

Education Watch 2013

## NEW VISION OLD CHALLENGES

The State of Pre-primary Education in Bangladesh



**Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)  
Bangladesh**

Education Watch 2013

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## *Foreword*

**T**his twelfth *Education Watch* report attempts to provide a comprehensive picture of pre-primary education provision in Bangladesh. It provides the current situation of pre-primary education and its implementation gaps. The study can be used as a baseline for monitoring future progress. For the first time, the issue of pre-primary education has been selected as the theme for the *Education Watch* study.

Education is the key to addressing the challenges of development. Both *care* and *education* are important for early year's development as emphasised in Goal 1 of the Education for All (EFA) Declaration. Bangladesh has attained significant achievements in various aspects of education during the past two decades but attention to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) has been given only the past few years. Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has emphasised pre-primary education as a part of overall development of children under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME). Besides, NGOs are providing early stimulation to pre-primary education for a long period.

As an attempt to promote this issue, GoB has adopted several policy directions. It is expected that the government would take serious measures for expansion of pre-primary education and maintain its quality in the coming years. Considering all these, *Education Watch* has decided to take pre-primary education as the theme of this year's study.

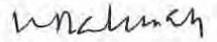
The study has created a baseline of existing facilities in the schools for pre-primary education in terms of infrastructure, curriculum, textbooks and materials, teacher profile, teaching-learning process and perceptions of parents and teachers. It has also captured the state of access to pre-primary education including trend over time, socioeconomic differentials and approaches and inputs. The study also explored evolution of pre-primary education in Bangladesh along with the national policy environment and the roles of various government agencies and civil society organizations in formulating policy along with implications.

We expect that the concerned authorities of the government would look into the findings seriously and take necessary actions so that the nation's foundation can be built strongly. A strong political commitment for human resource development is very much needed. We believe that the government will be able to give the right direction to the nation in this regard.

Finally, I would like to thank all concerned individuals and institutions including the research team and CAMPE team for their efforts from the start to the finishing of this research work, its publication and dissemination.

Let's work together for preparing our children for a brighter future.

Dhaka  
May 2014

  
**Kazi Fazlur Rahman**  
Chairperson  
Education Watch

## Preface

**W**ith this twelfth Report of *Education Watch* we have explored a new area – *State of Pre-primary Education in Bangladesh*. The study focused on developing a baseline of the pre-primary education in Bangladesh in terms of both its hard and soft parts. In the hard part it looked into physical infrastructure, teacher recruitment and financing issues related to access to pre-primary education. While the soft part of the study examined the policies, operational framework, GO-NGO collaboration guideline, curriculum, teaching-learning process and adequacy of materials, parental and teachers perception and response, socio-economic differentials, policy environment and role of state and non-state actors along with policy implications, options and strategies.

A mixed method was used in the study. The study was carried out in 30 *upazilas/thanas* of which 13 were fully rural, two fully urban and 15 mixed. Two surveys, viz., pre-primary school and household, were carried out using structured questionnaires. Much of the quantitative information came from the surveys. As our previous studies have highlighted variations in educational attainment among the learners in different geographical regions of the country a systematic random selection process was followed to accommodate diversity. The samples included 1,500 schools and 9,000 households. With a view to have a deeper understanding of the issues and for getting a comprehensive scenario of the existing facilities and capacities, qualitative investigation was carried out in 10 schools in two *upazilas* from the above sample. A number of checklists were used.

The research conclusion emphasized the need for a collaborative and coordinated approach for bringing the major stakeholders together, facilitated and encouraged by the government and political authorities with a holistic vision of early childhood care and development. This collaborative and holistic approach was considered more appropriate than individualistic and separate efforts by different key actors.

We strongly urge upon the policy makers of Bangladesh to take note of the findings of this study and make use of the evidences, analyses and policy recommendations. Strong political commitment accompanied with pragmatic strategies, sufficient resources and continuous monitoring will be required to prepare our next generation, particularly the disadvantaged, to contribute to nation building and enable them to perform well in the era of globalization and competitive, market oriented human resource development all over the world. We believe that providing an enabling environment for early learning will contribute to human capability enhancement. All development actors including the government, political parties, corporate sector, CSOs and development partners should come forward to play their role in human potential development.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Chairperson of the *Education Watch* and Kazi Rafiqul Alam, Chairperson of CAMPE for their continued guidance to all of us. The *Education Watch* is privileged to have the unflinching support of CAMPE. Its staff has all along played a vital role in producing the annual *Watch* reports and facilitating their dissemination. Our sincere appreciation goes to them for their tireless efforts.

Samir Ranjan Nath of the Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC and a core researcher of *Education Watch* took the lead in carrying out the study and preparing the report. His team members included Goutam Roy, M. Habibur Rahman, Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed and Dr. AMR Chowdhury. We are grateful to all of them. The panel of reviewers comprising Dr. Anwara Begum of BIDS, Dr. Md. Golam

Mostafa of Aga Khan Foundation and Mohammad Mohsin of UNICEF deserve our special thanks for their valuable comments and suggestions on the draft.

Our sincere gratitude to the *Education Watch* community, who participated in various sharing sessions on the preliminary findings and the draft report and provided valuable suggestions on the design, approach, analyses and findings of the study. Their contribution in preparing the key messages and policy recommendations of this report is highly appreciated. Our appreciation will remain incomplete if we do not acknowledge the contribution and wholehearted cooperation of the Research and Evaluation Division (RED) of BRAC, Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) and BRAC University Institute of Educational Development (BU-IED) for their support in different stages of the study.

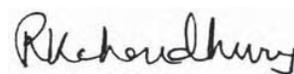
Durdana Nahid, Utpal Mallick, Anwar Hossain and Syed Suaib Ahmed of the Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC helped the research team in many ways including training and coordination and supervision of field surveys conducted by research assistants. K M Enamul Hoque, Ghiasuddin Ahmed and Mirza Quamrun Naher of CAMPE played important roles at various stages of the study. All of them deserve our sincere appreciation. We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the respondents of the survey, particularly the household heads, Head Teachers of different schools and parents for sharing their thoughts, experiences and pertinent information to the research team.

*Education Watch* and its reports have been possible due to the generous support received from *Manusher Janno Foundation (MJF)* and *the European Union (EU)*. We acknowledge their kind cooperation and express our deep appreciation.

Finally, we would like to request the readers, users and well wishers of *Education Watch* to send us their suggestions, if any, regarding selection of topics for research, improvement of quality of research, presentation style or any other issue related to the study. Our efforts will be worthwhile if this report could serve as a useful input in the key decision making process for improving basic education in Bangladesh.

Let us all work for building a better future, a beautiful Bangladesh.

Dhaka  
May 2014



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## Acronyms

BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics	GPS	Government Primary School
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics	GSS	Gano Sahajjo Shangstha, an NGO
BEN	Bangladesh ECD Network	HSC	Higher Secondary School Certificate
BRAC	An NGO, formerly known as Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	ICDP	Integrated Community Development Project
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board	IER	Institute of Education and Research
BSA	Bangladesh Shishu Academy	MDG	Millennium Development Goal
BU-IED	BRAC University Institute of Educational Development	MEP	Mass Education Programme
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education	MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tract	MoE	Ministry of Education
CHTDB	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board	MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
CI	Corrugated Iron	MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
C-in-Ed	Certificate in Education	NAPE	National Academy for Primary Education
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child	NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission, an NGO	NER	Net Enrolment Rate
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education	NGO	Non-government Organization
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education	NPA	National Plan of Action
ECD	Early Childhood Development	NRDP	Noakhali Rural Development Project
ECED	Early Childhood Education and Development	PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
ECRDC	Early Childhood Resource Development Centre	PPE	Pre-primary Education
EFA	Education for All	PTI	Primary Teachers Training Institute
ELCD	Early Learning for Child Development	RED	Research and Evaluation Division [of BRAC]
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	RNGPS	Registered Non-government Primary School
FIVDB	Friends in Village Development Bangladesh, an NGO	SBK	Shishu Bikash Kendra
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio	SSC	Secondary School Certificate
GO	Government	UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
GPA	Grade Point Average	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



A young boy with short dark hair, wearing a yellow patterned shirt, is looking down at a worksheet on a desk. In the background, another child is blurred, also working at a desk. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a classroom environment.

# Overview



## A. Introduction and Objectives

Global attention and commitment to early childhood development is recent. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 focused on ‘guaranteeing the rights of young children’ to *survive*, *develop* and be *protected*. Signing of the Convention by 192 countries demonstrates its worldwide acceptance. Encouraging early childhood care and education (ECCE) the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) stated that ‘learning begins at birth’. Ten years later the World Education Forum in Dakar 2000 reaffirmed the importance of ECCE in reaching basic educational goals.

In Bangladesh, good attention is also being paid to early childhood development. Inspired by the Dakar Framework of Action and the six EFA goals, *the Bangladesh Education Watch* group decided to devote this year’s report on ECCE. The Group recognized that both *care* and *education* are equally important in early years development. Unfortunately, the issue of *care* did not receive as much attention in policy or practice as received for *education*. Pre-primary education (PPE) is now an important part of the government strategy for education. The government has already approved the national curriculum for pre-primary education and has adopted books and materials, operational framework, expansion plan, GO-NGO collaboration guideline for universal PPE, pre-primary service delivery standard and comprehensive ECCD policy. It is likely that a large expansion of the pre-primary education would take place during the next few years. Globally the main rationale for early childhood education has been in its ability to create a ‘strong foundation’ for better achievements in future life. Evidences of such achievements have already been seen in various studies conducted in developed countries. Globally children’s participation in pre-primary education has increased by 46.3% between 1999 and 2010. Most of the increases have happened in low income countries as the high income countries already achieved a high rate. Noticeable rise was seen in South and West Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Interestingly in Bangladesh, pre-primary education has functioned in different forms for a long time. At least seven such models could be identified. But the scale and rate of increase over time has been slow until 2008. Mixed results were found on its positive impact in so far as future learning achievement was concerned.

The main objective of *Education Watch 2013* is to create a baseline for pre-primary education provision in the country which would allow monitoring of its future progress. An important aim is also to identify gaps in the current provisions which would facilitate formulation of appropriate policies for future development. The main research questions addressed by *Education Watch 2013* are given below:

1. How has pre-primary education evolved in Bangladesh? What is the present national policy for pre-primary education? How was it formulated? What specific roles were played by various government agencies and the civil society organizations in formulating the policy? Is there a need for a change in the policy?
2. What is the current situation of access to pre-primary education? Has access increased over time? What are its socioeconomic determinants? How the different provisions differ in their approaches, inputs and outputs?
3. What facilities exist in the schools where pre-primary education is provided? What curriculum is followed, textbooks and materials used and who facilitates learning in the schools? What

teaching-learning practices exist in pre-primary classrooms and beyond? What are the views of the parents and teachers regarding the provisions?

## B. Data and Methodology

Like other *Education Watch* studies, this study collected new data to explore the above research questions related to pre-primary education in Bangladesh. To see the trends of some of the indicators, previous *Education Watch* databases were used as and when required. Both qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques were used. The quantitative part included two surveys using structured questionnaires: pre-primary school survey and household survey. The qualitative investigation was carried out in a small number of schools and included school and classroom observation and focus group discussions with teachers and parents.

Thirty *upazilas/thanas* were selected from all over the country following a systematic random sampling technique. Of the selected *upazilas/thanas*, 13 were fully rural, two fully urban and 15 mixed. A list of all types of schools in the selected *upazilas/thanas* was prepared and the schools providing pre-primary education were identified. Five top types of providers/schools in terms of frequency were considered for the study which included government primary school, registered non-government primary school (henceforth called non-government school), English-medium kindergarten (henceforth called kindergarten), NGO operated *non-formal* and mosque based pre-primary schools.

Three hundred schools from each type were randomly selected totalling 1,500. Twelve neighbourhoods from each selected *upazila/thana* and 25 households from each neighbourhood were selected. Systematic random sampling technique was followed in each selection. Thus the household survey covered 9,000 households. In-depth investigation was carried out in 10 pre-primary schools – two from each of the above five types. These were taken from two of the above 30 *upazilas*. Non-formal category was represented by BRAC schools considering their frequency and scale. The data were collected during May–July 2013.

## C. Major Findings

### *Access to pre-primary education*

- The official age for pre-primary education is five years. However, children belonging to a wide range of 3–10 years were found enrolled in pre-primary education. A third of them were of age five, a quarter of age six and about a fifth of age four – comprising 77.6% of total enrolment.
- The gross enrolment ratio at age five was 161.6% which indicates wide variation in age of enrolment. The net enrolment rate was 52.6%. Both the gross and net ratios were higher for urban areas than those of the rural areas. No gender difference was observed. As expected, the socio-economically well-off had higher enrolment rates.
- Kindergartens were at the top of pre-primary education providers where 27.9% of the students admitted. It was followed by the government and NGO operated non-formal schools with 23.1 and 21.7% of the students respectively. Mosque based schools and madrasas received 15.7% of the students. Kindergartens (64.3%) and the government primary schools (19.3%) were the two main providers in urban areas. On the contrary, at least five types of providers could be identified in rural areas. Non-formal schools enrolled 25% of rural students, with BRAC alone claiming 57% of them.

- Majority of the students (72.2%) resided in the same neighbourhoods as the schools, 23.3% in adjacent neighbourhoods and 4.5% came from a further distance. Over 80% of the students of NGO, mosque based, and non-government schools came from the neighbourhoods where the schools were situated.
- A dramatic increase in pre-primary enrolment rate was observed in the post-2008 period. The increase was four times in net rate and about three times in gross ratio. The increase was uniform for children of both genders and in both urban and rural areas. Unavailability of pre-primary schools close-by and parental unwillingness to admit were the major reasons of non-enrolment in pre-primary education. Many parents preferred late entry in school.

### **The pre-primary schools**

- The first pre-primary class in the study *upazilas* was started as long as a century ago. However, its expansion was very limited until very recently. Of the schools, 11% were established before 2000, a fifth during 2000–2007 and 69% afterwards. Although pre-primary education was very limited in the government and non-government primary schools prior to 2008, over half of the kindergartens, 38.4% of the NGO schools and 30% of the mosque based schools had already established by this time. Nine percent of the NGO schools were located in the campuses of government and non-government primary schools.
- Nearly 15% and 41.3% of the government and non-government primary schools respectively had no separate classroom for pre-primary education. These schools offered pre-primary education along with Grade I in the same classroom, often at the same time. No such case was found in other three types of schools.
- In majority of the cases, pre-primary classes were held in the classrooms; however, school verandas, head teachers' offices, roofs of school buildings, stair-rooms or open spaces were used in 10.8% of the cases. Most of the pre-primary classes in the government, non-government, mosque based schools and the kindergartens were held in rooms/places fully made of bricks or a combination of bricks and corrugated iron sheets. On the other hand, most NGO schools were made of corrugated iron sheets and other raw materials.
- Overall condition of 44.1% of the classrooms was fully satisfactory. Untidy floors with dusts and waste papers were found in 56% of the classrooms. About three-quarters of the classrooms in the government schools and the kindergartens and 84.6% of those in the non-government schools were not tidy. Good natural light and airflow was found in over 84% of the classrooms but electric light and fan was available in only a third of them.
- On an average, the government schools had 1.3 teachers for pre-primary, non-government schools had 1.6, kindergartens had four and NGO and mosque based schools had one teacher each. All the teachers of mosque based schools and 94% of those in NGO schools were fully dedicated to pre-primary education. This rate was below 7% in other three types of schools.
- Two-thirds of the pre-primary teachers were females. Percentage of female teachers was highest in the NGO schools (98%) and lowest in the mosque based schools (25.2%). It was about 70% in government schools and kindergartens and 60.9% in non-government schools.

- Government school teachers were at the top in terms of educational qualification. They were followed by those of kindergartens, non-government and mosque based schools. NGO school teachers were the most disadvantaged in this regard.
- On an average, 56% of the teachers had any kind of teacher training and 35% had training specifically on pre-primary education. Over 95% of the NGO school teachers, 53.8% of those in government, 52.5% of those in mosque based, 17.8% of those in non-government schools and 6.5% of those in the kindergartens were trained in pre-primary education.
- Most of the schools had drinking water facility and 69.5% had sanitary latrines. In majority cases, these were common to all students (pre-primary and primary) which sometimes created difficulty for the pre-primary students considering their age and height. Age and height appropriate drinking water facility was found in 38.3% of the schools and toilet facility in 59% of the schools. First aid box was available in 37.2% of the schools.
- Various kinds of seating arrangement and seats were found in pre-primary classrooms. Students sat in rows in 71% of the classrooms, U-shaped in 10.3%, in small groups in 14.2% and in large groups in 4.5%. They sat on benches in 55.3% of the classrooms, on mats in 27.5% and on floors in 12.5% of the classrooms. NGO schools students sat in small groups on jute or plastic made mats.
- On an average, 28 students were registered per class. The attendance, on average, was 19 students or 67.9%. The attendance rate was highest in NGO schools (78.6%) and lowest in non-government schools (51.7%). The government schools had 52.5%.

### *Curriculum related issues*

- In the absence of any curriculum and fixed textbooks from any central authority the pre-primary education providers used different types of textbooks published by various publishers. Overall, 912 book titles published by 418 publishers were used. Major variations were found in the kindergartens followed by the NGO operated non-formal schools and the non-government schools.
- Not all the schools had adequate educational materials – 53.3% had charts, 35.8% had toys, 34.3% had physical exercise items, 28.5% had drawing items and 11.9% had singing, dancing and drama related items. Thirty-nine percent of the schools had none. Hoisting of national flag and singing national anthem are important parts of a school's culture and rituals. Students of 72.8% of the schools participated in singing national anthem and 28% in national flag hoisting. Two-thirds of the schools had provision for physical exercise. In each case, NGO schools were ahead of others and the mosque based schools lagged behind.
- Provision of homework was found in 69% of the schools. Eighty-eight percent of the schools had various forms of student assessment starting from classroom assessment to half-yearly and final examinations.
- Substantial school-wise variation was observed in the daily contact time which ranged from 45 minutes to 4.30 hours. Highest variation was observed in the kindergartens and lowest in NGO schools.

- When the head teachers were asked to state their opinion on curriculum, teaching materials, physical facilities and teachers' quality based on their own experience, only a third provided opinion on all four issues indicating lack of awareness among the school heads. Shortage of teacher and their training, inadequate physical facility and teaching materials were mentioned by over a third of the teachers. Only 42.3% gave curriculum related opinions.

### ***Teaching-learning provisions in schools***

This part came from qualitative investigation carried out in 10 schools – two each from government, non-government, kindergarten, non-formal and mosque based category. As mentioned earlier BRAC schools represented the non-formal category due to their highest frequency.

- Most of the surveyed pre-primary schools were not well endowed with adequate physical facilities. This included classroom size and availability of other needed spaces. Mosque based schools did not have any specific classrooms and used verandas for teaching. Classrooms, where available, were not learning friendly and sitting arrangement was inappropriate considering age and physical growth of the students. Gender segregated seating arrangement was found in kindergartens and mosque based schools. BRAC schools had better facilities among the observed schools.
- There was no commonality among the schools in terms of curriculum, books used and use of teaching learning materials. Inadequate number of books and no or very few teaching-learning materials were found in government, non-government and mosque based schools. Kindergartens used a variety of books, but lacked teaching-learning materials. BRAC schools had a good number of books for all students along with other learning materials.
- All schools had specific teacher to teach at pre-primary level but not all of them were dedicated for pre-primary. Primary teachers of government and non-government schools taught in pre-primary as additional duty. Kindergarten teachers taught in both. Most of the teachers were not qualified for pre-primary education. Little or no training was a major obstacle. They did not know how to deal with children of early age. Teachers of BRAC and mosque based schools were dedicated to only pre-primary and were trained.
- Teaching technique in pre-primary classes was no different than that in primary classes. Games and other fun activities as part of teaching were almost absent. Book-based one way deliberation unfortunately was most popular. In contrast, a joyful learning environment coupled with curricular and co-curricular activities engaging all students were found in BRAC schools.
- Traditional examination system, practiced in upper grades, prevailed at pre-primary level in most of the schools except BRAC. Students' assessment as part of teaching-learning was found in the kindergartens and BRAC schools. Mental and corporal punishment were seen in mosque based schools and kindergartens.
- Supervision and provision of a feedback mechanism for improvement lacked in many cases. Pre-primary classroom visits by their heads in government and non-government schools and the kindergartens was similar to that of the higher grades. Supervisors of mosque based and BRAC schools visited schools regularly and provided feedback.

### **Private expenditure for education**

- Over 87% of the students had to bear private expenditures for pre-primary education. These included stationery (76.1%), school bag (53.3%), books (45%), admission fees (42.4%), school dress (35.7%), tuition fees (30.2%) and private tuition (25.5%).
- On an average, Tk. 1,794 was spent per student during the first six months of 2013. The figure was higher for boys than girls (Tk. 1,939 vs. Tk. 1,650) and much higher for urban students than those in rural areas (Tk. 5,601 vs. Tk. 954). Whereas, the average expenditure was Tk. 14 for the poorest quintile it was Tk. 5,956 for the richest quintile. Compared to NGO schools, students of government schools spent three times as much and Kindergarten 8.8 times more.
- Of the total private expenditure for pre-primary education 23.2% was spent in private tuition, 21% in monthly tuition fees, 17.3% in school admission, 12.2% in school dress, 10.7% in stationery, 8.2% in books, and 7.4% for school bags.
- Private expenditure for schooling significantly increased with increase in parental education. Students from the households with surplus food security status had much higher expenditure than those from the households with deficit or breakeven food security status.

### **Supplementary private tuition**

- A quarter of the pre-primary students received private tuition during the first six months of 2013. Although there was no gender difference, a fifth of the rural students availed private tuition compared to a half of the urban students.
- The incidence of private tuition was much higher among the students of kindergartens and high schools (over 50%) but much lower among those in NGO operated and mosque based schools (<10%).
- Students who availed private tuition, on an average, spent Tk. 1,622 during the first six months of the year. In other words, average monthly expenditure for private tuition was Tk. 270 per student. This was slightly higher for the boys than the girls. Urban students spent 2.8 times higher than rural students.
- Average monthly expenditure for private tuition was Tk. 100–150 for the students of government, non-government, non-formal and mosque based schools and over Tk. 350 for those of the kindergartens.
- Parents irrespective of educational status had no or little time to oversee children's educational up-keeping. Some parents chose private tutor as a strategy to better *control*, as they said, their 'naughty' children. Some thought that it would help their children compete well.

## **D. Key Messages from the Study**

Following are the key messages generated from the findings of this and other studies.

1. *Good start with major policy directions*: Unlike many other initiatives, pre-primary education already has a number of policy directions which may be helpful in its proper implementation if followed appropriately. These include curriculum, books and materials, operational framework, expansion plan, GO-NGO collaboration guideline for universal PPE, pre-primary service delivery standard, and comprehensive ECCD policy.

2. *Commendable increase in access in recent years:* Access to pre-primary education has increased hugely during the past five years compared to any other previous period. Such an increase was observed across the board. Although there was no difference in access in terms of gender or residence (urban/rural) huge variations were seen by *upazilas*. Children's access to pre-primary education was positively correlated to parental education and household economic status.
3. *Many children are still out-of-school:* Although the enrolment rate has gone up in recent years, a huge number of children of pre-primary age were still out of the network of education. The number may as high as 1.5 million among children aged five years across the country and 3.8 million if the children of age four years were added.
4. *Pluralism in provision:* Many different categories of pre-primary education persisted in terms of curriculum, books and other materials used, load of books, contact hour, course duration and so on. Pre-primary education in government and non-government primary schools was mostly similar which was far different than what was provided in the kindergartens. Kindergarten students were over-loaded by books, homework and examinations. Non-formal schools of the NGOs and mosque based schools of Islamic Foundation provided two different types of education.
5. *Unprepared educational institutions:* Majority of the schools, in general, were not adequately prepared to provide pre-primary education. The schools lacked physical facilities, learning materials, child-friendly classrooms, joyful teaching-learning environment, trained teachers, and so on. In most cases, pre-primary and primary classrooms could not be differentiated in terms of teachers' behaviour, classroom activities, homework provision, and student assessment. Outdoor activities, plays and fun were seldomly organized.
6. *Parents not impressed with current provision:* A portion of the parents were not prepared to send their children to schools at such a young age. Their understanding was that children of age 5–6 years should not be loaded with studies rather they should be engaged in play and fun. Unfortunately the schools failed to demonstrate that pre-primary education is nothing but learning through play and fun.
7. *Private expenditure persists:* Parents had to bear private expenditure for pre-primary education. Admission fee, monthly tuition fee and expenditure for private tuition were the three major cost components comprising over 60% of total expenditures. Private expenditure varied in urban and rural areas and by school type. It is also positively correlated to parental education and household economic status.
8. *Private tuition prevalent:* A quarter of pre-primary students had private tutor. Expenditure on private tuition accounted for the highest portion (23.2%) of private expenditures.

## **E. Policy Recommendations**

Findings and the main messages of the *Education Watch* 2013 study on the state of pre-primary education in Bangladesh raise the following policy issues.

1. The recent rise in pre-primary enrolment is a welcome development but we should not be complacent about it. Number of children still out of such education is staggering. The challenge is to bring those children into the reach of pre-primary education irrespective of children's

backgrounds. *Upazilas* having lower rate of enrolment demand immediate and special attention. It is clear that under the given circumstances the government alone would not be able to bring all the out-of-school children to school.

2. Dedicated classrooms and teachers with specialized and appropriate training, provision of educational materials and increased supervision and feedback mechanism may help improve their present situation in terms of preparing them for quality education. This is particularly true for government and non-governmental schools since they would have to play greater role in providing pre-primary education in future. Teachers need to understand the difference between education at pre-primary and primary levels. Teaching-learning cultures of the kindergartens need to be changed to make it more child-friendly. More non-formal schools may be promoted in the catchment areas of formal schools as a stop-gap measure.
3. Considering trained teachers as vital for pre-primary education it is important to create more facilities for teacher training. This can be done by introducing separate courses in the existing Primary Teachers' Training Institutes (PTI). NGOs having such facilities may also be utilized. Universities can be encouraged to launch specialized training and research programmes on pre-primary education including strengthening those who already have such activities.
4. In line with the present provision of primary education, pre-primary education should be confined to the children below age six. This would also help completing primary education timely. In order to ensure this, campaigns of various forms should be considered, which, at the school level, can include school-catchment area based survey and meeting with the parents of children aged 4–5 years. National and district level campaigns through different media such as radio, television, newspapers, mobile phones, bill boards, internet as well as folk media like popular theatre may be utilized. Some of these are already being used in some places; however, these need to be strengthened throughout the country for quick uptake. The civil society should be effectively used in this.
5. Provision of pre-primary education should, in principle, be the principal responsibility of the state. On behalf of the state, the Directorate of Primary Education, the government's lead authority to implement primary education, should play the key role in this regard. The *Upazila* Education Offices should play the coordinating role at the *upazila* level. This includes decentralization of authority at the *upazila* level and making them accountable for access, equity and quality of education in their respective *upazilas*. However, given the current limitations, the government should encourage other actors including NGOs and private sector for this.
6. It is important to ensure that all pre-primary education providers maintain and adhere to the pre-primary service delivery standard which has already been adopted by the government. Rigorous scrutiny of all centres/schools is essential which can be done by increasing capacity of *Upazila* Education Offices. This should be followed by feedback to the respective providers and allowing time to improve standard at an expected level.
7. The spirit of National Education Policy 2010 should be kept in mind in spreading pre-primary education in the country which urges one-year pre-primary education for the children of age five for the time being and later be extended to the children of age four. Other policy guidelines such as the pre-primary operational framework, expansion plan, GO-NGO collaboration guideline, pre-primary service delivery standard and comprehensive ECCD policy needs to be implemented with

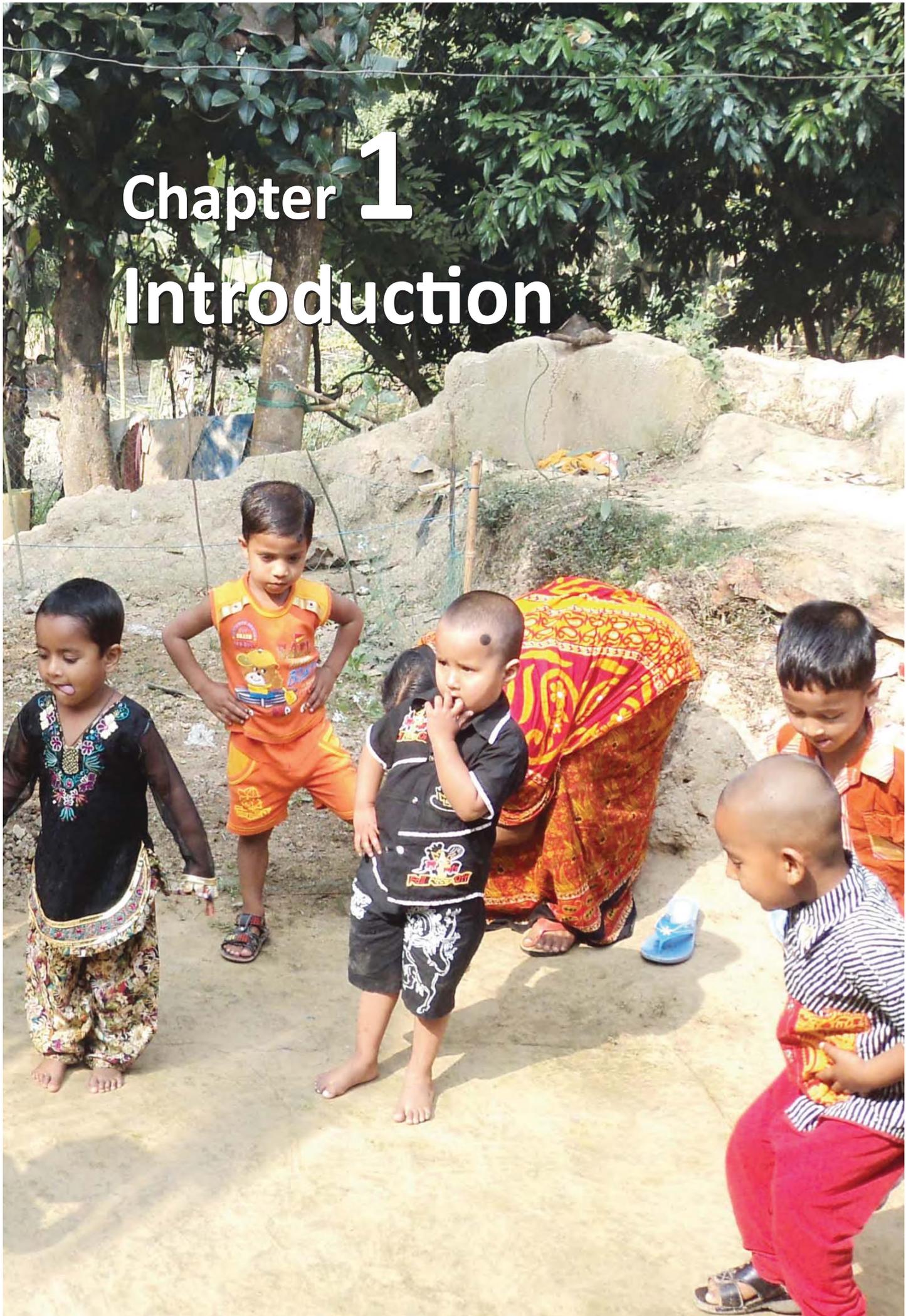
adequate responsibility, financial allocation, and taking all current providers on board. It would not be possible to ensure all children's access to pre-primary education without collective effort of all concerned.

8. Pre-primary education should be made an essential and integral part of compulsory education. The Act of 1990 made only primary education compulsory which is again limited to Grade V. Actually, in line with the present education policy, education from pre-primary to Grade VIII should be made compulsory. Moreover, the present Act is faulty as there is scope for the heads of the educational institutions to refuse admission without showing any reason; especially the physically and mentally challenged could be subjected to discriminations due to this. It is necessary to amend the Act towards broadening its scope to include pre-primary and Grades VI-VIII and vesting greater role, responsibility and authority to the *Upazila* Education Offices and local governments.



# Chapter 1

## Introduction





This introductory chapter creates a background of this study through providing an international perspective of early childhood development and expansion of pre-primary education throughout the globe. Existing knowledge on pre-primary education in Bangladesh and a brief on current government policy are also provided. Organization of the report is presented afterwards.

### A. The issue of early childhood development

International commitment to early childhood development has grown in recent times. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 focussed on ‘guaranteeing the rights of young children’ to *survive, develop* and be *protected*. Signing of the Convention by 192 countries demonstrates its worldwide acceptance. Endorsing early childhood care and education (ECCE) the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All declared that ‘learning begins at birth’. Ten years later the World Education Forum in Dakar 2000 reaffirmed the importance of ECCE in reaching basic educational goals. Two years later the UN Special Session on Children echoed the same. All these undoubtedly created the ground to advance the early childhood agenda at the forefront of all discussions and interventions on child development. Despite such awareness these rights are far from being realized for many of the world’s children.

The main thrust of early years’ development is creating a ‘strong foundation’ for better achievements in future life. The period of a child’s life from birth to eight years is widely recognized as early childhood (UNESCO 2006). *Care* and *education* are the two important components for development at this stage of life. Research shows that care and education at early years help children get *cognitive advantage*, positive *social adjustment* at adolescence and beyond, *family functioning and parenting practices* at adulthood, and *reduce social inequality* throughout life (Ou and Reynolds 2004). However, children of developing world are more disadvantaged than those in the developed world in getting appropriate environment for early years’ development (UNESCO 2006). They suffer multiple health and environmental risks. The positive benefits that can be derived by disadvantaged children from appropriate early years’ development interventions are found in a number of studies (Engle *et al.* 2007, Lamb 1998, Myers 1995, 2004). Significance of early years’ education was thus rightly reflected in the Dakar Framework of Action and came out rightly as the first of the six Education for All (EFA) goals (UNESCO 2000); however, sadly, there was no mention of it in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Dakar Framework for Action expressed the first EFA goal in the following manner:

*Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.*

The expanded commentary of the Framework the EFA global monitoring report 2007 (UNESCO 2006) defined the terms *care* and *education* in the following way.

The term ‘care’ generally includes attention to health, hygiene, and nutrition within a nurturing and safe environment that supports children’s cognitive and socio-emotional wellbeing.

Use of the term ‘education’ in the early childhood years is much broader than (pre-) schooling, capturing learning through early stimulation, guidance and a range of developmental activities and opportunities.

Emphasising on the both Choi (2002), Myers (1995) and OECD (2001) emphasized that *care* and *education* cannot be separated in the process of early years’ development; rather it is necessary to address good-quality provision of both for young children. In this respect it can be said that these are

**Box 1.1****Highlights on pre-primary education from EFA global monitoring report 2013/14**

Between 1999 and 2011, the pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio increased from 33% to 50%, although it reached only 18% in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is projected that by 2015, only 68 out of 141 countries will have a pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio above 80%.

In many parts of the world, governments have yet to assume responsibility for pre-primary education: as of 2011, private providers were catering for 33% of all enrolled children. The cost of this provision is one of the factors that contribute most to inequity of access.

Source: UNESCO (2014)

parts of a whole. Both are needed to foster holistic growth, development and learning of young children, as Dakar Framework stated. The other issue as mentioned in the goal is addressing the *vulnerable* and *disadvantaged* children. In other words, an inclusive system has to be developed so that inequalities of opportunities that various groups of children face can be reduced. Link between poverty and ECCD is thus an issue not to be ignored.

The *Education Watch* group is very much inspired by the Dakar Framework of Action and the six EFA goals. The group recognises that child development requires a holistic approach in which both *care* and *education* are important. Special attention is also required to address the children from disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in designing early childhood initiatives. The same is

applicable to research on early childhood. A part of early childhood education (Grades I–III or ages 6–8 years) was addressed in a number of *Education Watch* studies on primary education. It was thought to be formidable to address the issues related to both *care* and *education* in one study with adequate justice. Again, on reaching at a certain level of primary education, Bangladesh is emphasising more on educational part of the children below the primary age range. Such education is popularly known as pre-primary education. Considering its policy relevance the *Education Watch* group has decided to consider pre-primary education (PPE) as the theme of this year's study.

## B. Expansion of pre-primary education globally

The EFA global monitoring reports continuously provide information on expansion of pre-primary education throughout the globe. Although, it is not the same education that provided to the children all over the world; the curriculum varies from one country to another. Cultural context of the countries as well as their economic strengths may cause such variation. Not all the countries offer pre-primary education for the children of similar age group. Countries vary in terms of age of starting pre-primary education and its duration. Children in majority of the countries (70.6%) start pre-primary education at age three years, 23% starts at age four, 5.4% at age five and 1% at age six. Duration of pre-primary education is three years in more than a half of the countries (50.4%); it is two years in 30.9% of the countries, one year in 6% of the countries and four years in 12.7% of the countries<sup>1</sup>.

Analysing overall situation of the countries, the latest EFA global monitoring report concluded that 'progress on early childhood care and education has been too slow' (UNESCO 2012). Between 1999 and 2011, the pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio increased from 33% to 50%, although it reached only 18% in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is projected that by 2015, only 68 out of 141 countries will have a pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio above 80% (Box 1.1). Available evidence suggests that children's participation in pre-primary education has increased 46.3% globally from 111.7 million in 1999 to 163.5 million in 2010 (Table 1.1). The rate of increase per year was not uniform across the regions. Compared to 4.2% globally, it was 5.5% in the developing countries and

<sup>1</sup> These were calculated from Annex Table 3A of the EFA global monitoring report 2012 where information of 204 countries or territories are provided (pages 332-8) (UNESCO 2012)

1% in the developed countries. Whereas, 5.7% yearly increase in pre-primary enrolment was recorded in the Arab States, it was 2.3% in Central Asia, 1.9% in East Asia and the Pacific, and 2.6% in Latin America and the Caribbean. Fortunately, major improvement was noticed in the South and West Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, due mostly to a low base. The rates were respectively 11.4 and 10.8% (Table 1.1).

In 2010, global pre-primary gross enrolment ratio (GER) was 48% with huge gap between developed and developing countries – 85% and 43% respectively (Figure 1.1). GER was highest in North America and Western Europe (85%) and lowest in the Sub-Saharan Africa (17%). However, the absolute number of out-of-school children in the relevant age-group did not reduce much due to population growth (UNESCO 2012).

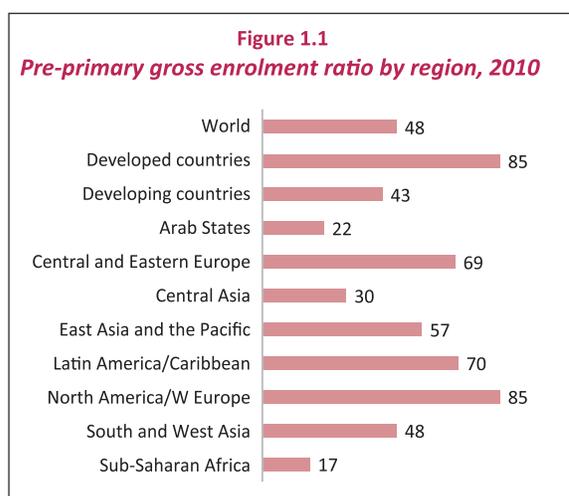
**Table 1.1**  
*Increase in pre-primary enrolment in various regions of the world, 1999–2010*

Regions	Number of students (000)			Percentage increase	
	1999	2010	Increase	Overall	Yearly <sup>1</sup>
World	111 745	163 525	51 780	46.3	4.2
Developed countries	25 314	28 106	2 792	11.0	1.0
Developing countries	78 975	126 680	47 705	60.4	5.5
Arab States	2 407	3 904	1 497	62.2	5.7
Central and Eastern Europe	9 443	10 906	1 463	15.5	1.4
Central Asia	1 272	1 591	319	25.1	2.3
East Asia and the Pacific	36 704	44 502	7 798	21.2	1.9
Latin America/ Caribbean	16 010	20 541	4 531	28.3	2.6
North America/W Europe	19 102	22 050	2 948	15.4	1.4
South and West Asia	21 381	48 144	26 763	125.2	11.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	5 427	11 887	6 460	119.0	10.8

<sup>1</sup>Average of 11 years

Sources: Various EFA global monitoring reports, UNESCO

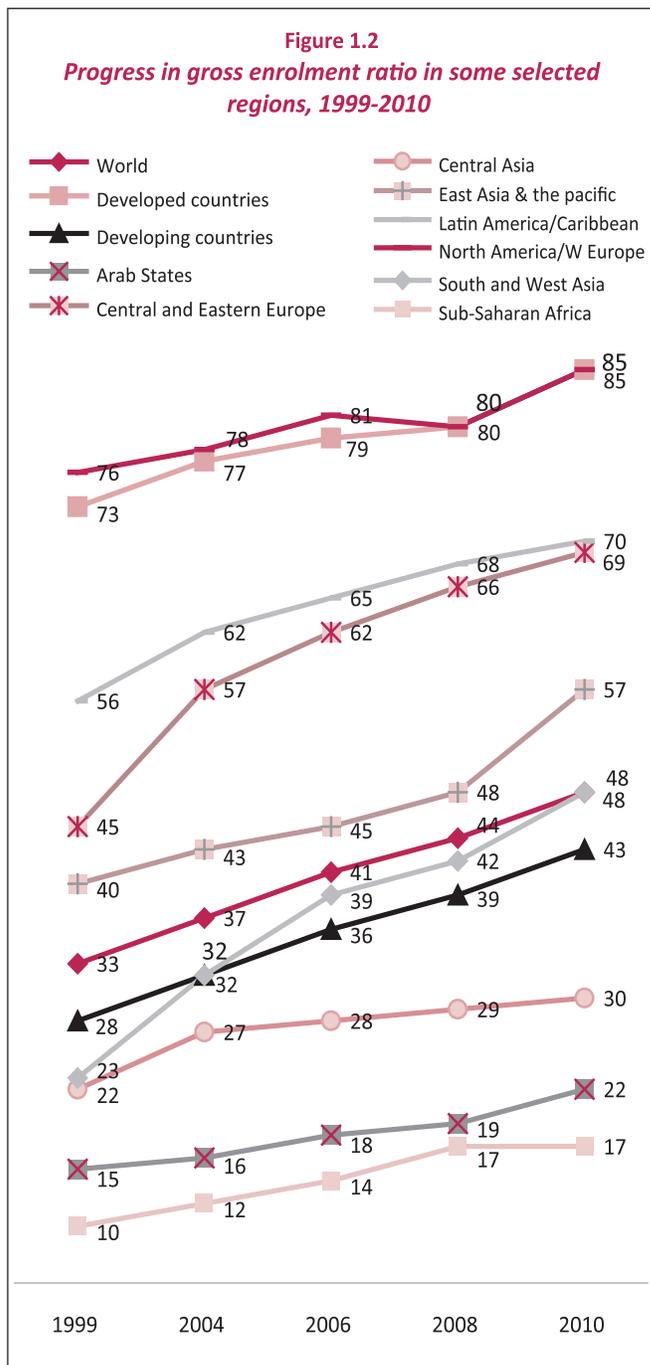
Globally, the progress in GER was 15 percentage points – 33% in 1999 to 48% in 2010; on an average, 1.36 percentage points per year (Figure 1.2). Increase in GER, during the same period, was 12 percentage points in the developed countries and 15 percentage points in the developing countries. However, the gap between the developed and the developing nations was huge throughout the



Source: UNESCO (2012)

reporting period with the former much ahead of the later. Not only the North America and Western Europe or the developed countries altogether, regions like East Asia and the Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, and Latin America/Caribbean were ahead of the global average. On the other hand, the South and West Asia, Arab States, Central Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa were below the global average. Although the South and West Asia was 10 percentage points behind in 1999, it reached the global level by 2010.

