

Bangladesh

Third Primary Education Development Project



Bangladesh has one of the largest primary school systems in the world, with over 16 million children enrolled in over 80,000 primary schools. Considerable progress has been made in improving access to free and compulsory primary education. Gross enrollment rates in primary education improved from 93.7% in 2005 to 103.5% in 2009, and net enrollment rates improved from 87.2% in 2005 to 93.9% in 2009. Bangladesh was one of the few countries to achieve gender parity up to the secondary level by 2005. Despite significant progress in access to education, high inefficiencies persist—high student dropout and repetition rates, low completion, and high student and teacher absenteeism. Two rounds of national student assessment indicate low student achievements in grades 3 and 5, but the results are improving.

The government prepared the National Education Policy (NEP) to address the above systemic issues in primary education. The NEP plans to achieve education for all by 2015, and ensure that every child starts primary school

by 2011. The NEP aims at reducing disparities between different types of schools, and expanding and improving primary education in disadvantaged locations in rural communities and urban slums. The major benefits foreseen are reduced repetition and dropout, improved completion rates, enhanced net enrolment rates, and improved transition rates to secondary education—all as a result of improved quality and relevance of education in schools with initial input deficits.

In July 2011, the Asian Development Bank approved the Third Primary Education Development Project. The project supports the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) III, which builds on the PEDP II achievement, lessons identified, and joint experience of the government and development partners. It broadens the scope to include 1 year preprimary, and nonformal and second chance primary education; deepen quality improvement through improved teaching and learning practices in the

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Project Features

Greater focus on results. The project links financing to the government, achieving nine annual disbursement linked indicators (DLIs) output level results and implementation steps to policy and institutional changes that are deemed essential to meet the project's objectives. The use of DLIs helps project interventions move from a focus on activities to a broader program approach that focuses on results. It also helps strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system and the government's capacity in results monitoring and reporting.

Alignment with government system. The fiduciary risk assessment undertaken during project preparation suggested ADB and the development partners to use the government's treasury system for disbursement and financial management. The ADB loan and development partners' funds are channeled to the government's treasury to finance PEDP III eligible expenditures, included under certain program budget heads (PBHs) in the government's chart of accounts, as agreed between the government and the development partners. The PBHs include total subsector expenditures that contribute to PEDP III outcomes, with some exceptions, and comprises both development and nondevelopment expenditures.

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The project supports the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) III, which builds on the PEDP II achievements

Project Features

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Harmonization and partnership arrangements. Greater alignment with the government system enhances harmonization among development partners. The government and development partners signed a joint financing arrangement that sets forth the jointly agreed terms and procedures for partners' support to the PEDP III.

Development partners have enhanced delegated cooperation in key areas of monitoring and oversight, including joint fiduciary oversight of PEDP III by ADB and the World Bank.

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classroom, including improved assessment; enhance school governance, accountability, and community mobilization; provide targeted support to disadvantaged groups and locations; institutionalize human resource development to incentivize the system and enhance capacity; deepen and institutionalize a results-based management and monitoring mechanism at all levels; target and ensure effective utilization of technical assistance at all levels within an emerging decentralization

framework; and enhance subsector management, coordination, and greater alignment with the country system.

The project is in line with the strategic directions of ADB's South Asia Department. The strategy focuses on sustainable infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, human development, regional cooperation and integration, public-private partnership, and good governance.



The project supports second chance and alternative education for students that have never enrolled or may have dropped out from formal school

The Project at a Glance

Cost and financing: Asian Development Fund, \$320,000

Project approval date: 5 July 2011

Project themes: Capacity development, Gender equity, Governance, Social development, Poverty reduction and inclusive growth

Status of project implementation: Ongoing

Actual loan closing date: 31 December 2016

Executing agency

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

ADB department

South Asia Department
Bangladesh Resident Mission

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Sources: Project information document, <http://www.adb.org/projects/42122-013/main> ; ADB. 2001. *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 <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/projdocs/2012/42122-013-ban-rrp.pdf>