

# Project Brief

## Second Primary Education Development Program



Bangladesh has one of the largest primary education systems in the world. The strong national commitment to education over the past decades is evident in the rapid growth in participation and completion rates and strong overall growth in the primary education system.

While access to primary education has been provided, its quality needs improvement. High pupil–teacher ratios, insufficient contact hours, high dropout rates, low attendance by students, poor teacher training, insufficient teacher salaries, poor physical facilities, and low-quality textbooks and supplemental materials are among the critical issues. The Second Primary Education Development Program seeks to provide high-quality primary education to all children in Bangladesh and to create the environment for nationwide improvement in primary education. The flagship program of the Government of Bangladesh, assisted by 11 development partners with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as the lead agency, was approved in 2003.

### Key Program Results

#### Output

- More than 45,000 new teachers recruited; 40,464 classrooms built
- 396 Upazila Resource Centers, 455 Upazila Education Offices, 58 District Primary Education Offices, 53 Primary Teachers Training Institutes, 346 school-cum-cyclone shelters, and about 18,395 toilets constructed
- More than 526,856,900 textbooks distributed, free of charge, to 112,957,433 students
- About 105,000 teachers received local training; 193 personnel received overseas training

#### Outcome

- Students improved their test results, and their mean score increased, as evident in the National Student Assessments conducted in 2006 and 2008.
- Number of double-shift schools decreased as additional classrooms were built and more teachers recruited
- Teacher–student ratio came down to 1:47 in 2009 from 1:54 in 2005.
- Stipends provided under the program contributed to greater attendance, retention, and completion of primary school by poor students
- More efficient, fair, and transparent teacher recruitment system was put in place

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## Program Features

The program targeted education quality improvement through organizational development, capacity building, institutional reforms, and human resource development and management. The quality improvement initiatives in schools and classrooms were pursued through training of teachers, distribution of free textbooks, and providing funds to schools to purchase teaching–learning materials and to implement the school-level improvement plan. The program also focused on improving physical infrastructure of schools, Primary Teacher Training Institutes, and educational offices at the field level.



## Program at a Glance

### Cost and financing

Asian Development Fund, \$109.8 million; International Development Association, \$150 million; United Kingdom's Department for International Development, \$112.3 million; European Commission, \$131.4 million; Government of the Netherlands, \$46.3 million; Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, \$36.5 million; Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, \$33.5 million; Canadian International Development Agency, \$53.3 million; Japan International Cooperation Agency, \$5.4 million; UNICEF/Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), \$27.1 million; Government of Bangladesh, \$1,161 million. The assistance from AusAID was channeled through UNICEF.

### Executing agency

The Directorate of Primary Education, acting under the overall supervision of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

### Implementation period

January 2004–June 2011

Asian Development Bank

Bangladesh Resident Mission

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