The other issue is the rise of private institutions (non-public) as providers of pre-primary education (UNESCO 2012). Globally, in a half of the countries over 29% of the pre-primary students were enrolled in private institutions in 1999 which increased to 33% in 2010. Tendency to admit in private institutions was more likely in the developing than the developed countries. Whereas, more than half of the students were enrolled in the private institutions in a half of the developing countries it was only 13% in developed countries. In 2010, 48% or more students in half of the South and West Asian countries enrolled in private pre-primary institutions. Private provisions



Sources: Various EFA global monitoring reports, UNESCO

education to the children before they enter into primary education were made by various Education Commissions reports since 1951. The 1951 East Bengal Educational System Reconstruction Committee chaired by Maulana Muhammad Akram Khan for the first time brought the issue in Commission's report and emphasized the importance of various pre-school interventions such as crèches for the children from birth to 3/4 years, nursery school, and kindergarten. Later in 1957, the

have, no doubt, a role in the expansion of pre-primary education but these often are priced out of reach for poorest households (UNESCO 2012).

### C. Pre-primary education in Bangladesh

Primary education with duration of five-years (Grades I-V) for children aged 6–10 years is compulsory in Bangladesh since 1990. This, however, did not include pre-primary education (Government of Bangladesh 1990). Historically, *baby classes* of a section of the formal primary schools (both government and non-government) offered pre-primary education in Bangladesh which was an unofficial grade prior to the first grade. Unofficial in the sense that the schools were not obliged to offer such education but in some cases the local education authorities (district/*thana/upazila*) encouraged the schools to do so. Teachers of some schools also started such education with their own initiatives. Sometimes, the younger siblings who were under-aged for primary education accompanied the primary students in schools. These young children were the prospective students of *baby classes*. As there was no curriculum for pre-primary education, the schools offered some basic lessons such as introduction to alphabets and numbers, etc. using the first graders textbook. In some cases, books available in the markets were used to facilitate their studies.

Importance of pre-primary education has been recognized and recommendations to provide such

Education Reforms Commission headed by an eminent politician Ataur Rahman Khan also thought in the same line and wrote the following in their report.

Learning begins at birth and continues as a lifelong process. From the very start of their lives, children, the future citizens, therefore, claim the attention of the modern educators who seeks to provide in the system of education facilities for their physical growth, their mental and emotional development and their upbringing as socially useful beings. ... Development of pre-school institutions such as Nursery schools and Kindergartens, therefore, can no more be neglected. A modest beginning at suitable centres in rural and urban areas has, therefore, been recommended (Government of East Pakistan 1957, page 7).

The Commission mentioned that ‘the main objective of education at the pre-primary stage is to give young children desirable social experience rather than formal instruction’.

All the eleven Education Commissions, Committees or Task Forces formed during the past four decades in Independent Bangladesh emphasized the importance of pre-primary education along with primary education. In 1974, the first Education Commission chaired by Md. Quadrat-e-Khuda emphasised both *care* and *education* at early stage of life. The Commission proposed to set up nursery schools and kindergartens in required number throughout the country. It also felt the need of establishment of an Institute of Research for Child Education. The subsequent Education Commissions, Committees and Task Forces also recommended pre-primary education. It can be noticed that instead of a holistic approach of child development the recent Commissions/Committees emphasised more on one-year duration of pre-primary education for the children of age five years. Besides, a number of other policy documents including the National Plan of Action for children and the National Education Policy highlighted the need for pre-primary education (Government of Bangladesh 2003, 2005, 2010). More on this is provided in Chapter 2.

Although the national Education Commissions, Committees and Task Forces emphasised pre-primary education for long but it has not been put into real practice by the public system. On the other hand, many English-medium kindergartens were established in both urban and rural areas with private initiative. The non-government organizations (NGOs) also started operating pre-primary schools independently. As there was no communication among the providers of pre-primary education, a variety of pre-primary education systems sprung up in Bangladesh (Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2**  
**Various pre-primary models in Bangladesh**

Age (years)	Model 1 (1 year)	Model 2 (1 year)	Model 3 (2 years)	Model 4 (2 years)	Model 5 (3 years)	Model 6 (3 years)	Model 7 (4 years)
2/3							Playgroup
3/4					Nursery	Playgroup	Nursery
4/5			KG-1	Nursery	KG-1	Nursery	KG-1
5/6	Pre-primary	KG	KG-2	KG	KG-2	KG	KG-2

*Note: Adopted from Nath and Sylva (2007)*

Fortunately, the government has started adopting pre-primary education for the past several years. It has already developed a pre-primary curriculum and textbooks. The government aims to start a pre-primary class in every government and non-government primary schools by January 2014. It will provide pre-primary education of one-year duration to the children of age five years. For this, 15,000 teachers are already recruited for the state run schools. US\$ 300 million is allocated under the third

Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP 3) for five years for expansion of pre-primary education throughout the country. Box 1.2 provides more on this.

#### Box 1.2

##### *Government initiatives in Pre-primary education*

The government introduced pre-primary education in 1992 under PEDP 2 but did not give much attention to it until recently. In PEDP 3 the government has decided to introduce gradually one-year pre-primary education in all schools nationwide. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has prepared learning materials based on the approved curriculum. National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) finalized teacher training manual.

Every Government Primary School (GPS) has received Tk. 5,000 for procurement and preparation of supplementary teaching learning materials in the form of pre-primary education (PPE) operational cost. The government has created 37,672 additional posts of assistant teachers (one for each GPS) for PPE classes. The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) has already provided one-day PPE orientation training for all field level officials including head teachers of all GPS, Registered Non-governmental Primary Schools (RNGPS) and community schools.

Source: Bangladesh Primary Education Annual Sector Performance Report 2013

There is a scarcity of information on pre-primary education. It is mostly because the information collecting authorities (DPE or BANBEIS) did not give adequate attention to it. The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) estimated that in 2005, 26,299 of the 82,000 various types of primary schools offered pre-primary education to 1.1 million children. In addition, 25,180 centres established by various NGOs provided such education to about 630,000 children (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education 2008).

Although, no recent information is available on the proportion of primary schools providing pre-primary education but BANBEIS (2013) reports that 7.8% of the country's 19,208 secondary schools had provision for such education. In its Annual Sector Performance Report, the DPE reported that number of pre-primary students in government and non-government schools was 0.9 million in 2010, over 1.5 million in 2011 and nearly 1.7 million in 2012 (DPE 2013). On the other hand, BANBEIS (2013) estimated that the figure would be 2.6 million in all types of schools. DPE (2013) also observed

that in 2010, 42.3% of the Grade I students indeed had pre-primary education, which reduced to 37.7% in 2011 and again increased to 50% in 2012. However, DPE itself raised question about the reliability of such information due to plausibility of over-reporting by the schools.

Another estimate, based on *Education Watch* household survey dataset, shows that among the 4–5-year-old children the net and gross enrolment ratios were respectively 13.4 and 30.5% in 2005, indicating many over-aged children attended pre-primary schools (Nath and Sylva 2007). Among the students who completed primary education in 2008, 15.3% had received pre-school education before entering into primary education (Nath 2012). A wide variation was also observed by school type where the students of primary-attached high schools had the highest (37%) and those

#### Box 1.3

##### *BRAC is the main provider of pre-primary education among the NGOs*

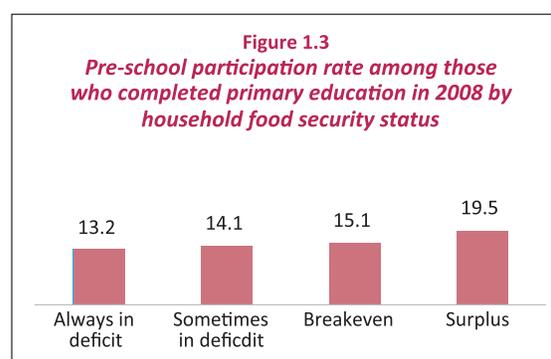
BRAC provides pre-primary education in non-formal mode. Single classroom, one teacher and 25–30 pupils comprise a BRAC pre-primary school. Course duration is one year. Education in BRAC schools is free as BRAC bears all necessary costs. A good proportion of these schools are located at the premises of government or non-government schools or in the catchment areas of such schools. The objective is to admit the students in formal schools after completion of pre-primary education.

The number of students attending BRAC increased over time and reached over 16,000 during 2004–5, over 20,000 during 2006–7, nearly 25,000 in 2008 and 26,350 in 2009. The number reduced afterwards. At present, about 13,000 schools are in operation. Till date, over 4.9 million children enrolled in 177,524 BRAC pre-primary schools; of which 4.35 million (61.7% girls) completed the course. Dropout is minimal – only 1.6%. Over 99% of the course completers moved to the first grade of formal primary schools.

Source: BRAC Education Programme MIS

of the non-formal primary schools had the lowest (2.3%) rate of pre-school participation. This was because of BRAC, the major provider of non-formal pre-primary and primary education in the country which had an agreement with the government not to admit its pre-primary completers into its own primary schools but to GPS or RNGPS. As a result completers of pre-primary course in BRAC schools enrolled in the government or non-government primary schools for primary education. In general, urban children of educated parents with good socio-economic background were more likely to participate in pre-primary education (Nath 2012, Nath and Sylva 2007). Such an example is provided in Figure 1.3.

Studies on Bangladesh exploring quality of pre-primary education and its participants' learning achievements are limited in number (Aboud 2006, Aboud and Hossain 2011, Moore, Akhter and Aboud 2008). Two studies on BRAC pre-primary programme reported that pupils with pre-primary experience were ahead of their non-pre-primary peers in their first year in primary schools but the difference disappears or becomes negligible by the end of second year and thereafter (Begum, Yasmin and Shahjamal 2004, Shahjamal and Nath 2009). Another study showed that the students who received pre-primary education from BRAC schools did better in the *Primary Samapani Examination* compared to those who did not (Ahmed and Haque 2011). Using *Education Watch* 2008 dataset, a recent study found that participation in pre-primary education, in general, could not make any tangible impact on learning achievement of the students at the end of compulsory primary education when the influence of socio-economic and school-related factors were controlled (Nath 2012). Of the six types of primary education providers that the study considered, statistically significant impact was seen only for the primary section of the high schools. The issue of poor quality of pre-primary education for majority of the receivers deserves special attention.



Source: Nath (2012)

#### D. Organization of this report

In addition to the Overview, this report has 11 chapters. This introductory chapter contains a short literature review on early childhood development along with the rationale for this study, world-wide expansion of pre-primary education, and the country situation. The second chapter deals with the history and current policy for pre-primary education in Bangladesh and its formulation process. Chapter 3 presents details of objectives, methodologies, and research techniques and approaches used. It also includes the strengths and weakness of the study.

Chapters 4 to 10 provide major findings of this *Watch* report. Chapter 4 deals with access to pre-primary education, progress over time and its socioeconomic differentials. Current state of pre-primary schools is provided in Chapter 5. Curriculum and teaching learning related issues are presented in Chapter 6 and teaching-learning provisions in Chapter 7. Information on private expenditure for PPE is provided in Chapter 8 and students' use of supplementary private tuition in Chapter 9. Chapter 10 provides information on parents and teachers understanding on early years care and education and their participation in such activities.

Chapter 11 is the final chapter. This discusses the findings of this study and compares with those from other studies. Policy issues were discussed and key messages emanating from this study and a few policy recommendations are presented. The Annexes provide additional tables as well as instruments used and methodological notes.



# Chapter 2

## Development of pre-primary education policy in Bangladesh



M. Habibur Rahman prepared this chapter in collaboration with Rubina Hashemi, Utpal Mallick and Mohammad Mohsin.



### হৃদয় হৃদে ব্যঞ্জনবর্ণ

ক কলা খাই সবাই মিলে	খ গরগোশাটি লাগিয়ে ঢালো	গ গু দিয়ে কড়ি ঢালো	ঘ ঘরে মারা কড়ি ঢালো	ঙ
চ চিড়ি মাকে সবু বাসা	ছ ছাতা মমার ডেইরি	জ জল খেলতে ভালো লাগে	ঝ ঝরনা পড়তে ভালো লাগে	ঞ
ট টিকি মাকে সবু বাসা	ঠ ঠাণ্ডা পানি সবাই পাই	ড ডাল পানি সবাই পাই	ঢ ঢালো মাকে সবু বাসা	ণ
ত তরুণী মাকে সবু বাসা	দ দুধ খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ধ ধান খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ন নদীতে স্নান করা ভালো লাগে	
থ থাকলে মাকে সবু বাসা	ফ ফল খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ব বালুর মধ্যে খেলা ভালো লাগে	ভ ভালো লাগে মাকে সবু বাসা	ম
য যত্নে মাকে সবু বাসা	র রান্না খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ল লাঠি হাতে খেলা ভালো লাগে	ব বালুর মধ্যে খেলা ভালো লাগে	শ
ষ ষাট মাকে সবু বাসা	স সবু খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	হ হাত খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	জ জল খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	শ
য় য়ত্নে মাকে সবু বাসা	ং ংগুন খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ড় ড়াল খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ঢ ঢালো মাকে সবু বাসা	ত
	ঃ ঃখ মাকে সবু বাসা	ড় ড়াল খাওয়া ভালো লাগে	ঢ ঢালো মাকে সবু বাসা	ত

প্রকল্পটিঃ কোম্পানি আইনবিঃ প্রকল্পটিঃ প্রকল্পটিঃ প্রকল্পটিঃ  
প্লান বাংলাদেশ



The government of Bangladesh recognizes profound importance of investing on early childhood years. The unrelenting pursuit for improving children's lives is manifested through various interventions undertaken over the years by the government, private sector, development partners and the NGO community. This chapter provides a brief historical overview of how pre-primary education originated during the British period and how it evolved over the years in Bangladesh and what the key features pertaining to pre-primary education are in the current policy directions and guidelines.

### A. British and Pakistan eras

A cursory review of historical documents shows that young children's education was one of the policy agenda in undivided India from the British colonial period. The idea of pre-primary education (young children's education) was first conceptualized by an education commission in 1882. Based on the commission report a policy was drafted followed by formation of an expert committee (in 1884) to review primary education curriculum, syllabus and textbooks. The review report came out in 1900 followed by an education scheme in 1901. This advocated:

- development of primary curriculum based on updated knowledge and concepts of basic education influenced strongly by a German educator Friedrich Froebel's Kindergarten system
- development of teaching-learning methods based on child psychology
- construction of classrooms with locally available low or no cost materials
- setting up of lower primary education at age five years of which the first three years would be known as *baby* section
- flexibility of education scheme and adaptability to immediate environment
- teachers' training and education

Piloting of the newly formed education scheme was initiated immediately after approval of lower primary education curriculum. However, it was closed down in 1905 due to shortage of financial support from the central government.

The central advisory board of education constituted a committee headed by Sir John Sergeant in 1943. The government of India developed a national scheme of education based on the report of the Sergeant committee in 1944. The report is popularly known as Sergeant Plan. It recommended the following:

- establishment of nursery schools for children of age 3–6 years
- attachment of nursery classes to the existing primary schools
- mandating non-compulsory and free nursery education
- medium of instruction would be vernacular language and taught by female teachers

*Shishu Shreeni* was existed in a section of schools during this period with a recommended primer *Ballya Shikkha*. The kindergarten approach was adopted at a small scale in urban areas. Nursery classes were introduced as a form of pre-primary education. Kindergartens were established in most of the divisional towns where nursery class was a common feature. This resulted to a gradual progression of pre-primary education system as well as institutionalization of young children's education. Such trend continued up to 1970 and beyond. However, structured and organized education at early childhood was not an integral part until very recently.

## B. The Bangladesh period

Decade-wise analysis of emergence of pre-primary education in Bangladesh is provided in this section. The sub-sections include institutionalization, experimentation, planning and programme development, and partnership with NGOs.

**Decade of institutionalization:** A careful review of the sequence of educational events over the years shows signs of informal attempts, particularly at the community level in the 1970s. Primary school children brought their younger siblings with them to schools as part of their traditional role of care-givers. Teachers faced the challenge of accommodating these additional children in the classrooms. Fortunately, they did not turn them away. In fact, in many cases they were allowed to sit in separate classrooms or in the courtyards. This resulted in the appearance of *baby class* in its earliest form. The schools started *baby classes* as a sporadic and temporary endeavour. However, it set into a motion, a demand for education facilities for younger children. Such a general demand and institutionalization of *baby class* became an important milestone in the emergence of pre-primary education in Bangladesh and in subsequent policy deliberation and policy formulation related to early childhood education in the later years. In fact, *baby class* was such a common occurrence that a World Bank report showed 70% of all primary schools had *baby classes* attached to them (World Bank 2000).

The first education commission in Bangladesh headed by Qudrat-e-Khuda outlined early childhood development in the following manner (Ministry of Education 1974).

- The Commission viewed it as a comprehensive process of child development considering their physical, psychological and behavioural domains with the ultimate goal of helping them grow into independent adult with strong moral character.
- The Commission suggested two types of programmes viz., *Shishu Bhaban* (children's house) and kindergarten. *Shishu Bhaban* is to provide services to newborns up to the age of three for a safe and secured environment through organized, consistent, daily scheduled feeding, resting and play activities to enable children to learn expected daily social practices. Kindergarten is to provide services to children from 3–5 years for helping them prepare for primary education through fun and enjoyable games and play activities, including, songs, rhymes and colouring. It will provide opportunities to develop pre-reading and pre-mathematics skills and instil in them a strong sense/ability to decide between right and wrong.
- The Commission recognized the importance of early years, from birth to age five, as a critical stage of human development. The commission proposed recruitment of female teachers for such education. Relevant teacher training was suggested on a number of issues ranging from child psychology to nursing. Teaching techniques were also suggested for interacting with young children and for providing love and care and for enabling the children to channel their excessive and boundless energy in a positive direction. In addition establishment of a research institute on early childhood education was also proposed.

Though the report was published about 40 years ago it is still extremely farsighted and relevant. The commission's recommendations are still valid at present situation.

**Decade of experimentation:** The 1980s may be labelled as experimentation phase. In this decade government agencies and NGOs engaged in developing pre-primary curriculum, primer, play materials and methodologies (satellite schools for lower grades including *baby class*). Some major actors were National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and UNICEF.

NCTB developed a curriculum in 1981 followed by a primer (UNESCO undated). The curriculum was especially designed to address the needs of disadvantaged children to prepare them for smooth transition to primary school. The primer helped build pre-reading and pre-numeracy skills of children in *baby class*. The programme was abandoned after a few years. It was stated that primary education, rather than pre-primary, was a priority area and deserves more attention.

In early eighties, a feeder school approach was introduced in a small area named Meher Panchagram under Shahrasti *upazila* which was later scaled up through the Mass Education Programme (MEP) under Danida project in all 15 *upazilas* in greater Noakhali district (Noakhali, Feni and Lakshmipur). Based on extensive research a comprehensive teaching-learning package for children aged five years was developed along with a teachers' guidebook. The package included *Amar Sahayeeka*, charts, alphabet cards, mathematical numbers (up to 40), five stories, and flip charts. This package was the first comprehensive package from any government supported project. It was Mass Education Programme (MEP) under Noakhali Rural Development Project (NRDP), financed by Danida. A feeder approach for *Shishu Shreeni* (used to be called as *Shishu Kendra*) was implemented in 3000 centres in 15 *upazilas* till June 1992, in collaboration with Ministry of Education and coordinated by Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB). Community teachers with junior secondary or secondary education taught in these preschools and prepared the children for Grade I.

In 1983, Save the Children developed a model of 'play school' for illiterate fishing community in an *upazila* under Brahmanbaria district. The intention was to build awareness of these communities about education and to prepare children for successful transition into mainstream education. The 'play schools' were exemplary in design. They were brick built with seven edge tin roofs. A female teacher was employed in each 'play school' to conduct activities for two hours every working day, with 15-20 children ranging from 3–6 years. The activities covered free play, circle activity, recitation of rhymes, storytelling, drawing and outdoor play. Teachers were supposed to prepare toys for students with natural and discarded materials.

In 1985, BRAC experimented implementing pre-primary education in two schools for rural poor children of age five years. No separate curriculum was developed. A general intention was to cover 40% of the national curriculum of Grade I with more focus on play and other co-curricular activities like singing, dancing, drawing and so on. However, learning was limited to Bangla language, alphabets, mathematical numbers, counting, hand writing and drawing. Each school had two teachers with junior secondary education. Few more schools were established in 1988 but discontinued later.

In 1987, with assistance from UNICEF, NCTB started an experimental satellite school project in Bhaluka *upazila* under Mymensingh district (UNESCO undated). The satellite schools included Grades I and II with *baby class*. These were attached to nearby primary school. The satellite schools were set up closer to the homes of young children. A primer was developed. The curriculum contained planned activity based pre-reading, pre-writing, pre-numeracy and included play, rhyme, and story. The project insisted on communities paying for the teachers to build a sense of ownership. The initial success of the project generated overwhelming interest. However, the community lost interest within a few years and became unwilling to pay for the teacher's salary. The satellite school project was therefore discontinued.

**Decade of planning and programme development:** The 1990s was the decade of planning and programme development. In 1992, the government included an early childhood education and

development (ECED) programme for children of age 4–5 years in the first National Plan of Action 1992–2000 (NPA I) for children, to meet its commitment to EFA goals. This NPA also encouraged continuation of existing *baby classes* through non-government and community initiatives but did not propose necessary support to institutionalize them. Unfortunately the *baby class* in the primary school failed to get adequate attention. It had no structured curriculum and no teacher was appointed for this.

With support from UNICEF, the government established planned early childhood education centres under the Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme (1992-1997). It aimed to reach 75,000 children of age 4–5 years but managed to cover 63,000 by the end of the project period. Thirty-five NGOs implemented this. Curriculum and teachers guide were developed jointly by the government, NGOs and relevant resource persons. The curriculum included pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-numeracy skills.

In 1994, DPE issued an official letter to all primary schools asking them to set up *baby classes*. There was no provision of separate teacher or curriculum. Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA) started pre-primary class in 1995 in each of its district offices to provide basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills to the pupils under its ECD project supported by UNICEF.

A national committee on primary education, in 1997, proposed to consider the first six months of the first grade of primary education as preparatory stage without any separate arrangement for *baby class* (MoPME 2008b). This could do little to stop *baby classes*. In spite of all logistical and financial difficulties, the government recognized the importance of preparing children for primary school. NCTB developed a package of pre-primary educational materials including a primer and a teacher guide along with a set of teaching-learning materials. In 1999, NCTB distributed 100,000 primers and 10,000 teacher guides to many primary schools.

While the *baby classes* continued sporadically and in an informal manner in government primary schools, an awareness regarding early learning began to develop in the 1990s. Awareness about the concept of holistic learning based on lessons from international experience and neuroscience research on the plasticity and the potentials of brain during early childhood years rose in the country. It gradually triggered a social movement among ECD proponents for advocating the importance of focusing on the early childhood years as critical 'window of opportunities' for targeted interventions. Such social movement led to designing appropriate and innovative ECD curriculum, training modules, low cost learning materials and cadre of ECD professionals. The government acknowledged NGO contribution and expertise in the area of education. It also realized that NGOs and civil society could be critical partners in tackling the massive task of universalizing pre-primary education, especially with their strength in working with the community and their ability to reach remote and disadvantaged areas. Some of the pioneers of early learning in Bangladesh included BRAC, Concern Bangladesh, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB), Gano Sahajjo Shangstha (GSS), Grameen Shikkha, Plan Bangladesh, Phulki, Save the Children and UNICEF. Save the Children and Plan Bangladesh developed structured early learning programmes for different age groups which were implemented through community and partner NGOs. Though Save-Plan partnership discontinued in 2001, Plan continued its programme development through its six field units and modified the methodologies with national and international experts on board.

Based on the programme package and learning experience which evolved through this process the government initiated its ECD project in the late 1990s. This is the precursor of the present Early

Learning for Child Development (ELCD) which is being implemented by Bangladesh Shishu Academy, supported by UNICEF. This project also included the three Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) districts and supported implementation of preschools through 3,500 *para* centres under Integrated Community Development project (ICDP), implemented by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) and with technical support from Plan Bangladesh.

With its 14 years experience on non-formal primary education and initial experiment with pre-primary education BRAC restarted pre-primary education programme in 1997 with 40 schools. Curriculum, books and materials were developed through trial. High school graduates were made teachers through providing intensive training. Through intensive trial BRAC modified its methodologies and materials. BRAC also partnered with BSA in the ECD project.

***Decade of partnership with NGOs:*** The 2000s was the decade of partnership with NGOs. The government adopted the second National Plan of Action (NPA II, 2008), Sixth Five Year Plan and pre-primary operational framework. These documents highlighted government's willingness to work with the NGOs through a partnership arrangement. Leading INGOs such as Save the Children, Plan Bangladesh, Concern Universal, Aga Khan Foundation launched a number of pre-primary programmes and made national NGOs partners to them. These national NGOs were: Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Friends in Village Development (FIVDB), Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS), Community Development Centre (CoDeC), Jagorani Chakkra Foundation (JCF), Village Education Resource Centre (VERC), Zabarong Kalyan Samity (ZKS), ESDO, JSKS, SUROVI, Phulki, BIRF, SAF etc.

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) launched an Early Childhood Development Project (ECDP) in 2001. This experimental project was designed in collaboration with UNICEF as a platform for creating awareness and understanding about holistic and integrated child development at the community level. BSA implemented the project in partnership with NGOs (BRAC, Gramen Shikkha and city corporations with technical support from Plan Bangladesh. At some point the project was renamed to Early Learning for Child Development Project (ELCDP) and continued up to December 2013. In 2002, for the first time in Bangladesh, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) officially allowed two NGOs to operate pre-primary schools in the premises of government primary schools. The NGOs were BRAC and Save the Children. Plan Bangladesh also implemented its programme in some government and non-government primary schools.

BRAC developed its new curriculum by 2000 including two main books, six story books, a teachers' guide and various types of play and activity materials. A project called PRIME (Primary Initiative for Mainstream Education) was developed to work with the government primary schools in 30 *upazilas*. Expansion of BRAC pre-primary school was a massive task after getting permission from MoPME. In most cases two schools were established within a government or non-government primary school. BRAC established 136,016 centres in this decade where 3,763,486 children of age 6–7 years received pre-primary education. About 30% of these schools were located in the premises of government primary schools (source: BRAC MIS).

USAID invested in ECD including pre-primary education for 10 years starting from 2002. Three NGOs received USAID fund to implement a project. Under this project, Plan Bangladesh operated parenting education targeting 0-3 years age group, *Shishu Bikash Kendra* (SBK) for 3–4 years age group and pre-primary schools for 4-5 years age group. Plan developed a package of materials for this. CARE Bangladesh operated CHOLEN–CHT (Children's Opportunity for Learning Enhanced project in the Chittagong Hill Tracts) to provide pre-primary and early grade support. Save the Children utilized this

fund in its *Drirha Suchana* initiative in the north eastern marshy land regions. It included parental education, pre-primary education and early grade support to schools with poor performance.

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) started a capacity development programme for the local NGOs in the area of early childhood development and pre-primary education. This also included materials development and advocacy at local and national levels.

***Consolidation of experiences into a movement for knowledge management:*** The attempts of the NGOs and the development partners led to setting up of a national network. With financial assistance from Plan Bangladesh, Save the Children established an ECD unit in 1998 with an aim to provide technical support to NGOs working in this field. Partnership was initially made with three NGOs namely, GSS, Phulki and Grameen Shikkha. Although this partnership did not continue but encouraged Plan to institutionalize the experience, research findings, examples with the creation of a national resource centre. Plan Bangladesh, in collaboration with BRAC conceptualized the ECD Resource Centre (ECDRC) within the BRAC University Institute of Educational Development (BU-IED) in 2003. This centre, with support from Plan Asia became the first professional centre offering certificate course, Diploma and Masters Course in ECD. The centre became the focal point for ECD discussion, debate, modification of approaches, standardization of courses, curriculum, assessment tools, etc.

Evolution of ECD in general and pre-school in particular got momentum with creation of the Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN). BEN is a forum of stakeholders including government, non-government and international organizations working in early childhood development (ECD). The idea of BEN originated in 2002 as an activity of the ECD project of BSA under MoWCA supported by UNICEF. An ECD Working Group was formed at the end of 2002 for carrying out some preparatory works which were (a) publishing a Directory of ECD Partners and hosting an ECD Website, (b) developing a constitution of the proposed ECD Network, and (c) forming an ECD Network comprising of representatives from the leading ECD actors in Bangladesh. The first task was entrusted to Save the Children USA by the ECD Working Group. A nation-wide survey of ECD organizations was conducted with support from BSA. The last two tasks were conducted jointly by the members of the ECD working group. UNICEF was made the secretariat of the ECD Working Group.

BEN was formally launched in September 2005 through a national conference. Since then BEN has been fulfilling its mission through advocacy, sharing information and experiences, supporting cooperation and building capacity of stakeholders regarding Early Childhood Care and Development. ECD Resource Centre at BU-IED has been the Secretariat of BEN since its formal inception. The Preschool Operational Framework 2008, existing national curriculum development, PPE teaching learning package development, GO-NGO collaboration guidelines under PEDP3 are the unique examples of BEN-GOB collaboration for preschool system strengthening in Bangladesh.

### **C. Current policy directions**

Bangladesh signed the World Declaration on Education for All in 1990 and the Dakar Framework for Action 2000, which emphasized the importance of early childhood years as a means to achieve Education for All. Bangladesh is therefore pledged to reach the ECCE goal for 'expanding and improving early childhood care and education, especially for most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.' which includes pre-primary education. In fact these commitments to pre-primary education were effectively translated into national level policies through specific directions. The key features pertaining to PPE in these policy documents are described in brief in the following section.

**EFA national plan of action:** The second EFA National Plan of Action (2003-2015), 2003 identified early childhood care and education as one of the major components of basic education (MoPME 2003). It spelled out a comprehensive and a detailed plan for ECCE to be implemented through an integrated approach for providing health, nutrition, sanitation, and education services with the involvement of major ministries, stakeholders and development partners. The document stressed the urgency of meeting the needs of all children of age 3–5 years, particularly those who are from poor families, including those who are disabled, isolated or belong to socially excluded communities. The plan proposed three types of ECCE programmes: school based pre-primary education, community based centres and home based initiative.

**Operational framework for pre-primary education:** Under the guidance of a working group comprising of members from MoPME, MoWCA, NCTB, DPE, UNICEF, Institute of Education and Research (IER) of the University of Dhaka, ECDRC of BU-IED and DAM, Government of Bangladesh produced an *Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education in Bangladesh* in 2008 (MoPME 2008a). In the past, policy makers and education proponents had been concerned that PPE services in the country followed different objectives and curriculum based on the implementing organization's own need and applied varied teaching techniques. And that in many cases the services lacked adequate coordination and standards. There was therefore a great need to bring all the key actors under a common umbrella.

This nationally approved overarching policy guideline was therefore adopted to provide shared vision, goals and policy guidelines for implementing education programs to children between 3 to 6 years of age. The immediate goal is to include all five-years-old children under preschool/PPE for 1 year prior to grade one of primary school. The long term goal is to bring all children between 3 to 5 years of age within any kind of pre-school programme (be it GO, NGO or privately run) alongside opportunities for meeting their health, social, physical and intellectual development to enable them to continue their education in formal educational institutions.

The framework stresses the need to give special attention to children of disadvantaged groups, living with special needs and ethnic minorities. The framework provides a matrix of developmental domain, curricular framework (contents, scope, standards and methodological aspects) and operational strategies. Of the suggestions made in the framework three can be considered as significant for the purpose of this report. Firstly, it referred that pre-primary education centres should be established either within the primary schools or in separate houses adjacent to the existing primary schools. Secondly, these centres should be managed by a separate Centre Management Committee. Finally, the framework suggested that the curriculum and programme should be flexible enough to accommodate different circumstances and individual needs.

**National education policy:** *The National Education Policy 2010* (MoE 2010) is grounded in the spirit of establishing a poverty free, secular, liberal and democratic state, and is committed to enable young people to evolve into educated, efficient and productive resources as well as instil in them traditional national, cultural and moral values. This policy provides direction for the entire education sector of the country with pre-primary as the first component of the system.

The policy recognizes PPE as an integral part of primary education. It suggests one-year PPE for the children of age five which, later, can be extended up to the children of age four. With this objective, the policy asks government to introduce PPE in all the existing primary schools. There is also clear indication for inclusion of pre-primary schooling with the instructional programmes of the mosques,

temples, churches and pagodas presently being conducted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Increase of posts for teachers and number of classrooms in every school to facilitate pre-primary schooling is recommended and can be implemented in different phases since this is an expensive endeavour and requires a long time-span. National Education Policy 2010 promised that in every pre-primary class colour and colour pencils, pictures, and various models would be made available for every children and teaching would be done through songs, rhymes, stories, and so on. All teachers are expected to be welcoming and caring for children and their safety will get high importance.

**Early leaning and development standards:** *Early Leaning and Development Standards, 2010* (MoWCA 2010) is a tool to assess children's knowledge and behaviour for supporting children's development and learning through appropriate interventions. It provides guidelines on age specific strategies. Supported by UNICEF globally, as well as nationally, Bangladesh took this opportunity and joined the initiative for drafting the development standards for children 0-8 years. Through the ELCD Project being implemented by the BSA under MoWCA, development standards have been developed, reviewed and are ready to be validated. These draft standards were extensively used during curriculum development for pre-primary education.

**Pre-primary education curriculum:** To standardize pre-primary education, NCTB (2011) developed and approved a national PPE curriculum in 2011. Prior to that, an interim package of textbook, teachers guide, and teaching-learning materials were introduced in 2010, based on the preschool materials developed by the ELCD Project under MoWCA and supported by UNICEF for its development and teachers training. The interim package was supplied to many government, registered non-government, community, experimental, and approved NGO primary schools. One teacher and the head teacher from these schools (almost 40,000) received six days training on pre-primary.

Curriculum 2011 is a competency based national curriculum which was subsequently developed based on set standards. This was a collaborative process between the government and the NGOs led by NCTB and coordinated by UNICEF as technical support provider for PEDP3. DPE, NAPE, UNICEF, SC, Plan, and AKF provided technical inputs in developing the PPE package. This comprehensive curriculum is activity based, developmentally appropriate and addressed all necessary domains such as physical, cognitive, emotional, language, and social needs. It underscores creating an enabling environment and ample opportunities for instilling into the child, love for learning, and for tapping into the child's spontaneous eagerness and curiosity (fundamental to intrinsic motivation for learning) to question and learn and help them carry such ability to gain knowledge when they graduate to primary school and throughout their life. The curriculum includes a materials package which contains teacher's guide, workbook, exercise book, Bangla alphabet chart, flip chart, flash cards (number, alphabet, and objects), story books, blocks, play materials, audio visual materials, toolbox, and students' attendance register. The government has decided to provide these materials to the students and teachers of all schools free of cost.

**National children policy:** MoWCA (2011) approved *National Children Policy* in early 2011 to guide standardized services to the children and adolescents irrespective of their age, gender, religion, and occupation, social, and ethnic identities in fulfilling their rights to education, health, nutrition, safety and recreation. The policy suggested child development programme for the children of age 3–5 years. It also proposed to strengthen and expand PPE to make formal education more successful and effective for children. Basic training of the teachers of these centres is also recommended. The policy emphasized the importance of providing recreation, sports and cultural programmes for children by all the organizations, prioritizing children's' rights to protection.

**Third primary education development programme (PEDP 3):** This is a sector wide, multi donor programme which includes all interventions to support primary education including pre-primary. The document specifies that ‘pre-primary education is to prepare children physically and mentally to begin formal education by creating one year pre-primary programme for the children of age five years old in phases and over a long time-span. Special effort were meant to reach children from poor families who lack access to quality education in rural (char, haor, hilly areas) and urban (slums, working children) areas (DPE 2011).

**GO-NGO collaboration guideline for universal PPE:** ‘Engaging in partnerships with NGOs and the private sector’ is one of the recommendations made in the *National Education Policy 2010* (MoE 2010). Main idea behind this is to create a culture of positive competition and effective coordination among all service providers: through strengthening the capacity of all those working with PPE for providing efficient and quality services. With this in mind, MoPME approved Implementation plan of *GO-NGO Collaboration Guideline for Universal Pre-Primary Education in Bangladesh* in 2011, with DPE as the assigned executive body for implementing this guideline (MoPME 2011). The guideline briefly describes the rationale, purpose and areas of possible collaborations. There are set criteria for eligible NGOs to bid for collaborative activities. Interested NGOs would send their proposal/ application to a Review Committee in DPE. The Committee would then review the proposals and make a recommendation for selection. DG-DPE provides initial approval on the basis of the report and recommendations made by the Review Committee and forward it to the Secretary MoPME for final approval of the collaboration proposal of the NGOs. DPE/MoPME reserves the rights to accepting or rejecting any proposal from any NGO/institute. After approval, the government contribution associated with a particular proposal is incorporated in the regular government work plan on PPE under PEDP 3. The guideline also provides a detail mechanism for implementation, coordination, monitoring and supervision, and reporting of any collaborative activities. It also includes a progression plan for implementation of the guideline with a timeframe for a period of five years where roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders are specified. Along with detailed implementation strategy role of DPE, the roles of CAMPE and BEN has also been clearly specified in the guideline.

**Pre-primary education expansion plan:** From 2010 government initiated pre-primary education through government primary schools as an interim arrangement under PEDP 3. Being influenced by the progress and experience of PEDP 2, pre-primary education became an important component of PEDP 3 and this new project set objective to gradually expand standardized PPE for all eligible children of the country. To achieve this goal, DPE with Technical Assistance from UNICEF has developed *Pre-Primary Education Expansion Plan in 2012* (MoPME 2012).

This plan provided an indication of year wise improvement of PPE to reach higher level of standards into all government and registered non-government primary schools by the end of PEDP 3 in June 2016 and also a way forward up to 2020. There is also rollout plan of expansion of PPE services by NGOs. This plan, then, based broadly on PEDP 3 framework (resources, options and opportunities) to have a match between the expected results of the project and that of the expansion plan. Comparing with international practices this expansion plan set some standards of PPE service delivery including physical and teaching-learning environment, staffing, monitoring and supervision, parents and community involvement, training and professional development, management, and administration.

Standards of PPE are set in three levels; Level-1 is minimum/basic, Level-2 is desired/medium, Level-3 is preferred/exemplary though it is mentioned that there is no absolute level or value of quality rather

it is a continuous process to maximize the result of any effort. The upper limit of the standards considered here as the pre-primary global standards that are already tested and supported by research; the lower limit or minimum standards are set based on the country contextual experiences that ensured minimum quality of service delivery with limited resources available. However, it is also said that this is not a complete list of standards that covered everything for a quality service delivery; it is focusing on major areas and elements only. Implementers can set their target and priorities based on feasibility of implementation.

***Comprehensive ECCD policy:*** The Cabinet has very recently (November 4, 2013) approved the *Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy (MoWCA 2013)* providing the basis and the rationale for addressing holistic developmental (health, nutrition, emotional, social and cognitive/learning) needs of children from conception till age eight through an integrated and cross-sectoral approach. This policy provides opportunities to involve a range of stakeholders from diverse sectors and encompasses the complete age range of the early childhood years. Pre-primary education is an integral part of this policy document focusing on the learning component of the child with the aim of strengthening school readiness skills.





