREATE research, taking advantage of a time frame that extends to at least four years.

7.4.4 Feasibility and Necessity of a Participatory Research Approach

- There is a richness of non-governmental organizations which are addressing problems of exclusion and disparity in education in Bangladesh. They can be partners in research at the field sites. A participatory approach can be followed within a common framework of design and methodology with technical support and supervision from the CREATE partner institution.

- An added advantage of the partnership is that current interventions of the organizations can be evaluated and lessons extracted in terms of addressing access issues. The partner organizations will also be partners in communication, dissemination, and policy dialogue arising from the research activities and incorporation of research conclusions and insights into policies and programmes. They will also be the beneficiaries of capacity-building.

7.4.5 Sustainable Intervention Strategies as Guide to Prioritization of Research

- Understanding and extracting lessons from a spectrum of intervention strategies through a range of formal and alternative institutional models, - including preschools, madrassas, post-primary non-formal programmes, and second chance recovery approach - should be included in the research design.

- Case studies of intervention packages, especially of NGOs, which reflect a distinct approach and rationale in a particular context, but can provide insight into generic issues, can be considered as a complement to the structured cohort and sentinel site tracking and analysis.

- Cross-national thematic studies may include issues which are of high relevance as policy questions, but may not be captured in cohort tracking. These would include – decentralization and accountability, dealing with corruption, resource mobilization and utilization, teachers' remuneration and incentives, professionalizing educational management, and conceptualizing education-poverty reduction links.

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ANNEXURES

Annex 1: A Schematic of the Education System in Bangladesh

The national education system is divided into three major stages: pre-primary and primary, secondary, and tertiary. Each stage draws pupils mostly from related age-groups , as shown below.

Age	Grade												
26+	XXI												
25+	XX				Ph.D (Eng)	Ph.D Medical			Ph.D (Education)				
24+	XIX	Ph.D	Post MBBS Dipl M Phil (Medical)										
23+	XVIII	M.Phil											
22+	XVII	MA/MSc/MCom/ MBA	LLM		M Sc. (Eng)	M Sc. (Agr)	MBA	M.Ed&M A(Edm				MA (LSC)	
21+	XVI	Masters Preliminary			BSc. Engneering	BSc. Eng.) (Tech.		B.Ed Dip.Ed. & BPED				Dip (LSC)	
20+	XV	Bachelor Honors — Bachelor (Pass)	LLB (Hons)	MBBS	BDS/BSc. Agr/ Text/ Bsc Eng /Leath		BBA						Kamil
19+	XIV											Diploma In Nursing	
18+	XIII				Diploma (Engineering)								
17+	XII	SECONDARY	Examination HSC Higher Secondary Edu.					Cin Edu	Cin Agri	Diploma in comm			Fazil / ALI.M
16+	XI												
15+	X		Examination SSC Secondary Education			Trade Certificate	ARTISAM COURSES eg Ceramics						
14+	IX												
13+	VIII		JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION										
12+	VII												
11+	VI												
10+	V		PRIMARY EDUCATION										Dakhil
9+	IV												
8+	III												
7+	II												
6+	I												Ebtedayee
5+			PRE- PRIMARY EDUCATION										
4+													
3+													

Source : BANBEIS 2004

Annex 2: Eleven Types of Primary Schools

1. Government primary school (GPS): This is by far the dominant category and these are run fully by the government. The government appoints and pays salaries of teachers. It also pays for school buildings, textbooks and teaching materials for the school. A total of 37,700 GPS with 157,000 teachers enrolled 10.7 million children in 2002.

2. Registered non-government primary school (RNGPS): These schools are established privately under community auspices. On being registered by the government after some minimum years of wait and fulfilment of criteria, the teachers become eligible for 90 percent salary subvention from the government and allocations for building and facilities. About 19,000 RNGPS enrolled 4 million children in 2002.

3. Non-registered primary school. These are schools set up privately or under community auspices, usually waiting to meet the criteria for government registration and financial support.

4. Primary classes attached to high school. These schools are in the same premises as high schools and are managed by the high school authorities. They follow the national primary education curriculum. These schools are not supervised by the primary education authorities and do not receive any support from the government.

