



Technical Assistance Report

Project Number: 42122-015
Capacity Development Technical Assistance (CDTA)
December 2016

People's Republic of Bangladesh: Support to Primary Education Development

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Asian Development Bank

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of 31 October 2016)

Currency unit	–	taka (Tk)
Tk1.00	=	\$0.013
\$1.00	=	Tk78.23

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
DLI	–	disbursement-linked indicator
DPE	–	Department of Primary Education
MOPME	–	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
PFM	–	public financial management
PEDP3	–	Third Primary Education Development Program
TA	–	technical assistance

NOTES

- (i) The fiscal year (FY) of the Government of Bangladesh ends on 30 June. “FY” before a calendar year denotes the year in which the fiscal year ends, e.g., FY2016 ends on 30 June 2016.
- (ii) In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

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CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

1. Basic Data		Project Number: 42122-015	
Project Name	Support to Primary Education Development	Department /Division	SARD/SAHS
Country	Bangladesh	Executing Agency	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
2. Sector	Subsector(s)	ADB Financing (\$ million)	
✓ Education	Pre-primary and primary		0.30
		Total	0.30
3. Strategic Agenda	Subcomponents	Climate Change Information	
Inclusive economic growth (IEG)	Pillar 2: Access to economic opportunities, including jobs, made more inclusive	Climate Change impact on the Project	Low
4. Drivers of Change	Components	Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	
Governance and capacity development (GCD)	Organizational development	Some gender elements (SGE)	✓
Knowledge solutions (KNS)	Knowledge sharing activities		
5. Poverty and SDG Targeting		Location Impact	
Geographic Targeting	No	Nation-wide	High
Household Targeting	No		
SDG Targeting	Yes		
SDG Goals	SDG4		
6. TA Category:	B		
7. Safeguard Categorization	Not Applicable		
8. Financing			
Modality and Sources		Amount (\$ million)	
ADB		0.30	
Capacity development technical assistance: Technical Assistance Special Fund		0.30	
Cofinancing		0.00	
None		0.00	
Counterpart		0.00	
None		0.00	
Total		0.30	
9. Effective Development Cooperation			
Use of country procurement systems		No	
Use of country public financial management systems		No	

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The capacity development technical assistance (TA) for Support to Primary Education Development is included in the country operations business plan, 2016–2018 for Bangladesh.¹ The Government of Bangladesh, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and nine development partners² have been jointly implementing the Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP3) since FY2012.³ The program provides financing depending on the achievement of selected results—called disbursement-linked indicators (DLIs)—and the government and development partners have agreed on a joint mechanism to review, verify, and improve reporting on DLIs and other results. Because ADB and the development partners use the government’s treasury system for project disbursement and financial management, close fiduciary oversight and support for system improvement in public financial management (PFM) was agreed at the start of PEDP3. TA support for fiduciary oversight, implementation, and results reporting has been provided since the start of the program.⁴ Given that a new primary education program is planned to start in the first quarter of 2018 and PEDP3 is planned to close in the second quarter of 2018, it was agreed to lend support for fiduciary oversight and PFM improvement, and for implementation of the final stages of PEDP3 and the transition to the new program.⁵ Subsequently, the government requested ADB’s support to strengthen the capacity for program implementation and to assist the transition to the new program.⁶ The TA was discussed and agreed on during a TA fact-finding mission in October 2016. The government concurred with the TA’s impact, outcome, output, implementation arrangements, cost, financing arrangements, and terms of reference.⁷ The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

II. ISSUES

2. Bangladesh has made significant progress in improving the participation and retention rates of boys and girls in primary education. The primary education completion rate increased from 70.3% in 2011 to 79.6% in 2015, and net enrollment increased from 94.9% to 97.9% in the same period. The percentage of grade 1 students in primary schools who have attended pre-primary education has steadily increased since 2013 and reached 96% in 2015. However, challenges remain in reducing dropout and repetition rates and in improving the quality of education, particularly in disadvantaged areas. The sample-based National Student Assessment demonstrated that only 25% of students master grade 5 Bangla competencies.⁸ PEDP3 always had a strong focus on improving the quality of education, while at the same time

¹ ADB. 2015. *Country Operations Business Plan: Bangladesh, 2016–2018*. Manila.

² Australia, Canada, the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, the European Union, the Global Partnership for Education, the International Development Association, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and the United Nations Children’s Fund.

³ ADB. 2011. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh for the Third Primary Education Development Project*. Manila (Loan 2761-BAN); ADB. 2015. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan for Additional Financing to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh for the Third Primary Education Development Project*. Manila (Loan 3256-BAN).