This chapter presents the methodology used in this study. It includes the main and specific objectives/research questions, methods, the instruments, sampling strategies, weighting procedure, field operations, and measures of ensuring data quality. Finally, strengths and weaknesses of the study are also provided.

### A. Objectives

The main objective of *Education Watch 2013* is to create a baseline of pre-primary education provision in the country that would allow monitoring its progress in future. This study also identifies gaps in current provisions and helps formulate policies for future development. The main objective is broken down into three broad sub-groups, in the form of research questions, as below:

- a. How has pre-primary education evolved in Bangladesh? What is the present national policy for pre-primary education? How was it formulated? What specific roles were played by various government agencies and the civil society organizations in formulating the policy? Is there a need for a change in the policy?
- b. What is the current situation of access to pre-primary education? Has access increased over time? What are its socioeconomic differentials? How the different provisions differ in their approaches and inputs?
- c. What facilities exist in the schools where pre-primary education is provided? What curriculum is followed, textbooks and materials are used and who facilitates learning in the schools? What teaching-learning practices exist in pre-primary classrooms and beyond? What are the views of the parents and teachers regarding the provisions?

### B. Methods

Bearing the above objectives in mind and relevance and appropriateness of both qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques in educational research this study employed both. A full list of the schools providing pre-primary education in the study areas was collected. The quantitative part included two surveys using structured questionnaires: pre-primary school survey and household survey. The qualitative investigation was carried out in a small number of schools where a number of checklists were used: school and classroom observation, and focus group discussion with teachers and parents. Experiences of previous *Education Watch* studies were helpful in implementing the methodology for this study. Wherever suitable, previous *Education Watch* data were used for trends analysis purpose.

### C. The instruments

The instruments for the study were developed in phases. The study team first outlined a draft for first round piloting. Incorporating the experiences of the pilot a draft of instruments was prepared and shared with the *Education Watch* group. Their observations and suggestions were incorporated into the new draft which was then sent for second round piloting. Following the experiences of the second pilot a final draft of instruments was prepared and duly approved by the *Education Watch* group. Following is a brief description of the instruments.

*Household survey questionnaire:* It covered basic information such as age, gender, years of schooling completed, and literacy status of all members of the sampled households. Current enrolment status with grade and school type of all aged 3–20 years was collected. Ever enrolment in pre-primary and its duration and type of institution were collected for all of them. As usual, parental education,

religion, ethnicity, residence (rural/urban), and household food security status were also included. (Annex 3.1)

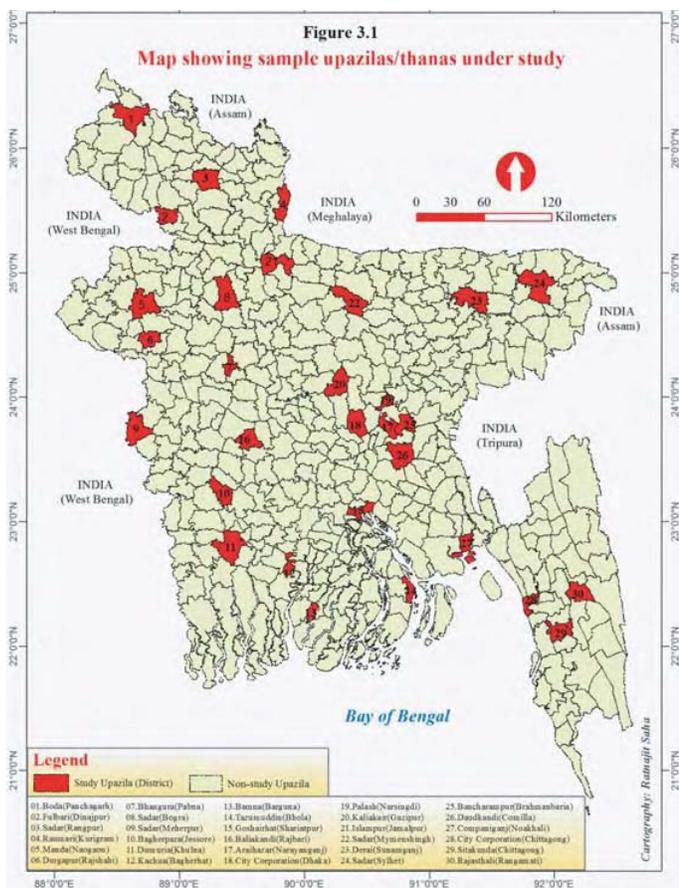
*School survey questionnaire:* It collected information on each school in terms of year of establishment, type, basic physical infrastructure of the classrooms, seating capacity and arrangement, teacher's gender, educational qualification and training, materials used, co-curricular activities, number of students by gender, parental/community participation, etc. (Annex 3.2).

*Classroom observation checklist:* A non-participant observation recorded a host of data including the activities of the students and the teachers, use of different teaching materials and lesson plan, teaching techniques, interaction among the students and between students and teachers, discipline, assessment, student support mechanism, overall environment of the school and the classroom, etc.

*Checklists for in-depth interviews and FGDs:* For this, separate checklists were prepared for parents, teachers and officials. Parents and the teachers were asked about their perception on the importance of pre-primary education, constraints faced in operating pre-primary education, and its plausible impact on students' life. Parental expectation from the schools, its quality, strengths and weaknesses, and their participation in the process were also addressed.

#### D. Sampling strategies

Thirty *upazilas/thanas* were selected from all over the country following a systematic random sampling technique. Figure 3.1 shows the selected *upazilas/thanas* in a map. Of the selected *upazilas/thanas*, 13 were fully rural, two fully urban and 15 mixed. A list of all types of schools in the selected *upazilas/thanas* was prepared and the schools providing pre-primary education were identified. Five types of schools were included for school survey, which were also the top five providers in terms of frequency. The types included government primary school (GPS), registered non-government primary school (RNGPS, henceforth called non-government school), English-medium kindergarten (hence after called kindergarten), NGO operated non-formal pre-primary school, and mosque based pre-primary school. Box 3.1 provides a short description for each of them. Three hundred schools of each type were randomly selected from the *upazilas/thanas*. Thus, total number of selected schools was 1,500 (Table 3.1). This helped getting comprehensive scenario of existing facilities and capacities of the schools providing pre-primary education.



## Box 3.1

**Various types of pre-primary schools under study**

*Government school:* These are the primary schools providing full primary education (Grade I-V). These schools were established at different times by the communities since the British period until they were nationalized in 1974. The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) directly operates these schools through its offices at district and *upazila/thana* levels. Some of these schools had *baby classes* started at various times but now the government has decided to open a new class called pre-primary in each of these schools.

*Non-government school:* These were established by the communities after nationalization of all primary schools in 1974 to provide full course of primary education. These have government registration and thus are called registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS). These schools function similarly as the above mentioned GPS and operate under DPE. Some of these had *baby classes* in the past but now have started opening pre-primary classes. Recently, the government has decided to take them over and operate like as the GPSs.

*Kindergarten:* Independent entrepreneurs (individual, group or institution) established these schools. All of these have pre-primary section with variable duration. They emphasize English. Although there is a Kindergarten Association but no commonality is present among the schools in terms of curriculum, books used, facilities, operation system or management.

*Non-formal pre-primary school:* These are independent pre-primary schools operated by non-government organizations (NGOs). The course duration is one year. Large NGOs have their own curriculum and the small NGOs in most cases follow them. A few NGOs developed the curriculum, books and materials and operation system through their own experiments and experiences. NGOs send their graduates to formal primary schools (government or non-government).

*Mosque based pre-primary school:* These are government initiated independent pre-primary schools established in the mosques. The main implementing agency is Bangladesh Islamic Foundation. Course duration is one year and the curriculum and books are developed by the Foundation itself. The mosque committees are responsible for everyday management of the schools.

To provide answers to specific research questions, in-depth investigations were carried out in 10 pre-primary schools from two *upazilas* taken from the above 30. Above five types of schools were included here as well. It should be mentioned that BRAC pre-primary school was pre-selected in the category of NGO operated non-formal school due to its largest share in non-formal pre-primary provision in the country as well as in the selected *upazilas*. One school of each type was taken from each *upazila*. Investigations in terms of curriculum implemented, textbooks used, teacher guides and lesson plans were carried out in all 10 schools. In each school one classroom was observed for three consecutive days. The class teachers and the head teachers, and officials were interviewed. Focus group discussions (FGD) were held with parents. Table 3.2 shows this in detail.

To address the other research questions, a household survey was conducted in the selected *upazilas/thanas* mentioned above. In each selected *upazila/thana*, 12 neighbourhoods (villages in rural and

**Table 3.1**  
**School survey sample at a glance**

School type	Number of school
Government primary	300
Registered Non-government primary	300
Kindergarten	300
Non-formal pre-primary	300
Mosque based pre-primary	300
Total	1,500

**Table 3.2**  
**Sample for qualitative part of the study**

Techniques	Informants	Sample size
Observation	Classroom, teachers, students	10 schools x 3 days each = 30 days
In-depth interview	Class teachers	10
	Head teachers/ programme organizers	10
	NGO managers	4
Focus group discussion	Parents	10 groups, 67 parents

*mahallahs* in urban sites) were selected randomly. Twenty-five households were selected from each selected neighbourhood following a systematic random sampling procedure. Thus, the household survey covered 9,000 [30x12x25] households from 360 neighbourhoods. This survey enumerated 40,702 individuals. Urban share in terms of number of neighbourhoods, households and population

**Table 3.3**  
**Sample for household survey**

Type	Upazilas/ thanas	Neighbour hoods	House- holds	%	Population
Fully rural	13	156	3,900	43.3	17,418
Fully urban	2	24	600	6.7	2844
Mixed: rural	15	140	3,500	38.9	16,026
Mixed: urban		40	1,000	11.1	4,414
Total	30	360	9,000	100.0	40,702

was 17.8%. Number of children currently enrolled in pre-primary class in the selected households was 1,351. Of them, 671 were boys and 680 girls; 1,107 from rural and 244 from urban neighbourhoods. Table 3.3 provides some more information on this.

Individuals and representatives of organizations (NCTB and NGOs) involved in the pre-primary policy formulation process were interviewed and relevant documents were scanned in order to fulfil information requirement for the study.

### E. Weighting

The number of schools varied substantially by type in the study *upazilas/thanas*. Since an equal number of schools of each type were selected for the sample weighting was used for pooling estimates at national level. Proportions of schools in the *upazilas/thanas* by type were used in calculating weights. Standard statistical procedure was used in calculating the weights. Annex 3.3 gives details on the procedure followed. As a single national sample was drawn for the household survey, no weight had to be used for the estimates.

### F. The field operation

Data for this study were collected in three phases. A team of 30 research assistants visited all the sampled *upazilas/thanas* and collected a full list of schools that included pre-primary schools in them. The *upazila/thana* education offices, *Upazila* Nirbahi Offices, and various NGO offices were visited by the team. The team also visited the communities and schools to check the veracity of the above list. This helped understanding the density of pre-primary provisions in the study areas and also sampling for the schools.

Two separate groups of research assistants were engaged in household and school surveys. The first group containing 30 research assistants did the household survey and the second group containing 60 research assistants did the school survey. In addition, there were six supervisors for school survey and five for household survey. In both the surveys, the research assistants were divided into two-member small teams to conduct interview in each sampled unit (school or household). Separate training sessions were arranged to train each group of research assistants. Classroom lectures, group discussions, one-to-one discussions, role playing and field practice were the techniques to train them. Each training session was started with more number of people than required. However, only the competent ones were finally selected after the training. Many of the selected research assistants had previous experience with similar surveys in education.

The head teachers were the principal respondents for school survey who were assisted by one or two other teachers engaged in pre-primary education. Along with interview some of the information was

collected through direct observation, head counting or scanning of school documents. Teachers who were directly involved in pre-primary teaching were appropriate for a number of specific questions. Thus, the school survey involved a number of information collection techniques and various types of respondents. On the other hand, household heads were the principal respondents in household survey. Here, head means the main decision maker in the household. Spouses were considered in their absence and any adult person (aged 18 years or above) as the third option. The interviews were held in the premises of the households, preferably at the corridors, courtyards or in the living/drawing rooms. In a few cases, the households and the schools had to be visited more than once due to non-availability of appropriate respondents.

A five member separate team having background in educational research was formed for execution of qualitative part of the study. One of them was the head of the team and the rest were divided into two small teams to do actual fieldwork for the study. Each of the two member teams took responsibility of one *upazila*. They were intensively trained. The whole team spent one and a half month in the field and met in a common place once a week to review their activities. Note taking of observations and interviews and FGDs was the main way of recording information. However, in some cases voice recorder was used in interviews and FGDs. Fresh notes were prepared soon after conduct of observation, interview or FGD.

Fieldwork for this study took two-and-a-half months. Preparation of school list, school survey and qualitative investigation were carried out during May–June 2013. The household survey was conducted during the first three weeks of July 2013.

### G. Data quality measures

Several steps were taken to ensure quality of data. First, in each survey team (two-member) one was made leader whose responsibility was to ensure drawing of appropriate sample. Both the members checked each other's filled-up questionnaires to find errors or inconsistencies, if any. A team of supervisors randomly visited the sample spots to see whether sampling is done in the right manner and questions are asked in the right way to appropriate respondents. They also randomly checked previous day's works of the teams. A five member team of the field management unit of the Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC also provided random visits to the field teams. They also checked whether the supervisors were doing their duties as expected. Finally, members of the core research team and the *Education Watch* group members visited some of the sampled *upazilas* to check overall field operations. The research assistants and the supervisors regularly communicated over cell phones with the research team in Dhaka.

Post enumeration checks were done by the supervisors in 57 neighbourhoods (15.8% of sample). Over 3.2% of the households (285 in number) were brought under re-enumeration. Instead of the whole questionnaire a number of key variables were chosen for this. These data were later matched with the original data to find deviations. The matching operation shows

**Table 3.4**  
*Percentage of matched cases between the main survey and the re-interview in some selected indicators*

Indicators	% matched
<i>Children of age 4–5y</i>	
Age (in years)	96.5
Gender	98.2
Enrolment status	98.2
Current grade	96.5
School type	94.9
<i>Pre-primary student</i>	
Age (in years)	95.9
Gender	100.0
Class	95.9
School type	94.9

that the data quality was very good. The matching rate was 95% or more in most of the cases (Table 3.4). No post-enumeration check was possible in school survey. However, the supervisors visited the sampled schools while the research assistants were working. Some basic information of the 30 upazilas under the study are provided in Annex 3.4 as background. These were gathered from the surveys.

The *Education Watch* group implemented the study through its Working Group and Technical Committee and taking support from Advisory Board. Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) played the role of Secretariat. The Research and Evaluation Division (RED) of BRAC was commissioned to conduct the study. Under the leadership of RED, a research team containing researchers from RED and outside collected all data and prepared the report.

### H. Strengths and limitations

Although all necessary measures were taken to conduct the study in the best possible manner, like any other sample based study, this research bears both strengths and limitations. The following provide some strengths and limitations.

#### *Strengths*

1. This is the first study on pre-primary education in Bangladesh which produced national estimates on various aspects of such education. It is a timely study because the government wishes to start pre-primary education throughout the country from 2014. Thus, this study can be a baseline for assessing future development in this field.
2. School survey produced information on various issues related to quality pre-primary education. These can be valuable information for not only assessing current situation but also determining what to be done for better preparation at early ages. Findings of this study can be used in identifying gaps in pre-primary education.
3. Indicators selection for the study was done carefully so that issues like access, quality and equity can be addressed which are important parameters for the first goal of Education for All (EFA goal 1).
4. Along with national estimates provision for school type-wise estimates was built in to the study. This allowed comparing various provisions and finding out their relative strengths and weaknesses.
5. One of the strong points of this study is the use of mixed methods. Use of qualitative techniques helped explain some of the estimates revealed from the surveys. Exploration of teaching learning provisions gave a sense of what goes on in the schools. Data on private expenditure for pre-primary education and supplementary private tutoring increased the value of the study.
6. Census database produced by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) was used for sampling the *upazilas* under study and the neighbourhoods for household survey. Additional effort was given to prepare the full list of schools providing pre-primary education. This helped drawing accurate sample for school survey.

### **Limitations**

1. Access to pre-primary education was explored at the national level only. There was no provision for division-wise estimates and analyses. This is a deviation from previous *Education Watch* studies. This limits trend analysis at the divisional level.
2. This study dealt very well with access, input and process related issues but there was no indicator related to output. Exploration of output indicator in terms of input and process indicators and their internal relationship could provide better insights on the current provision of pre-primary education in Bangladesh.
3. Children centric estimates based on household survey depended on correct reporting of age by the respondents. However, collecting age information was the most difficult and time consuming task in the survey. Although all measures were taken to collect the 'best' estimated age (following the procedures such as 'event calendars' developed by demographers) some errors cannot be ruled out.
4. The qualitative part visited only a few schools. This limits statistical generalization of the findings from that part of the study.





# Chapter 4

## Access to pre-primary education

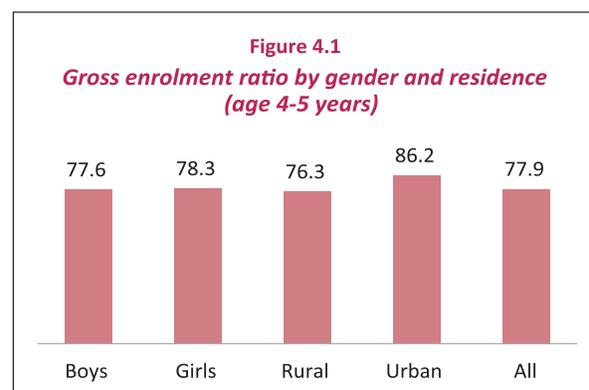


The Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1990 specifically identified ages six and 10 years for starting and completing primary education in the country (GoB 1990). However, various studies including *Education Watch* reported presence of a substantial number of over-aged (and some under-aged) children in primary classrooms creating a big gap between the net and gross enrolment ratios (Chowdhury *et al.* 1999, Nath and Chowdhury 2009, Nath 2013). Late entry in primary education leads to late completion of primary education or drop out from the system keeping primary education incomplete. The latest education policy committed to introduce a year-long pre-primary education (PPE) through all formal primary educational institutions (GoB 2010). The Third Primary Education Development Project (PEDP 3) also commits the government of Bangladesh for expansion of pre-primary education. There is, however, some confusion about the actual age at which this PPE should take place. The Primary Education Policy has indicated age five for pre-primary education. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), on the other hand, approved an operational framework with a vision of one year pre-primary education for all children of age 5–6 years. The same document also mentioned age 3–5 years for pre-school programmes as a long term vision. The confusion is also reflected in studies and surveys too. For instance, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) of 2009 report, published jointly by UNICEF and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) produced pre-primary enrolment rate among 3–5 years (UNICEF and BBS 2010). Nath and Sylva (2007) and Nath (2012) considered 4–5 years in their studies. In the current *Watch* report we are presenting enrolment rates for both at age five year and at age 4-5 years.

#### A. Gross enrolment

As mentioned in previous chapter, school enrolment information of population aged 3–20 years was collected through the household survey. Analysis of these data shows that children from age 3–10 years were enrolled for pre-primary education. At age five, the GER was 161.6% in the study *upazilas*. It was 161.3% for boys and 161.9% for girls. The GER was 160.4% in rural areas and 167.1% in urban areas.

Following Nath and Sylva (2007), the GER was also calculated at age 4–5 years, with children aged 4-5 years as denominator and number of currently enrolled pre-primary students of any age as numerator. On an average, the pre-primary GER at age 4-5 in the study *upazilas* was 77.9% (Figure 4.1). Although not much variation was observed in GER by gender, some difference was observed by area of residence of the students. The GER was 77.6% for boys and 78.3% for girls. Residence-wise, it was 76.3% in rural areas and 86.2% in urban areas.



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

*Upazila*-wise analysis of GER shows that it varied from 34.8% to 133.3% in the study *upazilas*. A third of the *upazilas* had GER 66.7% or less and another third had 89.7% or more. It was more than 100% in a half of the *upazilas*.

**Age distribution:** Of the students attending pre-primary classes, a third was of age five years, over a quarter was of six years, and nearly a fifth was of four years (Table 4.1). Children of the first two age cohorts (4–5 years) constituted 51.8% of all students and the second two age cohorts (5–6 years) constituted 58.3%. Altogether, 77.6% of the pre-primary students were of age 4–6 years. Although proportionately more urban students fell in this age group compared to their rural counterparts

(79.9% vs. 77.1%), no variation was observed by gender (boys 77.9% and girls 77.3%). Age five, the modal value and official age for PPE, comprised with 31.1% of the boys and 33.8% of the girls, and

**Table 4.1**  
*Age distribution of pre-primary students by gender and residence*

Age (years)	Gender		Residence		All (1351)
	Boys (671)	Girls (680)	Rural (1107)	Urban (244)	
3	4.6	6.9	6.5	2.5	5.8
4	19.8	18.8	19.7	17.6	19.3
5	31.1	33.8	31.3	37.7	32.5
6	27.0	24.7	26.1	24.6	25.8
7	11.8	11.3	11.1	13.5	11.5
8+	5.5	4.4	5.3	4.1	5.0
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

31.3% of rural and 37.7% of urban students. Note that 5.8% of the pre-primary students were of age three years and 5% of eight years or above. Overall, 42.3% of the pre-primary students were from primary age group (6-10 years). This was 44.3% among the boys and 40.4% among the girls and 42.5% among rural and 42.2% among urban students.

**Analysis by school type:** A total of seven types of schools were identified in the *upazilas* as providers of pre-primary education. These included government primary school, non-

government primary school, madrasa, kindergarten, high school, NGO operated non-formal school, and mosque based school. Overall, the kindergartens were the most popular pre-primary education providers with 27.9% of the students' attending this type of educational institution (Table 4.2). They were followed by the government primary schools and the NGO operated non-formal pre-primary schools. These two types admitted respectively 23.1 and 21.7% of the students. Of the other types, 12.4% of the students admitted in mosque based schools, 10.8% in non-government primary schools, 3.3% in the madrasas, and 0.8% in the high school attached pre-primary classes.

Gender-wise difference was observed in three types of schools (Table 4.2). Proportion of boys was more than girls in the kindergartens (30.7% vs. 25.1%) and the non-government primary schools (12.2% vs. 9.4%). Otherwise, more girls than boys were found in the government primary schools (26.3% vs. 19.8%). A huge variation in the distribution of students by school type was observed in rural and urban areas. Whereas, 64.3% of the urban students enrolled in the kindergartens it was 19.9% in rural areas. Enrolment in high schools was also higher in urban areas. However, an opposite scenario was observed in other types of pre-primary schools. It would be interesting to note that NGO operated pre-primary schools were at the top in students enrolment in rural areas accounting for a quarter of the students. The government

**Table 4.2**  
*Distribution of pre-primary students by school type gender and residence*

School type	Gender		Residence		All (1351)
	Boys (671)	Girls (680)	Rural (1107)	Urban (244)	
NGO school	21.3	22.1	25.0	6.6	21.7
Mosque based	11.9	12.9	14.0	5.3	12.4
Government primary	19.8	26.3	23.9	19.3	23.1
Non-govt. primary	12.2	9.4	12.9	1.2	10.8
Madrasa	3.6	2.9	3.9	0.4	3.3
Kindergarten	30.7	25.1	19.9	64.3	27.9
High school	0.4	1.2	0.4	2.9	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

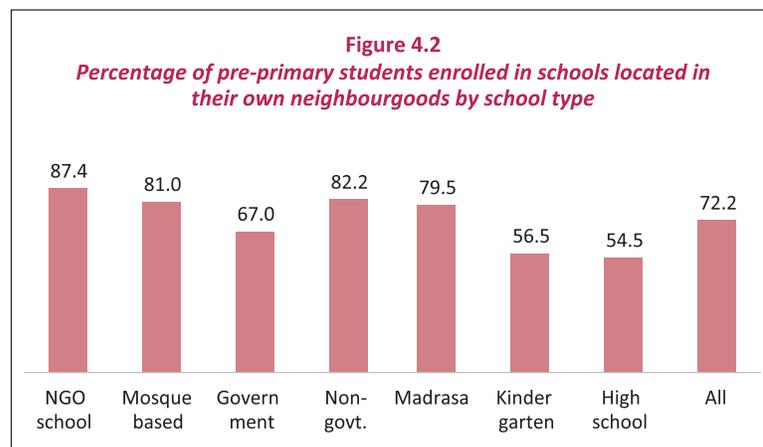
schools were slightly behind them with 23.9% of the students. The kindergartens were at the third place in rural areas followed by respectively mosque based and non-government schools.

Among those who enrolled in NGO operated non-formal pre-primary schools, 57% enrolled in BRAC schools alone and others in the schools operated by 17 other NGOs. Majority of these NGOs

operated locally in a small scale but a few also worked nationally. Nationally, BRAC schools received 12.4% of the total pre-primary students. This figure was exactly the same as the mosque based schools and over half of the government primary schools. BRAC's coverage was 14% in rural areas and 5.3% in urban areas.

**Nature of pre-primary education:** Parents were asked to report on the type of pre-primary education that their children were currently enrolled. Three types came out – 10.8% reported play group, 10% nursery and 79.2% KG, *Shishu Shreni* or *Prak Prathomic*. All students of six types of schools fell in the third type. The school types included government primary, non-government primary, NGO school, madrasa, high school, and mosque based school. The only exception was the kindergartens. About 38% of the students of this type enrolled in play group, 35.5% in nursery and 26.5% in KG, *Shishu Shreni* or *Prak Prathomic*. Parents were also asked to report on duration of pre-primary schooling in the schools. About 8% reported that they did not have any idea on this, 64.7% reported one year, 17.2% two years, and 10.1% three years.

**School location:** On an average, 72.2% of the pre-primary students enrolled in schools which were located in the same neighbourhood as their residence, 23.3% enrolled in the adjacent neighbourhoods and rest in other neighbourhoods within own union or adjacent unions. Over 87% of the students of the non-formal schools enrolled in schools located in their own neighbourhoods (Figure 4.2). They were respectively followed by the students of non-government schools (82.2%), mosque based pre-primary (81%), and the madrasas (79.5%). About two-thirds of the students of government schools, 56.5% of those of the kindergartens, and 54.5% of those of pre-primary section of high schools also enrolled in the schools located in their own neighbourhoods. More on this is provided in Annex 4.2.



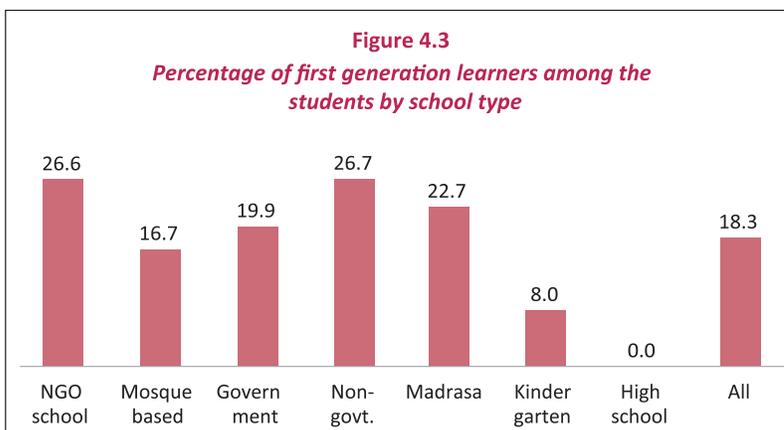
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Background of pre-primary students:** An attempt was made to know the parental education of the pre-primary students. On average, 35.2% of the fathers had no education, 12.8% studied in school but did not complete primary education, 32.2% completed primary education, and 19.8% completed secondary education or more (Annex 4.3). These figures were respectively 25.1, 15.4, 45.6, and 16.9% among the mothers (Annex 4.4).

Parents of the students of the kindergartens and high schools were more educated than those of the other types. Compared to the average figures of 19.8 and 16.9%, 37.1% of the fathers and 29.4% of the mothers of kindergarten students had 10 or more years of schooling (Annexes 4.3 and 4.4). Both the figures were 36.4% for the parents of high school students. Less educated parents sent their children to NGO operated schools or the non-government primary schools. Around 47% of the fathers of the students of these schools had no education and another 12–15% did not complete primary education. Again, around 55% of the mothers of these students either did not enrol in school

or dropped out before completing primary education. Educational level of the parents of the students of mosque based pre-primary and government primary schools were mostly similar; however, it was slightly lower for those of the madrasas.

Overall, 18.3% of the pre-primary students were first generation learners – meaning that none of the parents of these students had any schooling (Figure 4.3). Such students constituted 26% of those enrolled in NGO schools or non-government primary schools and 22.7% among the madrasa



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

students. Nearly a fifth of the government school students, 16.7% of mosque based schools, and 8% of kindergartens were also first generation learners. No such student was observed in the pre-primary classes of the high schools.

As a proxy for economic status of the households, their yearly *food security status* was collected. The respondents were asked to

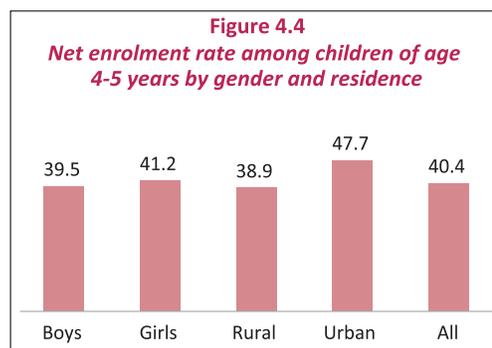
rate their households in a four-point scale considering the immediate past year's total income and expenditures. The points in the scale were *always in deficit*, *sometimes in deficit*, *breakeven*, and *surplus*. On an average, 5.1% of the households rated themselves as *always in deficit*, 22.7% *sometimes in deficit*, 31.8% *breakeven*, and 40.4% *surplus*. As the proportion for *always in deficit* was too small we added the first two categories and renamed it *deficit* for further analysis.

Around 35% of the pre-primary students of government and non-government primary schools came from *deficit* households (Annex 4.5). A third of the non-formal school students, 26–27% of the mosque based and high school students, and a quarter of the madrasa students also came from similar type of households. Relatively, the kindergarten students came from better-off households. Only 15.4% of the students of these schools came from *deficit* households. Over 60% of the students of kindergartens and the pre-primary sections of high schools belonged to the *surplus* households. This proportion was much less among the students of other types of schools.

## B. Net enrolment

The net enrolment rate (NER) at age five years is defined as the *number of children aged five years currently enrolled in pre-primary classes in any school for every 100 children of the same age*. The NER at age five was 52.5%. It was 50.2% for boys and 54.8% for girls. The NER was 50.3% among the rural and 63% among the urban children.

However, if the age definition is extended to 4-5 years (rather than just five years as above), the NER has changed to 40.4% for this age group (Figure 4.4). No



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

significant gender difference was observed in terms of NER (boys 39.5%, girls 41.2%). However, the rate was significantly higher for the urban children compared to their rural counterparts (47.7% vs. 38.9%;  $p < 0.01$ ). If age three is added with this (i.e., age 3-5 years), the NER would reduce further to 30.5% because of much lower NER at age three (9.5%). The NER was 29.1% for children of age four years and, as mentioned above, 52.5% for those aged five years. Significant urban-rural gap in NER for 4–5 years surfaced due to big difference among the children of age five. More on age-specific analysis of NER is provided in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3**  
*Net enrolment rate in pre-primary education by age, gender and residence*

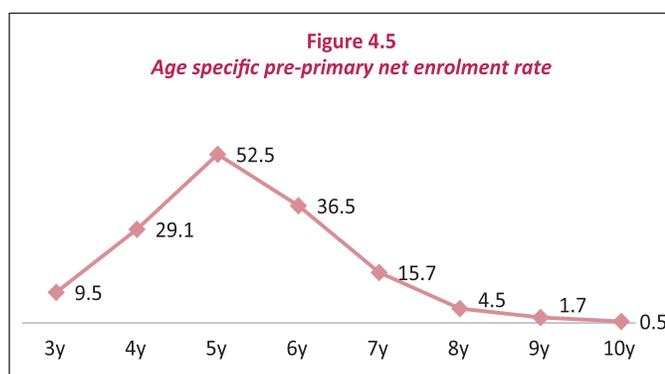
Age	Gender		Residence		All
	Boys	Girls	Rural	Urban	
3 yrs	8.0	10.9	10.6	4.3	9.5
4 yrs	29.6	28.5	28.6	31.4	29.1
5 yrs	50.2	54.8	50.3	63.0	52.5
3-5 yrs	29.7	31.2	29.9	33.4	30.5
4-5 yrs	39.5	41.2	38.9	47.7	40.4

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

*Upazila*-wise analysis of NER at age 4-5 shows a wide variation from 17.9% to 81.7% with a median of 39.3%. NER was 31.4% or below in a third of the *upazilas* and 43.5% or below in two-thirds of the *upazilas*. More than half of the children of age 4–5 years in 30% of the *upazilas* enrolled in pre-primary education.

Age specific NERs for the children of ages 3–5 years are already mentioned in an earlier paragraph. It was 36.5% among the children of age six years, 15.7% for those of age seven years and less than 5% among others (Figure 4.5). The rate was higher against six years old children compared to those of age four years.

**Figure 4.5**  
*Age specific pre-primary net enrolment rate*



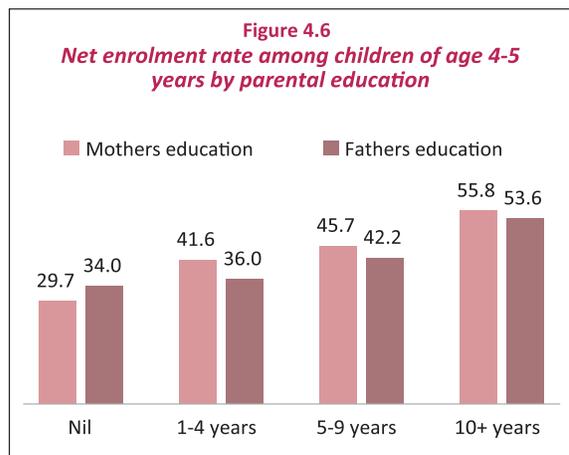
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

Let us now compare GER and NER at pre-primary level. For the children of age five years the GER-NER gap was 109.1 percentage points; however, it was much lower (37.5 percentage points) when the children of age 4–5 years were taken into account. In the earlier case, GER was found more than triple of the NER but in later case, GER was found almost double of the NER.

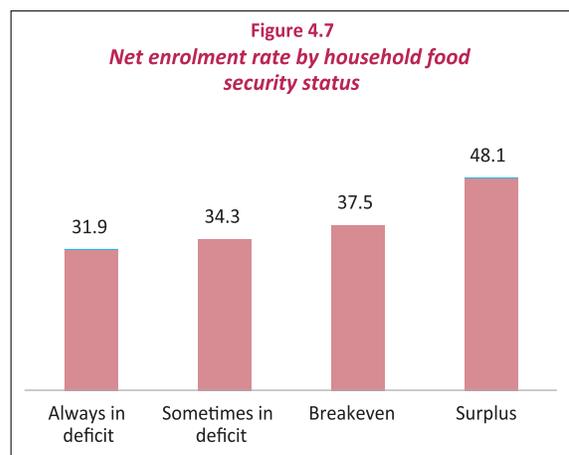
### C. Socioeconomic differentials of enrolment

Parental education, religion, electricity connection at home, and household food security status were cross-tabulated with pre-primary enrolment status of the children of age 4–5 years. A statistically significant increase in pre-primary NER was observed with the increase in parental education. For instance, the NER was 34% if the fathers had no education; it was 36% if fathers had 1-4 years of education, 42.2% with 5–9 years of fathers' education, and 53.6% if the fathers' had 10 years or more education (Figure 4.6). Similarly, the net enrolment rate was 29.7% among children of never schooled mothers. It was 41.6% among children of mothers with 1–4 years of schooling, 45.7% among children of mothers with 5–9 years of schooling and 55.8% among children of mothers with 10 or more years of schooling (Figure 4.6).

Non-Muslim children were more likely to be enrolled in pre-primary education compared to their Muslim peers. Here, the non-Muslims included believers of Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. As



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

separate estimates were not possible for each of these religious groups due to small sample sizes, they were polled as a non-Muslim category. On an average, the NER was 48.9% among the non-Muslim and 39.1% among the Muslim children ( $p < 0.01$ ). Having electricity at home was positively linked to pre-primary net enrolment rate. The NER was 42.9% if the households had electricity connection at home and it was 34.7% if the households had no such service ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Statistically significant positive association of pre-primary NER and households' *food security status* was also observed. For instance, 31.9% of the children of *always in deficit* households, 34.3% of those of *sometimes in deficit* households, 37.3% of those of *breakeven* households, and 48.1% of those of *surplus* households were currently enrolled in pre-primary education (Figure 4.7). Similar trends were found when data were analyzed separately for boys and girls and for urban and rural children.

#### D. Multivariate analysis predicting enrolment

An attempt was made to understand the predictive power of the socioeconomic backgrounds of the children in their enrolment in pre-primary education. Children of age 4–5 years

were considered for this analysis. The dependent variable was the children's enrolment in pre-primary education which was measured dichotomously: currently enrolled in pre-primary education or not. Eight socioeconomic and demographic characteristics were considered as explanatory variables. These included age, gender, area of residence, fathers' education, mothers' education, self-perceived food security status of household, electricity at home, and religion. All these variables were categorical. As the dependent variable was measured dichotomously logistic regression was considered as appropriate for such analysis. A stepwise approach was followed and the variables appeared in the model through forward selection and backward elimination.

Four variables came out as significant predictors of enrolment in pre-primary education in Bangladesh. These were: age of child, mothers' education, self-perceived food security status of household, and religion. Table 4.4 provides the regression coefficients, odds ratios and their 95% confidence limits. Children's age came out as the most important predictor of enrolment in pre-primary education followed respectively by mothers' education, religion and food security status of household. On the other hand, gender, area of residence, fathers' education, and having electricity at home had no significant role in predicting enrolment in pre-primary education.

Estimated probabilities of children being enrolled in pre-primary education against two extreme characteristics of the children were calculated using the regression coefficients found in the above model. This provides a hint about the probability of being enrolled. Probability of four year old children having no education of mother belonging to Muslim households with always in food deficit condition of being enrolled in pre-primary education was 0.17. On the other hand, it was 0.76 for those who were five years old, mothers had 10 or more years of schooling, belonged to non-Muslim households and the household had surplus food security. This shows how the plausibility of being enrolled in pre-primary education varied in terms of background characteristics of the children. However, at the same time, no difference in enrolment was observed in terms of some well known characteristics like gender or area of residence. This can be interpreted as positive from an equity perspective.

**Table 4.4**  
**Logistic regression model predicting pre-primary enrolment**

Predictors	Regression coefficients	Odds ratio	95% confidence interval
<i>Age</i>			
4 yrs	0	1.00	
5 yrs	1.06	2.87	2.34–3.52
<i>Mothers education</i>			
Nil	0	1.00	
1–4 yrs	0.56	1.76	1.26–2.44
5–9 yrs	0.51	1.69	1.27–2.19
10 yrs+	1.02	2.77	1.88–4.07
<i>Food security status</i>			
Always in deficit	0	1.00	
Sometimes in deficit	-0.01	0.99	0.60–1.65
Breakeven	0.06	1.06	0.65–1.74
Surplus	0.37	1.45	0.88–2.40
<i>Religion</i>			
Muslim	0	1.00	
Non-Muslim	0.38	1.46	1.08–1.96
Constant	-1.59		
-2 Log likelihood	2173.52		
Cox & Snell R <sup>2</sup>	0.09		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.12		

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

### E. Reasons behind non/late enrolment

**Non-enrolment:** It is already mentioned that a section of the children get directly admitted in primary education without attending any pre-primary course. Parents were asked to mention the most prominent reason for not sending their children for pre-primary education. For analysis purpose, the children were categorized into three groups, viz., 3–10 years, 11–15 years, and 16–20 years (Table 4.5). Three major reasons were found for each of the groups. These included: non availability of a pre-school nearby, parents unwillingness (as they thought pre-primary education was not necessary), and parents' ignorance about it. These three reasons were collectively responsible for 86.6% of the children of age 3–10 years,

**Table 4.5**  
**Percentage of students by reasons of not attending pre-primary education**

Reasons	Age group		
	3–10y (1308)	11–15y (1814)	16–20y (2004)
School is away from home	2.7	1.0	0.5
Transportation problem	2.1	1.5	0.5
School refused admission	4.3	2.3	2.6
No school available nearby	32.8	49.2	61.0
Under-aged	1.5	1.0	0.3
Parents did not wish to admit*	44.2	31.1	24.1
Parents were not aware of pre-primary	9.6	11.2	10.1
Scarcity of money	2.0	1.8	0.8
Others	1.0	0.8	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Or they thought that pre-primary is not necessary/required

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

91.5% of those of age 11–15 years, and 95.2% of those of age 16–20 years. Non-enrolment due to unavailability of pre-primary school nearby reduced over time. This is perhaps because of recent expansion of pre-primary education throughout the country. However, at the same time, parental unwillingness to admit their children in pre-primary or considering it as unnecessary for their development increased. Such a response may be linked to quality of pre-primary education. Parents may observe no or little benefit of enrolment in school before primary education. On the other hand, no variation was observed in lack of parental awareness about pre-primary education. A similar result was found when data were analyzed by gender (Annex 4.8).