5. Experimental school. These are attached to the primary teachers training institutes (PTIs) and used by PTIs for practice teaching by teacher trainees. The school budget is part of the government PTI budget.

6. Satellite school. These are feeder schools with one or two classrooms taught by one or two teachers - established under community auspices to have schooling facilities close to children's home at grade level 1 and 2. Government support to these schools has been discontinued; as a result few satellite schools exist any more.

7. Community school. These are community-sponsored schools taught by a locally appointed teacher in communities where regular school provisions are insufficient. The government provides an allowance to the teacher.

8. Non-formal primary school. These are NGO-run schools meant to serve children who have crossed the school entry age or have dropped out of the primary school. Typically, these are one-room-one teacher schools in which a cohort of around 30 students are taught for three or four years to bring them to the level of grade 4 or 5 in the formal school or to give them a full equivalent of primary education. These receive no assistance from the government and are not included in the official primary education statistics.

9. Ebtedayee madrassa. These are primary level institutions where the curriculum combines general education and religious education. They are nominally under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, but they receive textbooks from the primary education authorities and a proportion of them are beneficiary of the stipend scheme at the primary level.

10. Primary classes attached to high madrassas. These are under the management of the secondary level madrassas and their situation is analogous to the primary classes attached to secondary schools, Curriculum-wise they are similar to the ebtedayee mdrassas. The primary education authorities do no have responsibility for these institutions.

11. Kindergarten. These are generally proprietary institutions run by individuals as commercial enterprises. They follow their own curriculum and teaching of English is emphasized. These are expected to be registered with the government either as a business or a non-profit organisation, though often they are not registered.

Note: The above list of the type of schools used in official statements do not include over 30,000 non-formal primary education schools managed by NGOs which serve about 1.5 million children. Satellite Schools have been discontinued since 2004.

Annex 3: Comparison between BRAC and government primary school models

Characteristics	BRAC Primary School (BPS)	Government Primary School (GPS)
Specified Age range	8-12	6-10
Intake	Once every 3-4 years	Annual
Class size	30-33	61[1]
Classrooms per school	One	Three or more
Attendance (% of enrolled)	96.0	61.0[2]
Completion (% of enrolled in grade 1)	94.0	64.4[3]
Instructional days in a year	I-II =207.0 III-V =230.0	I-V =238.0[4]
Instructional hours/day	I-III = 3.5 IV-V = 4.0	I-II=2.5[5] III-V=4.0
Instructional hour/year	I-II = 724.5 III= 805.0 IV-V = 920.0	I-II=595.0 III-V=995.0
Primary cycle (years)	4	5
Instructional hours/primary cycle	4094	4046
Of 27 selected competencies: Mean number of competencies achieved % of students achieving all 27 competencies	 17.2[6] 6.2[6]	 16.1[6] 1.2[6]
Curriculum	50 GOB competencies+ life skills Class I-III: BRAC books Class IV-V:NCTB books + BRAC supplementary materials	50 GOB competencies Class I-V: NCTB books
Teachers/school: (%of female)	Urban: 1(99%) Rural: 1(99%)	Urban: 5-8 Rural : 3-5 (37.86% Combined urban/rural)

Sources:

[1] Compulsory Primary Education Implementation and Monitoring Unit (2003). Child Education and Literacy Survey 2002. Dhaka; MoPME

[2] PSPMP in MoPME (2001) Primary Education in Bangladesh Financings of PSPMP: 2001. Dhaka: MoPME.

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[4] Directorate of Primary Education (2003) Calendar with holiday list for GPS/RNGPS/Community/Satellite schools 2003. Dhaka: MoPME.

[5] Ibid

[6] CAMPE (2000): A Question of Quality: State of Primary Education in Bangladesh; Dhaka: University Press Limited.

