

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
APPRAISAL STAGE**

Report No.: AB7626

Project Name	Additional Financing for Primary Education Development Program 3
Region	SOUTH ASIA
Sector	Primary education (100%)
Project ID	P150669
Borrower(s)	PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education Bangladesh
Implementing Agency	Directorate of Primary Education Bangladesh
Environment Category	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI <input type="checkbox"/> TBD (to be determined)
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1. Country and Sector Background

Bangladesh is recognized globally for its achievements and potential, despite a number of difficult challenges. Government policies which have sustained economic growth over the last three decades¹ and kept a systematic focus on poverty reduction contributed to sharp improvements in many social indicators. Bangladesh has met several Millennium Development Goals ahead of the target year, including achievement of gender parity in primary and secondary education.

After the country's independence in 1971, the Government nationalized most primary schools and in 1990 approved a Compulsory Primary Education Act. The General Education Project and Primary Education Support Project were launched in 1990, followed by two "Primary Education Development Programs" – PEDP I (1997-2003) and PEDP II (2004-2011). Key reform initiatives involved targeted stipends to bring the poorest and girls into schools, and interventions to improve the quality of primary education. In 1993, demographic and health surveys reported that 74 percent of children aged 6 to 10 were in school. This rose to 88 percent by 2011. Disparities in access remain nonetheless; for example, children from poor and extremely poor households in the slums attend school far less than their non-slum urban peers, especially at earlier ages of schooling, and education for minority children generally trails behind that of non-minority children.²

Under PEDP I and PEDP II there were some trends toward improved learning environments, notably in Government Primary Schools (GPS), but learning *outcomes* lagged behind improvements in access, with marked disparities between regions, types of schools, and social groups. The 2011 National Student Assessment (NSA) revealed that only 25 percent of Grade 5

¹ The economy experienced stable growth in GDP since 2001 reaching 6.2 percent in FY12.

² It is estimated that there is a population of 2.5 million indigenous ethnic minorities living in Bangladesh. They mostly live in tribal areas and are very poor.

students mastered competencies in Bangla (language) and only 33 percent mastered competencies in mathematics. Those from poor households performed worse,³ as did students in “staggered” shift schools⁴ compared with single shift. Students from Registered Non-Government Primary Schools (RNGPS) performed less well than GPS students.

The comprehensive National Education Policy (NEP; 2010) lays out operational objectives and expected results across the entire spectrum of the education sector and accords PEDP3 a major role in addressing challenges related to quality and equity in primary and pre-primary education. PEDP3 embodies the four main foci of the NEP, *viz.* (i) establishing an integrated school system under a framework that unifies public, NGO and private providers; (ii) improving quality through reduced class size, improved teaching practices, and a focus on ICT literacy; (iii) decentralizing primary education administration and management; and (iv) engaging in partnerships with NGOs and the private sector.

GoB and the nine participating Development Partners used a strategic planning process to identify the expected development outcomes – “Program Results Framework” – and the operational framework (4 result areas represented by 29 Sub-components under the GoB’s program) through which to achieve these outcomes. Nine of these Sub-components were selected strategically as the Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) under the program.

2. Objectives

The development objectives of the proposed program are to: (i) increase the number of children enrolled and completing primary education; (ii) reduce social disparities in terms of access to education; and (iii) improve the measurement of student learning.

3. Description

The operation uses a Sector Wide approach (SWAp) to support implementation of the Government of Bangladesh’s Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP3). The Credit finances recurrent and development expenditures in the entire primary education sector and funds are disbursed when DLIs, covering nine areas, are met.

An extensive Mid-term Review (MTR) was carried out during the period July 2013 till September 2014, as a part of this MoPME/DPE/DPs conducted a series of internal assessments along with five in-depth independent analyses: Economic, Financial, Governance and Institutional, an Education Quality Study, and a Population Study. Results reaffirmed the strength of PEDP3’s conceptual design finding its emphasis on quality of learning, use of government systems, strengthening government engagement and ownership as well as systems’ accountability, and exemplary donor harmonization put the program at the forefront of global best practice.

³ The poor performed three-fourths of a year behind their wealthier counterparts in Bangla and half a school year behind in mathematics.

⁴ Staggered shift schools could have more than one shift operating with the same set of teachers. Currently, 85 percent of primary schools run on a staggered shift approach with two shifts per day. Some schools operate with more than two shifts per day.