**Late enrolment:** While talking with the parents in FGDs the issue of ‘appropriate age’ for pre-primary enrolment came in. Although the parents were found convinced about the necessity of pre-primary education for their children’s development but a section of them had reservation about the age of enrolment. These parents emphasised mostly on mental and physical development of the children. According to them, children should enrol in school after certain level of such development. Surely, these parents need more awareness that pre-primary schooling can ensure such development.

In FGDs, mothers mentioned that age five was not appropriate to enter pre-primary education because children’s brain does not grow fully by this time. If a child was enrolled in school at this age, his/her brain could be spoilt because of academic pressure. A mother said the following:

If you enrol a child in school at the age of five, s/he will not be able to study because this is the time to play, not for serious study. Children are unable to be attentive in study at this age. Therefore, they may fail in examinations which can be more harmful for their further education and career.

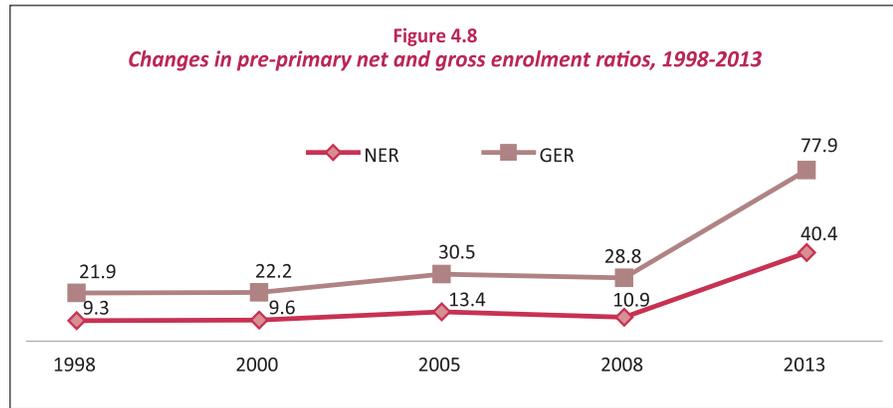
Most of the mothers preferred age six for enrolment in pre-primary. They also added that after staying at pre-primary for 1–2 years, children can move to primary education. Referring to use of many books a mother clearly mentioned, ‘Reading of 3-4 books at this age could be harmful for intellectual development of the children. They should be admitted in grade one, at least, at age 7 or 8 years.’ In some cases, school authorities also refused admission because of ‘under-age’. A mother complained that she wanted to enrol her child in pre-primary when he was five, but the head teacher refused to admit. The head teacher advised the mother to enrol her child next year when he would be six.

It was previously shown that a number of students were admitted in pre-primary class at a later age. There may be many reasons behind this. However, the above thoughts of mothers regarding early age of schooling could be a contributory factor.

## **F. Changes in access during 1998–2013**

Analysis of datasets from previous *Education Watch* studies allowed us to examine the changes in access to pre-primary education for the past one-and-a-half decade (1998 to 2013). Improvements were noticed in both gross and net enrolment ratios of pre-primary education. For instance, among aged 4–5 years, the gross enrolment ratio was around 22% in 2000 or before which increased to 30.5% in 2005 and then decreased to 28.8% in 2008 and again increased to 77.8% in 2013 (Figure 4.8). Similar trend was observed in net enrolment rate as well. The NER was below 10% in 2000 and before which increased to 13.4% in 2005 and then decreased to 10.9% in 2008 and again increased to 40.4% in 2013. Particular to mention is the improvements during the past five years – from 2008 to 2013. During this period, NER increased by 29.5 percentage points and GER by 49.1 percentage points. In 2013, the net enrolment rate in pre-primary education was more than four times that of 1998. This was 3.6 times in the case of gross enrolment ratio.

Tables 4.6 and 4.7 provide changes in both net and gross enrolment ratios by gender and residence of the students. Both the rates were mostly equal for boys and girls indicating gender equality in terms of access to pre-primary education. On the other hand, the ratios were more in urban areas than rural areas. In the case of NER, the urban-rural gap was very small during 1998–2000 (2.5 percentage points in 1998 and 2.1 percentage points in 2000) which increased drastically during next five years (12.8 percentage points in 2005), and then decreased to 5.2 percentage points in 2008 and again increased to 8.8 percentage points in 2013. The gap in gross enrolment ratios was also highest in 2005 (15.7 percentage points) which was 7.2 percentage points in 2000 and 3.2 percentage points in 1998. The urban-rural gap in GER reduced after 2005. It was 9.4 percentage points in 2008 and 9.9 percentage points in 2013.



Sources: Education Watch Household Survey, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013

Enrolment of children appropriate for primary schooling (aged 6y+) into pre-primary schools has also decreased tremendously during the past five years. For instance, during 1998–2005, 56–57% of the pre-primary students were of age six years or more which increased to 62.3% in 2008 but drastically decreased to 42.3% in 2013 (Annex 4.6). On the other hand, tendency of six years old children's enrolment in pre-primary education has increased greatly. In 1998, 9.5% of the six years old children were enrolled in pre-primary education which increased to 10.8% in 2000, 16.5% in 2005, 18.8% in 2008, and 36.5% in 2013 (Figure 4.9). The figure doubled during the past five years and four-fold during one-and-a-half decade. This means that children up to age six tended to enrol in pre-primary education and those seven years or more tended to enrol in primary education.

Distribution of pre-primary students by school type also changed over time. There was no presence of mosque based pre-primary school in 2008 or before. As a result of overall increase in access to pre-primary education,

**Table 4.6**  
*Changes in net enrolment rate by gender and residence, 1998–2013*

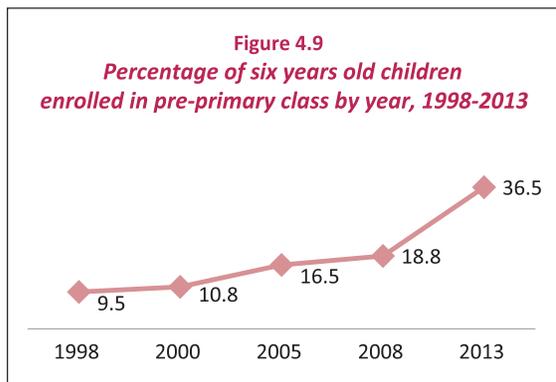
Gender/ Residence	Year				
	1998	2000	2005	2008	2013
<i>Gender</i>					
Boys	8.9	8.6	13.4	10.7	39.5
Girls	9.6	10.7	13.4	11.0	41.2
<i>Residence</i>					
Rural	8.9	9.3	11.8	10.3	38.9
Urban	11.4	11.4	24.6	15.5	47.7

Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013

**Table 4.7**  
*Changes in gross enrolment ratio by gender and residence, 1998–2013*

Gender/ Residence	Year				
	1998	2000	2005	2008	2013
<i>Gender</i>					
Boys	20.6	21.0	32.4	28.7	77.6
Girls	22.3	23.5	32.7	29.0	78.3
<i>Residence</i>					
Rural	21.3	21.2	28.6	27.8	76.3
Urban	24.5	28.4	44.3	37.2	86.2

Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013



Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013

kindergartens admitted less than 10% of the students in 1998 which increased to 11.4% in 2000, 17.1% in 2005, and around 28% in 2008 and 2013.

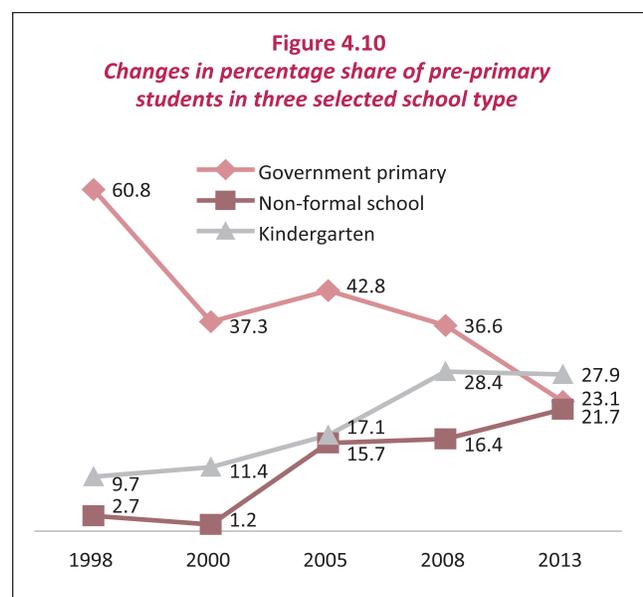
Figure 4.11 presents the changes in net enrolment rate in terms of food security status of the households. Similar to gender and residence of the students it also shows mostly an equal rate of improvement in enrolment in the first two categories of household food security status; however, the improvement was greater in later two categories. During the past one-and-a-half decade, the pre-primary NER increased 25 percentage points among the poorest students. The amount of increase was 27.5 percentage points in the *breakeven* and 33 percentage points in *surplus* households during the same period.

### G. Summary findings

Access to pre-primary education of the children is the first step in building a strong foundation of the nation. However, it does not happen uniformly throughout the population in any developing country. This section summarizes the findings of this chapter which includes current net and gross enrolment ratios, their socioeconomic differentials and reasons behind non enrolment.

- Although in most cases, it was one year course, children of age 3–10 years were found enrolled in pre-primary education, thus shooting the gross ratios up. A third of them were of age five, a quarter of age six and about a fifth of age four – comprising 77.6% of total enrolment.
- The gross enrolment ratio was 161.6% for children of age five years and 77.9% for aged 4–5 years. The ratios were higher for urban areas than those of the rural areas. No gender difference was observed.
- The English medium kindergartens were at the top of pre-primary education providers where 27.9% of the students were enrolled. It was followed by the government and non-formal schools

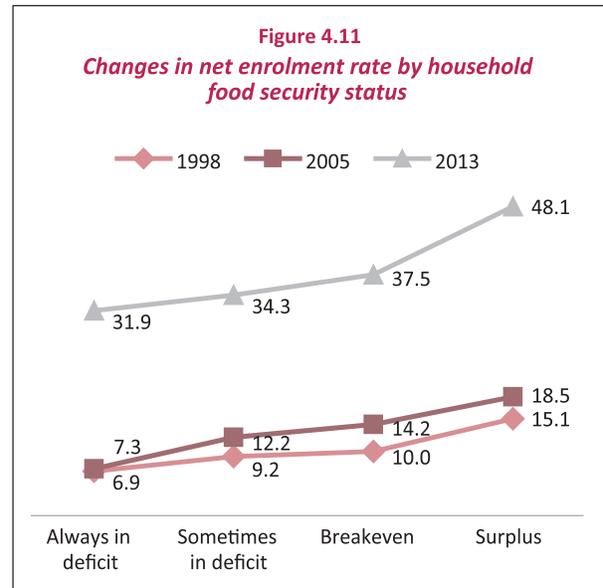
number of students in all types of schools obviously increased. However, the percentage share of them increased for some types and decreased for others (Figure 4.10 and Annex 4.7). Although, over 60% of the pre-primary students enrolled in the government schools in 2000 or before, it reduced to 42.8% in 2005, 36.6% in 2008 and 23.1% in 2013. On the other hand, the share of the non-formal schools and the kindergartens increased. Whereas, in 2000 or before, less than 3% of the pre-primary students enrolled in non-formal schools, the figure increased to 15.7% in 2005, 16.4% in 2008, and 21.7% in 2013. The



Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013

with respectively 23.1 and 21.7% of the students. Mosque based schools and the madrasas together received 15.7% of the students. Kindergartens and the government primary schools were the two main providers in urban areas with huge gap between them (64.3% vs. 19.3%). On the contrary, there were five major providers in rural areas. BRAC alone covered 57% of NGO intervention which is equivalent to 12.4% of all students.

- Majority of the students (72.2%) were enrolled in schools which were located in their own neighbourhoods, 23.3% enrolled in adjacent neighbourhoods and 4.5% far. Over 80% of the students of non-formal, mosque based, and non-government schools came from the neighbourhoods where the schools were situated. Otherwise, 43.5% of the students of the kindergartens and a third of those in government primary schools came from the nearby neighbourhoods.
- The net enrolment rate was 52.5% among the children of age five years. The rate was slightly higher for the girls than the boys but it was much higher among urban children than their rural counterparts. NER was 40.4% among the children of age 4–5 years.
- Children of socio-economically well-off households (in terms of parental education, household food security status and electricity at home) were more likely to enrol in pre-primary education compared to those from the poorer households. Non-Muslim children were more likely to enrol in pre-primary education compared to their Muslim peers.
- A dramatic increase in pre-primary enrolment rate was observed after 2008, the year government decided to push pre-primary. The increase was four times in net rate and about three times in gross ratio. Increase was noticed at a similar pace for the children of both genders and both urban and rural areas. Urban children were always ahead of their rural counterparts. Increase was more among the children of the households with *breakeven* and *surplus* economy compared to those from *deficit* economy.
- Tendency of the six years old children's (legal age for enrolment in the first grade of primary education) enrolment in pre-primary education has increased over time – 9.5% in 1998 to 36.5% in 2013. However, overall, primary aged children's enrolment in pre-primary education reduced over time – 62.3% in 2008 to 42.3% in 2013.
- Proportionate share of pre-primary students in the government primary schools gradually decreased but the share of the kindergartens and the NGO operated non-formal schools increased over time.
- Unavailability of nearby school providing pre-primary education and parental unwillingness to enroll due to lack of awareness about its necessity in child development were the major reasons of non-enrolment in pre-primary education. Many parents also preferred late start of their children in school



Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2005, 2013

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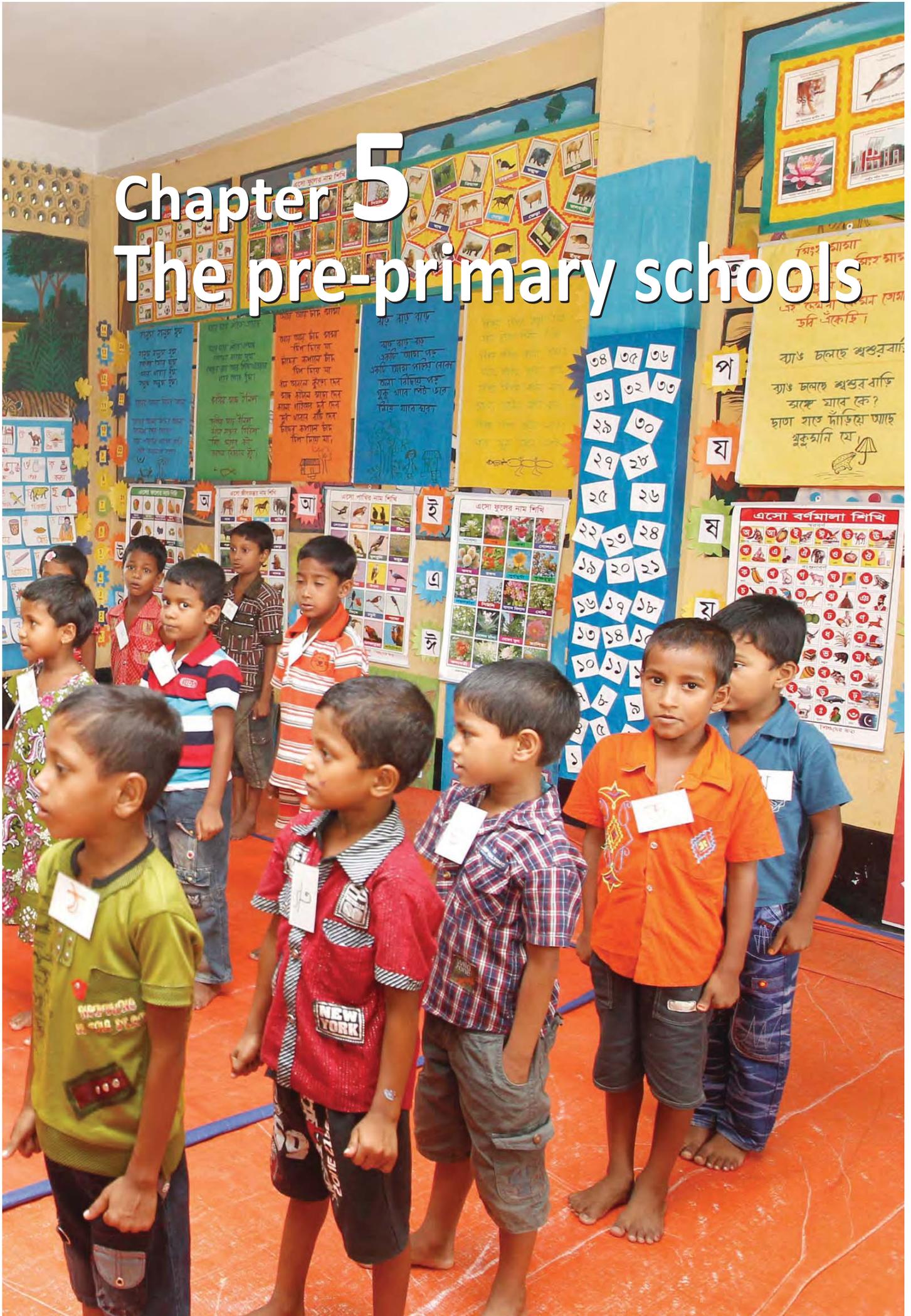


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# Chapter 5

## The pre-primary schools





This chapter presents the background, history and other characteristics of pre-primary schools in the study *upazilas*. Characteristics included physical facilities, and teachers and their education and training. Water and sanitation facilities, classroom seating arrangement and students' attendance were also included. This chapter allows understanding overall atmosphere for pre-primary education in the schools in terms of some specific indicators.

### A. Establishment of schools

Pre-primary education in the study *upazilas* was launched a long time ago. The first pre-primary class was started, in a government primary school, as early as 1910. The second one was started in 1939, the third one in 1945, the fourth one in 1949 and the fifth one in 1961. It is worth mentioning that this class used to be called *Shishu Shreni* or *baby class* as mentioned in the introductory chapter, instead of pre-primary. Till then no other type of pre-primary school existed in the *upazilas*. Only nine schools were established before the Independence of Bangladesh which was only 0.6% of the sampled schools. However, most of the schools (69%) were established in 2008 or afterwards, 19.9% during 2000–2007, and 11.1% earlier (Table 5.1). In other words, 88.2% of the pre-primary schools/classes were established after three decades of Independence of Bangladesh. In this sense, it is a new phenomenon in the *upazilas*. NGO operated and mosque based pre-primary were rare before 2000. By this time, 13% of the government and 19.3% of the non-government schools started pre-primary classes. Over 19% of the kindergartens were established by the same time. Very few government and non-government primary schools opened pre-primary class during 2000–2007 but a good portion of the other three types came into existence at that time. The year 2008 and onwards was the high time in the *upazilas* for spreading pre-primary education irrespective of school type. Only 9% of the NGO operated pre-primary schools were located in the compound of formal primary schools (government or non-government). Among others, some were adjacent to those or in separate locations; however, in the catchment areas of the formal schools. Five percent of the non-government and 4.3% of the government primary schools received assistance from the NGOs in operating pre-primary education.

**Table 5.1**  
*Percentage distribution of pre-primary schools in the upazilas by year of establishment and school type*

Year	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Before 2000	13.0	19.3	19.3	3.7	3.7	11.1
2000 - 2007	4.0	6.7	34.7	34.7	26.3	19.9
2008 and onwards	83.0	74.0	46.0	61.7	70.0	69.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Nearly 60% of the schools were situated in calm and quiet environment (Table 5.2). It was a bit of calm and quiet along with some din and bustle for 31.1% of the schools, and full of din and bustle for 9.6% of the

**Table 5.2**  
*Percentage distribution of pre-primary schools by state of surrounding environment and school type*

State of surrounding environment	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Calm and quiet	60.7	68.3	42.3	60.7	62.3	59.3
Partially calm & quiet	30.0	24.3	40.3	32.7	29.3	31.1
Fully din and bustle	9.3	7.3	17.3	6.7	8.3	9.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

schools. The kindergartens in most cases fell in the last two categories. School type-wise, 60.7% of the government, 68.3% of the non-government, 42.3% of the kindergartens, 60.7% of the NGO operated, and 62.3% of the mosque based pre-primary schools were situated in calm and quiet places.

### **B. Duration of pre-primary education**

Duration of pre-primary education was one year in all government and non-government primary schools and the mosque based pre-primary system. Less than 10% of the NGO schools had a two-year course but the vast majority were of one year duration. Much variation was observed in the case of kindergartens. Duration of pre-primary course was one year in 8.3% of the kindergartens, two years in 71% and three years in 20.7%. Overall, 84% of the schools offered one year course, 12.8% offered two-years, and 3.2% operated three-year long pre-primary course.

Over 31% of the schools had provision of school uniform for pre-primary students. The kindergartens were much pro-active than others in this regard with over 96% of them with such provision. Among others, 36.7% of the government and 27.3% of the non-government schools promoted uniform. It was less than 5% for NGO operated and mosque based schools.

### **C. Physical condition of classrooms**

**Separate arrangement for pre-primary:** A portion of the government and the non-government primary schools had no separate arrangement for pre-primary education. These schools offered such education in the same classroom as Grade I. Thus, the students of pre-primary and Grade I shared the same classroom at the same time. Proportions of such government and non-government primary schools were respectively 14.7 and 41.3%. However, the heads of 77.3% of these government schools and 69.4% of the non-government schools claimed that although the pre-primary students took their seats with the students of Grade I they were offered separate lessons. This means that pre-primary students of 3.3% of the government primary schools received lessons of grade I, they received separate lessons seating with the students of grade I in 11.3% of the schools, and separate lesson in separate classroom in 85.3% of the schools. These figures were respectively 12.7, 28.7, and 58.7% in the case of non-government primary schools. Mixing-up of the pre-primary students with those of other classes did not happen in NGO operated non-formal or mosque based pre-primary schools because all of these were single grade schools established only to offer pre-primary education. No such case was observed in the kindergartens too.

Although majority of the pre-primary classes were held in the classrooms but due to lack of such facilities, classes were held in places outside the classrooms in 10.8% of the schools. These places include school verandas, head teachers offices, roofs of school buildings, stair boxes, and open spaces. School veranda was most popular with 11.4% of the schools. Pre-primary classes were held outside the classrooms in 15.3% of the government and non-government primary schools each. A third of the mosque based pre-primary education was provided in the verandas of the mosques. Co-education existed in all the pre-primary schools/classes.

Overall, one classroom was used to offer pre-primary education in 96.2% of the schools, two classrooms in 3.4%, and three classrooms in 0.5%. School type-wise, it was offered in one classroom in 97.7% of government, 98.5% of non-government and all the NGO operated and mosque based schools. On the other hand, the kindergartens had a different story; 85.3% of them offered it in one classroom, 12.6% in two classrooms, and 2% in three classrooms.

**Classroom construction materials and assessment of overall condition:** Various construction materials were used to build pre-primary classrooms. Forty-three percent of the classrooms were fully made of bricks, 25.9% made of a combination of bricks and corrugated iron (CI) sheets, 18.3% fully CI sheets, and 12.8% CI sheets with other materials such as straw, leaf, etc. (Table 5.3). Over 64% of the classrooms in government and 77.2% in non-government schools were fully made of bricks. Another 28.8% of the classrooms in the government schools were made of a combination of bricks and CI sheets. Use of bricks in NGO school classrooms was rare. These were mostly made of CI sheets along with various other materials. On the other hand, bricks and CI sheets were major construction materials in the kindergartens and mosque based schools.

Whatever the construction materials were, assessment of the classrooms in terms of their overall condition was done on a five point scale. The points in the scale were: *fully satisfactory, major*

*portion satisfactory, half portion dilapidated and fully dilapidated.* On an average, condition of 44.1% of the classrooms was fully satisfactory. Major portion of 26.8% of the classrooms and

half part of 18.2% were satisfactory (Table 5.4). On the other hand, major portion of 8.6% and full of 2.2% of the classrooms were dilapidated. Full or major portion with satisfactory condition was observed in over 73% of the classrooms in government and non-government schools. It was 70.2% in the kindergartens, 69.6% in NGO schools, and 68.4% in mosque based schools.

**Table 5.3**  
**Percentage distribution of classrooms by construction materials and school type**

Construction materials	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Fully brick	64.6	77.2	29.6	4.7	40.1	43.0
Brick and CI sheet	28.8	9.7	36.2	18.1	31.7	25.9
Fully CI sheet	4.2	10.0	24.7	37.8	17.8	18.3
CI sheet with others	2.3	3.1	9.5	39.5	10.4	12.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Table 5.4**  
**Percentage distribution of classrooms by condition and school type**

Classroom condition	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Fully all right	47.7	51.7	46.3	32.1	43.6	44.1
Major parts all right	25.4	21.6	23.9	37.5	24.8	26.8
Half part all right	16.2	13.5	21.6	18.7	20.8	18.2
Major part dilapidated	8.1	9.3	7.5	11.0	7.4	8.6
Fully dilapidated	2.7	3.9	0.9	0.7	3.5	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Floors and walls:** Cleanliness of floors and walls of classrooms were looked at. Overall, floors of 43.9% of the classrooms were clean meaning that no dust or waste paper was found there (Table 5.5). Waste papers were found on the floors of 10.5% of the classrooms, dusts were found on the floors of 16.4% of the classrooms and both on the floors of 29.2% of the classrooms. Floors of the government and non-government schools and the kindergartens were comparatively less clean than those in the non-formal and mosque based pre-primary schools.

**Table 5.5**  
*Percentage distribution of classrooms by cleanliness condition of floor and school type*

Cleanliness condition of floor	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
No dust or waste paper on floor	26.5	15.4	26.1	82.9	70.3	43.9
Waste paper on floor	18.1	12.4	12.1	3.7	3.0	10.5
Dust on floor	18.5	21.6	18.1	9.7	14.4	16.4
Dust and waste paper on floor	36.9	50.6	43.7	3.7	12.4	29.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

The walls of about 55% pre-primary classrooms were painted; of which 28.7% were found clean (Table 5.6). The classroom walls of about 43% of the schools were not painted; however, 29.8% of this was clean but 13.1% was not. In other words, clean walls were observed in 58.5% of the schools and it was dirty in 39.3% of the schools. Note that no wall of the classrooms was found in 2.2% of the schools. Painted as well as clean walls of pre-primary classrooms were observed in 34-35% of the government and non-government schools, around 30% in the kindergartens and mosque based schools and only 12.7% in NGO schools. Overall, the government and the non-government schools were more likely to have painted walls but less likely to keep them clean. On the other hand, an opposite scenario was observed in other three types of schools. The government and NGO schools are two extreme cases in this regard. Whereas pre-primary classroom walls of 84% of the government schools were painted, it was 16% in NGO schools. In terms of cleanliness, the figures were just opposite, 81% of NGO classrooms were clean.

**Table 5.6**  
*Percentage distribution of classrooms by cleanliness condition of walls and school type*

Cleanliness condition of walls	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Painted and clean	35.4	34.0	29.9	12.7	30.7	28.7
Painted but unclean	48.5	43.6	18.4	3.3	11.9	26.2
Not painted but clean	6.5	8.9	33.3	68.2	35.6	29.8
Not painted and unclean	9.2	12.4	16.1	14.4	14.9	13.1
No wall	0.4	1.2	2.3	1.3	6.9	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch pre-primary school survey, 2013

Painted and clean walls with no dust or waste papers on the floors may be an ideal situation in any pre-primary classroom. Unfortunately, on an average, such an ideal situation was observed only in 16.7% of the schools. School type-wise, 14.6% of the government, 12.4% of the non-government, 17.2% of the kindergartens, 11.4% of the NGO operated, and 28.7% of the mosque based pre-primary schools had such an expected situation.

**Natural light and airflow:** Majority of the pre-primary classrooms, irrespective of school type, had enough natural light and airflow (Table 5.7). On an average, 89.3% of the classrooms had enough natural light and 84.2% had enough flow of natural air. Electric light and/or fan were observed in only 34% of the classrooms with large variation by school type. The kindergartens and the mosque based

schools were much ahead of the others in having electric light and fan and the non-government and NGO schools were much behind in this regard. About a third of the classrooms of government schools had electric light and 36.2% had electric fan.

**Table 5.7**  
*Percentage of classrooms by various facilities and school type*

Facilities	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Enough natural light	90.8	96.5	82.2	87.6	91.1	89.3
Enough natural airflow	84.6	95.0	75.6	82.6	86.6	84.2
Electric light	32.3	11.6	62.1	5.0	56.9	34.3
Electric fan	36.2	11.6	66.4	4.3	46.5	34.2
Artwork on wall	48.8	30.9	9.8	98.3	10.4	41.5
Disable-friendly (ramp)	20.4	23.6	27.0	32.8	24.8	25.4
Dedicated to pre-primary	60.0	22.4	57.8	92.6	99.0	67.6

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Decoration of classrooms by artwork is important for any early childhood education. On an average, 41.5% of the classroom walls were found with artwork. NGO schools were incomparable to others with 98.3% of the classrooms decorated with colourful artwork. Much lower proportions of kindergartens and mosque based schools had such decoration: 9.8 and 10.4% respectively. Among others, pre-primary classrooms of 48.8% of the government schools and 30.9% of the non-government schools were decorated with artwork.

**Other issues:** On an average, two-thirds of the pre-primary classrooms were used only to provide pre-primary education and the others shared with other grades in the same school. School type-wise, 99% of mosque based pre-primary classrooms, 92.6% of those of NGO schools, 60% of those of government schools and 57.8% of those of kindergartens were used only for pre-primary education. Worst situation, in this regard, was observed in the non-government schools. Only 22.4% of the pre-primary classrooms in this type of schools were dedicated.

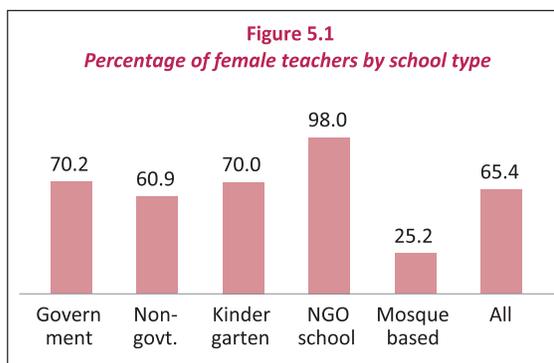
To increase access to education of the children with disability, ramp was attached to a quarter of the pre-primary classrooms (Table 5.7). This was highest in NGO schools (32.8%) and lowest in government schools (20.4%). Among others, 27% of kindergartens, 24.8% of mosque based and 23.6% of non-government schools classrooms had ramp to make them friendly to children with disability.

#### **D. The pre-primary teachers**

**General information:** Information on teachers who taught in pre-primary classes was collected. On an average, the government schools had 1.3 teachers, non-government schools had 1.6, kindergartens had four, and NGO operated and mosque based schools had one teacher each. All of them were not fully dedicated to pre-primary education; majority had to offer primary or secondary education too. Overall, 29% of these teachers were specific to pre-primary education, 68.9% also taught in primary classes and rest higher. All the teachers of mosque based schools, 94% in NGO schools, 6.9% in each of kindergartens and government schools, and 4% in non-government schools taught only in pre-primary classes. It was because they were recruited to teach pre-primary students only. Six percent teachers of the NGO operated pre-primary school also taught in primary classes of NGO schools.

School heads or their assistants constituted 11.6% of the pre-primary teachers in government and 18% of those in non-government schools. This was 5.4% in the kindergartens. Presence of community teachers was observed in the government and non-government schools. They were respectively 6.2 and 7.2% of the total pre-primary teachers of these two types of schools. Overall, 7.5% of the pre-primary teachers were school heads or their assistants, 97.5% assistant teachers, and 2.5% community teachers.

**Female teachers:** On an average, 65.4% of pre-primary teachers were female (Figure 5.1). Whereas, only a quarter of the pre-primary teachers of mosque based schools were female it was 98% in NGO schools. This was 70.2% in government and 60.9% in non-government schools, and 70% in the kindergartens. A third of the school heads who taught in pre-primary classes, 52.4% of their assistants, 67.3% of the assistant teachers, and 87.1% of the community teachers were females.



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Ethnicity and religion:** Majority of the pre-primary teachers was Muslims (84%). Among others, 14.5% were Hindus, 1.3% Christian, and 0.3% Buddhists. The non-Muslims comprised of a fifth of the pre-primary teachers in government and 16% in non-government schools, and 13.3% in the kindergartens. Highest proportion of non-Muslim teachers was observed in the NGO

schools (23.2%) and lowest in mosque based schools (11.6%). It was surprising to see non-Muslim teachers in mosque based schools. Only 1.5% of the teachers belonged to small ethnic groups. They were 2.7% in government and 2.6% in non-government schools, and 4.6% in NGO schools. No such teacher was found in the kindergartens or in the mosque based schools.

**Table 5.8**  
*Percentage of teachers from small ethnic groups and non-Muslims by school type*

Groups	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Small ethnic groups	2.7	2.6	0.0	4.6	0.0	1.5
Non-Muslims	19.9	16.0	13.3	23.2	11.6	16.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Teachers' education:** Educational qualification of teachers varied (Table 5.9). Overall, only 3.4% did not complete secondary education, 24% completed secondary, 36.7% higher secondary, 22.7% Bachelors and 11.6% Masters. NGO school teachers were less educated than others. The government school teachers were better educated than their peers in other schools. Over a quarter of these teachers had Master's level education, a third Bachelors, another quarter with higher secondary, 12.2% with secondary, and 2% with incomplete secondary schooling. Over a tenth of the pre-primary teachers studied in the madrasas, of which 10.4% in general and 1.5% in non-graded *kawmi* and *kharizi* madrasas. Not surprisingly, majority of them were concentrated in the mosque based schools (55.4%). Of the total teachers in mosque based schools, 48.8% studied in general madrasas and 9.3% in *kawmi* or *krarizi* madrasas— totalling 58.1%. Madrasa educated teachers were found in other types

**Table 5.9**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary teachers by level of education and school type**

Level of education	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Below secondary	2.0	2.2	0.7	17.5	3.3	3.4
Secondary	12.2	29.7	14.6	60.6	34.6	24.0
Higher secondary	26.4	43.7	48.7	20.2	26.9	36.7
Bachelors	33.1	19.4	26.1	1.7	16.3	22.7
Masters	26.4	5.0	9.3	0.0	9.6	11.6
Non-graded madrasa	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	9.3	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

too. For instance, 1.7% of the government and 5.4% of the non-government school teachers were educated in the madrasas. This was 5.8% in the kindergartens and 3.3% in NGO schools.

Majority of the pre-primary teachers were more likely to have educated in humanities. Among those who completed secondary education, 64.4% studied humanities, 25.5% science, 9.5% business studies, and others vocational or *muzabbid*. Proportion of teachers studying humanities increased with the increase of their level of education and an opposite scenario was observed in the case of studying science.

The public examination results in Bangladesh were previously graded into three divisions/classes but it gradually moved to grade point average (GPA). The pre-primary teachers got their results in either of the systems; however, majority in previous system. It is interesting to note that majority of those who got results in previous system received second-division/class but it was GPA 3–5 (equivalent to first division/class) in new system. Annex 5.3 shows that 38.2% of the teachers got second division in SSC/dakhil examination. This was 39.3% in HSC/alim, 64% in Bachelor/fazil, and 76.3% in Master/kamil. School type-wise analysis shows that the teachers of government schools and the kindergartens had better results compared to those in other types.

**Training of teachers:** Teacher training is very important for any education system. However, 44% of those who taught in pre-primary classes had no such training (Table 5.10). This means that 56% of the teachers were trained in some kind of formal to informal. Ninety percent of the government school teachers, 78.6% of those in non-government schools, 14.5% of those in kindergartens, 96% of those in NGO schools, and 57% of those in mosque based schools had training. This means that majority of the kindergarten teachers (85.5%) had no training. A

**Table 5.10**  
**Percentage of trained teachers by school type**

Training	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Any type	89.6	78.6	14.5	96.0	57.1	55.9
No training	10.4	21.4	85.5	4.0	42.9	44.1
Training on PPE	53.8	17.8	6.5	95.4	52.5	35.1

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

tenth of the government and over a fifth of the non-government school teachers were also untrained. Only 35% of the teachers had training specific to pre-primary education. Over 95% of the NGO school teachers, and more than half of the government and mosque based school teachers had

specific training to teach in pre-primary classes. This was 17.8% among the non-government and 6.5% among the kindergarten school teachers. Overall, it can be said that of all pre-primary teachers 44% had no training, 35% had other teacher training including training on pre-primary education, and 21% had other kind of teacher training but had no training for pre-primary education.

### E. Water and sanitation facilities

**Drinking water facility:** Over 93.3% of the schools had drinking water facilities of which tap or tube wells were the main sources (Table 5.11). The source of drinking water was deep tube well for about 67.6% of the schools, it was tube well for 21.6% of the schools, and tap or supply for 4.1% of the schools. A smaller proportion of non-government and NGO operated schools had tap or supply water facility compared to others. Overall, no school type-wise variation was observed in terms of safe drinking water sources. Fifty seven percent of the schools owned the reported drinking water sources

**Table 5.11**  
*Percentage of schools with various aspects of water and sanitation facilities*

Water and sanitation facility	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. Primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Drinking water facility in school <sup>1</sup>	93.7	91.0	94.6	94.7	92.7	93.3
School's own the source of water	77.0	59.7	67.7	13.3	57.7	57.1
Separate facility for pre-primary	24.7	29.3	46.0	76.7	44.7	42.7
Age and height appropriate system	19.0	16.0	42.0	72.0	41.3	38.3
Pot used for drinking water						
School's mug/glass	71.3	77.0	68.0	83.7	63.3	72.0
Own bottle/flask/glass	18.7	13.0	28.0	9.0	12.7	16.1
Hygienic toilet facility in school	90.0	79.0	87.3	37.0	51.7	69.5
Age and height appropriate system	68.0	61.7	81.7	44.3	43.0	59.1
Hand washing facility	39.7	33.0	55.7	27.0	15.0	33.1

<sup>1</sup>Tap, supply or tubewell

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

and the others used the sources of the neighbours. In terms of ownership of the sources, the government schools were ahead of the others followed by the kindergartens, non-government schools, and mosque based schools. Very few of NGO operated schools had their own source of drinking water.

Separate arrangement for drinking water for pre-primary students (against primary) was observed in a quarter of the government and 29.3% of the non-government schools. The same was observed in 46% of the kindergartens. Although the NGO operated and mosque based schools were exclusively for pre-primary education, two different scenarios were observed there. All the NGO operated schools where there was safe drinking water source had such arrangement. However, it was only 44.7% in the case of mosque based schools. On an average, 42.7% of the schools had separate arrangement for drinking water for the pre-primary students.

Pre-primary students are supposed to be younger in age and shorter in height compared to the other students in the schools. It is thus important to keep water pots in such places appropriate to their heights. On an average, only 38.3% of the schools kept the water pots in such places suitable for the heights of the pre-primary students. This was the case for 19% of the government and 26% of the

non-government schools, about 42% of the kindergartens and the mosque based schools, and 72% of the NGO operated schools.

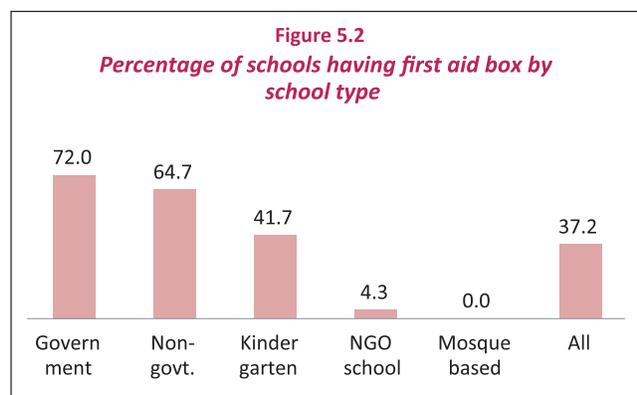
Majority of the students of 72% of the schools used school's glasses for drinking water and in 16.1% of the schools the students used their own glasses or flasks. Use of school's glasses was highest in the NGO operated schools (83.7%) but use of own glasses or flasks was highest in the kindergartens (28%).

**Toilet facilities:** Over 69% of the schools had hygienic toilet facility which may be sanitary latrine or ring slab with water seal (Table 5.11). Hygienic toilet was observed in 90% of the government and 79% of the non-government schools. This was also found in 86.3% of the kindergartens, 37% of the NGO operated and 51.7% of the mosque based schools. The toilet was set appropriately considering age and height of the pre-primary students of about 59% of the schools. This was highest in the kindergartens (81.7%) and lowest in the mosque based schools (43%). This proportion for NGO operated schools was near to the later type. Sixty-eight percent of the government and 61.7% of the non-government schools set toilet appropriately. Hand washing facility with soap and water was available in a third of the schools. This was also highest in the kindergartens (55.7%) and lowest in the mosque based schools (15%). Among others, 39.7% of the government, a third of the non-government and 27% of the NGO operated schools had hand washing facility with soap and water.

Although a good portion of the pre-primary schools had water and sanitation facilities but in some cases, these were not appropriate considering age and physical growth of the students. Existence of facilities in schools does not always guarantee use of them as and when necessary. In a school, the surrounding area of the tube well was slippery so that the pre-primary students had to seek help from the senior students or teachers or other staff in getting water from it. In another school, the handle of the tube well was so hard that the young students were unable to provide adequate pressure on it. They were seen waiting until a senior person appears to use it. However, these senior people were kind enough to the young students. In some schools drinking water was kept in mug or jug but at a high place which was not easy for the pre-primary students to use.

This was also true for toilet facilities. As the schools had no separate toilet for the pre-primary students, so the students of this section had to face difficulty in accessing the common toilets. In some there were two sanitary toilets - one for the teachers and the other for the students. Students were not allowed to use the teachers' toilet. It was kept locked most of the time. Both the toilets were placed in such a high place that pre-primary students could not use those. Overall physical structure of the students' toilet was not suitable considering the height of the pre-primary students.