Annex 4: Achievement of BEP as of November 2005

Accomplishments by school type (2000-2005)				
Particulars	**BPS**	**BAPS**	**ESP**	**TOTAL**
1. Ratio of girls	63.9	68.4	71.9	66.0
2. Number of ongoing schools	20,776	5,601	5,500	31,877
3. Enrollment	666,556	166,070	164,934	997,562
4. Dropout rate*	7.6	7.8	0.2	7.0
5. Graduates*	950,230	466,195	165,218	1,581,643
6. Graduates enrolled in Gov't schools*	95.2%	91.7%	99.1%	94.5%

Source: BEP MIS
*Year 2000-2005

Annex 5: Training completed for secondary school teachers of PACE programme as of December 2005

Type of training	Type of participants	No. of participants
1. Workshops	Head teacher	1,094
	Asst. Head teacher	1,169
	SMC Chairs and Vice-Chairs (two persons from each school)	2,064
2. Subject based teachers training	**Teachers**	
	English	3,059
	Mathematics	3,098
	Science	1,019
	Value Education	717
3. Training Material Development	**Modules**	
	English (skill and lesson)	4
	Mathematics	4
	Science	2
	Management Training	2
	SMC Workshop	2
	Value education	1

Note: BEP plans to provide subject-training to 9,100 teachers between 2004-2009

Annex 6: ESP accomplishments - actual and planned

Particulars		ESP three year cycle
	1999-2005 Actual	**2006-2009 Planned**
Number of schools	5,500*	5,500
Number of partner NGOs	616	650-750
Girl:Boy student ratio	72:28	70:30
Female teachers (%)	99	99
Enrollment, by year	2000 = 73,350 2001 = 75,150 2002 = 89,250 2003 = 164,179 2004 = 158,525 2005 = 164,934	510,000 (cumulative for 2006-2009)
Graduates, by year	2000 = 17,836 2001 = 30,293 2002 = 28,179 2003 = 14,813 2004 = 31,948 2005 = 42,149 **Total = 165,218**	Approximately 468,666

*Includes 185 schools in Chittagong Hill Tracts

Annex 7: PLAN Bangladesh whole child development model

Existing Community Organization				SMC of Primary School and Other Interest Groups	
Target Groups	Parents and 0-3 years Children	3 - 5 years children	5 - 6 years children	6 - 10 years School Students	All Children of 6 - 10 years
Existing Facility in Community					Poor Quality School
Proposed Interventions of the Project	Parenting and Care Giving Education	Community Managed Home Based Learning Centers	Community and School Managed Pre School	Tutorial Camps for Primary Students	Whole School Improvement for Quality Basic Education
Evolving Community Organizations	Parents Group	Volunteer Mothers and SBK Committee	Pre School Committee	Camp Committee	SMC and Parents Committee
Envisaged Community Organization	**Community Learning Forum**				

Source: Plan Bangladesh

Annex 8: Total centres and beneficiaries of Save the Children USA - core programmes, 2005

Sl. No.	ECD programme key activity	Total centre	Total # of children
1.	Home Based Early learning Centre (HBELO)	163 centres	3011 children
2.	Home Based Pre School (HBPS)	110 centres	2003 children
3.	Shishu Class	63 schools	1590 children
4.	Parenting	163 groups	3008 parents
5.	Reading for Children	156 groups	3233 families

Annex 9: Projection of Child and Student Population

Interaction between Population and Education

Population of Bangladesh is estimated at 141.8 million in 2006, just double of the population at independence in 1971. Both the size of the population and an average growth rate of more than 2 percent during the last 30 years were important factors in human resource development planning. Thanks to the success of the family planning programme, the fertility has been declining faster since 1990s than in the earlier decades. This has created the prospect of gradually relieving pressure on the demand for expansion of education services.

The past trends in fertility and mortality in Bangladesh have shaped the population age structure in such a way that there is a large inbuilt growth potential. Past high growth rates have resulted in a bulge in the proportion of people in the prime reproductive ages. The observed improvement in the mortality conditions, particularly among the aged population, is expected to accelerate the inbuilt growth trend. Fertility level in Bangladesh is currently well above replacement level, but it is expected to come down to the replacement level within 10-15 years. Even if the replacement level is reached within the next 10 years, there will be still high growth in absolute terms in the near future. This population momentum, resulting from the large growth in the reproductive age groups as a result of past high fertility rates, guarantees continued high growth potential of the population for some time even after reaching NRR = 1.