Rationale for Additional Financing (AF)

The MTR process has identified a financing gap due to the proposed program extension until December 2017. The initial costing for the program was for USD 8.3 billion which is currently calculated to be USD 7.5 billion due to exchange rate fluctuations. Going forward extending the program by one more year will require additional funds making the revised costing for PEDP3 for 2011 to 2017 USD 9.8 billion (at current exchange rate). Moreover, a financing gap will arise as a result of the higher national pay scale implemented since FY2012/13 and increased infrastructure costs because of changes in the standard school design and inflation in the cost of construction materials.

The activities to be financed under the AF fall under the following categories (selected from the Program activities listed below and included in the Annual Plans):

I. Improving the Quality of the Learning Environment and the Measurement of Student Learning

- (a) Improvement of the timely delivery of free textbooks to all eligible schools and the quality of textbook content through the provision of quality learning materials.
- (b) Improvement of the effectiveness of teacher training through the carrying out of a comprehensive teacher education and development plan.
- (c) Recruitment of teachers and head-teachers, and application of the competitive, merit-based recruitment as per the Recipient's rules in place, as well as taking account of vacancies to be filled as a result of new classrooms constructed through the needs-based. Infrastructure approach.
- (d) Improvement of the quality, transparency and effectiveness of the primary completion examination through the carrying out of an action plan to improve the Grade 5 completion examination.
- (e) Improvement of the national assessment program, including the organizational management of the said program.
- (f) Development of techniques to determine pupils' current knowledge and skill level, including through the training of teachers to identify students' learning strengths and weaknesses.
- (g) Improvement of the curricula for grades one to five, including the carrying out of a regional comparative study on competencies, curriculum substance and revision practices, and capacity building of staff for curriculum development.
- (h) Implementation of a pilot initiative *Shikhbe Protiti Shishu* (Each Child Learns) to improve learning of basic skills in Bangla and mathematics, and dissemination of good practices and lessons learned to a progressively larger number of schools.
- (i) Provision of equipment and materials for the setting-up of multi-media classrooms.
- (j) Any other activity as the Recipient and the Association may agree.

II. Improving Access and Reducing Social Disparities

- (a) Provision of one year of free pre-primary education for five-year olds through a new school-based approach to reach coverage of all children in government primary schools.
- (b) Initiating a needs-based approach to improve physical facilities (reconstruction of schools, additional classrooms, toilets and safe water source) through the preparation and implementation of an action plan for infrastructure development.

- (c) Development and implementation of a public relations and communications strategy to inform and encourage enrollment and retention of children in school for the full primary cycle, targeting different groups of stakeholders.
- (d) Implementation of a revamped stipend program to support participation of children in primary educations.
- (e) Coordination and implementation of a school health and nutrition program, including curriculum development on health and nutrition practices and health screenings in selected areas, and nutritional interventions such as school feeding.
- (f) Implementation of an inclusive primary education plan at the upazila level, with support from a block grant to schools accommodating previously excluded children, develop supplementary learning materials, and strengthen the capacity of teachers to identify and teach children with special needs.
- (g) Coordinating alternative primary education opportunities with education service delivery in the formal, public sector.
- (h) Any other activity as the Recipient and the Association may agree.

III. Improving Program Planning and Management, and Strengthening Institutions

- (a) Improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at central and decentralized levels through the provision of grants to schools based on their school-level improvement plans.
- (b) Enhancement of the primary education subsector budget preparation process by improving the linkage between the budgetary process and the medium-term primary education subsector strategy, and the consistency between annually approved primary education subsector budgets and the PEDPIII results framework and medium term budgetary framework, and improvement of fiscal and budget management.
- (c) Improvement of the timeliness, quality and coverage of the Recipient's Annual School Census.
- (d) Development and implementation of a human resource management plan to, *inter alia*, strengthen the Directorate of Primary Education and improve delivery of teacher education programs.
- (e) Carrying out of analyses and stakeholder consultations to clarify issues and potential actions to develop an integrated, comprehensive framework to include school standards for all categories of primary schools in the country.
- (f) Any other activity as the Recipient and Association may agree.

4. Financing

Source:	(\$m.)
BORROWER/RECIPIENT	4976.0
International Development Association (IDA)	400.0
Asian Development Bank	120.0
EU	45.0
GPE	100
Total	5641.0

5. Implementation

Overall policy guidance, program oversight and coordination, and resolution of critical inter-ministerial implementation issues will be provided by an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee chaired by the Secretary, MOPME, and comprising representatives of key ministries and agencies with a representative group of five development partners.