**First aid box:** It is important for any education provision. Overall, 37.2% of the schools had this (Figure 5.2). School type-wise, 72% of the government and 64.7% of the non-government schools and 41.7% of the kindergartens had first aid box. Unfortunately, only 4.3% of the NGO operated and none of the mosque based pre-primary schools had this box. First aid boxes in the government and non-



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

government schools might not necessarily specific to pre-primary students. As these schools were providing primary education for long, they already may have these in the schools.

## F. Seating arrangement and attendance

**Seating style and seat type:** A variety of seating styles were observed in the pre-primary classrooms which not only varied by school type but also within each type of school. On an average, the students

**Table 5.12**  
*Percentage distribution of schools by seating style and school type*

Seating style	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kinder arten	NGO school	Mosque based	
In rows	64.1	85.2	96.1	5.9	68.7	71.0
U-shaped	19.4	9.2	0.4	19.4	18.0	10.3
In small groups	4.5	1.6	3.5	72.8	1.7	14.2
In large group	12.0	3.9	0.0	1.9	11.7	4.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

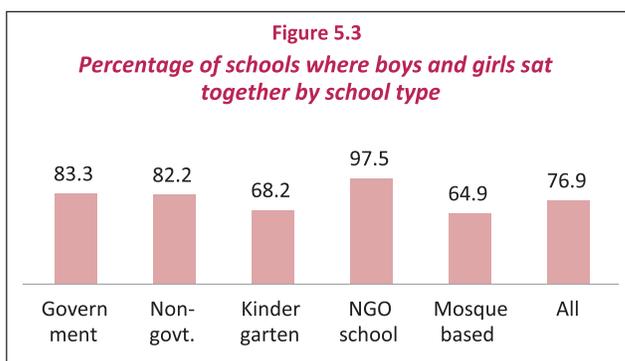
**Table 5.13**  
*Percentage distribution of classrooms by seat and school types*

Seat type	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Jute made mat	13.9	7.2	0.5	62.5	29.7	17.9
Plastic mat	23.3	7.5	0.0	22.5	8.7	9.6
Chair	1.3	0.7	5.7	1.9	0.3	2.8
Bench	49.5	74.4	93.0	1.9	2.7	55.3
Floor	9.1	9.2	0.3	10.6	52.7	12.5
Others	2.9	1.0	0.5	0.6	6.0	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

schools. On the contrary, students sat in small groups in 72.8% of the classrooms in NGO schools and in U-shaped pattern in 19.4% of the classrooms.

Type of seat also varied substantially which included jute made mat, plastic mat, chair, bench, floor and some others (Table 5.13). In majority of the cases, the students sat in bench (overall 55.3%)



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

sat in rows in 71% of the classrooms and U-shaped seating style was observed in 10.3% of the classrooms (Table 5.12). They sat in small groups in 14.2% of the classrooms and in large group in 4.5% of the classrooms. Except the NGO schools, the students sat in rows in majority of the classrooms of the other four types of school. This was 64.1% in government and 85.2% in non-government schools, 96.1% in the kindergartens, and 68.7% in mosque based schools. It can be noted that in government schools, U-shaped seating pattern was observed in 19.4% of the cases and large group pattern in 12% of the cases. These figures were respectively 18 and 11.7% in mosque based pre-primary schools. On the contrary, students sat in small groups in 72.8% of the classrooms in NGO schools and in U-shaped pattern in 19.4% of the classrooms. which was dominated by the kindergartens (93%), non-government schools (74.4%), and government schools (49.5%). In government schools, students sat on plastic mats in 23.3% of the cases, on jute made mats in 13.9% of the cases and on floors in 9.1% of the cases. Students of 9.2% of the classrooms in non-government schools also sat on floors. Students sat on floors in majority of the cases in mosque based schools and on jute made mats in 29.7% of the cases. Jute made mat was the major

seat type in NGO schools (62.5%), followed by respectively plastic mat (22.5%) and floor (10.6%).

Both boys and girls sat together in 76.9% of the classrooms (Figure 5.3). It was highest in NGO schools (97.5%) and lowest in mosque based schools (64.9%). The kindergartens were slightly ahead of the mosque based schools with 68.2% of the classrooms. Seating together irrespective of gender was observed in 83.3% of the classrooms in government and 82.2% of the classrooms in non-government schools.

**Registered students, classroom capacity and attendance:** Number of students enrolled in each pre-primary classroom and information on capacity of those classrooms were collected. Although these figures varied substantially by school type and among the schools within each particular type of school, on an average, 28 students enrolled per classroom and 27 could seat with ease in each (Table 5.14). Capacity of the classrooms was not at all a problem because head-count on school survey day shows that on an average, 19 students were present per classroom. Number of enrolled students was greater than seating capacity in three types of schools, viz., government, non-government and kindergarten. However, an opposite scenario was observed in the NGO operated and mosque based pre-primary schools. Whatever the case, average number of students seating in the classrooms was smaller than that can seat with ease in all five types of schools.

The average attendance rate was 67.9% which was marginally higher among girls than boys (68% vs. 65.9%). School type-wise variation was observed in attendance rate (Figure 5.4). The rate was highest in NGO schools (78.6%) and lowest in non-government schools (51.7%). The rate in government schools was slightly higher than that of the non-government schools.

Seventy-three percent of the kindergarten students and 70% of those of the mosque based schools were present in schools on the counting day.

### G. Summary findings

What type of facilities and opportunities were created for the students in schools at their early age is provided in this chapter. Following paragraphs provide a summary of the findings on these.

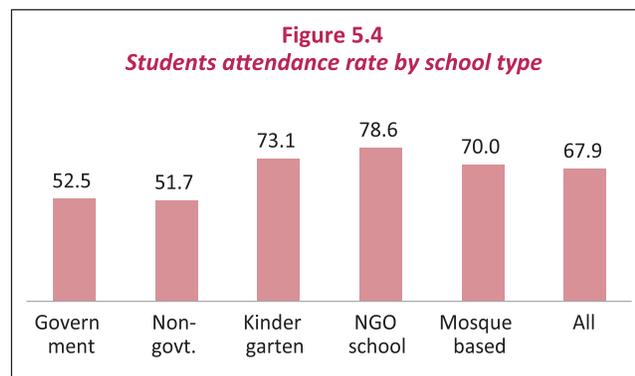
- The first pre-primary class in the study *upazilas* was started over a century ago. Expansion of pre-primary education was very limited up to 2007. Of the schools, 11% were established before 2000, a fifth during 2000–2007, and 69% in 2008 or afterwards. Although pre-primary education

**Table 5.14**  
*Mean number of enrolled, can seat with ease and attended students by school type*

School type	Enrolled student	Can seat with ease	Attended on survey day
Government	33	28	17
Non-government	29	27	15
Kindergarten	26	23	19
NGO school	28	29	22
Mosque based	30	32	21
All	28	27	19

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Figure 5.4**  
*Students attendance rate by school type*



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

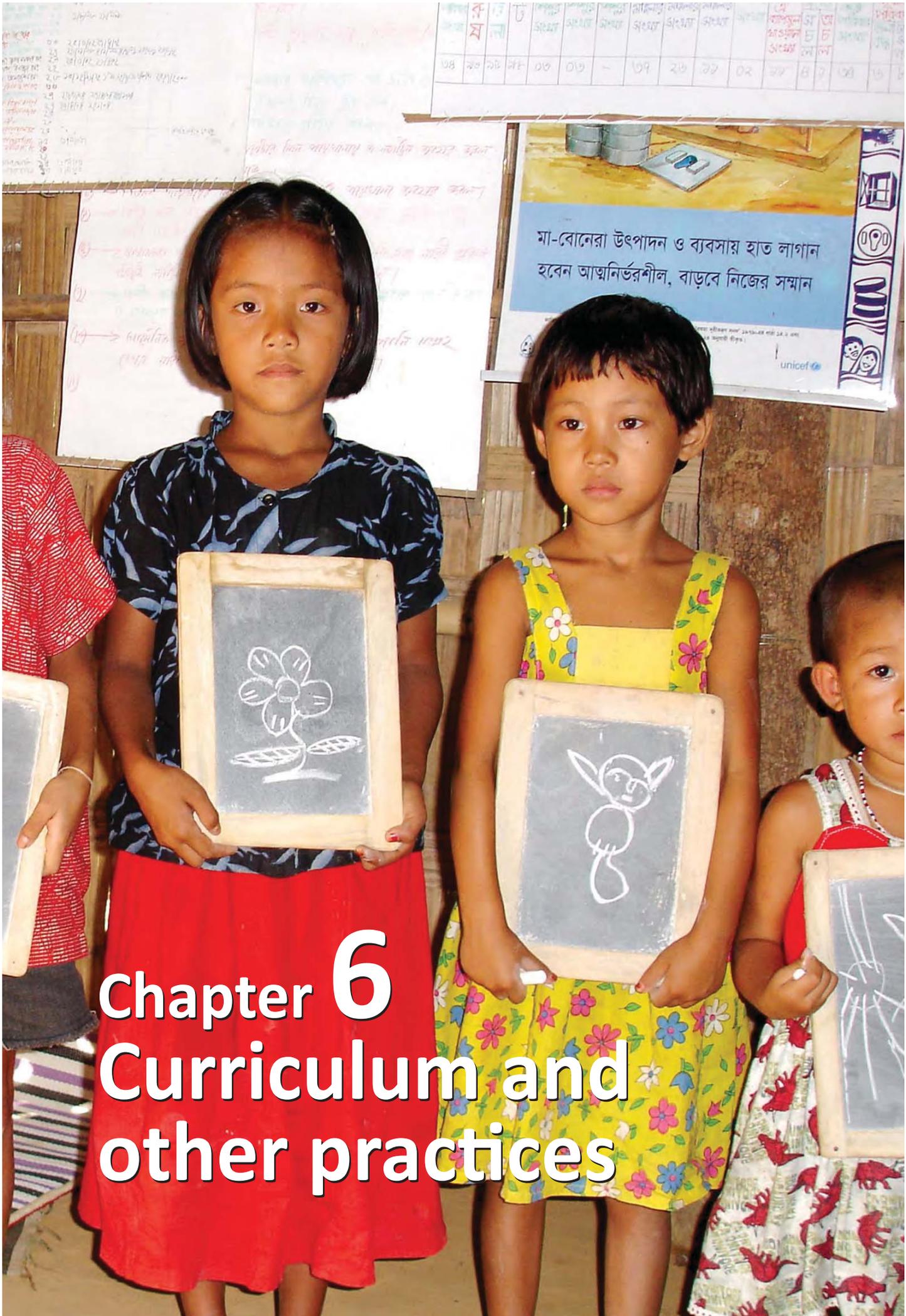
was very limited in the government and non-government primary schools before 2008, over half of the kindergartens, 38.4% of the NGO schools and 30% of the mosque based schools were established by that time. Nine percent of the NGO schools were located in the campuses of government and non-government primary schools.

- Respectively, 14.7 and 41.3% of the government and non-government primary schools had no separate classroom for pre-primary education. These schools offered pre-primary education alongside Grade I in the same classroom, often at the same time. No such case was found in other three types of schools.
- In majority of the cases, pre-primary classes were held in the classrooms; however, school verandas, head teachers offices, roofs of school buildings, stair boxes or open spaces were used in 10.8% of the cases. This was found in 15.3% of the government and non-government schools and a third of the mosque based schools.
- Most of the pre-primary classes in the government and non-government primary and mosque based schools, and the kindergartens were held in places fully made of bricks or a combination of bricks and CI sheets. On the other hand, most NGO schools were made of CI sheets and other raw materials.
- Overall condition of the classrooms in 44.1% of the schools was fully satisfactory, major portion of 26.8% and half part of 18.2% of the classrooms were satisfactory. Otherwise, major portion of 8.6% and full of 2.2% of the classrooms were dilapidated. Unclean floors with dusts and waste papers were found in 56% of the classrooms. About three-quarters of the classrooms in the government schools and the kindergartens and 84.6% of those in the non-government schools were not clean. Enough natural light and airflow was found in over 84% of the classrooms but electric light and fan was available only in a third of them.
- On an average, the government schools had 1.3 teachers for pre-primary, non-government schools had 1.6, kindergartens had four, and NGO and mosque based schools had one teacher each. All teachers of mosque based schools and 94% of those in NGO schools were fully dedicated to pre-primary education. This rate was below 7% in other three types of schools.
- Two-thirds of the pre-primary teachers were female. Percentage of female teachers was highest in the NGO schools (98%) and lowest in the mosque based schools (25.2%). It was about 70% in the government schools and the kindergartens and 60.9% in the non-government schools.
- Government school teachers were better educated than others. They were followed by those in kindergartens, non-government and mosque based schools respectively. NGO schools were more flexible as they had teachers with lower educational levels. Highest proportion of madrasa educated teachers was found in the mosque based schools.
- On an average, 56% of the teachers had some type of training and 35% had specific training on pre-primary education. Over 95% of the NGO school teachers, 53.8% of those in government, 52.5% of those in mosque based, 17.8% of those in non-government schools and 6.5% of those in the kindergartens were trained in pre-primary education.
- Most of the schools had drinking water facility and 69.5% had hygienic toilets. In majority cases, these were common to all students (pre-primary and primary) which sometimes created difficulty for the pre-primary students considering their age and height. Age and height

appropriate drinking water facility was found in 38.3% of the schools and toilet facility in 59% of the schools. First aid box was available in 37.2% of the schools.

- A variety of seating style and seat type were observed in pre-primary classrooms. Students sat in rows in 71% of the classrooms, U-shaped in 10.3%, in small groups in 14.2% and in large groups in 4.5%. They sat on benches in 55.3% of the classrooms, on mats in 27.5% and on floors in 12.5% of the classrooms. NGO schools were prominent for seating in small groups on jute or plastic mats.
- On an average, 28 students enrolled in each classroom, although 27 could be seated with ease. It was not a problem because only 19 students were found present on the survey day. Thus, the average attendance rate was 67.9%. It was highest in NGO schools (78.6%) and lowest in non-government schools (51.7%). The government schools had slightly a higher rate (52.5%).





# Chapter 6 Curriculum and other practices



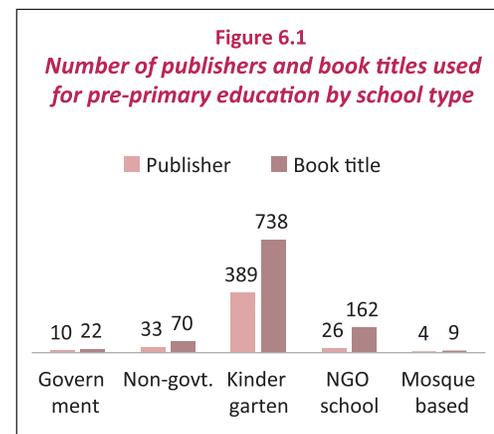
In absence of a recommended national curriculum<sup>2</sup> for pre-primary education the provision is in general ad hoc and based on the abilities of the schools and their understanding of the subject. Initiatives such as the NGO schools and the mosque based schools had some sort of written documents stating objectives of such education. BRAC, in addition, has developed achievable written competencies for its schools. This chapter attempts to understand curriculum related issues and the learning provisions as found through the school survey. We describe the practices in terms of the use of books and educational materials, homework, assessment, home-school communication and teachers' opinion on the overall provision.

### A. Books used for pre-primary education

It is a matter of debate whether pre-primary education should have fixed textbooks; however, there is some unwritten agreement on the value of a well written teacher guide based on selected well articulated learning objectives. In practice, a teacher guide was not available, except for NGO schools. However, a variety of text and supplementary books were used. Overall, 912 different book titles published by 418 publishers were found to be used in pre-primary education. These varied by school type and in some cases within a particular type too. The kindergartens were at the top with 738 different titles and 389 publishers. On the other hand, very few book titles and publishers were found in mosque based pre-primary education (Figure 6.1).

The publishers included government agencies like the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), Bangladesh Islamic Foundation and *Hindu Dharmiyo Kallyan Trust* (Welfare Trust for the people of Hindu faith). International publishers like Orient Longman, Oxford University Press and Ladybug were also found. Moreover, a number of Indian and hundreds of local publishers were also found. Some of the local publishers were based at *upazila* level.

The government and the non-government schools used mostly two books. These are *Aamar Boi* (my book) and *Eso Likhte Shishi* (lets learn how to write), published by the government agencies (NCTB or DPE) mentioned above. The Kindergartens used a large variety of books published by a large number of local, regional and international publishers. The NGO schools had three main texts; these are *Borner Mela* (alphabets), *Sankhar Mela* (numbers), and *Chhabi Dekhe Shikhi* (learn from photos). These schools used a number of supplementary story books which include *Lal Murgi* (red hen), *Prithibeer Sabchaite Baro Pitha* (largest cake on earth), *Dadima Ebong Ami* (grandma and me), *Dui Pakhi* (two birds) and *Kothay Aamar Ma* (where is my mom). BRAC is the major publisher in this case, in addition to FIVDB and Save the Children. *Aamar Protham Para* (my first reading) and *Kayda O Dween Shikkha* (norms of Islamic education) are the two main texts used in mosque based pre-primary schools. These were published by the Bangladesh Islamic Foundation. Others included *Aamar Protham Para* (my first reading), *Aamra Ganit Shikhi* (we learn maths) and *Sanatan Dharma Shikkha* (Hindu religious education). These were published by *Hindu Dharmiyo Kallyan Trast* (Welfare Trust for the people of Hindu faith). It was found



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

<sup>2</sup> It was absent until the fieldwork of the study; however, national curriculum was approved afterwards.

that some of the government and the non-government schools also used some books published by the above mentioned NGOs.

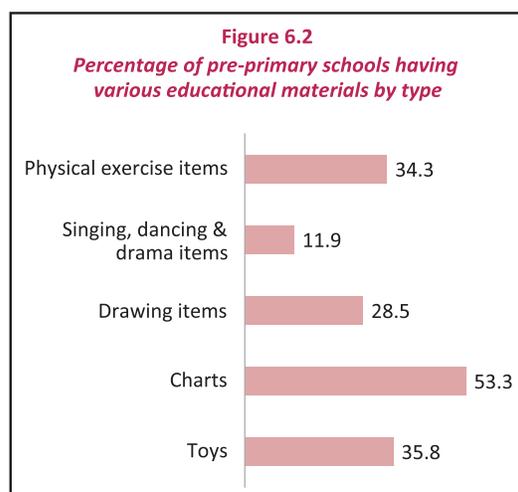
In most cases the government and non-government schools emphasised Bangla language only. Along with Bangla, the NGO schools also emphasised mathematics and environmental studies but the mosque based pre-primary schools emphasised Arabic language. The kindergartens were much different. They taught Bangla and English languages, mathematics, Arabic, religious education, and drawing. Separate books were used for each of them.

During qualitative investigation it was known that the kindergartens changed book titles almost every year. On the other hand, the other types of schools use the same title year after year. The other issue was the number of titles in kindergartens. An explanation for this can be found from a head teacher of a kindergarten:

At the beginning of each year, many private book publishers come to us with their booklists and sample copies. We select books which we think suitable for our students. We decide grade-wise appropriate books. Then we prepare grade-wise booklists and give them to the parents at the time of admission. The parents buy books from local shops. If we feel to add any other book at any point of the school year, again we ask the parents to buy that in the same way. Usually we change the booklist every year, but there are some common books also.

## B. Educational materials used in schools

Information on the use of educational materials in the classrooms, categorized into the following five broad groups, was collected from the surveyed schools: toys, charts, drawing items, items for singing, dance and drama, and physical exercise items. Toys included clay, wood, plastic, and jute; charts included alphabet chart, number chart, and natural scenery; paper and colour pencil were included in the list for drawing items; items for singing, dance and drama included cassette player, mobile phone, dress, and *nupur*; and rope, ball, and dumble were considered as physical exercise items. An option called 'others' was kept in each category.



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Overall, 61% of the schools had one or more of these materials. Highest proportion of the schools had charts (53.3%) and lowest proportion had singing, dancing and drama related items (11.9%) (Figure 6.2). Of the other categories of items, toys were found in 35.8% of the schools, materials for physical exercise in 34.3% and drawing materials in 28.5% of the schools. Whatever the type of materials, the NGO schools were at the top of having them in schools and the mosque based schools at the bottom (Table 6.1). Ninety-nine percent of the NGO schools had charts, 95% had toys, 92.7% had drawing materials, over three quarters had materials for physical exercise and 43% had materials relevant to singing, dancing and drama. On the other hand, 12.7% of the mosque based schools had charts, 1.3% had toys, 0.7% had drawing items, 1% had materials for physical exercise and none had materials relevant to singing, dancing and drama.

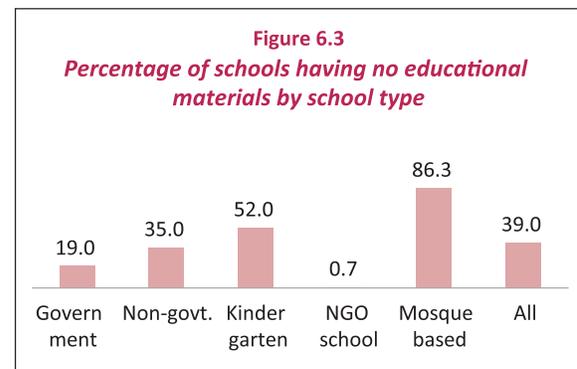
Almost all the NGO schools had charts. It was available in 70.3% of the government and 56.7% of the non-government schools, 27.3% of the kindergartens, and 12.7% of the mosque based schools (Table 6.1). Again, 43% of the NGO schools had implements for singing, dancing and drama; it was in 12.3% of the kindergartens, 5–6% of the government and non-government schools, and none of the mosque based schools.

**Table 6.1**  
*Percentage of pre-primary schools having educational materials by type of material and school type*

Type of materials	School type				
	Govt. Primary	Non -govt. Primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based
Toys	46.3	22.0	13.3	95.0	1.3
Charts	70.3	56.7	27.3	99.0	12.7
Drawing items	31.0	16.7	3.0	92.7	0.7
Items for singing, dance, drama	5.7	5.0	12.3	43.0	0.0
Physical exercise items	44.0	24.3	28.3	75.7	1.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Overall, 39% of the pre-primary schools had no educational materials at all (Figure 6.3). The mosque based schools were most disadvantaged as 86.3% of these schools had no such materials. Nineteen percent of the government and 35% of the non-government schools also had no materials. Surprisingly, more than half of the kindergartens also had no such materials. In detail, 86.7% of the kindergartens had no toys, 72.7% had no charts, 97% had no drawing materials, 87.7% had no materials for singing, dancing and drama, and 71.7% had no materials for physical exercise. Of the five types of materials presented here, 18.6% of the schools had only one type, 10.5% had two types, 10.1% had three types, 15.4% had four type and 6.5% had all five types.



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Mean number of materials per school where these were available is provided in Table 6.2. On an average, 28.3 toys and 14.5 items for drawing were found in each school. Among others, each school had 4.2 charts, 3.3 items for singing, dancing and drama, and five materials for physical exercise. It seems that some materials were inadequate to serve adequately to all students in the

**Table 6.2**  
*Mean number of educational materials per school by type of material and school type*

Type of materials	School type					All
	Govt. Primary	Non-govt. Primary	Kinder arten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Toys	21.3	24.2	12.7	33.8	11.0	28.3
Charts	3.5	3.7	2.8	5.5	2.0	4.2
Drawing items	10.7	12.6	23.1	15.7	13.0	14.5
Items for singing, dance, drama	5.2	3.8	3.5	3.6	-	3.3
Physical exercise items	7.2	4.7	3.6	3.3	1.3	5.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

classrooms. For instance, 14.5 drawing materials can never meet the need of 28 registered students with 19 attendees (Table 5.14 in Chapter 5). Although the toys were highest in number in the

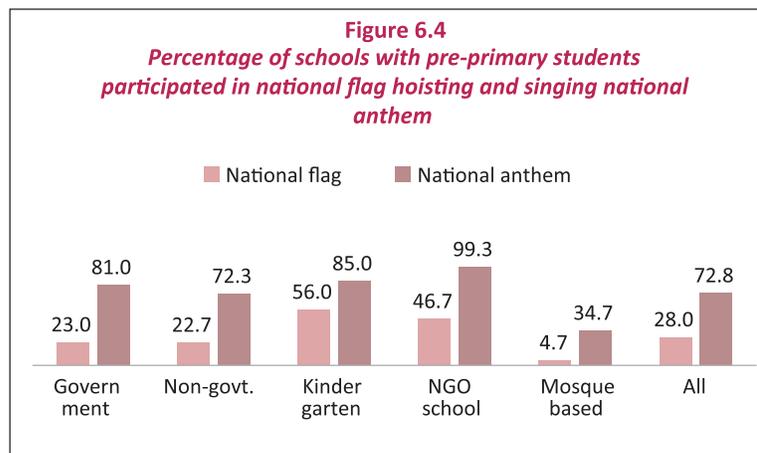
classrooms but 28.3 toys cannot ensure access to the above number of pupils as per their demand. Charts and items for singing, dancing, drama and physical exercise may be used in groups. However, it would be interesting to see how the teachers manage the classrooms with limited resources.

School type-wise analysis shows that NGO schools had more toys and charts than others. The kindergartens were ahead of others in having drawing items and the government schools in having materials for singing, dancing, drama and physical exercise.

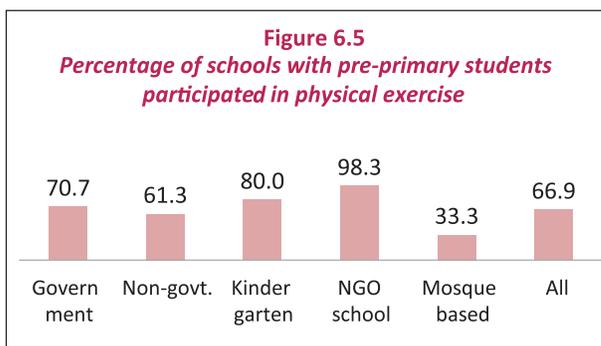
In majority of the cases (64%) these materials were kept in the classroom itself and rest in the office of the schools. Overall, nearly 70% of the toys and drawing materials, two thirds of the charts, about 60% of the materials for singing, dancing and drama, and 47.2% of the physical exercise items were kept in the classrooms. Drawing materials were kept to the students in 5% of the cases. School type-wise analysis showed a different scenario. Over 98% of the materials in NGO schools and three-quarters of those in mosque based schools were kept in the classrooms. This was 36.3% in the government schools, 26.7% in the non-government schools, and 21.4% in the kindergartens.

### C. National flag hoisting, national anthem and physical exercise

Hoisting of national flag and singing of national anthem in schools foster love for the country including its people, history and heritage. These are common school activities across the world. It was surprising to find that the pre-primary students of only 28% of the schools had national flag hoisting as a regular ritual (Figure 6.4). Happily, national anthem was sung by the students of 72.8%



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

of the schools. Students of less than a quarter of the government and non-government schools and below 5% of the mosque based schools attended of the national flag hoisting. This was the case for 56% of the kindergartens and 46.7% of the NGO operated schools. Singing of national anthem was more common in all types of schools compared to hoisting of national flag. Students of almost all NGO schools, 85% of the

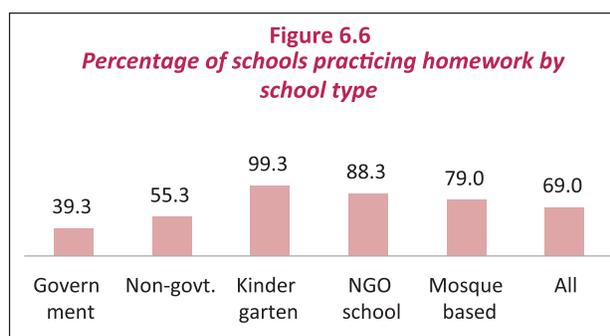
kindergartens, 81% of the government primary, and 72.3% of the non-government primary schools sang national anthem. Students of 34.7% of the mosque based pre-primary schools sang the national anthem.

Physical exercise plays an important role in early childhood development. It can be arranged in school fields or in the classrooms. Sometimes, it is done along with curricular activities. In majority of the cases, the schools arranged physical exercise without any

materials. On an average, two-thirds of the schools had physical exercise as part of school activities (Figure 6.5). School type-wise, NGO schools were at the top of such activities while the mosque based schools were at the bottom. Eighty percent of the kindergartens, 70.7% of the government and 61.3% of the non-government schools had physical exercise in place for the pre-primary students.

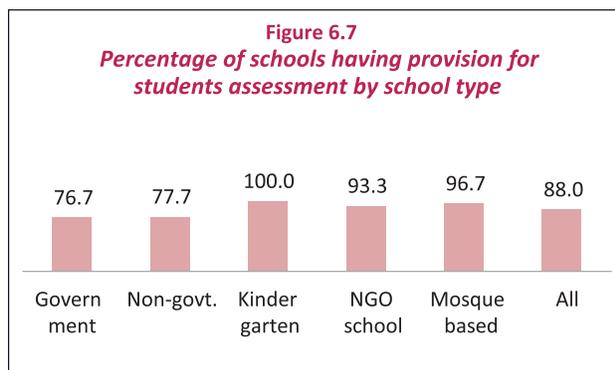
#### D. Homework and assessment

A common phenomenon in primary and secondary education in Bangladesh is homework. In most cases, homework means some written tasks offered by the school teachers to be done by the students at home. It was surprising to observe that homework was also given to the pre-primary students in 69% of the schools under study (Figure 6.6). The kindergartens were more active on this with 99.3% of them practicing it. They were respectively followed by the NGO operated (88.3%) and mosque based schools (79%). Over 55% of the non-government schools and 39.3% of the government schools also offered homework to the students.



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Pre-primary students were assessed in 88% of the schools (Figure 6.7). Written, oral or both were the common mode of assessment. All the kindergartens, 96.7% of the mosque based and 93.3% of the NGO operated schools had provision for students' assessment. Over three-quarters of the government and non-government primary schools did the same. Majority of the schools (70.6%) assessed students' through both written and oral tests, 6.4% took written test only and 11% took oral test only. Over 80% of the kindergartens, NGO operated and mosque based schools practiced both types of tests in assessing the students.



Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Table 6.3**  
*Percentage distribution of schools by frequency of assessment and school type*

Frequency of assessment	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Nil	23.3	22.3	0.0	6.7	3.3	12.0
One	15.7	9.7	1.7	12.0	43.7	18.5
Two	9.3	5.0	1.7	5.3	11.7	7.3
Three	50.7	60.7	77.3	7.3	19.7	41.2
Four or more	1.0	2.3	19.3	68.7	21.7	21.0
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

operated schools adopted monthly assessment system with some exceptions. For instance, 68.7% of the schools reported 10 tests per year and 6.7% reported no tests at all. However, 12% of the same type of school

had the provision of only one test per year, 5.3% had two tests, and 7.3% had three tests. On the other hand, 43.7% of the mosque based schools had the provision of only one test, 11.7% had two tests, and 19.7% had three tests. It can be noted that 18.3% of the mosque based pre-primary schools adopted monthly assessment system. Majority of the government and non-government schools and kindergartens had three tests which include first term, half yearly and annual.

**Table 6.4**  
*Percentage distribution of schools by assessment type and school type*

Assessment type	School type					All
	Govt. Primary	Non-govt. Primary	Kinder garten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Written	5.7	6.7	16.7	0.7	4.7	6.4
Oral	15.0	22.3	1.3	12.3	4.7	11.0
Both	56.0	48.7	82.0	80.3	87.3	70.6
None	23.3	22.3	0.0	6.7	3.3	12.0
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

Eleven percent of the schools had only oral test for students' assessment, 6.4% had written test and 70.6% had both (Table 6.4). Both oral and written tests were taken by 56% of the government, 48.7% of non-government, 82% of kindergartens, 80.3% of non-formal and 87.3% of mosque based schools. Kindergartens were ahead of others in offering written tests, non-government schools in oral test and mosque based schools both. Around 22–23% of the government and non-government schools, a few of the non-formal and mosque based schools and none of the kindergartens had no provision of students assessment (Tables 6.3 and 6.4).

### E. Home school communication

Schools communications with parents and vice versa are very important particularly for pre-schools. Teachers' home visit, parents' school visit, parent-teacher meeting and informal talk among parents and teachers are some of the ways to keep contacts. A high degree of parental involvement was reported in pre-primary education which is in general absent in mainstream primary and secondary education in Bangladesh. It was found that the teachers of 82% of the schools visited homes of their students; 86.2% of the parents visited school, 83.3% discussed about progress of their children's education and 52.7% advised the teachers for educational development (Tables 6.5). Parent-teacher meeting was held in 72.8% of the schools. NGO operated and mosque based schools were ahead of the Kindergartens, and the government and non-government schools in all the indicators.

**Table 6.5**  
*Percentage of teachers providing opinion on various issues by school type*

Issues	School type					All
	Govt. Primary	Non-govt. Primary	Kinder agarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Curriculum	54.0	42.7	40.7	31.0	38.3	42.5
Teaching materials	92.7	94.3	78.7	54.0	88.0	82.7
Physical facilities	94.7	94.7	74.0	85.7	84.7	87.5
Teachers	94.3	96.3	67.7	46.0	62.3	74.3
All four	46.3	38.3	29.0	19.0	27.3	33.1
None	0.0	0.3	10.0	10.3	2.3	4.0
Others	22.0	19.3	13.3	10.3	13.3	16.1

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

### F. Duration of pre-primary class

Duration of pre-primary class varied substantially not only by school type but also within each particular type. It ranged from 45 minutes to 4.30 hours. The duration was less than 2 hours in 6.3%

of the schools, 2–<2.30 hours in 19.2% of the schools, 2.30–<3.00 hours in 35.2% of the schools, 3.00–<3.30 hours in 36% of the schools and more than 3.30 hours in 3.3% of the schools. Highest variation was observed in the kindergartens and lowest in the NGO operated non-formal schools. Mean duration of pre-primary class was 2.30 hours. It was 2.50 hours in each of NGO and mosque based schools, 2.30 hours in the kindergartens, and around 2.20 hours in government and non-government schools.

### G. Teachers' opinion

A number of issues like curriculum, teaching materials, physical facilities, and issues related to pre-primary education were discussed with the heads of the government and non-government schools and the kindergartens and the teachers of NGO and mosque based schools. The aim was to seek their opinion regarding the problems faced in implementing pre-primary education. The respondents were asked to share their opinion based on their own experiences. Perhaps due to short experience with pre-primary education, only a third of the respondents expressed their opinion on all four above mentioned issues.

It seems that majority of the head teachers were not aware or did not find

it necessary to be aware of pre-primary curriculum. Most of them considered the prescribed books as the main instrument to provide such education. Thus, we see that 57.5% of the school heads had no opinion on this. Among those who had an opinion, nearly 17% had no idea about any pre-primary curriculum; however, they demanded for specific curriculum and textbooks. Twenty-nine percent of them mentioned that there was no English in the curriculum and wanted to keep scope to teach at least English alphabets at this stage of education. Over a fifth of the teachers noticed that the books used for pre-primary were difficult for the pupils. Eleven percent of the teachers identified shortage of story books. As they said, provision of colourful story books was a must at this stage of education.

The school heads identified inadequacy of teaching materials in pre-primary classrooms which hampered quality education. These can be categorized into four: books, stationeries, toys, and charts. Nearly 57% of the teachers mentioned that students did not have adequate stationery, 41.4% mentioned inadequate number of charts in the classrooms, 26.8% inadequate toys, and 13.9% mentioned books.

A number of items related to physical facilities of the schools were identified by the teachers which hampered pre-primary education. Absence of separate classroom for pre-primary education or inadequate number of classrooms in the schools was mentioned by 41.2% of the teachers. Absence of electricity or electric fan and light were mentioned by 38.2% of the heads. Lack of toilet facilities in schools in general or separate toilet specific to pre-primary students (considering their age and height) was mentioned by a third of the school heads. A similar portion identified inadequacy in seating facility which included chair, table, bench, mat, etc. About 30% of the school heads raised the

**Table 6.6**  
*Percentage of teachers providing opinion on various issues by school type*

Issues	School type					All
	Govt. Primary	Non-govt. Primary	Kinder agarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
Curriculum	54.0	42.7	40.7	31.0	38.3	42.5
Teaching materials	92.7	94.3	78.7	54.0	88.0	82.7
Physical facilities	94.7	94.7	74.0	85.7	84.7	87.5
Teachers	94.3	96.3	67.7	46.0	62.3	74.3
All four	46.3	38.3	29.0	19.0	27.3	33.1
None	0.0	0.3	10.0	10.3	2.3	4.0
Others	22.0	19.3	13.3	10.3	13.3	16.1

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

problem related to drinking water facilities for the students and 12.2% identified absence of play grounds.

Three major problems related to teachers were identified by the school heads. Lack of additional teachers to teach in pre-primary classes was identified by 35.7% of them; over 40% mentioned

**Table 6.7**  
**Suggestions of the school heads for**  
**improving pre-primary education provision**

Suggestions	% of teachers
Adequate educational materials	33.1
Trained teachers specific to pre-primary	24.8
Separate and decorated classrooms	18.5
Age specific toilet facility in school	17.2
Electricity, electric fan and light	15.8
Pure drinking water facility in school	15.2
Adequate books for each student	11.8
Better seating arrangement	11.2
Adequate toys and play materials	9.8

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

teacher training. According to them, the teachers lacked training specific to pre-primary education. However, 12.2% mentioned low teachers salary as a problem.

The teachers were asked to identify the steps to reducing the existing constraints in pre-primary education. Most of their suggestions were in line with the problems identified. They suggested for adequate educational materials, training of teachers specific to pre-primary education, separate and decorated classrooms, age specific toilet facility in school, electricity, electric fan and light, clean drinking water facility in school, adequate books for each student, better seating facility, and adequate

number of toys and play materials. In addition, the heads felt the need for increased awareness among the parents so that they can be a help along with the teachers. The other suggestion was to resolve the above problems jointly with teachers and members of school managing committees.

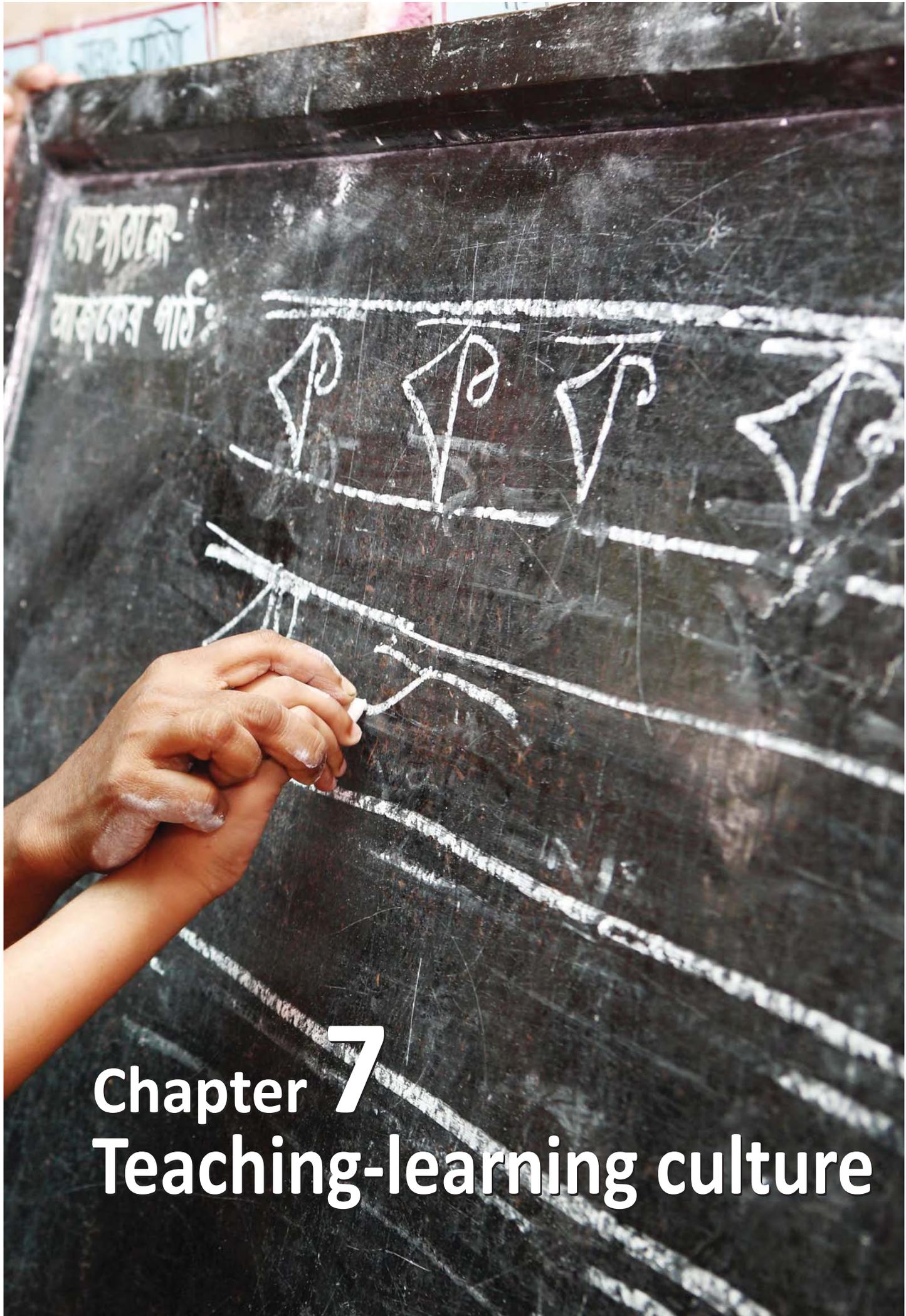
## H. Summary findings

Following are the salient findings from this chapter on curriculum and other inputs related issues.