⁴ ADB. 2012. *Technical Assistance to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh for Support for the Third Primary Education Development Project*. Manila (TA8085-BAN).

⁵ ADB will contribute to the next primary education program through the Fourth Primary Education Development Program which is programmed in the Country Operations Business Plan for 2018. ADB. 2015. *Country Operations Business Plan: Bangladesh 2016–2018*. Manila.

⁶ TA support for fiduciary oversight and PFM improvement is expected to be cofinanced by one of the development partners and will be included as supplementary financing.

⁷ The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB’s website on 4 November 2016.

⁸ Government of Bangladesh, Directorate of Primary Education. *Annual Sector Performance Report 2016*. Dhaka.

aiming to sustain and improve where possible the efforts to widen access to education. PEDP3 supports four key reforms of the national education policy:⁹ (i) establishing an integrated school system under a framework that unifies the public, nongovernment organizations, and private providers; (ii) improving quality through smaller class sizes, better teaching practices, and a focus on literacy in information and communication technology; (iii) decentralizing primary education administration and management; and (iv) engaging in partnerships with nongovernment organizations and the private sector.

3. **Focus on results.** Success in managing reforms in large systems such as the Bangladesh primary education system depends largely on the government's capacity for effective targeting, planning, and management of resources to achieve the intended results. PEDP3 has since its start supported the development of institutional capacity in planning and financing based on results, has established a robust monitoring and evaluation system, and has promoted accountability for results through improved results reporting. The joint midterm review of PEDP3 confirmed in August 2014 that the results-based approach using the treasury system was yielding good progress—for one, the use of DLIs had shifted the nature of policy dialogue toward attention to outputs, outcomes, and policy implementation and brought a sharper focus on results. Second, the use of the treasury system and electronic procurement had strengthened the governance and accountability of these systems. Third, harmonization between development partners had been exemplary, with well-coordinated communication and review mechanisms, and joint decision-making by all partners, which showed the strength of the sector-wide approach. Based on these findings, ADB and several other development partners agreed to provide additional financing in FY2015 to maintain the momentum of the ongoing program and to fund the extension of it.¹⁰

4. To ensure that the implementation of the program remains on track, achievement of agreed results, especially DLIs, must be properly monitored and assessed; and additional implementation support must be given in core result areas such as infrastructure, gender, and quality, especially during the closing of the ongoing program and the transition to the new program. Technical assistance will support the implementation and monitoring of the large construction program, to ensure that capacity is built up, safeguards are complied with, and the infrastructure DLI is achieved. This assistance will also support the transition to the new program by helping draw lessons and identify new options in the field of infrastructure, with a focus on increasing inclusiveness and disaster resilience. The support for gender aspects will focus on supporting and strengthening gender reporting and mainstreaming in the remaining part of the program. The support for improving the quality of education will focus on monitoring achievement of the DLIs in the areas of quality, including teacher education, curriculum, and the primary education completion exam, and on assisting implementation to achieve these results. The support will also help ensure that DLI reporting meets the requirements.

5. The new program will build on the lessons from the ongoing programs in primary and secondary education. The results-based approach, using government systems where possible, and harmonized development partners' support in a sector-wide approach under government leadership, will be continued and further strengthened. As part of the preparation for the new

⁹ Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education. 2010. *National Education Policy*. Dhaka.

¹⁰ ADB, the European Union, the Global Partnership for Education, the International Development Association, and the United Nations Children's Fund provided additional financing. The additional financing covers the increased cost of construction, the cost of an overall salary increase, and additional costs for the 1-year extension; and allows to scale up successful project interventions, such as appointing additional teachers and improving teacher education to increase impact and development effectiveness.

program, assessments of PEDP3 were agreed.¹¹ In line with the direction set out in the national education policy and in the Sustainable Development Goal 4, a first draft action plan to expand primary education to grade 8 was developed; it is built upon an implementation strategy prepared for secondary education with ADB TA support in 2012.¹² A committee consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and from the Ministry of Education is responsible for finalizing the action plan. To achieve this, targeted support was requested. Specific actions to be determined concern improvements in the quality of education by adjusting the curriculum and teacher education, and effecting examination reforms in the medium term. Actions to ensure inclusive and equitable access for all children up to grade 8 will be based on an analysis of the expected number of students, available schools, and demand-side interventions. Since the primary and secondary education systems are currently under different governance and financing structures, options for medium-term institutional and organizational changes will be developed. An action plan to expand primary education to grade 8, accepted by all stakeholders, would support the primary and secondary education programs now being prepared.

III. THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Impact and Outcome

6. The impact of the proposed TA will be an efficient, inclusive, and equitable primary education system in Bangladesh, which is aligned with the outcome of PEDP3 and the tentative outcome for the next primary education program. The outcome of the TA will be that planning and results management capacity in primary education is improved. This will be measured through (i) the action plan to expand primary education from grade 5 to grade 8, to be incorporated by 2017 as part of the new program; and (ii) the annual core program results to be achieved in 2017 and 2018, as recorded in the DLI progress reports.

B. Methodology and Key Activities

7. The TA will provide assistance to the executing and implementing agencies in planning, monitoring, and reporting in key result areas. The first output is the reform to expand primary education developed. The TA will support to further develop the action plan to expand primary education to grade 8, with a focus on analyzing requirements for ensuring access, quality, and organizational changes in the medium term. The second output is the results reporting implemented. The TA will focus on the implementation of improved annual core program activities and results reporting on infrastructure, gender, quality of education, and administration and monitoring, as well as assist in the transition to the new program in the core result areas especially relevant to the DLIs. The proposed TA period will be from January 2017 to June 2018.

8. Institutional capacity development may be affected by slow decision-making at the policy level. High turnover of the government's focal points can also lead to delays in issuance of essential reports. The close oversight by ADB, the World Bank, and other development

¹¹ The assessments that are planned, ongoing, and/or completed cover institutional capacity, quality of education, results of information and communication technology interventions, PFM, monitoring and evaluation capacity, reduction in the numbers of out-of-school children, expansion of primary education to grade 8, and a rapid program assessment.

¹² ADB. 2011. *Technical Assistance to the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the Development of an Implementation Strategy of the National Education Policy for Secondary Education Sector Project*. Manila (TA 7719-BAN).

partners, and the extensive policy dialogue with the government conducted through the development partners' consortium and joint working groups will aim at managing these risks to produce the planned outputs.

C. Cost and Financing

9. The TA is estimated to cost \$315,000, of which \$300,000 will be financed on a grant basis by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-V). The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, coordination support, and other in-kind contributions.

D. Implementation Arrangements

10. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education will be the executing agency and the Directorate of Primary Education the implementing agency. ADB will administer the TA. The TA will be implemented in accordance with ADB's *Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook* (2010, as amended from time to time).

11. Consulting services will be provided in line with ADB's Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2013, as amended from time to time) for a total of 31 estimated person-months, comprising 9 person-months of international and 22 person-months of national consultants.

12. Individual consultants will be engaged to support implementation, monitoring, and reporting activities in the core components of PEDP3 (infrastructure, quality, and gender), and for targeted support in further developing the access, quality, and organizational parts of the action plan for expansion of primary education to grade 8. Each consultant will deliver an individual, distinct output. The following experts will be needed: (i) education specialist (international, 3 person-months), (ii) implementation specialist (international, 6 person-months), (iii) senior infrastructure specialist (national, 14 person-months), (iv) education quality specialist (national, 3 person-months), (v) education economist (national, 3 person-months), and (vi) gender specialist (national, 2 person-months).

13. The TA team will work closely with the PEDP3 development partners' consortium and the working group structure set up to support and monitor PEDP3 implementation and prepare the design of the new program. The TA will be monitored periodically through review of consultants' reports and in meetings of the joint working groups of the Government of Bangladesh and the PEDP3 consortium.¹³ Lessons drawn and best practices adopted will be disseminated through the aide-mémoires of the PEDP3 joint review missions and post-PEDP3 preparation and joint review missions; the reports will be shared by the working groups and wider stakeholders. Lessons from the action plan for expansion of primary education will be

¹³ The government and the development partners have structured policy dialogue, implementation support and monitoring for PEDP3, and the design of the next program. Six joint working groups are each focusing on specific areas: (i) access to education-related issues, including gender and inclusive education, in the Disparity Working Group; (ii) curriculum reform, examination reform, teacher education, and other quality of education components in the Quality Working Group; (iii) procurement, financial management, audit and fiduciary oversight in the Procurement and Finance Working Group; (iv) organizational development, teacher recruitment, and monitoring and evaluation in the Administration and Monitoring Working Group; (v) infrastructure in the Infrastructure Working Group; and (vi) expansion to grade 8 and decentralization in the Cross Cutting Working Group. Coordination of working groups for joint, overarching issues is managed through a joint technical committee, in which the Ministry of Education also participates, during review missions, and in the PEDP3 consortium for development partner-related issues. Each working group is chaired by the government with a co-chair from among the development partners.

shared with all relevant stakeholders in dedicated sessions. Other development partners will provide complementary TA for the assessments of PEDP3, the transition to the next primary education program, and in the area of result monitoring and reporting (footnote 6).