Already Bangladesh has a higher proportion of female population in the reproductive ages (51.8 percent) and 38.6 percent of the female population are children. Because of the large population of women of reproductive age group and consequent population momentum, the size and structure of school age children will continue to change. The structural change will have direct bearings on educational planning in Bangladesh.

Population of Bangladesh and its Growth

The main sources of information on population size are the censuses, the vital registration system and research reports of government and other research organizations. Census information of Bangladesh is available from the 1951 and 1961 Censuses of Pakistan and then the 1974, 1981, 1991, 2001 Censuses of Bangladesh. Table 1 shows the population size and its average annual estimated rate of growth over the period 1951-2006.

Table 1: Population size and growth rates

Census Year	Population (in million)	Growth rate (in percentage)
1951	44.1	-
1961	55.2	2.27
1974	76.3	2.52
1981	89.9	2.37
1991	111.5	2.18
2001	130.0	1.54
2006	141.8	1.46

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

The age-sex composition of population by broad age groups provides an up-to-date demographic scenario of Bangladesh as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Age-sex composition of population by broad age Group

Age group	1991		1998		2001	
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
0-4	15.7	16.0	10.7	11.2	13.1	12.9
5-9	16.7	16.5	14.4	14.5	13.6	13.3
10-14	12.8	12.7	13.4	12.6	13.2	12.4
15-19	8.5	8.7	7.3	7.1	9.9	9.6
20-24	7.6	9.4	7.7	9.8	7.6	10.1
25-29	6.9	7.2	8.8	10.7	7.7	9.8
30-34	6.3	6.2	7.8	8.5	6.8	7.4
35-39	5.9	5.3	7.5	6.9	6.6	6.3
40-44	4.4	4.1	6.5	5.4	5.4	4.6
45-49	3.5	3.1	4.6	3.4	4.1	3.3
50.54	3.0	2.9	3.5	2.9	3.4	3.1
55-59	2.0	1.7	2.2	1.8	2.1	1.8
60-64	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.4	2.2
65-69	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.1
70-74	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.2	0.8
75+	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.7	1.2
Total	98.90	99.00	100.0	100.0	100.1	99.90

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Population Projection

Population projection shows the changes in the future size, composition and structure of the population given the present size, structure and current trends. Population projection is the basis for planning potential education demand. Table 3 provides the projection of population for the period 2006 to 2051 estimated by BBS under two different assumptions.

Table 3: Population projection of Bangladesh for 2006 - 2051

Year	Population in million					
	Assumption 1			Assumption 2		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2006	73.0	68.8	141.8	73.1	68.9	142.0
2011	77.9	73.6	151.5	78.7	74.4	153.1
2016	82.7	78.3	161.0	84.0	79.6	163.6
2021	88.1	83.7	171.8	89.4	84.9	174.3
2026	93.4	88.9	182.3	94.7	90.2	184.9
2031	98.1	93.5	191.6	99.7	95.0	194.7
2036	102.1	97.5	199.6	104.0	99.3	203.3
2041	105.6	100.9	206.5	107.9	103.1	211.0
2046	108.9	104.0	212.9	111.5	106.3	217.8
2051	112.0	106.7	218.7	114.7	109.2	223.9

Assumption 1: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2011
Assumption 2: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2016

Projection one was made under the assumption that replacement fertility will be achieved by the year 2011. In that case, the total population by 2051 will be over 218 million, which will be two-thirds higher from the base year population in 2001. Projection two shows the outcome with the assumption of replacement level growth by 2016.