- In absence of any curriculum and fixed textbooks from any central authority the pre-primary education providers used a variety of different textbooks published by various publishers. Overall, 912 book titles were found which were published by 418 publishers. Major variations were found in the kindergartens followed by the NGO operated non-formal schools and the non-government schools.
- Not all the schools had adequate educational materials – 53.3% had charts, 35.8% had toys, 34.3% had physical exercise items, 28.5% had drawing items, and 11.9% had singing, dancing and drama related items. The chronology changed dramatically when mean number of materials were explored. Toys came up at the top (28.3 items) followed by drawing items (14.5 items). Others were less than 5%. Thirty-nine percent of the schools had none. These include 86.3% of the mosque based, 52% of the kindergartens, 35% of the non-government, 19% of the government, and 0.7% of the NGO schools.
- Participation in hoisting of national flag and singing of national anthem are important parts of school rituals. Students of 72.8% of the schools participated in singing national anthem and those of 28% of the schools participated in national flag hoisting. Two-thirds of the schools had provision for physical exercise. In each case, NGO schools were ahead of others and the mosque based schools lagged behind.

- Provision of homework was found in 69% of the schools. Most kindergartens, 88.3% of NGO schools and 79% of mosque based schools had this practice. This was 39.3% of the government and 55.3% of the non-government schools. Eighty-eight percent of the schools practiced various forms of student assessment starting from classroom assessment to half-yearly and final examinations. Both oral and written tests were taken.
- School-wise substantial variation was observed in duration of daily contact time which ranged from 45 minutes to 4.30 hours. It was less than two hours in 6.3% of the schools, 2–<2.30 hours in 19.2%, 2.30–<3.00 hours in 35.2%, 3.00–<3.30 hours in 36%, and more than 3.30 hours in 3.3% of the schools. Highest variation was observed in the kindergartens and lowest in NGO schools.
- Head teachers were asked to put their opinion on curriculum, teaching materials, physical facilities and teachers' quality based on their own experience. Only a third provided an opinion in all four issues. Lack of teacher and their training, inadequate physical facility and teaching materials were mentioned by over a third of the teachers. Only 42.3% provided curriculum related opinion.





# Chapter 7

## Teaching-learning culture



**P**re-primary education, due to its particular nature as a part of early childhood development, demands a variety of activities and techniques to be used in the classrooms and outside for fostering child development. Because of the age of the students such activities should differ from the upper classes of primary education. It is expected that pre-primary classrooms would be activity-based, colourful, joyful and participatory so that learning can be fun for students. Moreover, there should not be any differentiation between curricular and co-curricular activities which is often the case at upper levels of education. Here, both are equally important for learning and complementary to each other. Trained teachers, spacious and decorated classrooms with lots of reading and play materials are thus obvious parts of pre-primary education. Activities outside classrooms are equally important. In order to understand teaching-learning provisions and practices at pre-primary level, classroom and outside activities in 10 schools of five types were closely observed. BRAC schools were considered to represent non-formal category because of highest frequency and scale.

### **A. Setting of the schools**

**Schools location and classrooms:** It is expected that schools and the classrooms should be situated in such a place where teaching-learning activities can take place in an undisturbed and peaceful atmosphere. Such an environment may include spacious and decorated classrooms with good flow of natural air and light, and little noise outside. Unfortunately, not all schools under study met these conditions. In most cases, overall arrangement for pre-primary education was not well organized. There were lack of physical and learning facilities and classrooms were not learning friendly.

A government and a non-government school were situated adjacent to local bazaars and the other two in secluded places. Kindergartens were located in such places where noise and sound easily affected classroom activities. As a departure, BRAC schools were established in calm and quiet places. The government and the non-government schools were established on their own lands, but the kindergartens and the BRAC schools were established in rented houses. On the other hand, mosque based schools were placed inside the mosques. Most of them were on busy roads. Moreover, one mosque was in the middle of a market and thus the place was crowded, especially during school hours. Kindergartens and mosque based schools had no room or ground to play.

All the 10 schools had dedicated classrooms (space in the case of mosque based schools) for pre-primary education. However, some were small in size in terms of number of students, such as in the kindergartens. Classrooms in other schools were spacious. All the classrooms had adequate number of windows through which enough natural light and air could pass in. One mosque based school lacked natural light and air. The government and non-government schools which were located nearby the bazaars and the kindergartens had electricity facilities but the number of fans in the classrooms was inadequate. The other schools had no such facility.

The classrooms were hardly decorated in majority of the schools. None of the classrooms of the government, non-government and mosque based schools and the kindergartens were decorated and there were lack of teaching-learning materials in them. No bin, toy basket, rack or trunk was found in any of these schools. BRAC schools were exceptional in this regard; the classrooms were fully decorated with many posters, pictures and artworks. Many of these were drawn by the students and teachers themselves. There was also a trunk in each classroom where educational materials were safely stored.

It can thus be said that the classrooms in BRAC schools were more appropriate and friendly for pre-primary education. On the other hand, an opposite scenario was observed in the mosque based schools in terms of location and overall environment. Kindergartens were also beyond expectation.

**Sitting arrangement:** Classroom sitting arrangement is an important issue because it has an implication for teaching-learning. Two types of seating arrangements were found in the observed schools. Benches were found in two government and one non-government schools and the kindergartens. On the other hand, seating on floor (on jute or plastic mats) was found in NGO (BRAC) and mosque based schools and in a non-government school.

Although the pre-primary students did not feel ease sitting on benches due to their physical growth, there was no alternative in a number of schools. Not enough benches were found in most of these schools. For instance, only three low benches were seen in the pre-primary classroom of a government school. Four students could seat with ease in each, totalling 12. However, 40 students were enrolled in the class and at least half of them were normally present on an average day. Moreover, there was no place (such as a desk) for keeping books and other materials. Thus, two types of problems were found in this school – sitting in a congested manner and absent of high bench or desk. Another government and a non-government school also had inadequate number of low and high benches. Each student of the kindergartens had a seat but there was no room to walk in the classrooms because it was full of benches. The classroom size was comparatively small considering the number of students.

Floor sitting arrangement (on mats) was found in BRAC and mosque based schools and in a non-government school. BRAC school classrooms had enough space for movement of the students and teachers. Students of a mosque based school also sat on mat but in other school they sat on the *pucca* floor. In the non-government school where the students sat on jute mat was earlier used by BRAC to run a pre-primary class. When BRAC left, the school authority started its own pre-primary class there. On request of the school authority, BRAC left the mats to the school because the teachers of this school liked floor sitting system and they found it suitable for the pre-primary students. U-shaped sitting arrangement was observed in the BRAC schools and this non-government school. However, in other schools, the students sat side-by-side in rows and columns.

Gender wise differentiation was also found in seating of the students at this very young age. Girls and boys of the kindergartens and the mosque based schools sat separately; one column for the boys and the other for the girls. In other schools, the students sat wherever they liked irrespective of gender. A teacher of a mosque based school said that it was religiously forbidden to mix boys and girls. Kindergarten teachers claimed that they did this because the parents wanted it. A teacher of a non-government school said, 'it is not good to create gender-wise differentiation at this early age. Girls and boys, in our school, always sit together. We should cultivate fellowship mentality among them regardless of gender identity.'

**Books and other materials:** *Aamar Boi* (my book) published by the Directorate of Primary Education was used in the government and non-government schools under study. Each of these schools received 30 sets of such books free in 2011; no new book came afterwards (in 2012 or 2013). On completion of pre-primary course the students left their books to the teachers for use by the next cohort of students. Thus, the current pre-primary students of these schools started their school life with old, sometime dirty and non-attractive books. It was also reported that each of these schools received 30 notebooks, some pencils, alphabet charts, *ludo*, balls, and skipping rope from the *upazila* education office in the same year.

Mosque based schools used two books published by the Islamic Foundation Bangladesh. These were *Kayda O Din Shikkha* containing Islamic practices and rituals, and *Aamar Prothom Pora* (my first

reading) containing Bangla, English and mathematics. Both the schools received these books last year (2012). So the students were using books already used by another cohort of students. However, each of the students had both the books.

On the other hand, BRAC schools and the kindergartens were exceptional. BRAC schools had three main books. Each student got new set of three books at the beginning of the academic year. One set of six story books was also found in each BRAC school. Besides, a teacher's guide containing description of 150 lessons and all other necessary information was found with each teacher. Each student also had copybooks, pen, pencil, colour pencils, etc. These were provided by BRAC free of cost.

All students of the kindergartens had new books. These were not free of cost and the parents had to buy them from local markets. Each student had six books in one kindergarten and seven books in another. Students also had all necessary things including copybooks, pen, pencil, etc.

Like books, play materials were also available in some schools but not all. Government and non-government schools had some art papers and play materials like balls, skipping ropes, etc. which they got from *upazila* office a few years back. Other learning materials like sticks, blocks, shapes, flash cards, and charts were not found in these schools. Teachers informed that they tried to collect some more materials from local education office as well as from community but the initiative was not successful. Mosque based schools also had none of the above. As the schools were located inside the mosques it was prohibited to hang any poster there. Kindergartens had a number of books for the pre-primary students, but the schools did not have any other teaching-learning or play materials.

BRAC schools were better conditioned in this regard. Slates, hardboards, colour pencils, various types of flash cards, blocks, alphabet and letter charts, bamboo made counting sticks, etc. were in the classrooms of both the schools. Besides, there were some materials made of clay which were provided by the mothers of the students. Some plastic made materials were collected from communities. These were stored in trunks in the classrooms.

**Teachers and their qualifications:** Teachers of the government and non-government schools and the kindergartens were not exclusively for pre-primary education. Government and non-government school teachers were previously recruited for primary education but now as per demand of the schools they were conducting pre-primary classes. These schools did not appoint any teacher to teach in pre-primary classes. Kindergarten teachers were recruited to teach in both primary and pre-primary sections. On the other hand, the teachers of BRAC and mosque based schools were recruited exclusively for conducting pre-primary classes.

The government schools had one female teacher each for pre-primary. One of them completed higher secondary education and another had a master degree in commerce. The former received only a short training course on pre-primary education but the later did not; however, she had Certificate in Education (C-in-Ed). One of the non-government schools had two male teachers and the other had a female teacher. One male and the female teacher completed higher secondary education and the other male teacher had a Bachelors degree. Each of them had C-in-Ed but no training on pre-primary education. One of the kindergartens had six and the other had four teachers. Four of them had Masters degree, three had bachelor degree, and three completed higher secondary education. None of them received any kind of teacher training. BRAC and mosque based schools had one teacher each. Both the BRAC school teachers were females, one of whom completed secondary

education and the other had a Masters degree. One of the mosque based schools had a female teacher who completed secondary education and the other had a male teacher who had completed alim level madrasa education (equivalent to higher secondary education). All four teachers of BRAC and mosque based schools received basic teacher training provided respectively by BRAC and Islamic Foundation.

Teachers of the kindergartens were more experienced than the others. Each of them had a few years of experience. One BRAC and other mosque based school teachers had also some years of experience. All other teachers had less than two years of experience. Of the 19 teachers, 17 were Muslims and the other two were Hindus (one in a government and the other in a BRAC school).

***Students and their attendance:*** Number of students in the observed classes varied from 20 to 40. A government school had 40 students, a non-government school had 22, a kindergarten had 20, and all others had 30–33 students. The government schools had equal number of boys and girls, the non-government schools and the kindergartens had more boys than girls and the BRAC schools had more girls than boys. Although a mosque based school had equal number of boys and girls, the other had more girls than the boys.

Attendance of the students during the three observation days were recorded through head count and compiled later. The attendance rate was below 50% in the government and non-government schools and over 75% in the kindergartens. The rate was 97% in a BRAC school and 77% in another. Although all students of a mosque based school were present in each observation days, 60% of the students were present in the other.

### **B. Teaching-learning activities**

In terms of the nature of teaching-learning activities, no difference was observed between the government and non-government schools or any of the two schools of the same type. Teaching was mostly limited to Bangla alphabets and mathematical numbers. Recitation of rhymes and drawing of various objects were also done. Teachers sometimes read alphabets/numbers loud and the students collectively recited them. They also asked the students to read alphabets and numbers from the charts hung on the walls. The students sometimes did so collectively and sometimes individually, as instructed by the teachers. For instance, in a government school, the teacher recited a rhyme line-by-line and the students followed her. In another school, teacher wrote the number 11 to 15 on the blackboard and asked the students to copy on their slates for several times. The teachers sometimes called the students to the blackboards and asked them to write alphabets or numbers of teachers' choice. Intention of the teachers to ensure participation of all students in these activities was convincingly observed. Additional care to the slow learners was limited to asking them to read or write repeatedly. The same was done to those who did any mistake. The teachers also praised those students who performed well. No group work or peer work was seen in any of these classrooms. Activities like singing, telling stories or rhymes, play or drama were totally absent. Everything was book-based. There was no activity outside classrooms. There was no variation in teaching style.

Kindergarten classrooms were simple without any decoration. No posters, photos, charts or students' artworks were seen there. No other teaching materials except books, chalks, duster, and blackboard were found in the classrooms. However, the teachers came everyday regularly and timely and spent the full amount of time in the classrooms. The classes started with an instruction from the teachers for submitting homework offered them the previous day. It was a daily activity. Teaching techniques included teachers' reading from the books, writing on blackboard and copying by the

students, asking questions to the students, and providing them some written tasks. The teachers claimed that more books were used in their kindergartens compared to any other pre-primary educational institutions. However, no teachers' guide was found in any of them. More than one teacher was found in each kindergarten; however, no difference was observed in their teaching style.

Teacher assessed students regularly in different ways in the classroom. Teachers also praised the students as and when necessary; especially when the students could provide correct answers to their questions which may be oral or written. Compared to any other pre-primary schools, the kindergarten students were heavily loaded with homework and other book-based activities. Thus, a good portion of the teachers' time in the classrooms went for checking students' homework. In order to keep the students busy the teachers often offered them more written work which was not always possible to check with adequate attention. Students were seen making noise, quarrel or gossip among them while the teacher was checking their copybooks. No introduction was given before transferring from one topic to another. No group work was seen. Considering the congested sitting arrangement, it was also not possible to do group work. English was their main focus in teaching. More emphasis was given on memorization and rote learning than understanding.

BRAC schools were pleasantly different. They started with singing national anthem in the classrooms followed respectively by some physical exercises and cleaning of classroom and surroundings. The teachers carried 'teachers guide' to the classrooms daily and tried their best to follow the instructions provided in the guide. Individual work was seldom seen in BRAC schools. Most activities in the classrooms were in groups – small or large. During group activities, the teachers moved from one group to another and helped the students as required. Such activities may be reading, writing or even play or drawing. The teachers were very cooperative and helpful in correcting mistakes of the students, if any. The teachers sometimes joined with the students and participated in group activities. At this time, they tried to help the slow learners. In general, the teachers behaved warmly with the students, helped them as required, motivated to participate in classroom activities, and praised individual student or group of students for their good work.

It was difficult to differentiate between curricular and co-curricular activities in BRAC classrooms because both appeared equally important. While doing activities with language or mathematics the teachers suddenly moved to a play or singing or dancing activity. This relieved the students and the teachers from monotony and made the classroom joyful. The students liked such practice; however, they were found happier when activities like play, singing or dancing were done. Sometimes, when the teachers found that the students lost their concentration with a type of activity they moved to another. Outdoor plays were seldom seen. Although there were scopes to arrange free-hand outdoor plays the teachers did not do it. Instead, defending them, they mentioned that as there was no material for outdoor plays they could not arrange any. No specific play corner was seen in the classrooms. There were some plastic and mud made materials in both the classrooms; however, use of them was less than expected. There were no musical instruments and costumes in the schools except anklet for singing and dancing.

Classes in mosque based schools started with recitation from the Holy Quran. Each day, the teachers instructed a boy or a girl to do so. The other students were found silent at that time. After this, the teacher asked another student to recall the previous day's lesson and say it loudly. All other students followed this student. New lesson started afterwards. Two books titled *Amar Prothom Pora* and *Kayda O Din Shikkha* published by the Islamic Foundation Bangladesh were used. No other materials like stick, blocks, shapes, flash card, and charts were used as these materials were not available in

the mosques. No group or co-curricular activities were seen and the students' participation was very limited. Of the two teachers, behaviour of the female was softer than that of the male. She had a tendency to help the students which was missing in the male teacher. Teaching was limited to Arabic, mathematical numbers and Bangla alphabets. No play material was seen in any of the mosque-based pre-primary school. As there was no space as well as no play-material for the students, they did not get any chance to play in school. There was a break for ten minutes to take rest at the middle of school hours. A supervisor of mosque based schools explained in the following way.

Except study, we do not encourage any other activities in school, because, most of the schools are located in the premises of the mosques. Mosque is a holy place. However, we instructed teachers to engage students in outdoor play but not in the mosque or around. Besides, we asked the teachers to involve the students in soft games so that they do not get hurt.

**Student assessment:** Similar to other levels of education, traditional examination once a year or more was found very popular in most pre-primary schools except BRAC. Teachers of these schools were convinced of the necessity of such provision. BRAC schools followed informal assessment as part of regular teaching-learning activities. On the other hand, kindergartens had day-to-day as well as three formal examinations. Provision of weekly and monthly examinations, on completion of a topic or a section, was also found in the kindergartens. No similarity was found in examinations marking system. Besides, the system changed every year. There was no specific guideline for this.

Regular assessment in BRAC schools and the kindergartens were held through class work and homework offered to the students. Offering homework was also regular in the kindergartens but it was occasional in BRAC schools. Homework in the kindergartens included further reading of the topics at home which were taught in school and some written tasks for doing at home. In BRAC schools, very few written tasks were offered as homework. Assessment in classrooms included asking students to write mathematical numbers on their slates or copying alphabets, numbers or drawing from blackboard. Sometimes BRAC schools students were asked to practice at home that was already done in the classroom. As part of assessment, if the teacher asked a specific question to a student, after getting reply from him/her the teacher asked another student to tell whether the answer was correct. This is an example how teaching, assessment and students' engagement were tried. Students' assessment along with teaching rarely occurred in mosque based schools. Following is a statement from a teacher of a mosque based school:

We keep eyes on the students to understand whether they learn. But assess them when supervisor visits because he wants to know students progress. Moreover, we do it in front of him so that he can provide feedback to the students, if needed. During assessment we ask from such topics that were already taught.

The teachers of the government and non-government schools claimed that they were attentive to the students, so daily assessment was not required. To them two terms and one final examination was good enough to judge the students. Mosque based schools claimed that Islamic Foundation rewarded the first three students based on the final examination at the end of academic year. Final results in the kindergartens were calculated accumulating written records of all weekly, monthly and terminal examinations. Results were sent to the parents. Box 7.1 provides two statements of two teachers which reflect their understanding about examination and assessment for pre-primary students.

**Participation in national anthem and hoisting national flag:** Students' participation in hoisting of national flag and singing of national anthem in school is important for the sake of building good citizenship. Government, non-government and BRAC schools and the kindergartens hoisted national flag everyday but the mosque based schools did not. National anthem was sung regularly in the government, non-government and BRAC schools but irregularly in the kindergartens and never in the mosque based schools.

Government and non-government schools and the kindergartens were two-shift schools; thus flag hoisting and national anthem were held in-between the shifts. As the contact hour for pre-primary in government and non-government schools was less than the other grades of the first shift, it was not possible for them to participate in the events. Pre-primary students of these schools left schools before the events started. Kindergarten students could do

it as they had longer contact hour. However, as the kindergartens had no additional space, the students had to do this in the very narrow space of verandas. A better situation was observed in BRAC schools where hoisting of national flag and singing of national anthem were daily routine activity at the beginning of school hour. As there was only one grade in such schools all the pre-primary students participated in these activities.

**Outdoor play:** Play should be one of the major activities in pre-primary schools. Learning can be joyful and fun if play can be incorporated with various classroom activities. This contributes in mental and physical development of students as well as creates friendship and understanding among them. However, unfortunately, importance of play as part of curricular activities was not well appreciated by most of the pre-primary teachers. None of the schools under observation had implement suitable for outside play. Moreover, there was no provision of outside play which can be done without any material, although a number of schools had space to do so. When the issue of play was discussed, a government school teacher said, 'school is a place for learning not to play. We teach the students many issues in classrooms. They have enough time to play before and after school hour.' In this regard a kindergarten teacher mentioned, 'if we allow students to play outside, the parents would complain against us. Thus, the school committee does not allow any outdoor play during school hour.' As the mosque committee did not like, outdoor play was forbidden in mosque based schools. On the other hand, some ropes and balls were found in BRAC schools which were used inside the classrooms. The above two statements and play-less teaching provision in the pre-primary schools clearly indicates lack of understanding and appreciation of child development.

**Punishment:** Both mental and corporal punishment was seen in mosque based schools and the kindergartens but not in the other three types of schools. It is not unusual that sometimes the students would not like to follow the instructions of the teachers rather they would love to work on their own. Sadly, this was not always understood by the teachers. They, in the name of making the

#### Box 7.1

#### Teachers views on examination and assessment

We do not offer any kind of examination to the pre-primary students throughout the year because it can create anxiety and examination phobia to them. We try to evaluate our students based on their class performance, although we don't do it regularly.

-A government school teacher

Examination is one of the best ways to assess the students. We examine our students' weekly, monthly, in two terms and through a final examination to assess their knowledge. We also evaluate them through observation in the classroom. Weekly examination is to ensure their regular attendance in school. We keep record of everything. They are examined through written and oral tests. We believe if the students go through such a rigorous process of examinations their examination related anxiety would be removed.

-A kindergarten teacher

Source : Education Watch In-depth Interviews of Pre-primary School Teachers, 2013

students disciplined and make them attentive to classroom activities, acted in a way which can easily fall in the category of punishment. The teachers of these schools also confessed this.

For instance, a kindergarten teacher shouted at his students due to late submission of homework. A teacher of a mosque based school hit a student using ruler because the student was talking to his peers. Students of a mosque based schools were afraid of their teachers because they always carried a stick during class hours. They also punished the students by asking them to stand on foot for a long time if they failed to provide a correct answer. Similar type of punishment was also found in the kindergartens.

According to teachers, a little punishment was necessary to keep the classroom under control. When they were asked whether they knew any class-control mechanism which does not require punishment, most of them replied in the negative. This also proves the necessity of effective training on pre-primary education of the teachers. A teacher of a registered school strongly instructed a student to sit properly. When the teacher noticed that the student was about to cry, she went to him and consoled. According to a government school teacher, punishment to the pre-primary students is nothing but cruelty. A BRAC school teacher mentioned that she was informed of negative effects of punishment when she got training. She also knew that punishment is totally prohibited in BRAC schools.

***Interaction among the students and between teacher and students:*** Teachers of government and BRAC schools were more caring to their students than others. These teachers knew their students names and sometimes called them as ‘mother’ or ‘father’ affectionately. When the teachers entered into the classrooms, students greeted them and the teachers responded appropriately. Teachers regularly asked them about their health and whether they had their breakfast. Besides, BRAC school teachers asked about the absentee students to their peers. It was observed that the students of these schools could ask anything to their teachers without hesitation and teachers also replied promptly. If anyone failed to do the tasks, teachers helped them. Although the government school teachers had no training on pre-primary education they also behaved well with the students like as those of the BRAC schools. Relationship among the students was also fine in most cases. Although in a few cases they quarrelled in the classrooms but most of the time they were helpful to each other in most classroom activities. They also shared utensils like books, pencils, slates, etc.

In contrast, teacher-students interaction was somewhat uneasy in the non-government, kindergarten and mosque based schools. The teachers of these schools behaved with the pre-primary students which they were used to do with those in other classes. Students of these schools did not get enough opportunity to ask questions easily to the teachers. Easy interaction between teacher and students mostly depends on how the teachers communicate with the students. Carrying of stick or a ruler, shouting to the students or punishing them in the name of discipline were found obstacle to easy teacher-students relationship. Sometimes the students were seen afraid of their teachers, especially in the mosque based schools. This was also found in the non-government schools and the kindergartens but not as severe as that in the mosque based schools. Provision of greetings, students helping each other, or teachers asking the students about their health and breakfast, etc. were rarely seen in these schools.

At the beginning of the class, students of all schools gave *salam* to the teachers and the teachers also replied the same. Tendency to help the students of the teachers was low compared to the government and BRAC schools. Teachers rarely asked the students about their health as well as about absent students. Compared to mosque based and registered schools, to some extent, better interaction between teacher and students was seen in kindergarten schools though this was not up

to the mark. Interaction among the students was not well in kindergarten and mosque based schools. Interaction between boys and girls was highly discouraged by the teachers of these schools. Moreover, talking with peers in the classroom was also discouraged.

### C. Supervision, monitoring and community participation

**School heads and programme supervisors:** Like any other provision, it is expected that pre-primary educational activities would be supervised and monitored and necessary feedbacks would be provided through a two-way loop. It is also expected that the feedbacks would be well taken by the teachers and lead to continuous improvement of the provision. This was explored during the study.

Some kind of supervision and monitoring was present in all types of schools either by the head teachers or by their supervisors. However, this was not always done. The *upazila* education officials (UEO and AUEO) visited the government and non-government schools but did not do so for other types. Excepting for BRAC, the responsible persons (supervisors) actually visited the schools but did not provide effective feedback to the teachers. In many cases, it was not possible to provide any feedback due to their inadequate capacity.

Three of the head teachers of the government and non-government schools were found visiting the pre-primary classrooms almost daily. According to them, the pre-primary class teachers were not trained in dealing with the young learners so they visited the classrooms as much as possible to fill this gap. These heads although provided feedbacks to the teachers but these were limited to classroom management only. There was nothing related to teaching-learning. The head teacher of a government school was unable to visit pre-primary classroom daily because, as he said, he had been very busy with administrative works. The same was repeated in the kindergartens. Classroom visit of the heads was there but feedbacks were not allied to teaching-learning activities.

Supervision from the respective *upazila* education officials was rare. UEO and AUEO occasionally visited the government and non-government schools but they were not much interested in pre-primary education. As a new intervention this should have attracted their special attention but they were more interested in the primary section. However, they did ask the head teachers whether such education was being provided in the right way. The school heads responded positively and the visitors were happy. There was an exception too. A UEO and the respective AUEO provided several joint visits to a particular study school at the beginning of the academic year. Reacting to this the pre-primary teacher of this school said, 'the officials are showing interest to pre-primary section because it is newly established. I think such an interest would not continue for long'.

The supervisors of BRAC schools visited schools and so did the supervisors appointed by the Islamic Foundation for the mosque based schools. During school visit, the BRAC supervisors used prescribed format which contained issues on teaching-learning activities, discipline and physical facilities. They filled up this format through observation. They discussed their observations with the teachers after school hour which was found fruitful. Following is an example of such support.

One day a programme organizer (BRAC supervisor) saw that a teacher asked her students to draw a mango. Instead of drawing a mango, one of the boys drew a papaya. The teacher checked this art-work of her students one-by-one in presence of the supervisor but did not give any special attention to the student who drew another fruit bypassing her instruction. After school hour, the supervisor asked the teacher whether she noticed it. The teacher replied, 'actually I did not have much time to deal with this issue as I had to move on to the next lesson.' The supervisor advised the teacher to finish one lesson first and then move to

the next. Regarding the specific case of the boy, his suggestion was to try to understand such students and be supportive. He also reminded that it is not unlikely that a few students would act differently. The teacher first needed to find out whether the student was able to draw a mango; if not, she needed to help him. The teacher replied, 'I would comply with it.'

Observation reports were also sent to higher management. On the other hand, although the supervisors visited the mosque-based schools regularly, at least three times in a month, they were unable to provide any feedback related to teaching-learning. This was because they had no training on pre-primary education. Teachers of these schools mainly shared problems related to school facilities with the supervisors.

***Role of SMCs and parents and community participation:*** Not all the schools under study had similar type of managing committee. The school managing committees of the government and non-government schools and the kindergartens were responsible for overall school activities including pre-primary education. In one of the government schools a separate committee was formed to look after pre-primary activities but this was found inactive. BRAC schools had parents committee with the same purpose. Mosque-based schools had no separate committee but the mosque committees were responsible to take care of the schools as additional duty.

In most cases, the function of the school managing committees was 'business as usual', without any additional/special activities specific for pre-primary. The SMCs in the government schools were more active than those in the non-government schools and the kindergartens. Scanning the meeting minutes of the SMCs no decision specific to pre-primary education was observed. It is plausible that the SMCs thought the education at pre-primary level was no different than primary. Two reasons might be accounted for this. First, it was a new phenomenon to them. Second, they did not get any orientation on pre-primary education. Thus, we observed that while visiting pre-primary classrooms the SMC members behaved in a way that they were used to with primary classrooms. Some of the SMC members also forgot to visit pre-primary classrooms while doing so in others. It was discovered that in most cases, SMC members did not visit the classrooms on their own and willingly; they did it when the head teachers requested. It was known that while opening the pre-primary classes in the government and non-government schools at the beginning of the academic year, most of the SMC members were present and promised to cooperate with the initiative. The teachers also expected their cooperation in this regard but no reflection of their promise was seen. A similar story was learned from the kindergartens. None of them were in a position to provide feedback to the teachers in relation to teaching learning activities because they thought they were not competent to do so. A head teacher of a kindergarten mentioned the following:

SMC members meet with us once in a month. We discuss various issues of school improvement. Our SMC members are not capable enough to provide pre-primary education related feedback. Reality is that most of our teachers do not know much about this kind of education, so we cannot expect anything better in our SMC members. They can give an overall observation on the whole school but not on any specific issue which requires technical knowledge.

Parental involvement was found more in the kindergartens and the BRAC schools in compared to government or non-government schools. It should be mentioned that mothers were found more active than fathers in keeping communications with the school authorities and the teachers. Besides, involvement of community members was noticed in BRAC schools. Mothers of the kindergarten and BRAC school students visited schools on a regular basis and talked with the teachers about

educational matters of their children. Moreover, these educational institutions arranged regular parent-teacher meeting to listen to the parents and as well report to them. Involvement of parents and other community members, in mosque-based schools, was almost negligible. The mosque-committees had overall control over the schools. Parents and other community members had little opportunity to be involved.

The local primary school teachers (heads and others) visited BRAC pre-primary schools on request of BRAC supervisors. They came, observed and provided their opinion. This is a good example of community support to BRAC schools. Such friendly relationship created scope for mutual learning (Box 7.2).

#### Box 7.2

##### *A case in parental involvement*

Parents and the communities are well associated with BRAC schools in many different ways. If any student absents the class the teacher asks the neighbouring students about him/her. If absenteeism occurs for successive days, the teacher visits the student and his/her parents at home. The other students also knock at the absentee student. The parents become very happy seeing teacher's and peers care to their children. It is also a psychological support to the families. All these help encourage ensuring high attendance rate and reducing dropout.

The seven-member parents committee rotationally visit the schools. It is possible perhaps because they live nearby. As they are not that much educated they cannot provide technical support. However, their regular visit ensures timely presence of the teachers throughout the school hour, and students' active participation and interaction with teachers. Sometimes the parents individually visit the teacher in school to talk about progress of their children's education.

During monthly parents meeting the committee members report their observations, teachers' response and other parents take part in discussion. Such a practice ensures schools accountability to the parents and thus helps maximizing overall effort.

*Sources : Focus Group Discussions with Parents and In-depth Interviews with Teachers and Supervisors, 2013*

## **D. Summary findings**

Teaching-learning provisions prevailing at pre-primary level of the 10 observed schools were explored and reported in this chapter. As the number of schools was small the results might not be generalized in statistical terms. However, as the findings were mostly similar in most of the schools under study it has significance for the overall system. Salient findings of this chapter are provided below:

- Pre-primary schools, in most cases, were not well suited to providing quality education due to inadequate physical facilities. Classroom size and other available spaces were also not appropriate for movement of the students. Mosque based schools did not have specific classroom; verandas were used for teaching. Classrooms were not learning friendly and sitting arrangement was inappropriate considering age and physical growth of pre-primary students. Gender segregated sitting arrangement was found in kindergartens and mosque based schools. BRAC schools had relatively better facility among the observed schools.
- There was no similarity among schools in terms of curriculum, books used, and use of teaching learning materials. Inadequate number of books and no or very few teaching-learning materials were found in government, non-government and mosque based schools. Kindergartens used variety of books; however, they also lacked teaching-learning material and tools. BRAC schools had enough books for all students along with other learning materials.

- All schools had specific teacher to teach at pre-primary level but not exclusively for it. Primary teachers of government and non-government schools taught in pre-primary as additional duty. Kindergarten teachers were appointed to teach in both. Most of the teachers were not qualified for pre-primary education. Little or no training was a major obstacle. They did not know how to deal with children at early ages. Teachers of BRAC and mosque based schools were appointed to teach only in pre-primary and were provided training.
- Teaching methods in pre-primary classes were no different than that in primary classes. Ways of communication with students, materials used, students' participation, class and home works, etc. were the basis of such conclusion. Government, non-government and mosque based schools and the kindergartens had similar challenges. Valuing play and other fun activities as part of classroom teaching was almost missing. Book-based one way deliberation was prominent. In contrast, a joyful learning environment coupled with curricular and co-curricular activities and participation of all students were found in BRAC schools.
- Traditional examination system, suitable for upper grades, prevailed at pre-primary level in most of the schools except BRAC. Students' assessment as part of teaching-learning was found in the kindergartens and BRAC schools. Mental and corporal punishment were seen in mosque based schools and kindergartens.
- In many cases, supervision of pre-primary activities in the schools and provision of feedback for improvement lacked. Pre-primary classroom visits by the heads of the government and non-government schools and the kindergartens was no different than that of the higher grades. Supervisors of mosque based and BRAC schools were found to visit schools regularly.



# Chapter 8

## Private expenditure for education



Private expenditure is an issue in pre-primary education as it is in primary and secondary education. Private expenditure for pre-primary education on the following seven different heads was collected: admission fee, monthly tuition fees, books, stationary, school bag, school dress, and private tuition. There are probably others, which however, were not explored. As the fieldwork for this study was done in July 2013, this study included expenditures incurred in January–June 2013.

### A. Scale of expenditures

On an average, the parents of 87.3% of the pre-primary students had to borne private expenditure during the first six months of the year (Table 8.1). Although no gender difference was observed in this (boys 86.9% and girls 87.8%), proportionately more urban students had private expenditures than their rural counterparts (98.4% vs. 84.9%;  $p < 0.001$ ). Heads of expenditure-wise, 42.4% of the students had to pay for admission fees, 30.2% paid monthly tuition fees, 45% paid for books, 76.1% for stationary, 53.3% for school bag, 35.7% for school dress, and 25.5% for private tuition. The rural-urban divide also persisted when the heads were considered. Highest proportion of the students spent money for stationeries followed by school bags. Private tuition was the least.

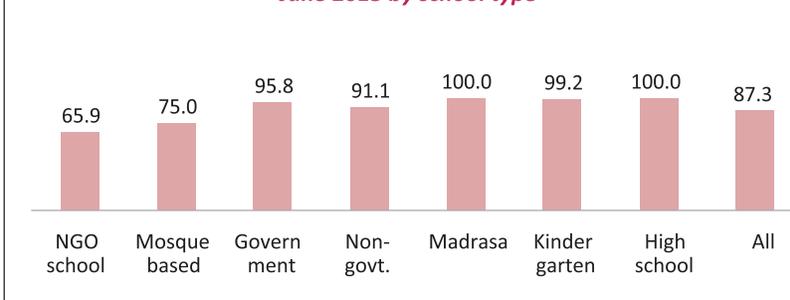
Almost all students of the kindergartens, madrasas and high schools had private expenditure for pre-primary schooling for at least one head (Figure 8.1). This was for 95.8% of the students of government schools and 91.1% of the students of non-government schools. Three quarters of the students of the mosque based pre-primary schools and two-thirds of those of the NGO operated non-formal pre-primary schools also had private expenditure. Area-wise analysis shows that almost all urban students of the government, non-government and mosque based schools had private expenditure during the reference period which was respectively 95.1, 90.9 and 72.9% for their rural counterparts (Annex 8.1). Three-quarters of the urban students of NGO schools and two-thirds of those of rural schools incurred some private expenditure. No gender variation was observed in most of the school types except NGO schools where 62.9% of the boys and 68.7% of the girls had private expenditure (Annex 8.1). More analyses of this by school type and heads of expenditure are provided in Annex 8.2.

**Table 8.1**  
*Percentage of students who incurred private expenditure by heads of expenditure, gender and residence*

Heads of expenditure	Gender		Residence		All
	Boys	Girls	Rural	Urban	
Admission	43.7	41.2	35.2	75.0	42.4
Monthly fees	33.2	27.2	22.1	66.6	30.2
Books	48.6	41.5	38.3	75.4	45.0
Stationery	76.3	75.9	71.8	95.5	76.1
School bag	53.5	53.5	47.5	80.7	53.3
School dress	37.0	34.4	27.8	71.3	35.7
Private tutor	25.6	25.4	20.1	50.0	25.5
Any	86.9	87.8	84.9	98.4	87.3

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Figure 8.1**  
*Percentage of students who had private expenditure during January–June 2013 by school type*

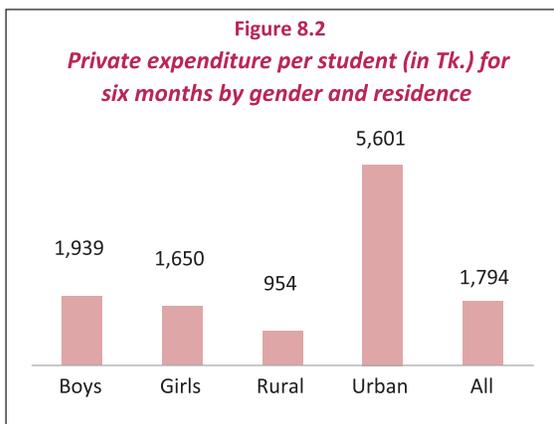


Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

More analyses of this by school type and heads of expenditure are provided in Annex 8.2.

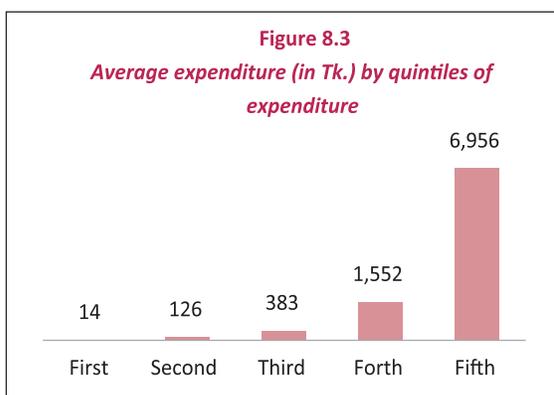
## B. Average expenditure

On an average, the households spent Tk. 1,794 per pre-primary student during the first six months of the year 2013 (Figure 8.2). If this is extrapolated, it becomes Tk. 3,588 per year. The average



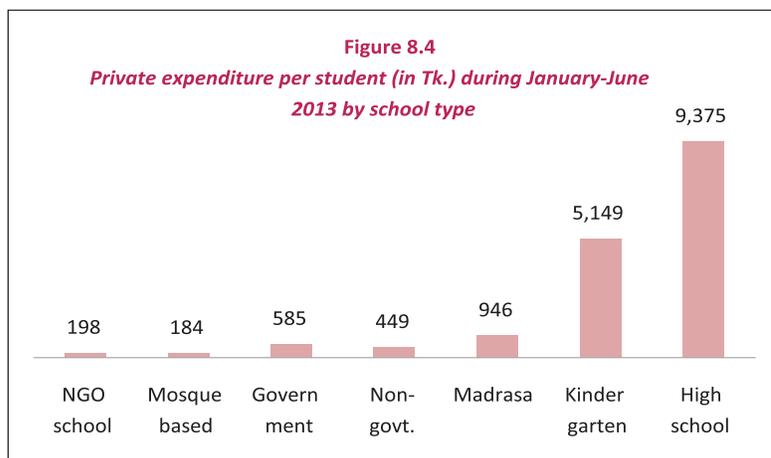
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

expenditure for six months was more for boys: Tk. 1,930 for boys and Tk. 1,650 for girls, indicating some gender bias in favour of boys. On the other hand, Tk. 5,601 was spent for each urban student against Tk. 954 for each rural student, which means that the urban parents spent six times of the rural parents. If only those students who had private expenditure during the reference period is considered (which is 87.3% of all students) the average would increase to Tk. 2,054 – Tk. 260 more than the previous figure. In this line, the figure would be Tk. 2,231 for the boys, Tk. 1,880 for the girls, Tk. 1,124 for rural and Tk. 5,694 for the urban students.



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

A wide variation was observed in total expenditure with a staggering maximum of Tk. 59,800. Private expenditure for a fifth of the (poorest) pre-primary students was Tk. 50 or less, it was Tk. 51–200 for the second quintile of students, Tk. 201–670 for the third quintile, Tk. 671–2,900 for the fourth quintile, and more than Tk. 2,900 for the fifth quintile (most well-to-do). Average expenditure against each quintile is provided in Figure 8.3. Huge difference among them is noticeable. Average monthly expenditure was more than Tk. 1,000 for 7.8% of the students and it was more than Tk. 500 for 19.8% of the students.