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

14. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the provision of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$300,000 on a grant basis to the Government of Bangladesh for Support to Primary Education Development, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact the TA is Aligned with			
An efficient, inclusive, and equitable primary education system in Bangladesh (PEDP3) ^a			
Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks
Outcome Planning and results management capacity in primary education improved	a. Action plan for expansion of primary education from grade 5 to grade 8 endorsed by the government by December 2017. (2016 baseline: draft action plan) b. Annual core program results achieved in 2017 and 2018. (2016 baseline: annual results achieved)	a. Action plan for expansion of primary education integrated in the design of the next primary education program b. DLI progress reports and aide-mémoires of joint annual review missions of PEDP3 and next program	Slow decision-making at the policy level.
Outputs 1. Reform to expand primary education developed 2. Results reporting implemented	1a. Action plan for inclusive expansion of primary education finalized by June 2017. (2016 baseline: initial action plan drafted) 2a. Report on DLI achievements completed in 2017 and 2018. (2016 baseline: reports on DLI achievements completed)	1a. Action plan, aide-mémoire, and other documents relevant to preparation missions for new program (government and development partners) 2a. DLI reports, aide-mémoires of joint annual review missions of PEDP3 and next program	High turnover of government focal points can delay availability of essential reports such as the DLI progress reports.
Key Activities with Milestones			
1. Reform to expand primary education developed 1.1. Finalize action plan for expansion of primary education to grade 8, with consultation carried out for stakeholders: February 2017–June 2017. 1.2. Incorporate the action plan in the design documents of the next primary education program: December 2017.			
2. Results reporting implemented 2.1. Conduct reporting on DLI achievements and overall progress, with meetings carried out: March 2017, May 2017, September 2017, March 2018, May 2018, and September 2018.			
Inputs			
ADB: \$300,000 Note: The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, coordination support, and other in-kind contributions.			
Assumptions for Partner Financing			
Not applicable.			

ADB = Asian Development Bank, DLI = disbursement-linked indicator, PEDP3 = Third Primary Education Development Program, TA = technical assistance.

^a ADB. 2011. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan to the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the Third Primary Education Development Project*. Manila (Loan 2761-BAN); ADB. 2015. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan for Additional Financing to the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the Third Primary Education Development Project*. Manila (Loan 3256-BAN).

Source: Asian Development Bank.

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN

(\$'000)

Item	Amount
Asian Development Bank^a	
1. Consultants	
a. Remuneration and per diem	
i. International consultants	130.0
ii. National consultants	108.0
b. International and local travel	17.0
c. Reports and communications	5.0
2. Workshops ^b	20.0
3. Contingencies	20.0
Total	300.0

Note: The technical assistance (TA) is estimated to cost \$315,000, of which contributions from the Asian Development Bank are presented in the table above. The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, coordination support, and other in-kind contributions. The value of government contribution is estimated to account for 5% of the total TA cost.

^a Financed by the Asian Development Bank's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-V).

^b Workshops are planned for mainstreaming gender and inclusive education and for consultations on the development of the action plan for expansion of primary education. In total, four 1-day workshops are planned, each with an expected 50 participants. Location is yet to be determined. Participants are government officials and other stakeholders. The TA will cover the cost of rent, workshop material, food, and board and travel.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

OUTLINE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

A. General

1. The technical assistance (TA) will help reform Bangladesh's primary education system and improve results reporting, and will provide the consulting inputs required for this.

B. Specific Consultancy Inputs

2. Individual consultants will be recruited to support education system reforms and improved results reporting. This includes support to the government in implementing the current Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP3) and in managing the transition to a new primary education program. The consultants will be supporting program implementation in the areas of quality of education, and monitoring and evaluation; infrastructure; gender mainstreaming and reporting; medium-term organizational changes; analysis of changes in the quality of education; and quantitative analysis of the action plan to expand primary education from grade 5 to grade 8. The following experts are foreseen: implementation specialist (international, 6 person-months), senior infrastructure specialist (national, 14 person-months), gender specialist (national, 2 person-months), education specialist (international, 3 person-months), education quality specialist (national, 3 person-months), and education economist (national, 3 person-months).¹ The implementation specialist, the senior infrastructure specialist, and the gender specialist will provide inputs throughout the TA period. The education specialist, the education quality specialist, and the education economist will provide inputs in the first 5 months of the TA period.