Projected Population by Age Group

Projection of school age population is the basis for enrollment projection. The accuracy of such projection depends on the accuracy of information, assumptions and the methods applied for the projection. The projection of population by age-groups is presented in Table 4 assuming that replacement level will be reached by 2011 (assumption 1). It shows that the school-age population of age 5-14 will decrease to 31.7 million by 2011 from 34.3 million in 2006. By 2016, the school age population will further decrease to 28.8 million and begin to stabilize around that number. More detailed projection of school age population at the primary and secondary levels and their urban-rural and gender breakdowns are shown in Tables 5 and 6

Table 4: Population projection of Bangladesh by 5 year age group for 2006 - 2026 (in million)

Year	2006			2011			2016			2021			2026		
Age group	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-4	8.02	7.53	15.55	7.09	6.66	13.75	7.15	6.70	13.85	7.78	7.30	15.08	7.89	7.40	15.29
5-9	8.60	7.91	16.51	7.89	7.38	15.27	7.01	6.55	13.56	7.08	6.62	13.70	7.72	7.23	14.95
10-14	9.21	8.30	17.51	8.56	7.87	16.43	7.87	7.35	15.22	6.99	6.53	13.52	7.07	6.61	13.68
15-19	8.80	7.76	16.56	9.18	8.27	17.45	8.54	7.85	16.39	7.85	7.33	15.18	6.98	6.52	13.50
20-24	6.57	5.91	12.48	8.76	7.72	16.48	9.15	8.24	17.39	8.52	7.82	16.34	7.83	7.32	15.15
25-29	5.07	6.31	11.38	6.53	5.88	12.41	8.72	7.69	16.41	9.12	8.21	17.33	8.49	7.80	16.29
30-34	5.09	6.10	11.19	5.03	6.26	11.29	6.50	5.84	12.34	8.69	7.65	16.34	9.09	8.18	17.27
35-39	4.47	4.60	9.07	5.05	6.04	11.09	4.99	6.21	11.20	6.46	5.81	12.27	8.64	7.61	16.25
40-44	4.33	3.92	8.25	4.41	4.54	8.95	4.98	5.97	10.95	4.94	6.15	11.09	6.40	5.76	12.16
45-49	3.49	2.84	6.33	4.23	3.84	8.07	4.31	4.46	8.77	4.89	5.88	10.77	4.87	6.07	10.94
50-54	2.62	2.01	4.63	3.36	2.75	6.11	4.08	3.73	7.81	4.18	4.35	8.53	4.76	5.75	10.51
55-59	2.12	1.80	3.92	2.45	1.90	4.35	3.16	2.62	5.78	3.87	3.57	7.44	3.99	4.19	8.18
60-64	1.23	1.00	2.23	1.91	1.65	3.56	2.23	1.76	3.99	2.91	2.44	5.35	3.58	3.35	6.93
65-69	1.35	1.17	2.52	1.04	0.86	1.90	1.65	1.45	3.10	1.95	1.56	3.51	2.57	2.20	4.77
70-74	0.66	0.52	1.18	1.07	0.94	2.01	0.84	0.71	1.55	1.35	1.21	2.56	1.62	1.32	2.94
75-79	1.37	1.07	2.44	0.47	0.37	0.84	0.78	0.68	1.46	0.62	0.53	1.15	1.02	0.91	1.93
80+	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.82	0.63	1.45	0.70	0.53	1.23	0.84	0.69	1.53	0.83	0.68	1.51
Total	73.02	68.76	141.78	77.85	73.56	151.41	82.66	78.34	161.00	88.04	83.65	171.69	93.35	88.90	182.25

Assumption: Projected population for 2001- 26 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2011

Projection of Primary and Secondary School Age Population

Tables 5 and Table 6 present the projected age group population during the period 2006-2051 for primary and secondary education respectively both for urban and rural areas under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by 2011.