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

School type-wise analysis of private expenditure for pre-primary education shows that it was highest for students of high schools and kindergartens (Figure 8.4). For instance, on an average, six month's expenditure for the students of pre-primary classes of high schools was Tk. 9,375 followed by those of the kindergartens for whom Tk. 5,149 had to be spent during the same period. It was Tk. 946 for madrasa

students, Tk. 585 for government school students, and Tk. 449 for non-government school students. Private expenditure for schooling was much lower for the students of non-formal and mosque based schools: on an average, Tk. 198 and Tk. 184 respectively. Average expenditure for the government school students was three times that of the students in NGO operated non-formal schools. Expenditure for kindergarten students was 26 times and for the high school students 47 times of that of the students of NGO schools. Again, private expenditure for pre-primary education in the kindergartens was 8.8 times of that in government schools. The figure stands at 16 times for high schools if it is compared with government schools.

**Table 8.2**  
**Average expenditure (in Tk.) by school type, gender and residence**

School type	Gender		Residence		All
	Boys	Girls	Rural	Urban	
NGO school	200	194	196	228	198
Mosque based	180	188	180	228	184
Government primary	590	582	445	1,379	585
Non-govt. primary	505	378	381	3,707	449
Madrasa	1,136	718	838	5,600	946
Kindergarten	5,247	5,031	3,463	7,512	5,149
High school	9,930	9,168	1,016	14,152	9,375
Total	1,939	1,650	954	5,601	1,794

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

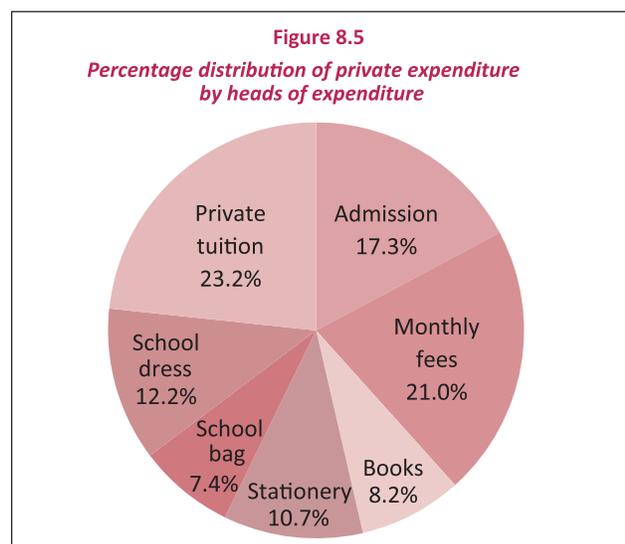
Average private cost for pre-primary education was higher for the boys than that of the girls in all types of school except mosque based schools. The cost was much higher for the urban students than that of the rural students of each type of school. Table 8.2 gives more details on this.

### C. Distribution of expenditure by item

Private tuition was at the top of all heads in terms of proportionate distribution of total private expenditure for pre-primary education. This is followed by monthly tuition fees and cost for school admission. Of the total private expenditure, 23.2% went for private tuition, 21% for monthly tuition fees, and 17.3% for school admission (Figure 8.5). These three items comprised of 61.5% of total expenditure. Among others, 12.2% of the total private expenditure went for school dress, 10.7% for stationery, 8.2% for buying books, and 7.4% for buying school bags.

The above analysis by gender and area of residence of the students is provided in Annex 8.3. Admission fees, monthly tuition fees and cost for private tuition were the three major heads of expenditure for both boys and girls, as well as of urban students. On the other hand, for rural students, it was school dress instead of admission fees. Whereas cost for stationery was at the fifth place for both boys and girls and for the urban students, it was at the fourth place for rural students. Expenditure for school admission was at the sixth place for rural students.

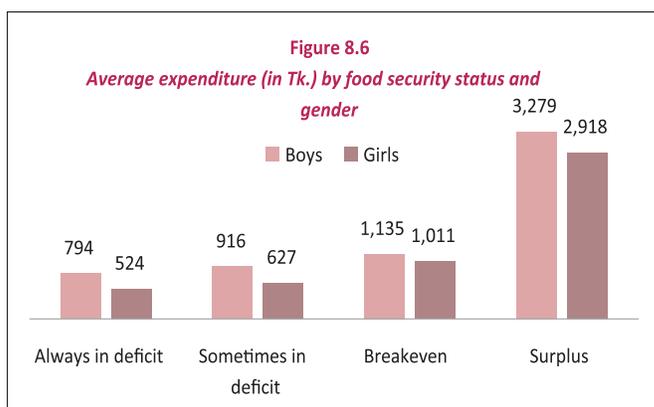
**Figure 8.5**  
**Percentage distribution of private expenditure by heads of expenditure**



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

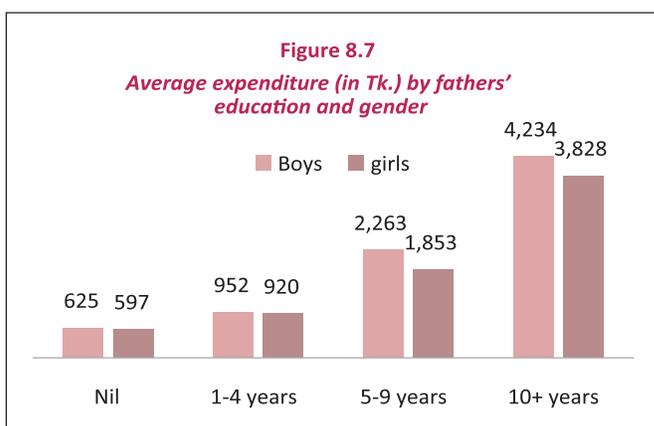
#### D. Socioeconomic differentials of expenditure

Gradual increase of private expenditure for pre-primary education was observed with the increase of household *food security status* (Figure 8.6). The average expenditure was Tk. 713 for those students who came from *always in deficit* households, Tk. 724 for the students of *sometimes in deficit*



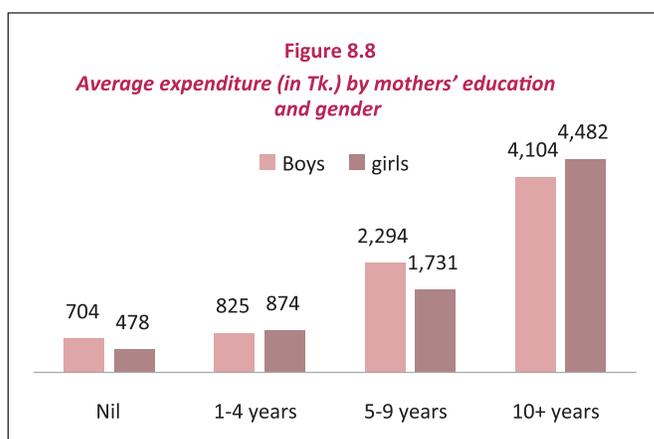
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

households, Tk. 1,071 for those of *breakeven* households, and Tk. 3,098 for those of *surplus* households. The difference between the costs against the first two categories was very small, cost against the third category was 1.5 times of the second category, and the cost against the fourth category was about three times of that of the third. The average private expenditure was higher for the boys than the girls irrespective of *food security status* of the households (Figure 8.6).



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

Private expenditure for pre-primary education also increased with the increase of parental education. The average expenditure was Tk. 611 if the fathers had no education; it was Tk. 937 if the fathers had 1–4 years of schooling, Tk. 2,046 if the fathers had 5–9 years of schooling, and Tk. 4,045 if the fathers had 10 or more years of schooling. Expenditure for the boys was higher than that of the girls at all levels of fathers' education (Figure 8.7).



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

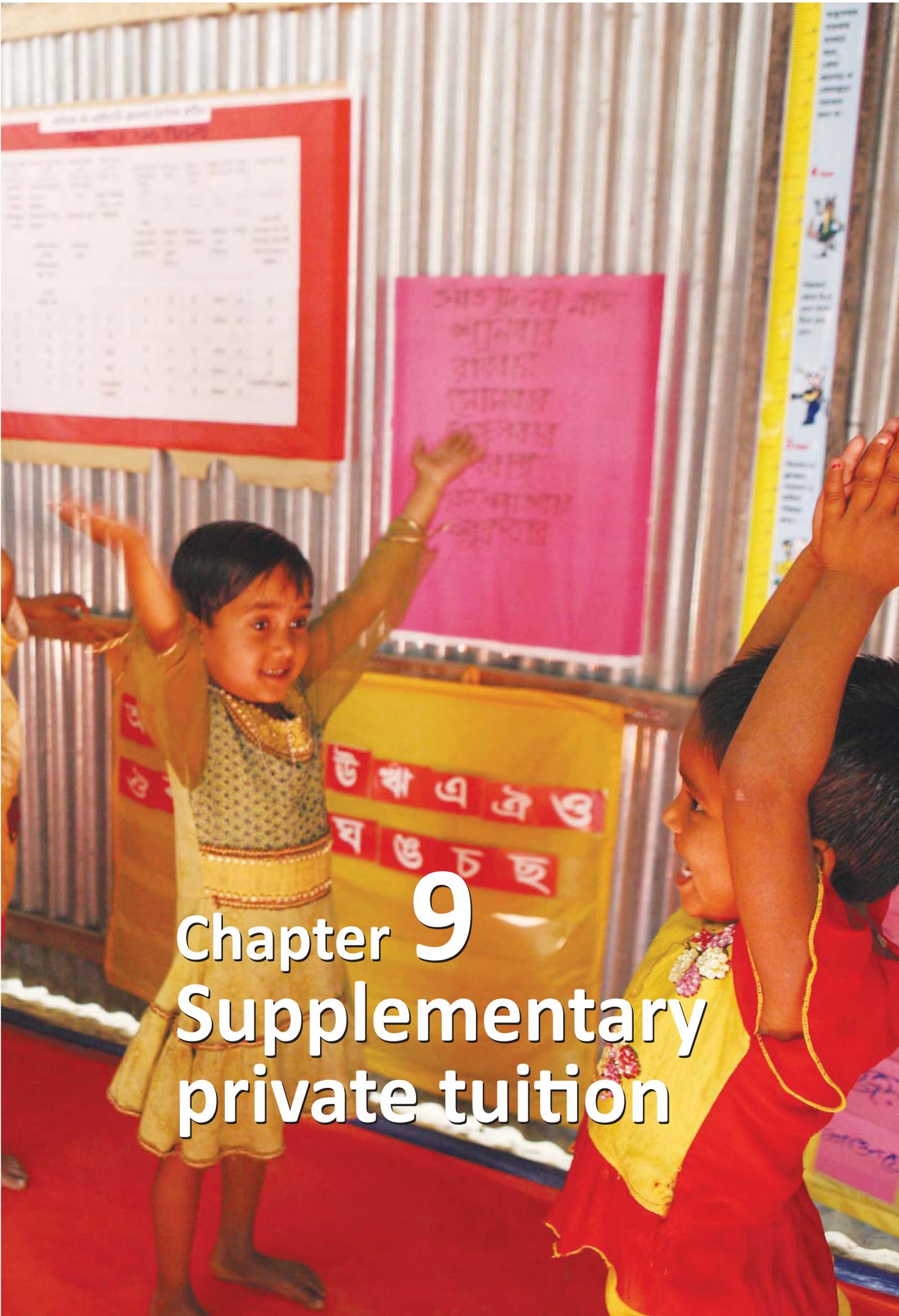
A similar picture was observed when the average private expenditure was calculated against mothers' education. Average expenditure per student was Tk. 587 if their mothers' had no schooling which increased to Tk. 850 for those with mothers' having 1–4 years of schooling, Tk. 2,014 for those with mothers having 5–9 years of schooling, and Tk. 4,291 for those with mothers having 10 years or more schooling. Separate such analysis for boys and girls is provided in Figure 8.8.

### E. Summary findings

Parents needed to bear private expenditure for pre-primary education of their children. Interestingly, the tuition waiver policy that was in place for primary and secondary levels was not applicable for pre-primary education. Following are the salient findings from this chapter.

- Over 87% of the students had to borne private expenditure for pre-primary education. Most pre-primary students belonging to kindergartens, madrasas, high schools, government and non-government, three-quarters of those of mosque based and two-thirds of those of NGO schools fell in this category.
- The highest proportion of students spent money for stationery (76.1%) followed by school bag (53.3%), books (45%), admission fees (42.4%), school dress (35.7%), monthly tuition fees (30.2%), and private tuition (25.5%).
- On an average, Tk. 1,794 was spent per student during the first six months of 2013. If this is extrapolated, it comes to Tk. 3,588 per year, a staggering figure! The six-monthly figure was higher for boys than girls (Tk. 1,939 vs. Tk. 1,650) and much higher for urban students than rural (Tk. 5,601 vs. Tk. 954). Whereas, the average expenditure was Tk. 14 for the poorest quintile it was Tk. 5,956 for the most well-to-do quintile.
- School-type-wise analysis shows very high private expenditure for the students of kindergartens and high schools and much lower for NGO and mosque based schools. Average expenditure of the government school students was three times of that of the NGO schools and kindergarten students spent 8.8 time of higher than those of the government schools.
- Of the total private expenditure for pre-primary education 23.2% went for private tuition, 21% for monthly tuition fees, 17.3% for school admission, 12.2% for school dress, 10.7% for stationery, 8.2% for books, and 7.4% for school bag.
- Private expenditure for schooling significantly increased with increase in parental education. Students from the households with *surplus* food security status had much higher expenditure than those from the households with *deficit* or *breakeven* food security status.





# Chapter 9

## Supplementary private tuition



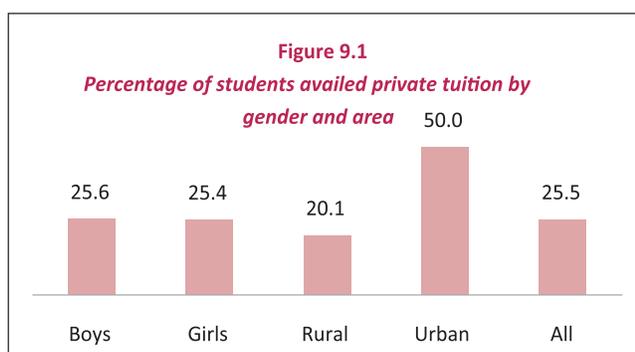
Supplementary private tutoring is an increasing menace in many developing countries (Bray 2003). Huge expansion of this is seen even in developed countries of Asia (Bray and Lykins 2012). Presence of supplementary private tutoring at primary and secondary levels in Bangladesh is well documented (Nath 2008, Nath *et al.* 2008, Nath and Chowdhury 2009). These studies show significant increase of students availing private tuition with the increase of grades in school. This chapter presents the case of supplementary private tutoring among the students of pre-primary education which is a new phenomenon in Bangladesh. No study so far explored this issue for pre-primary education in Bangladesh.

### A. The scale

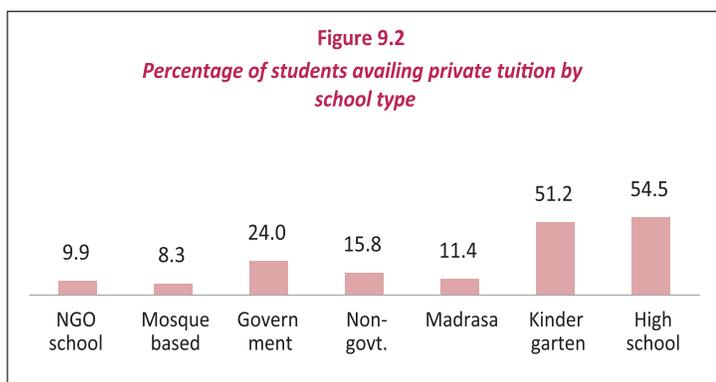
On an average, a quarter of the pre-primary students had private tutor at any time during the first six months of 2013 (Figure 9.1). There was no difference between boys and girls. A fifth of the rural students had private tutor compared to a half of the urban students ( $p < 0.001$ ).

A wide variation was also observed by school type (Figure 9.2). Although less than a tenth of the students of NGO operated non-formal and mosque based schools resorted to private tuition it was 51.2% in kindergartens, and 54.5% in high schools-attached. Twenty-four percent of the students of government pre-primary schools, 15.8% of those of non-government schools, and 11.4% of those of the madrasas also had private tutor.

*Upazila*-wise analysis shows a wide variation in private tuition among the pre-primary students which ranges from none to 74.1%. The proportion of students availing private tuition was less than 10% in 16.7% of the *upazilas* and it was 11–20% in additional 26.6% of the *upazilas*. At least a quarter of the pre-primary students of 46.7% of the *upazilas* had private tutor and a third or more students of a third of the *upazilas* availed private tuition.



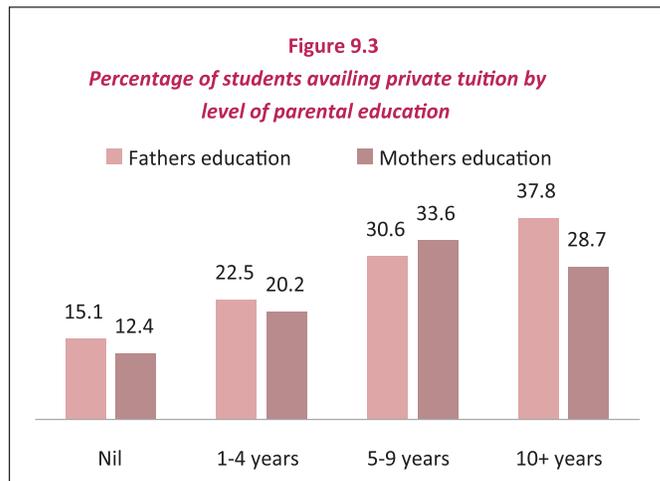
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013



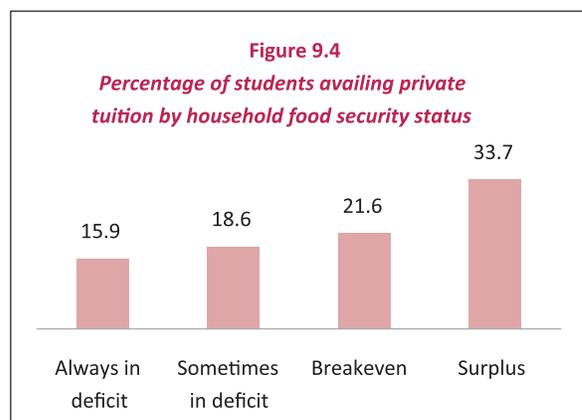
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

### B. Socioeconomic differentials

Statistically significant variation in proportion of students availing private tuition was observed (Figure 9.3). A steady increase in the prevalence was observed with fathers' education. For instance, 15.1% of the students whose fathers had no schooling availed private tuition. This rate increased to 22.5% with 1–4 years of fathers' education, 30.6% with 5–9 years of fathers' education, and 37.8% with 10 or more years of fathers' education. On the other hand, a different scenario was observed with mothers' education. The proportion increased up to the first three levels of mothers' education and then decreased. Here, 12.4% of the students with never schooled mothers availed private tuition



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

which increased to 20.2% if the mothers had 1–4 years of schooling and 33.6% if the mothers had 5–9 years of schooling. The rate then decreased to 28.7% for those students who had mothers with 10 or more years of schooling.

As expected, household food security status also had significant influence on students' resorting to private tutors. Nearly 16% of the students who belonged to *always in deficit* households availed private tuition (Figure 9.4). This was 18.6% among those who came from *sometimes in deficit* households, 21.6% among those who came from *breakeven*

households, and 33.7% among those who came from *surplus* households. Note that difference between the first and the second categories and second and third categories were three percentage points or less; however, a big jump was observed from the third to the fourth category (12.1 percentage points).

Statistically significant variation in availing private tuition was also observed in terms of religion, ethnicity and availability of electricity at home. For instance, compared to 27.2% of the Muslims, 15.9% of the non-Muslims had private tutor ( $p < 0.001$ ). The rate was 26.3% among the Bangalis and 5.8% among the small

ethnic groups ( $p < 0.001$ ). Again, 31.5% of the students availed private tuition among those who had electricity at home but it was 12.1% among those had no such facility at home. Thus, the Muslims, Bangalis and those had electricity at home were more likely to avail private tuition than their respective counterparts.

### C. Multivariate analysis of availing private tuition

This section provides a multivariate analysis predicting pre-primary students availing supplementary private tuition. Children of any age currently enrolled in pre-primary education were brought under this analysis. The dependent variable was students' participation in private tuition which was measured dichotomously: availing supplementary private tuition or not. The eight socioeconomic characteristics which were considered for similar analysis of access to pre-primary education were considered as explanatory variables. These are: age, gender, area of residence, fathers' education, mothers' education, self-perceived food security status of household, availability of electricity at home, and religion. All of them were categorical variables. Logistic regression analysis was performed because the dependent variable was measured dichotomously. Like as earlier, a stepwise approach was followed and the variables appeared in the regression model through forward selection and backward elimination. Thus, only the statistically significant variables were considered in building the model.

Of the eight explanatory variables, six came out as significant predictors of pre-primary students availing supplementary private tuition. These included age of children, area of residence, fathers' education, mothers' education, availability of electricity at home, and religion. Regression coefficients, odds ratios and their 95% confidence limits are provided in Table 9.1. Area of residence came out as the most important predictor of pre-primary availing private tuition followed by respectively availability of electricity at home, age of student, fathers' education, region, and mothers' education. On the other hand, gender and self-reported food security status of household had no significant role in predicting participation in private tuition at pre-primary level.

**Table 9.1**  
**Logistic regression model predicting prevalence of private tuition among pre-primary students**

Predictors	Regression coefficients	Odds ratio	95% confidence interval
<i>Area</i>			
Rural	0	1.00	
Urban	1.04	2.81	2.02 – 3.91
<i>Age</i>			
3–4 yrs	0	1.00	
5 yrs	0.80	2.23	1.52 – 3.27
6 yrs	0.93	2.53	1.69 – 3.79
7+ yrs	1.17	3.24	2.05 – 5.11
<i>Fathers education</i>			
Nil	0	1.00	
1–4 yrs	0.21	1.24	0.77 – 1.98
5–9 yrs	0.46	1.58	1.08 – 2.29
10 yrs+	0.81	2.26	1.39 – 3.66
<i>Mothers education</i>			
Nil	0	1.00	
1–4 yrs	0.49	1.63	0.98 – 2.71
5–9 yrs	0.91	2.49	1.64 – 3.80
10 yrs+	0.12	1.12	0.62 – 2.04
<i>Electricity at home</i>			
Not available	0	1.00	
Available	0.67	1.96	1.36 – 2.81
<i>Religion</i>			
Non-Muslim	0	1.00	
Muslim	0.57	1.77	1.15 – 2.74
Constant	–3.96		
–2 Log likelihood	1331.05		
Cox & Snell R <sup>2</sup>	0.14		
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.21		

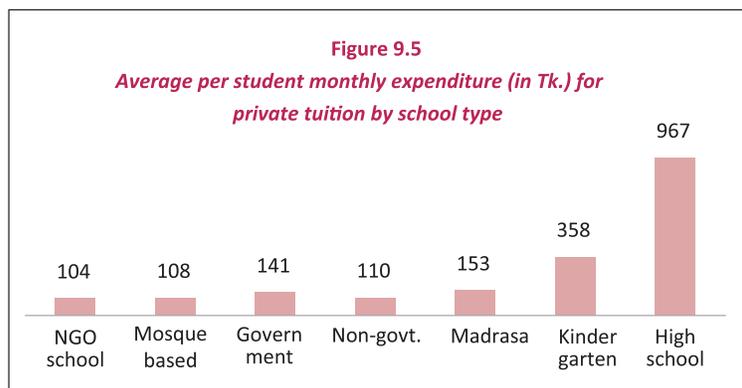
Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

Estimated probabilities of students availing supplementary private tuition were calculated against two sets of extreme characteristics. Regression coefficients found in the above model were used in probability calculation. This helps understanding the range of probability of taking support from private tutors. The probability ranged from 0.02 to 0.77. The lowest probability of availing private tuition was for those students who had the following characteristics: rural non-Muslim students of age 3–4 years, parents having no schooling, and having no electricity at home. On the other hand, students with the following characteristics had the highest probability of availing private tuition: urban Muslim of age seven years or more, fathers had 10 years or more and mothers had 5–9 years of education, and having electricity at home. This shows how the plausibility of being participated in supplementary private tuition at pre-primary level varied in terms of students' background characteristics. However, at the same time, no contribution of gender and household food security status was noticeable.

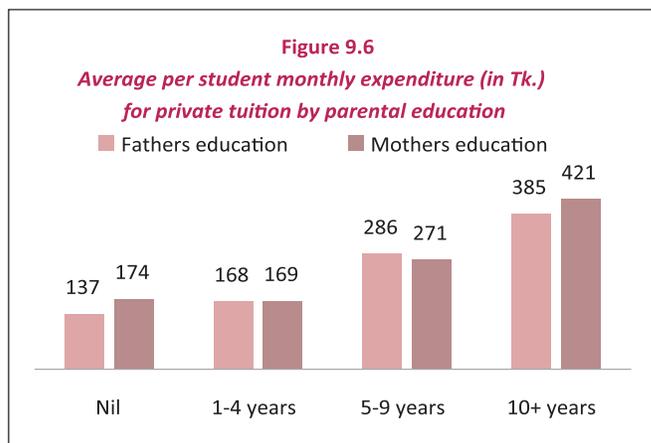
#### D. Expenditure for private tutor

Some results on the expenditure for private tuition were done in the previous chapter. This section reports estimates based on only those pre-primary students who availed private tuition. Thus, the estimated figures would be higher in this case.

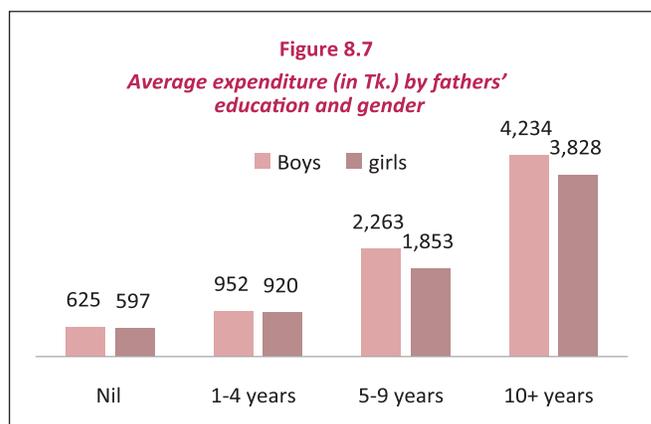
The students who availed private tuition, on an average, spent Tk. 1,622 for the same during the first six months of the year. In other words, average monthly expenditure for private tutor was Tk. 270 per student. Expenditure for the boys was slightly higher than that of the girls – respectively Tk. 272 and Tk. 268 per month per student. Such expenditure was 2.8 times higher for the urban students compared to their rural counterparts. Average monthly cost was Tk. 166 for rural students and Tk. 460 for urban students.



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013



Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

comparing to their rural counterparts. Average monthly cost was Tk. 166 for rural students and Tk. 460 for urban students.

Average monthly expenditure for private tuition varied substantially by school type (Figure 9.5). It was within Tk. 104–110 for a student of three different types of schools, viz., NGO operated non-formal, mosque based and non-government primary. Tk. 141 was spent for a government school student and Tk. 153 for a madrasa student. Much higher expenditure was reported for the remaining two types of schools – Tk. 358 for a kindergarten student and Tk. 967 for a high school-attached student. Although expenditure for a government school student was 1.4 times of an NGO school student; it was 3.5 times for a kindergarten student.

Monthly per student average expenditure for private tuition by students' background is provided in Figures 9.6 and 9.7. Per student monthly expenditure was Tk. 137 if the fathers had no education which gradually increased to Tk. 385 for the students with fathers having 10 or more years of schooling (Figure 9.6). Similarly, Tk. 174 was spent for the students with never schooled mothers and the figure gradually increased to Tk. 421 for the students with mothers having 10 or more years of schooling (Figure 9.6). This indicates a positive correlation between parental education and expenditure for private tutoring.

Monthly per student average expenditure for private tuition by students' background is provided in Figures 9.6 and 9.7. Per student monthly expenditure was Tk. 137 if the fathers had no education which gradually increased to Tk. 385 for the students with fathers having 10 or more years of schooling (Figure 9.6). Similarly, Tk. 174 was spent for the students with never schooled mothers and the figure gradually increased to Tk. 421 for the students with mothers having 10 or more years of schooling (Figure 9.6). This indicates a positive correlation between parental education and expenditure for private tutoring.

Similar to above, positive relationship between household food security status

and expenditure for private tutoring was observed (Figure 9.7). Average monthly expenditure was Tk. 127 for a student of *always in deficit* household, Tk. 145 for a student of *sometimes in deficit* household, Tk. 197 for a student of *breakeven* household, and Tk. 355 for a student of *surplus* household.

### E. Reasons behind private tuition

During qualitative exploration supplementary private tuition came out as an issue for discussion with the parents as well as teachers. Almost all teachers said that they strongly discourage private tuition for the pre-primary students. Their logic was that unlike other levels of education pre-primary students do not have much pressure of studies and students are assessed lightly. It was clear that they had no problem with such a practice for the upper graders.

When the issue was discussed with the parents specifically to know why a portion of them sent their children to the private tutors at this early age, a number of opinions came out. Some of the parents said that they did not get enough time to teach their children at home, so they needed help from someone else thus they engaged private tutor for their children. Some parents who never went to school or had a few years of education pointed out that they were unable to oversee their children at home or help them in doing homework. As the schools offered homework on a regular basis they engaged private tutor to keep up with the schools demand. Some parents who had some years of education which as they said was enough to look after education of pre-primary students confessed that due to workload at home or outside they did not get enough time to take care of their children. Thus, they sought help of private tutors. According to some parents, their children were naughty and did not want to study at home or did not want to follow the instructions of the family members; thus, they sent their children to a private tutor. The issue of competitiveness in future life and coping with such situation also came out in a number of discussions. Some of the parents thought that if they provide private tutor from early age their children would keep staying in competitive market.

Majority of the students, of course, did not have a private tutor. Most parents of these students thought that 'it was not required' because the schools did not put much pressure on the students. Some opined that they were happy with the school education. Some parents were able to look after education of their children at home; they had both time and qualification to do so. However, some could not provide private tutor due to financial constraints and some could not find a suitable tutor.

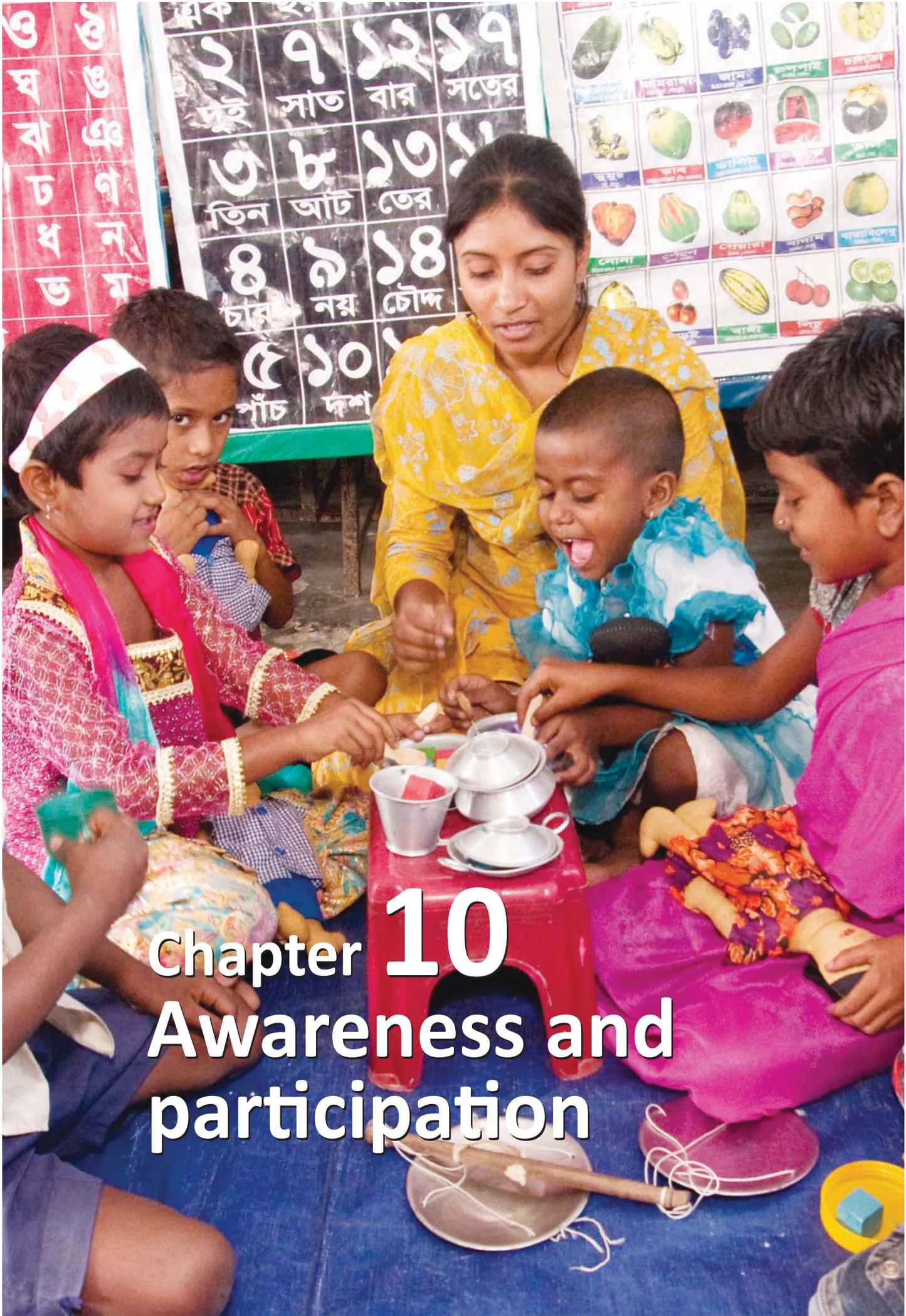
The case of BRAC school where less than 10% of the students had private tutor may be mentioned. BRAC teachers knew well that taking tuition privately by the pre-primary students or offering them tuition privately as their teacher were both strictly forbidden in BRAC system. Teachers were instructed to solve all the education-related problems of the students within the school hours and if required with some additional time. Parents also echoed in the same way. They added that the teachers did not offer any new homework so in most cases the students could do it themselves. If any student required help s/he sought it from upper grade neighbouring students.

### F. Summary findings

This chapter provided information on pre-primary students availing private tuition. Scale of private tuition, socioeconomic differentials and cost for it were presented. Reasons behind availing private tuition were also discussed. Following are the salient findings of this chapter:

- A quarter of the pre-primary students received private tuition during the first six months of 2013. Although there was no gender difference in this but a fifth of the rural students' availed private tuition compared to a half of the urban students.

- The prevalence of private tuition was much higher among the students of kindergartens and high schools-attached (over 50%) but much lower among those in NGO operated and mosque based schools (<10%).
- A steady increase in availing private tuition was observed with the increase of parental education. It significantly increased with increase of household food security status. Muslims, Bangalis and those had electricity at home were more likely to have private tuition.
- Students, who availed private tuition, on an average, spent Tk. 1,622 during the first six months of the year. In other words, average monthly expenditure for private tuition was Tk. 270 per student or Tk. 3,244 per year. This was slightly higher for boys than girls. Urban students spent 2.8 times higher than rural students.
- Average monthly expenditure for private tuition was Tk. 100–150 for the students of government, non-government, NGO operated and mosque based schools and over Tk. 350 for those of the kindergartens.
- Parents irrespective of educational status had no or little time to oversee children's education at home. Sometimes they choose to avail private tuition for children. Some parents choose private tutor as a strategy to better control, as they said, their naughty children. Some thought that it would help their children staying competitive.



# Chapter 10 Awareness and participation



Ten focus group discussions (FGD) with parents – five each with mothers and fathers representing all five school types - gave us an impression on parental understanding of early childhood care, education and development. In addition, opinion of teachers and their supervisors were also solicited.

#### A. Understanding of early childhood care and education

Early childhood care, to most parents, was ‘taking care of health of the children’. To them, it implies assurance of nutritious foods on a regular basis and taking care at the time of illness. The issue of mental development did not come up, perhaps because they were less aware of this. Some mothers said that they become worried when their children fall ill. However, some mothers admitted that mothers were supposed to know many things related to wellbeing of their children which they need not learn from others. One of the mothers said,

Motherhood is a natural process which automatically implies some responsibilities. When a woman becomes mother, she does not need anyone to tell her how to take care of her child. She automatically acquires this knowledge.

Some of the mothers, however, confessed that they did not learn anything from the outsiders on childcare. They took care of their children based on their own knowledge and understanding. According to them, they tried to feed nutritious foods to their children; however, their children often suffered from different types of illness like fever, cold, cough, diarrhoea, pneumonia, skin diseases, etc. A number of mothers mentioned that they were not solvent enough to seek qualified doctor’s advice. They often took advice from local doctors or *Kabiraj*.

According to some, monthly school meeting was a source for learning about childcare and development. However, the parents from the schools other than BRAC complained that such meetings were not regularly held. In a few occasions when the meetings did take place, the teachers discussed and emphasized on study related issues. It was understood from the FGDs that no holistic approach to early childhood development was taken by the schools or anybody else and thus it was not reflected in the school meetings, leading to a partial understanding of childhood development.

On this the role of BRAC school teachers may be mentioned here. Parents of BRAC pre-primary school students got opportunity to be aware of the issues related to childhood health and nutrition during monthly meetings. A mother said the following:

During monthly school meetings, our teacher tells us about our roles and responsibilities in taking care of children. Such meetings are held regularly. Various issues on child development are discussed which include how to take care of pregnant women, when to take her to a doctor and what to eat during pregnancy. We also relay this to our neighbours. These help giving birth to a healthy child. The teacher also tell us to keep our children clean through bathing in clean water before going to school, brushing teeth, wearing clean cloths, cutting nails regularly, washing hands before taking food, etc.

Although the kindergartens had no monthly school meetings as the non-formal schools, their parents knew more about health care and nutritional needs in their early age. This was because educational qualification of these parents was better than those of the others. However, these parents also had no or little idea about mental development of their children. Some of these parents expressed their views by saying that ‘we are not expert in this issue (mental development) which the teachers should be, we rely on them’. The head teachers of the kindergartens noted that they discussed childcare issue in their occasional meetings with parents.

The teachers also had a mixed understanding of the roles of home and school in early childhood development. Although they represented pre-primary educational institutions, majority viewed that families and homes played more important roles compared to school. It was clear from the discussions with the teachers that they were not properly instructed in early childhood care, education and development. They did not know the process of collective contribution of home and school in childhood development. A kindergarten teacher made the following statement:

Family plays an important role in physical and mental growth of children. My understanding is that mental development of a child primarily depends of his/her family condition up to a certain period, say, up to completion of fourth grade of education. After grade four, school plays more role than family. At this stage a child interacts more with the school environment which is different than home. In this one can meet with elder students, teachers and the SMC members which is not possible in home environment.

On the contrary, a small portion of the teachers realized the role of school in early age. However, they saw it as a preparatory stage for primary education. A government school teacher mentioned the following:

Pre-primary education can offer three things – preparation for primary education, socialization and discipline. If a child gets prepared with these three before entering into primary education s/he can do better compared to one who had not such preparation. I think pre-primary education can make a difference.

Importance of pre-primary education was recognized by majority of the parents, although in the same line of the above teacher. However, question was raised on appropriate age for such education. A diverse opinion came out from the discussion. A good portion of the parents opined that it was too early to admit a child in school at age, say five years. According to them, mental and physical development of five-year old children does not reach at a level that is appropriate for schooling. Some parents also had misconceptions about brain development. Parents of BRAC school students also had similar views. Box 10.1 provides some of the comments of the parents from various FGDs.

#### Box 10.1

#### *Parental views on appropriate age for pre-primary education*

Five is not appropriate age for pre-primary education because a child's brain does not grow fully by this time. If a child is enrolled in school at this age, this could be harmful for his/her brain due to academic pressure.

*-Concern from a mothers' group*

If we send our children to school at the age of five, they will not be able to study because of under-age. As a result, they may fail in examination which can be disastrous for their future life. They may even stop education.

*-Concern from a fathers' group*

I thought six-year was the appropriate age for admission in pre-primary education. If a child is admitted in pre-primary class at age five, it would unnecessary create pressure on brain at very early age. I think schooling should start at age seven, not earlier than this.

*-A mother of a student of BRAC pre-primary school*

Source: Education Watch Focus Group Discussions with Parents, 2013

The parents who had children studying at pre-primary level of kindergartens complained that in some cases the children of age 4-5 years were overloaded with 5/6 books along with homework almost every day. They believed that young children were unable to bear such loads. A mother opined that 'brain of a child of age five years cannot be ready to take load of so many books'. Another

mother added, 'children of age 6/7 years may take such load'. These comments and suggestions came, as they claim, from their practical lives.

A counter opinion was also found. One of the mothers said, 'now-a-days, intellectual growth of the children is much faster than earlier and thus they can be admitted in school at early age'. On the other hand, a father informed that he took his daughter to a school to admit in pre-primary class when she was five years but head teacher refused to admit because of under-age.

Almost every parent who was present in the FGDs recognized the need for pre-primary education. However, their understanding was that such education was necessary for making strong foundation for next stage of education, as along with language and mathematics, children learn many other things like song, dance, recitation of poems, etc. which they thought were important at this age of life.