3. **Implementation specialist** (international, 6 person-months). The expert will (i) take part in the Quality, Disparity, and Administration and Monitoring Working Group meetings, and engage actively in the issues discussed; (ii) liaise with all relevant development partners on implementation issues under the Quality, Disparity, and Administration and Monitoring Working Groups, and contribute in consultation with the other members to development, implementation, and budgeting of the annual operation plan, overall sector and program monitoring, disbursement-linked indicator (DLI) progress monitoring and assessment, TA coordination, and any other relevant issues; (iii) participate in consortium meetings, joint annual review meeting, and joint consultation meetings as a member of the Quality, Disparity, and Administration and Monitoring Working Groups; (iv) liaise with the Department of Primary Education (DPE) and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) as required on issues concerning the Quality, Disparity, and Administration and Monitoring Working Groups, in coordination with the co-chairs of the working groups involved in the PEDP3; (v) analyze national and international sector development that might be of relevance for the Quality, Disparity, and Administration and Monitoring Working Group; and (vi) assist in the smooth transition to the next program.

4. **Senior infrastructure specialist** (national, 14 persons-months). The expert will assist the DPE and development partners in (i) devising and maintaining the needs-based infrastructure development plan and its priority list of schools; (ii) reviewing the needs-based infrastructure DLI; (iii) strengthening the capacity of the DPE's planning division in infrastructure planning and management; (iv) liaising between DPE, development partners, Local Government Engineering Department, and Department of Public Health Engineering to resolve any issues pertaining to the needs-based infrastructure development; (v) supporting development and implementation of the automated construction monitoring system; (vi) supporting development

¹ Terms of reference for the individual consultants are available as a supplementary annex.

of the needs-based infrastructure component of the next program by actively participating in the infrastructure working group and closely working with the design team; (vii) quantifying specific disaster risk and climate change factors (hazards, exposure, and vulnerabilities) for specific locations and incorporating the risk assessment and mitigation and/or adaptation options into the needs-based infrastructure development plan for improving disaster-risk resilience; and (viii) supporting the social and environmental safeguard assessments during the preparation of the next program in line with the requirements of the development partners and the government, where applicable.

5. **Gender specialist** (national, 2 person-months). The expert will assist the Inclusive Education Cell at DPE in (i) establishing links with line divisions and related ministries to collect and analyze results related to gender and inclusive education; (ii) providing support to line divisions and related ministries in identifying gender and inclusive education results in their respective activities to be reflected in the annual operation plan; (iii) monitoring and reporting on the status of the implementation of the gender and inclusive education action plan to the Disparity Working Group and other stakeholders; (iv) providing the final gender report of PEDP3 with a focus on the analysis of the key triggers for the success and the collection of sex-disaggregated data, which can be used as the baseline for possible DLIs in the new primary education program; and (v) helping ensure that sufficient attention is paid to gender elements in the new program, where applicable.

6. **Education specialist** (international, 3 person-months). The expert will support the high-level committee formed at MOPME and DPE in identifying the medium-term managerial and organizational changes required for the expansion of primary education to grade 8. More specifically the expert will (i) deliver an analytical report on the managerial and organizational changes required, (ii) help specify the currently developed short-term plan and medium-term strategy, and (iii) help organize the consultation process and links with all stakeholders for discussion of the draft strategy and action plan to expand primary education to grade 8.²

7. **Education quality specialist** (national, 3 person-months). The expert will support the subcommittee set up at MOPME and DPE in focusing on quality of education issues in the development of the action plan and strategy for the expansion of primary education to grade 8 under the next program. More specifically, the expert will (i) deliver an analytical report on all required education quality changes, with a focus on curriculum, assessment and, for the medium term, teacher quality; and (ii) support the subcommittee in specifying actions to be implemented in 2017, which are to be agreed with all stakeholders relevant to education quality.

8. **Education economist** (national, 3 person-months). The expert will support the subcommittee set up at MOPME and DPE in focusing on access to education issues in the development of the action plan and strategy for the expansion of primary education to grade 8 under the next program. More specifically, the expert will (i) deliver an analytical report on all required access-to-education changes for an expansion in the medium term, which will include analysis of required classrooms and required teachers based on projections, an analysis of requirements for demand-side interventions like stipends, free textbooks, and school feeding as a result of the expansion, and an analysis of the available data including the ongoing school mapping exercise, to recommend what type of additional data is required; (ii) support the subcommittee in specifying actions to be implemented in 2017, which are to be agreed with all stakeholders relevant to access to education; and (iii) help develop an initial costing of the expansion plan for the short and medium term.

² A first draft action plan, with a more detailed approach on how to proceed with the expansion, is available.