Table 5: Projected primary age population of Bangladesh for 2006 – 2051 (in million)

Year	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2006	1.87	1.75	3.62	6.87	6.27	13.14	8.75	8.02	16.77
2011	1.95	1.87	3.82	6.08	5.62	11.70	8.03	7.49	15.52
2016	1.98	1.92	3.90	5.16	4.76	9.92	7.13	6.68	13.81
2021	2.21	2.15	4.36	4.79	4.40	9.19	7.00	6.55	13.55
2026	2.75	2.66	5.41	4.85	4.44	9.29	7.59	7.11	14.70
2031	3.23	3.12	6.35	4.62	4.22	8.84	7.85	7.35	15.20
2036	3.53	3.41	6.94	4.09	3.74	7.83	7.62	7.15	14.77
2041	3.74	3.62	7.36	3.51	3.19	6.70	7.25	6.80	14.05
2046	4.06	3.92	7.98	3.07	2.76	5.83	7.13	6.68	13.81
2051	4.56	4.39	8.95	2.74	2.41	5.15	7.30	6.80	14.10

Assumption: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2011

Table 6: Projected secondary age population of Bangladesh for 2006 – 2051 (in million)

Year	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2006	2.36	2.18	4.54	6.88	6.11	12.99	9.24	8.29	17.53
2011	2.50	2.39	4.89	6.20	5.58	11.78	8.71	7.97	16.68
2016	2.61	2.55	5.16	5.42	4.93	10.35	8.03	7.48	15.51
2021	2.62	2.58	5.20	4.48	4.07	8.55	7.10	6.65	13.75
2026	2.92	2.86	5.78	4.07	3.66	7.73	6.99	6.52	13.51
2031	3.56	3.48	7.04	4.04	3.63	7.67	7.60	7.11	14.71
2036	4.09	3.98	8.07	3.75	3.36	7.11	7.84	7.34	15.18
2041	4.38	4.27	8.65	3.24	2.88	6.12	7.62	7.15	14.77
2046	4.56	4.44	9.00	2.68	2.35	5.03	7.24	6.79	14.03
2051	4.86	4.73	9.59	2.26	1.94	4.20	7.12	6.67	13.79

Assumption: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2011

Projection of Primary School Enrollment

Projections of the future number of pupils enrolled at primary level constitute the starting point of primary educational planning, as they provide the basis for estimating the future needs of primary schools, classrooms, teachers and other facilities. Table 7 provides projection of primary school enrollment for the period 2006 – 2051 under the assumption of replacement fertility rate (RFR) of 2.1 being reached by 2011.
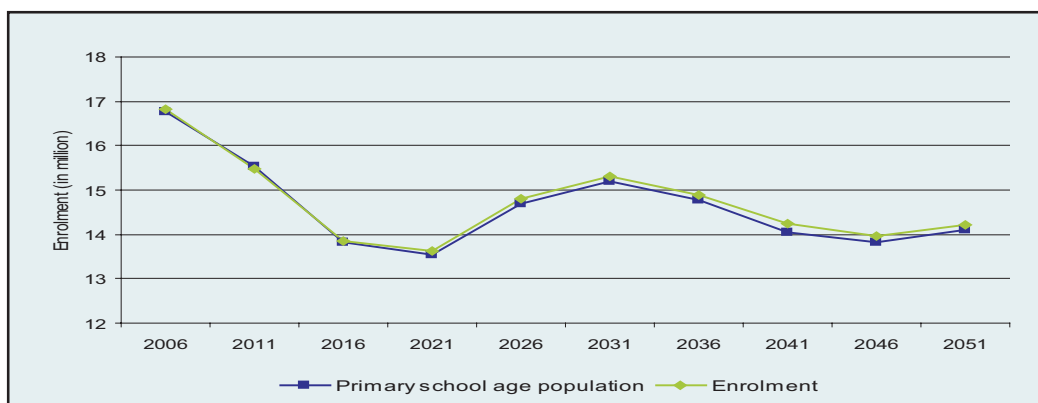
Table 7: Projection of primary school enrollment with assumed RFR by 2011 (millions)

Year	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2006	1.61	1.68	3.29	6.86	6.67	13.53	8.47	8.35	16.82
2011	1.80	1.85	3.65	6.06	5.76	11.82	7.86	7.62	15.48
2016	1.98	1.92	3.90	5.18	4.78	9.96	7.16	6.70	13.86
2021	2.22	2.15	4.37	4.82	4.44	9.26	7.04	6.59	13.63
2026	2.76	2.68	5.44	4.88	4.48	9.36	7.65	7.16	14.81
2031	3.24	3.14	6.38	4.66	4.27	8.93	7.90	7.40	15.30
2036	3.55	3.42	6.97	4.13	3.78	7.91	7.68	7.21	14.89
2041	3.78	3.63	7.41	3.56	3.26	6.82	7.34	6.89	14.23
2046	4.10	3.93	8.03	3.10	2.82	5.92	7.20	6.75	13.95
2051	4.59	4.40	8.99	2.77	2.46	5.23	7.36	6.86	14.22