The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) headed by a Director General will be responsible for day-to-day program implementation under the guidance of the Steering Committee. DPE will be assisted by a Technical Committee, chaired and coordinated by the Director General, who would be assisted by an Additional Director General. The Technical Committee will comprise all DPE directors and representatives from all agencies involved in the implementation of PEDP3.⁵

DPE line directors will be given responsibility for implementation of key areas of PEDP3. The intention is to develop long-term capacity of the regular staff of DPE and strengthen the interface between the central level personnel and decentralized levels (Upazila, District and Division officers) as well as the outreach to teachers and head teachers at school level.

The financial management arrangements of the Program would be based on the country financial management systems for budget execution, accounting, internal controls, financial reporting and auditing (i.e. “treasury model”). Contingent upon meeting a set of DLIs for each of the fiscal years – donor funds will be routed through sub-accounts of the Government’s Consolidated Fund. Thereafter, DPE would access funds according to the normal government budgeting process and monitor the process via the integrated budgeting and accounting system (iBAS).

6. Sustainability

Sustainability considerations are built directly into the PEDP3 design through improvements in budgetary processes to refocus program implementation under a results-based management model. In addition, the country’s growth prospects make it possible to envisage an increasing allocation of resources to education. Moreover, the political commitment to basic education is reaffirmed in the Government’s vision 2021, the Second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (FY2009-2011), and the National Education Policy (2010). The country also has a track record of meeting milestones for access and equity in basic education. Furthermore, the Government’s financial commitment to primary and mass education is nested in the country’s broader medium-term budgetary framework (MTBF) and is reaffirmed in the 7th Five Year Plan (under preparation).

7. Lessons Learned from Past Operations in the Country/Sector

(a) DLIs are effective mechanisms

⁵ Such as the National Academy of Primary Education (NAPE), National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Compulsory Primary Education Implementation and Monitoring Unit (CPEIMU), Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), and a non-government organization (NGO).

The project is the first to introduce a results framework on a national, sector-wide scale in Bangladesh. The system is beginning to respond positively.

(b) Importance of phased approach to major sector development

- The MTR emphasized that the quality reforms under the program are ready for the next stage of expansion- a transformative shift in educational quality.
- The Diploma in Education (DPEd), needs to be recognized as only one element of a broad and consistent teacher management framework; teacher training, continuous professional development and career path development need to be viewed as key elements for teacher motivation and performance.
- Nationalization of RNGPS opened the possibility for major systemic reform, but actual quality improvement requires that interventions of the original Credit continue and deepen across this expanded spectrum with adequate development budget.
- The various initiatives must be consistent in reinforcing a core set of messages about the quality agenda.

(c) Additional measures key to success

- The improvement of quality depends on adequate number of teacher-student contact hours in the classroom and incentives within the system to motivate teachers and education officials for optimum performance.
- The process of decentralization – including Upazila Primary Education Plans (UPEPs), School Level Improvement Plans (SLIPs) – can play an important role in building community ownership and improving the quality of education.

(d) An effective communication strategy is essential

The changes in school effectiveness need to be (better) understood by all stakeholders within and outside the education system.

(e) Investing in effective Monitoring and Evaluation

- A more systematic and coordinated monitoring and evaluation of the ongoing initiatives is required.
- Knowledge sharing and joint work on technical aspects of the initiatives by the central agencies (including DPE, NAPE, NCTB) are essential to maximize the synergistic potential of these actions. Similarly, regular and consistent school inspection is an important element of real time performance and results monitoring.

(f) Capacity building is a key element to success

- Building and retaining the required technical capacity in key institutions, and ensuring the technical capacity of key actors at lower levels of the system are of critical importance.
- Fostering stronger institutional linkages within government requires stronger linkages and attention to clarifying roles in cases where some responsibilities overlap.
- The system needs more effective human (and financial) resource capacity for tailoring education to differing circumstances.

(g) Donor harmonization is essential

- Effective donor harmonization and coordination can leverage significant resources for the program, over and above the contributions of any single agency and support a robust and effective policy dialogue.

8. Safeguard Policies (including public consultation)

Since there will not be new safeguards issues raised, existing legal covenants and the initial project’s ENV category of “B” would continue to apply under the proposed AF. The Environmental Management Framework (EMF) and the Social Management Framework (SMF) have been reviewed and agreed in DPE-DP consultative workshops and updated to capture lessons learned from implementation to date and have been publicly disclosed on the DPE, MoPME and World Bank websites (on September 9 and September 11, 2014, respectively). These will also be applicable for the Newly Nationalized Primary Schools (NNPS; formerly RNGPS).

Safeguard policies triggered?	
Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Forests (OP/BP 4.36)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Pest Management (OP 4.09)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Safety of Dams (OP/BP 4.37)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Projects on International Waters (OP/BP 7.50)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Projects in Disputed Areas (OP/BP 7.60)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No

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