Assumption: projected Population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2011

Figure 1 shows the trend of primary school age population as well as enrollment in primary school during the projection period 2006 – 2051. Both the primary school age population and the number of the enrolled will decrease during the projection period.

Figure 1: Trend of primary school age population and enrollment for 2006 – 2051(Assumed RFR by 2011)

The projection of primary school enrollment for the same period under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by 2016 is also presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Projection of primary school enrollment with assumed RFR by 2016 (millions)

Year	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	Boys	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**
2006	1.60	1.70	3.30	6.90	6.70	13.60	8.50	8.40	16.90
2011	1.80	1.90	3.70	6.10	5.80	11.90	8.00	7.70	15.70
2016	2.00	2.00	4.00	5.30	4.90	10.20	7.30	6.80	14.10
2021	2.30	2.20	4.50	4.90	4.50	9.40	7.10	6.70	13.80
2026	2.80	2.70	5.50	5.00	4.50	9.50	7.80	7.30	15.10
2031	3.30	3.20	6.50	4.70	4.30	9.00	8.00	7.50	15.50
2036	3.60	3.50	7.10	4.20	3.90	8.10	7.80	7.30	15.10
2041	3.90	3.70	7.60	3.60	3.30	6.90	7.50	7.00	14.50
2046	4.20	4.00	8.20	3.20	2.90	6.10	7.40	6.90	14.30
2051	4.70	4.50	9.20	2.80	2.50	5.30	7.50	7.00	14.50

Assumption: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2016

The projection of enrollment is based on projection of change in school age population and extrapolation of present trends regarding school enrollment in the eligible age group.

Projection of Secondary School Enrollment

Projection of secondary school enrollment constitute the starting point of secondary educational planning by guesstimating the future needs of secondary schools, classrooms, teachers and other facilities. Table 9 provides projection of secondary school enrollment for the period 2006 – 2051 under the assumption that replacement fertility rate (RFR) of 2.1 will be reached by 2011.
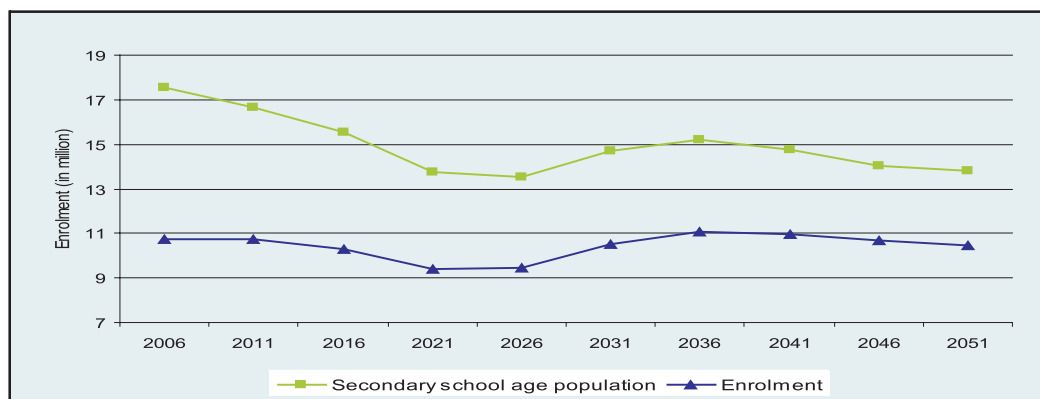
Table 9: Projection of secondary school enrollment with assumed RFR by 2011 (million)

Year	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2006	1.06	1.05	2.11	4.02	4.59	8.61	5.08	5.64	10.72
2011	1.33	1.34	2.67	3.81	4.24	8.05	5.14	5.58	10.72
2016	1.57	1.58	3.15	3.41	3.73	7.14	4.98	5.31	10.29
2021	1.77	1.73	3.50	2.85	3.06	5.91	4.62	4.79	9.41
2026	2.03	1.99	4.02	2.65	2.77	5.42	4.68	4.76	9.44
2031	2.49	2.50	4.99	2.75	2.76	5.51	5.25	5.26	10.51
2036	2.91	2.95	5.86	2.66	2.56	5.22	5.57	5.50	11.07
2041	3.20	3.24	6.44	2.36	2.19	4.55	5.56	5.43	10.99
2046	3.42	3.42	6.84	2.01	1.81	3.82	5.43	5.23	10.66
2051	3.65	3.64	7.29	1.70	1.49	3.19	5.34	5.14	10.48

Assumption: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2011

The trend of secondary school age population (growth assumption 1) as well as enrollment in secondary schools during the projection period 2006 – 2051 is presented in Figure 2. Akin to primary school projections, both the numbers of secondary school age children and their enrollment will decrease during the projection period.

Figure 2: Trend of secondary school age population and enrollment for 2006–2051 (Assumed RFR by 2011)

The projection of secondary school enrollment for the same period under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by 2016 is also presented in Table 12.

Table 10: Projection of secondary school enrollment with assumption of RFR by 2016(millions)

Year	Urban			Rural			Overall		
	Boys	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**
2006	1.10	1.10	2.20	4.00	4.60	8.60	5.10	5.60	10.70
2011	1.40	1.40	2.80	3.90	4.30	8.20	5.20	5.70	10.90
2016	1.60	1.60	3.20	3.50	3.80	7.30	5.10	5.40	10.50
2021	1.80	1.80	3.60	2.90	3.10	6.00	4.70	4.90	9.60
2026	2.10	2.00	4.10	2.70	2.80	5.50	4.80	4.90	9.70
2031	2.50	2.60	5.10	2.80	2.80	5.60	5.40	5.40	10.80
2036	3.00	3.00	6.00	2.70	2.60	5.30	5.70	5.60	11.30
2041	3.30	3.30	6.60	2.40	2.30	4.70	5.70	5.60	11.30
2046	3.50	3.50	7.00	2.10	1.90	4.00	5.60	5.40	11.00
2051	3.80	3.80	7.60	1.80	1.50	3.30	5.50	5.30	10.80

Assumption: Projected population for 2001-51 under the assumption of TFR = 2.1 by the year 2016

The projection of enrollment is based on projection of change in school age population and extrapolation of present trends regarding school enrollment in the eligible age group.

Consortium for Research on
Educational Access, Transitions & Equity

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Report Summary:

This country analytical review examines the key issues in access to and participation in primary and secondary education in Bangladesh, with a special focus on areas and dimensions of exclusion. Against a background of overall progress, particularly in closing the gender gap in primary and secondary enrollment, the research applies a conceptual framework outlining different forms of exclusion and presents two significant findings which compromise access and diminish gains made: high dropout rates at primary and secondary levels and nominal access but virtual exclusion from quality learning. Other areas surveyed in the review include interventions by public sector and non-governmental providers in primary and secondary education as well as the financing of basic education. This review of the literature concludes with suggestions for future research directions that might lead to new understanding and insights on equitable access and participation.

Author Notes:

Manzoor Ahmed, coordinator of the study, is the director of BRAC University Institute of Educational Development (BU-IED) and Bangladesh coordinator of CREATE. Kazi Saleh Ahmed and Nazrul Islam Khan are well-known educational researchers who were invited to join the research team for this study. Romij Ahmed is a statistician at the Directorate of Primary Education. Altaf Hossain is a Senior Research Associate and Md. Abul Kalam is a Research Associate in the Research, Policy Studies and Advocacy Unit at BU-IED. Md. Shahidul Islam was a junior professional in the Secondary Education Team at BU-IED, while Jennifer Hove was an intern at the Institute from Simon Fraser University, Canada.

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