Some of them saw pre-primary education as a means of making education easy to the children. According to them it also made their life easy. They were supposed to teach children at home but now it is done by the schools. Some others, however, saw it as a means of habit formation to go to school and socialization. Overall, they appreciated the initiative. Following is a statement from a mother:

When there was no opportunity for preschool education in our neighbourhood, we had to teach our children at home, but now we do not need to teach them at home. Moreover, preschool helps children to reduce their fear about school. They also become habituated to attend school, and able to learn social and school manners.

Echoing the above, a BRAC school teacher noted that pre-primary education is more than what one understands about academic activities. Books are not the whole of it. There are many other issues which help children shaping behaviour like individual responsibility, group work, discipline, confidence building, etc. From his experience, an NGO school supervisor pointed out that 'those who received pre-primary education were doing better in primary education'.

## **B. Participation in school activities**

For overall development of a school, participation of the stakeholders is very necessary. Unfortunately, little or no involvement was found in most pre-primary schools except BRAC schools. Among the community people, mostly parents were involved in the school related activities though that was not enough. They only participated in mothers gathering or such kind of meeting, if the school authority called them. Spontaneous participation from mothers or other group of people was missing. In some cases, SMC members participated in some activities but head teacher and other teachers considered this rate of participation as unsatisfactory. School authorities expected more participation of the parents as well as SMC members. It was also observed that school authority was not able to create any mechanism to ensure support and involvement of the community people. BRAC schools were the exception in this regard. Both the teacher and her supervisor ensured effective association of the community people.

### **Box 10.2**

#### ***Benefit of pre-primary education in the view of a mother***

I have two children – a daughter and a son. I did not have opportunity to admit my daughter in pre-primary because there was no such provision nearby. Now we have a pre-primary school. My son goes there. When I compare my son with my daughter I can realize the difference. My son is smarter than his sister in many ways. He can understand everything quickly. I think it is because of his experience with pre-primary education.

*-a mother from Manda, Naogaon*

*Source: Education Watch Focus Group Discussions with Parents, 2013*

Teachers of BRAC schools and their supervisors regularly invited people to visit their schools. Besides, the teachers of nearest primary schools were very cooperative as well. They sometimes visited BRAC schools and provided their opinion. The supervisor established this relationship between BRAC school and other nearest schools. Among the remaining schools, participation of the SMC members was found better in the government schools though this participation was not up to the mark. A head teacher of a government school informed that though the SMC members were comparatively active, but they did not participate in school related tasks spontaneously.

Among the studied schools, participation of parents, especially mothers, was found more in BRAC schools and kindergartens compared to other types. For instance, if students did not come to school regularly, teacher of the respective school went to the house of those children. Parents always showed their helping attitude to the teachers regarding this issue. Both teacher and supervisors mentioned that at the time of mothers gathering almost all the mothers came to school though only a few participate in discussions. Parents of the kindergartens went to schools daily to drop their children but their participation was also limited to attend in mothers meeting only. Head teachers of kindergartens said that they called the parents in school for discussion through cell phones if needed, but monthly meeting was the main point to share school related discussion. According to the head teachers, parents were more interested to help the school than the SMC members. A teacher of a kindergarten mentioned the following:

We always expect suggestions from the parents to improve quality of our school but we do not get such opinion. At the time of meeting with the parents, we request them to take care of their children at home and if they have any observation regarding our teaching-learning activities or any other issues, they should inform me. However, unfortunately, we get no suggestions from them. Even they do not discuss about any problem they faced about the learning process of their child. Instead of taking other types of help from the parents, we need to know their feedback.

The other schools reported that parents were seldomly involved in the school related activities. Sometimes school authorities arranged ad hoc meetings for parents which was the only platform for them to be involved. Though, in FGDs, mothers informed that they wanted to involve in school related activities but did not get enough opportunity to do that; however, school authorities refuted this. It is clear that both the school authority and mothers wanted to be involved in school related activities but no specific mechanism was there to ensure their participation. In mosque based schools, no parental involvement was found as the schools were fully controlled by the mosque committees. Participation of fathers was mostly missing in all types of schools studied.

# Chapter 11

## Discussion, conclusions and policy recommendations





This final chapter discusses the findings of the *Education Watch* 2013 study as presented in the foregoing chapters. Relevant findings from similar studies conducted outside and previous *Education Watch* reports were referred to where appropriate for discussion. Conclusions and major messages were drawn from the findings and discussions; and finally, a set of recommendations were made for further enhancement of pre-primary education (PPE) in Bangladesh.

### A. Discussion and conclusions

The government of Bangladesh has already decided to establish pre-primary education in all government and non-government formal primary schools from January 2014. A number of preparatory activities were made in order to implement the decision. These include preparation of pre-primary curriculum, pre-primary service delivery standard, operational framework for pre-primary education, pre-primary education expansion plan, and Go-NGO collaboration guideline for universal PPE. A comprehensive ECCD policy has also been adopted to cater full range of early years development. These are all welcome steps although this comes a little late as many developing countries have embraced PPE a long time ago. With all these initiatives, it can be said that Bangladesh has emphasised on early years development much later than other countries of the world. Although, Bangladesh, in various documents, recognizes the importance of all aspects of early years development including care and education but the current initiative is mostly concentrated to PPE.

Early years is defined from birth to eight years which includes both care and education. Care is specifically linked to the first three years. In Bangladesh, education from age 6–8 years is taken care of by primary education which is part of compulsory education. A one year pre-primary education has been introduced for the children of age five years and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is responsible for it.

The *Education Watch* group recognizes the need for a comprehensive study on the full range of early years development. The first three years of primary education (ages 6–8 years which also coincides with early childhood development) was addressed in many *Education Watch* studies. As the government has emphasized more on pre-primary education in recent years, this study, based on nationally representative samples, looked at various issues related to pre-primary education. It is expected that findings of this study would help understand the current state of pre-primary education in the country and to find out areas needing intervention emphasis, and also help follow up progress in future.

Pre-primary enrolment rate in Bangladesh was very low for long. The net enrolment rate did not exceed 15% and gross enrolment ratio did not go beyond 30% till 2008. The latest EFA global monitoring report projected that Bangladesh, along with other 29 countries, would lie ‘very far away’ from pre-primary enrolment target of at least 70% by 2015 (UNESCO 2014). It also predicted that the enrolment rate would not exceed 30% by the targeted year. Compared to this projection this study found tremendous increase in pre-primary enrolment in recent years. During the past five years, there has been a four-fold increase in net enrolment rate and 2.7 fold increase in gross enrolment ratio. This was possible because of the initiatives taken by many. Firstly, the government has been bringing the PPE issue on table for the last few years but with slow progression at implementation level. The National Education Policy of 2010 emphasized much on pre-primary education and, more importantly, US\$ 300 million was allocated under PEDP 3 for establishment of pre-primary education in all primary schools in the country. Steps like recruitment of teachers and their orientation on this specific education were initiated targeting establishing such education in primary schools by 2014. Secondly, there has been a huge rise of privately managed kindergartens throughout the country

without any support either from the government or development partners. Willingness of parents to send their children to such fee-paying educational institutions also expedited this. Thirdly, the NGOs which have been working in the area of pre-primary education for about two decades expanded their reach heavily in recent years. Approximately 150 NGOs are working on this issue.

Although access to pre-primary education has increased a lot recently but many children are still out of its reach. It was estimated that about 70% of the children of age four years and 47.5% of those of age five years are out of PPE. Overall, three of every five children aged 4–5 years were out of reach of pre-primary education. According to national statistics about 4.3% of Bangladesh's population or 6.5 million lies in this age cohort. Based on the above information on out of school children, a staggering 3.8 million children of age 4–5 years were found out of any kind of pre-primary educational network. Of them, 2.3 million belonged to age cohort four years and 1.5 million belonged to age cohort five years. Pre-primary education in Bangladesh would have to grow much faster if we are to meet the unmet need and attain the target of 70% enrolment.

Although UNESCO (2014) did not find much variation in PPE enrolment between the children of richest and poorest sections of population in Bangladesh but this study observed a wide variation in terms of a number of socioeconomic characteristics. The poorest section of the population had a probability of 0.17 to have access in pre-primary education and the richest section had 0.77. This huge gap would have to be reduced through creating opportunity of pre-primary education at the door-step of those who are less fortunate to be enrolled. Children of less educated mothers and those belonging to poor economic group (in terms of food security status) fall in this category.

Interestingly, this study found no variation in pre-primary enrolment rate in terms of gender or urban/rural residence of the children. This may be because of the fact that Bangladesh has already learned how to tackle the urban/rural and gender-wise variation in school enrolment. After achieving gender as well as urban/rural parity in access to primary and secondary education, this may be considered as good start for pre-primary education. However, despite this aggregate scenario, drastic *upazila*-wise variation in enrolment was noticed with a range from 17.9 to 81.7%. This indicates disparity by geographical location. Some years back, based on MICS data UNICEF (2010) identified 80 'most deprived' *upazilas* in terms of social achievements and suggested for geographical targeting of basic social services to mitigate inequalities in Bangladesh. This suggestion may have to be adopted for pre-primary education too. Low achieving *upazilas* should get priority in further expansion of PPE in Bangladesh.

Tackling inequalities in terms of *upazilas* or the socioeconomic groups mentioned above would not be an easy task due to parental understanding about appropriate age for schooling. Earlier *Education Watch* studies and others on primary education showed that the parents had reservation to send their children to primary schools at age six which is the legal age for such education (Chowdhury *et al.* 2001, Nath and Chowdhury 2009, Nath *et al.* 2011, Nath 2013). Many children of age 6–7 years were found out-of-school. Analysing the parental opinions of not sending the children to pre-primary education this study identified two major reasons. Firstly, unavailability of school nearby home and secondly, parents did not wish to send children to schools at such young age. A section of the parents thought that it was not necessary to provide pre-primary education. To address the first reason it is important to ensure pre-primary education provision in each neighbourhood. If the neighbourhoods are big in size more than one school/centre would have to be established in each. Government's intention to set up pre-primary class in every primary school would not meet the need of the communities. Similar to NGO operated non-formal schools, single room feeder schools connecting to

formal primary schools may be considered. In-depth discussion with the parents was an eye-opener. Majority of such parents argued that young children of age 5–6 years should be engaged more with play not with serious studies. Parental perspective is right. Pre-primary education should be full of fun, enjoyment, play, etc. which ultimately should be connected to introduction of socialization, morality, knowing alphabets and numbers and understanding nature and surroundings. Majority of our pre-primary schools specifically the kindergartens and the government and non-government schools do not offer pre-primary education in such manner and thus the parents are worried about it. If the schools could demonstrate education through play and fun the parents would be easily convinced to send their children to schools at young age. It is thus important for the pre-primary provisions to be more appropriate in their design.

School survey and in-depth observation in 10 schools brought up a few important issues that corroborate the parental views. Kindergartens, the major providers of pre-primary education, overloaded the students with books, home works and examinations. Except the non-formal schools of the NGOs, schools in general did not have adequate physical facilities, trained teachers and educational materials like charts, toys, physical exercise items, drawing items or items related to singing, dancing and drama. Thirty-nine percent of the schools had none of these tools. More importantly, teaching methods in pre-primary classes was no different than that in primary classes. It was mostly book-based and seemed to be an early extension of the first grade of primary education. Ways of communication with the students, activities done in the classrooms, seating arrangement, provision of homework, etc. were almost similar to primary education. Use of play and activities outside classroom and use of nature as part of school activities were almost missing. These clearly do not go with the philosophy and basic principles of pre-primary education.

Another related issue is the age of students. Although six years is the official age for starting primary education but studies on primary education continuously reported that a good portion of the children starts primary education at ages seven or eight years (Chowdhury *et al.* 2001, Nath and Chowdhury 2009, Nath *et al.* 2011, Nath 2013). As a result these children are to stay in primary schools up to their 12th or 13th birthday. Similar situation was observed in the case of pre-primary education which includes a wide variation in age of the students with a good portion belonging to age six and above. At the same time proportion of six-years-old children in pre-primary class also increased over time. Actually there is a relationship between earlier mentioned parental opinion and the students' age of school enrolment. The fact is that the parents were most likely to send their children to pre-primary education at age six years and to primary education at seven years. The children of age five should be brought to pre-primary class through demonstrating joyful learning with lots of fun activities. This would ultimately lead to children's enrolment in primary education at age six.

Mosque based and NGO operated non-formal pre-primary education provisions were two extreme cases which needs to be brought under consideration, although they had some similarities too. Both types of schools had similar history of expansion; majority of which was established in 2008 and onwards and admitted students mostly from the same neighbourhoods as the schools. As each of the non-formal schools had a classroom there was the opportunity of doing all kinds of educational activities. Unfortunately, it was not possible in the mosque based schools because most of them were established inside the mosques. However, majority of the schools of both types were established in calm and quiet places and had good level of cleanliness. NGO schools teachers were less educated than those of the mosque based schools. A quarter of the teachers of mosque based schools were madrasa educated. Whereas most teachers of NGO schools were trained in pre-primary education, a good portion of them in mosque based schools were untrained. Mosque based schools

had to maintain some rituals related to religious establishment which sometimes contradicted with the need of pre-primary education. For instance, activities like art work, singing, dancing, and drama, and hanging of charts were prohibited in the mosques. Thus, it was observed that 86.3% of the mosque based schools had no materials/tools other than books. On the other hand, most of the NGO schools had some materials/tools. This clearly shows how different the two provisions were. Values generated through these two types of schools were also different. The mosque based schools were less likely to appoint female teachers and gender segregated seating arrangement of the students were much in practice. On the other hand, NGO schools appointed mostly female teachers and boys and girls sat together in the classrooms. Mosque based schools lagged much behind the NGO schools in terms of hoisting of national flag, singing national anthem and students' participation in physical exercises. A policy question is thus, whether both the types be expanded with equal emphasis? Decision on this should be based on nation building promises made in the National Constitution and the objectives set in the National Education Policy 2010 and recently adopted PPE policy documents.

Although the enrolment rate has gone up in recent times, the schools in majority of the cases were not found ready to create an environment which can foster learning and provide quality education. Schools lack in physical facilities, learning materials, child-friendly classrooms and teaching-learning provisions, adequately trained teachers and so on. The government and non-government schools, kindergartens and the mosque based schools mostly suffer from an environment which is not amiable to quality education. Although all the non-formal schools of the NGOs were not equipped with adequate facilities for quality education but they were comparatively better than the other provisions. There were also no discipline in curriculum and use of books. A wide variation was observed in use of books by the schools especially in the kindergartens. Now, NCTB has adopted pre-primary curriculum and textbook and there is also set criteria for pre-primary standard. It is thus expected that the government would strictly monitor this so that all the pre-primary provisions follow the national curriculum and maintain adequate environment for quality education. This unfortunately cannot be done without increasing dedicated human resources at the *upazila* primary education offices. To meet the demand for teacher training special programme should be launched in the primary training institutes with support from the national institutes capable in early childhood and pre-primary related teacher training. As part of monitoring the standard, *Education Watch* and other research institutions should be asked and provided resources to undertake independent monitoring on a frequently regular basis.

Except for a few kindergartens especially in urban areas, all other provisions offered pre-primary education with a one year duration. The national curriculum has also been prepared to provide PPE to the children of age five years. The government can fix a timeline, say next five years, by which every child would receive pre-primary education with a standard already set by the government. Only 6% of the countries globally have one year duration of pre-primary education and more than half extended it to three years (UNESCO 2012). Bangladesh would have to follow the same path. However, it would not be wise to extend duration without achieving recently set standards. On achieving the current standard, the course should be extended to two years comprising the children of age four and five years. When asked, the parents were found unaware about course duration. It is important to make them aware of the importance of pre-primary education, its duration and quality so that they can be part of it and contribute in child development in a systematic manner. At the same time it is the responsibility of the providers to demonstrate that such education creates strong foundation for future life with fun and joyful learning.

## B. Key messages

Following are the key messages generated from the findings of *Education Watch 2013* and other studies:

- *Good start with major policy directions:* Unlike any other initiatives, pre-primary education already has a number of policy directions which may be helpful in its proper implementation if these are followed appropriately. These include curriculum, books and materials, operational framework, expansion plan, GO-NGO collaboration guideline, pre-primary service delivery standard, and comprehensive ECCD policy.
- *Laudable increase in access in recent years:* Access to pre-primary education has increased hugely during the past five years compared to any other period in the past. Such an increase was observed in all sections of population. Although there was no difference in access in terms of gender or residence (urban/rural) but huge variation by *upazila* persisted. Children's access to pre-primary education was positively correlated to parental education and household economic status.
- *Too many out-of-school children:* Although the enrolment rate has gone up in recent years, a huge number of children were still out of the network of pre-primary education. Approximately 2.3 million children of age four years and 1.5 million of age five years; totalling 3.8 million across the country were out of reach for pre-primary education. It is staggering!
- *Various categories of provision:* Many different categories of pre-primary education persisted in terms of curriculum, books and other materials used, load of books, contact hour, course duration and so on. Pre-primary education in government and non-government primary schools was mostly similar which was far different than what was provided in the kindergartens. Kindergarten students were over-loaded by books, homework and examinations. Non-formal schools of the NGOs and mosque based schools of Islamic Foundation provided two different types of education.
- *Unprepared educational institutions:* Majority of the schools, in general, were not adequately prepared to provide pre-primary education. The schools lacked physical facilities, learning materials/tools, child-friendly classrooms, joyful teaching-learning methods, trained teachers and so on. In most cases, pre-primary and primary classrooms could not be differentiated in terms of teachers' behaviour, classroom activities, homework provision and student assessment. Outdoor activities, play and fun are seldomly practiced in majority of them.
- *Parents not impressed with current provision:* A portion of the parents were not prepared to send their children to schools at such a young age as five. Their understanding was that children of age 5–6 years should not be loaded with studies rather they should be engaged in play and fun. Unfortunately the schools could not demonstrate that pre-primary education is nothing but learning through play and fun. Parents preferred pre-primary provision in their own neighbourhoods.
- *Private expenditure is an issue:* Parents had to borne private expenditure for pre-primary education as well. Among others, the heads of expenditure included admission fee and monthly tuition fee. Admission fee, monthly tuition fee and expenditure for private tuition were the three major cost components comprising over 60% of total expenditure. Private expenditure varied between urban and rural areas and by school type. It is also positively correlated to parental education and household economic status.

- *Supplementary private tuition is a reality*: A quarter of pre-primary students had private tutors. Urban students of age seven years or more, fathers had 10 years or more and mothers had 5–9 years of education, and have electricity at home had the highest probability of resorting to private tuition. Expenditure for private tuition comprised the highest portion (23.2%) of private expenditure.

### C. Policy recommendations

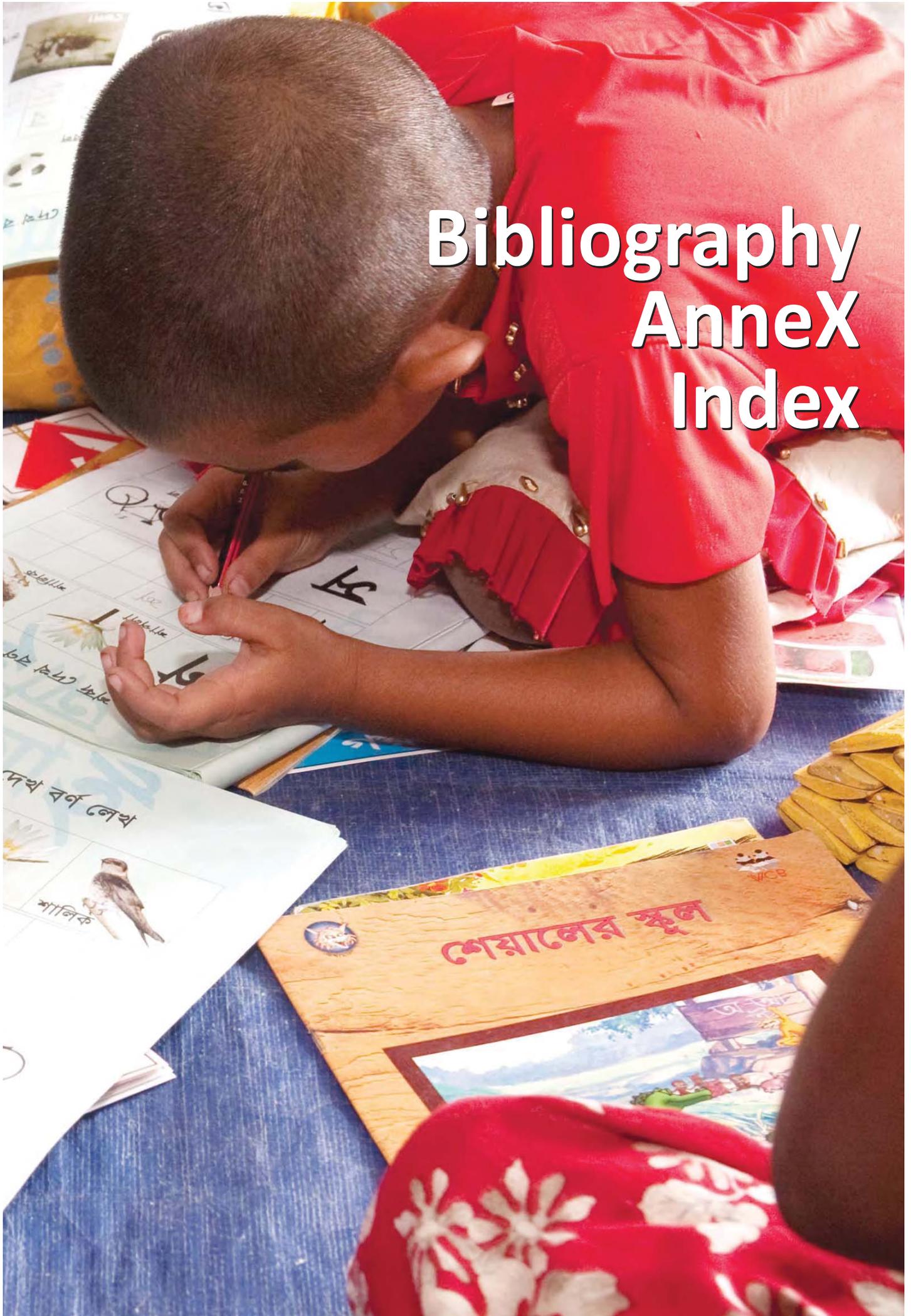
Findings and the main messages of the *Education Watch 2013* study on the state of pre-primary education in Bangladesh raise the following policy issues.

1. We should not be complacent at the recent rise in enrolment in pre-primary education. Number of children still out of such education is staggering. The challenge is thus to bring those children into the reach of pre-primary education irrespective of children's backgrounds. *Upazilas* having lower rate of enrolment demand immediate and special attention.
2. Dedicated classrooms and teachers with specialized and appropriate training, provision of educational materials/tools and increased supervision and feedback mechanism may help improve their present situation in terms of preparing them for quality education. This is particularly true for government and non-governmental schools since they would have to play greater role in providing pre-primary education in future. Teachers need to understand the difference between education at pre-primary and primary levels. Teaching-learning culture of the kindergartens needs to be changed to make it more child-friendly. More non-formal schools may be established and provided resources in the catchment areas of formal schools since the government would not be able to meet the huge need to bring 3.8 million out of school children to PPE.
3. Considering trained teachers as vital for pre-primary education it is important to create more facilities for teacher training. This can be done by introducing separate courses in the existing Primary Teachers' Training Institutes (PTI). NGOs having such facilities may also be utilized. Universities can be encouraged to launch specialized training and research programmes on pre-primary education including strengthening those who already have such activities.
4. In line with the present provision of primary education, pre-primary education should be confined to the children below age six. This would also help completing primary education timely. In order to ensure this, campaigns of various forms should be considered, which, at the school level, can include school-catchment area based survey, and meeting with the parents of children aged 4–5 years. National and district level campaigns through different media such as radio, television, newspapers, mobile phones, bill boards, internet as well as folk media like popular theatre may be utilized. Some of these are already being used in some places; however, these need to be strengthened throughout the country for quick uptake. The civil society should be effectively used in this.
5. Provision of pre-primary education should, in principle, be the principal responsibility of the state. On behalf of the state, the Directorate of Primary Education, the government's lead authority to implement primary education should play the key role in this regard. On its behalf, the *Upazila* Education Offices should play the coordinating role at the *upazila* level. This includes decentralization of authority at the *upazila* level and making them accountable for access, equity and quality of education in their respective *upazilas*. However, given the current limitations, the government should encourage other actors for this, including the NGOs.

6. It is important to ensure that all pre-primary education providers maintain the pre-primary service delivery standard which has already been adopted by the government. Rigorous scrutiny of all centres/schools is essential which can be done by increasing capacity of *Upazila* Education Offices. This should be followed by feedback to the respective providers and allowing time to improve standard at an acceptable level.
7. The spirit of National Education Policy 2010 should be kept in mind in spreading pre-primary education in the country which urges one-year pre-primary education for the children of age five for the time being and later be extended up to the children of age four. Other policy guidelines such as the pre-primary operational framework, expansion plan, GO-NGO collaboration guideline, pre-primary service delivery standard and comprehensive ECCD policy needs to be implemented with adequate seriousness, responsibility, financial allocation, and taking all current providers on board. It would not be possible to ensure universal access to pre-primary education without collective effort of all concerned.
8. Pre-primary education should be made an essential and integral part of compulsory education. The Act of 1990 made only primary education compulsory which is again limited to Grade V. Actually, in line with the present education policy, education from pre-primary to Grade VIII should be made compulsory. Moreover, the present Act is faulty as there is scope for the heads of the educational institutions to refuse admission without showing any reasons; especially the physically and mentally challenged children could be subjected to discriminations due to this. It is necessary to amend the Act towards broadening its scope to include pre-primary and Grades VI-VIII and vesting greater role, responsibility and authority to the *upazila* education offices and local governments.



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### B. বর্তমানে গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিতে পড়ছে এমন শিশু/শিক্ষার্থীদের তথ্য

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	শিক্ষার্থীর নাম	
		শাইন নম্বর	
1	শিক্ষার্থীর বিদ্যালয়ের অবস্থান কোথায়? কোড: নিজ গ্রামে = 1, পার্শ্ববর্তী গ্রামে = 2, অন্য গ্রামে (নিজ ইউনিয়নে) = 3, অন্য ইউনিয়নে = 4, জানা নাই = 8		
2	শিক্ষার্থীকে বিদ্যালয় কর্তৃক নির্দিষ্ট কোনো বই (বাড়ি বা বিদ্যালয়ে) পড়তে হয় কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2, জানা নাই = 8		
3	বই কোথায় থাকে? কোড: বাড়িতে = 1, স্কুলে = 2, কিছু বাড়িতে, কিছু স্কুলে = 3, বই নাই = 4, জানা নাই = 8		
4	গত ৭ কর্মদিবসে শিক্ষার্থী মোট কত দিন স্কুলে গিয়েছিল? জানা নাই = 8		
5	গত এক মাসে শিক্ষার্থীর অভিভাবক স্কুলে গিয়ে শ্রেণি শিক্ষকের সাথে দেখা করেছেন কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2, জানা নাই = 8		
6	স্কুলে আনা-নেওয়ার ক্ষেত্রে শিক্ষার্থীকে সাধারণত কে সহযোগিতা করে? কোড: নিজে নিজে যায় = 1, পিতা = 2, মাতা = 3, ভাই/বোন = 4, আত্মীয়-স্বজন = 5, বিদ্যালয়ের জাদু/পরিবহন = 6, অন্যান্য (শিক্ষক) = 7....., জানা নাই = 8		
7	আপনি কি জানেন, প্রথম শ্রেণিতে ভর্তি হওয়ার পূর্বে এই শিক্ষার্থীকে কত বছরের গ্রাক- প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা গ্রহণ করতে হবে? কোড: জানা নাই = 8		
8	শিক্ষাসংক্রান্ত খরচ (জানুয়ারি- জুন ২০১৩)	1	স্কুলে ভর্তি
		2	মাসিক বেতন
		3	বই কেনা
		4	খাদ্য, কলম, পেনসিল ইত্যাদি
		5	স্কুল ব্যাগ
		6	স্কুল ড্রেস
		7	গৃহশিক্ষক

### C. খানার আর্থসামাজিক তথ্য

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড
1	এই খানার সদস্যরা কোন ধর্মাবলম্বী? কোড: মুসলিম = 1, হিন্দু = 2, বৌদ্ধ = 3, খ্রিস্টান = 4, অন্যান্য (শিখ) = 5.....	
2	এই খানার সদস্যদের জাতিগত পরিচয় কী? কোড: বাঙালি = 1, অনিবাসী = 2	
3	এই খানায় বিন্যস্ত সংযোগ আছে কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2	
4	গত এক বছরে, এই খানার আর্থিক অবস্থা কীরকম ছিল? (উত্তরদাতাকে জিজ্ঞেস করুন যে, গত এক বছরে বিভিন্ন খাত থেকে এই খানায় যত টাকা আয় হয়েছে এবং বিভিন্ন খাতে যত টাকা ব্যয় হয়েছে তার তারতম্যের ভিত্তিতে গত বছর খানার আর্থিক অবস্থা কীরকম ছিল?)	সর্বসময় খাটতি 1 মাকে মাকে খাটতি 2 সমান 3 উৎকৃত 4
5	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাব্যবস্থা আছে এরূপ নিকটতম বিদ্যালয়ের দূরত্ব খানা থেকে কত কিলোমিটার?	
6	খানা থেকে প্রত্যেক বরনের নিকটতম বিদ্যালয়ের দূরত্ব কত কিলোমিটার? (দেশিকের পর এক একে ব্যবহার করুন) কোড: এরকম বিদ্যালয় আছে কিনা জানি না = 87, দূরত্ব জানা নেই = 88	
1	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক (এনজিও-পরিচালিত)	6 এনজিও-পরিচালিত প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
2	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক (মসজিদ/মন্দিরভিত্তিক)	7 সিহুমাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়
3	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	8 সরকারি/বেসরকারি মাধ্যমিক/স্কুল ও কলেজ
4	বেসরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	9 দাবিলা/আপিস/কাজিলা/কামিল মহালা
5	এবংঅন্য মাদ্রাসা	

তথ্যসংগ্রহকারীর নাম:..... তারিখ:..... তত্ত্বাবধায়কের নাম:..... তারিখ:.....

**Annex 3.2**  
**Pre-primary school survey questionnaire**

**গণসাক্ষরতা অভিযান**  
**এডুকেশন ওয়াচ ২০১৩: শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠান জরিপ প্রশ্নপত্র**

সনাক্তকরণ

শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম: ..... কোড:

গ্রাম: ..... ইউনিয়ন/ওয়ার্ড: ..... উপজেলা: ..... কোড:

জেলা: ..... বিভাগ: .....

শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠানের ধরন	এলাকা
সরকারি প্রাথমিক = 1	গ্রাম = 1
বেসরকারি প্রাথমিক = 2	শহর = 2
কিন্ডারগার্টেন = 3	
গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক (এনজিও পরিচালিত) = 4	
গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক (মসজিদ/মন্দির/জৈতিক) = 5	

**A. শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠানের সাধারণ তথ্য**

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড	
1	এই শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠানটি কত সালে প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয়েছে?		
2	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম কোন সাল থেকে শুরু হয়েছে?		
3	এনজিও-পরিচালিত হলে, গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের অবস্থান কোথায়? কোড: প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের কম্পাউন্ডে = 1, প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের বাইরে = 2, প্রযোজ্য নয় = 9		
4	সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ এনজিওর নাম কী? প্রযোজ্য নয় = 9		
5	এই শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠানে কত বছরের গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম প্রচলিত?		
6	বিদ্যালয়ের কয়টি কক্ষে গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির ক্লাস হয়? জানা নাই = 88		
7	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের কি অন্য কোনো শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে পড়ানো হয়?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2	
8	হ্যাঁ হলে, কোন শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে পড়ানো হয়? প্রযোজ্য নয় = 99		
9	বিদ্যালয়ে মোট শিক্ষক সংখ্যা কত জন?	নাই পুরুষ	
10	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিতে কত জন শিক্ষক ক্লাস নেন?	নাই পুরুষ	
11	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিতে কাদের (ছেলে/মেয়ে/উভয়) পড়ালেখার ব্যবস্থা আছে?	অধু হেলেনের 1 অধু মেয়েদের 2 উভয়ের 3	
12	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়/শ্রেণি শুরু এবং শেষ হয় কখন?	শিফট শুরু শেষ	
		১ম	
		২য়	

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড
13	বিন্যাসের পরিপার্শ্বিক পরিষ্কার/পরিবেশ কেমন? (বর্ণনা দিন)	নিরিবিদিত 1
	.....	কিছুটা নিরিবিদিত/কিছুটা কোলাহলপূর্ণ 2
	.....	কোলাহলপূর্ণ 3
14	বিন্যাসের কার্ট এইত বয়স (প্রাথমিক চিকিৎসা ব্যয়) রয়েছে কি?	হ্যাঁ 1
		না 2
15	সরকারি/বেসরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি হলে এর সঙ্গে কোনো এনজিওর সম্পর্ক আছে কি?	হ্যাঁ 1
		না 2
		প্রযোজ্য নয় 9
16	সম্পর্ক থাকলে এনজিওর নাম কী? এপ্রোজ্য নয় = 9	

### B. প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিকে বসার ব্যবস্থা ও উপস্থিতি

শ্রেণি	শা বা	সাপ্তাহিক ভাবে কত জন বসতে পারে	শিক্ষার্থী দের বসার ধরন	শিক্ষা থীদের বসার ব্যবস্থা	শিক্ষার্থী দের বসার পদ্ধতি	ছাত্র			ছাত্রী		
						তালিকা ভুক্ত (যেহি স্তায় থেকে)	বিশেষ চাহিদা সম্পন্ন	আজ ক্রমশে উপস্থিত (মাথা গুণে)	তালিকা ভুক্ত (যেহি স্তায় থেকে)	বিশেষ চাহিদা সম্পন্ন	আজ ক্রমশে উপস্থিত (মাথা গুণে)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
প্র	1	1									
	1	2									
	1	3									
নার্সারি	2	1									
	2	2									
	2	3									
কেজি-১	3	1									
	3	2									
	3	3									
কেজি-২	4	1									
	4	2									
	4	3									
কেজি	5	1									
	5	2									
	5	3									
শিশু	6	1									
	6	2									
	6	3									

প্রশ্ন ৪. বসার ধরন: সারিবদ্ধভাবে = 1, ইউ আকৃতির = 2, ছোট দলে বিভক্ত হয়ে = 3, সমবেতভাবে = 4, অন্যান্য (সিইন) = 5.....

প্রশ্ন ৫. বসার ব্যবস্থা: ছায়ায় টে = 1, প্রস্টিক ফাট = 2, চেয়ার = 3, বেঞ্চ = 4, চট/জাটবিহীন স্ট্রোলে = 5, অন্যান্য (সিইন) = 6 .....

প্রশ্ন ৬. ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের বসার পদ্ধতি: একসাথে/মিলেমিলে বসে = 1, আলাদা বসে = 2, প্রযোজ্য নয় = 9

**C. বিদ্যালয়ের গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির জন্য ব্যবহৃত বিভিন্ন কক্ষের অবস্থা (সরেজমিন পর্যবেক্ষণ করে তথ্য সিপিবিদ্ধ করুন)**

ক্রম নম্বর	কক্ষে র নির্মাণ ধরন কী?	কক্ষের বর্তমান অবস্থা কী?	শ্রেণি কক্ষের মেঝে কতটা পরিষ্কার-পরিচ্ছন্ন?	শ্রেণি কক্ষের দেয়াল কতটা পরিষ্কার-পরিচ্ছন্ন?	কক্ষের আয়তন		কক্ষে পর্যাপ্ত আলো-বাতাস প্রবেশ করে কি?		কক্ষে বৈদ্যুতিক ব্যক্তির ব্যবস্থা আছে কি?	কক্ষে বৈদ্যুতিক পাখার ব্যবস্থা আছে কি?	শ্রেণিকক্ষের দেয়ালে বিভিন্ন চার্ট/ছবি প্রদর্শিত বা আঁকা আছে কি?	কক্ষ শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী-বান্ধব কি?	অন্য শ্রেণির কক্ষ হতে কি?
					দৈর্ঘ্য (ফুট)	প্রস্থ (ফুট)	আলো	বাতাস					
1													
2													
3													
4													
5													
6													

2. কক্ষের নির্ধারিত বয়স পুরোটাই পাকা = 1 কিছু পাকা ও কিছু টিন = 2 পুরোটা টিন = 3 কিছু টিন ও অন্যান্য সামগ্রী = 4	3. কক্ষের বর্তমান অবস্থা পুরোটাই ঠিকঠাক = 1 বেশিরভাগ ঠিকঠাক = 2 অর্ধেকাধিক ঠিকঠাক = 3 বেশিরভাগ ধীর = 4 পুরোটাই ধীর = 5	4. কক্ষের মেঝে কতটা পরিষ্কার মূল্যবান ও তাগতস্বত্ববিহীন পরিষ্কার মেঝে = 1 মেঝেতে কাগজপত্র পড়ে আছে = 2 মেঝেতে মূল্যবান পড়ে আছে = 3 মেঝেতে মূল্যবান, কাগজপত্র পড়ে আছে = 4	5. কক্ষের দেয়াল কতটা পরিষ্কার দেয়াল রং করা ও পরিষ্কার = 1 দেয়াল রং করা আছে কিন্তু অপরিষ্কার = 2 দেয়ালে রং নেই কিন্তু পরিষ্কার = 3 দেয়ালে রং নেই এবং অপরিষ্কার = 4 শ্রেণিকক্ষ/ব্যাংকিংর কোনো দেয়াল নেই = 5	প্রশ্ন ৪- 14. হ্যাঁ = 1 না = 2
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**D. খাবার পানি, টয়লেট**

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড
1	বিদ্যালয়ে খাবার পানির ব্যবস্থা থাকলে, তার উৎস কী? কোড: ট্যাপ/পান্ড্রাই = 1, ডিপ টিউবওয়েল = 2, টিউবওয়েল = 3, কূয়া = 4, পুকুর/বাগর/নদীনালা = 5, কোনো ব্যবস্থা নেই = 6	
2	গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য পানি বাতায়র আলাদা কোনো ব্যবস্থা আছে কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
3	ব্যবস্থাটি শিক্ষার্থীদের বয়স ও উচ্চতা অনুযায়ী ব্যবহারযোগ্য কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2 প্রয়োজ্য নয় 9
4	বেশিরভাগ গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীরা পানি কীভাবে পান করবে?	বিদ্যালয়ের মঞ্চ/গ্রাস 1 নিজস্ব বোতল/গ্রাস 2 অন্যান্য ..... 3
5	পানি বাতায়র ব্যবস্থাটি কি নিরাপদ?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
6	বিদ্যালয়ে কী ধরনের টয়লেটের ব্যবস্থা আছে? কোড: স্যানিটাইন = 1, হিং-প্রাব (ওয়াটার সিলিং) = 2, হিং-প্রাব (ওয়াটার সিলিংবিহীন) = 3, পিট = 4, কোনো ব্যবস্থা নেই = 5	
7	টয়লেট থেকে থাকলে তা গ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীকে জন্য বয়স ও উচ্চতা অনুযায়ী ব্যবহারযোগ্য কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2 প্রয়োজ্য নয় 9
8	শিক্ষার্থীদের হাত ধোয়ার ব্যবস্থা আছে কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2



### F. প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিতে ব্যবহৃত বইশক্তির নাম ও প্রকাশক

ক্রমিক	বইয়ের শিরোনাম	প্রকাশকের নাম	প্রকাশকের ধরন	বইয়ের ধরন	বিষয় (একমুখিক কোড হতে পারে)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

প্রকাশকের ধরন: জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ড = 1, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর = 2, এনজিও = 3, অন্যান্য বেসরকারি = 4, জানা নাই = 8

বইয়ের ধরন: পাঠ্যপুস্তক = 1, গল্পের বই = 2, সহায়ক পুস্তক = 3, জানা নাই = 8

বিষয়: বাংলা = 1, ইংরেজি = 2, গণিত = 3, পরিবেশ = 4, বিজ্ঞান = 5, সমাজ = 6, আরবি = 7, ধর্মশিক্ষা = 8, ড্রইং = 9, অন্যান্য বিষয় (শিশু) = 10..... জানা নাই = 88

### G. শিক্ষার্থীদের (প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি) পড়ালেখার উপকরণ-সম্বন্ধে তথ্য

ক্রমিক	পড়ালেখার উপকরণ	কতগুলো আছে	কোথায় থাকে
1	2	3	4
1	পাঠ্যপুস্তক		
2	সহায়ক পুস্তক		
3	গল্পের বই		
4	লেখার খাতা		
5	কলম		
6	পেনসিল		
7	ড্রইং খাতা		
8	রঙ পেনসিল		

কতগুলো আছে: প্রতিটি দিনের জন্য আলাদা = 1, প্রতিটি সপ্তাহের জন্য আলাদা = 2, পুরো শ্রেণির জন্য কয়েকটি = 3, নেই = 4

কোথায় থাকে: শুধু ছুঁলে = 1, শুধু বাড়িতে = 2, বাড়িতে থাকে, ছুঁলে নিয়ে আসে = 3, ধর্মোচ্চ নয় = 9

### H. শিক্ষার্থীদের (প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি) বাড়ির কাজ/পরীক্ষা-সম্বন্ধে তথ্য

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড
1	প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিতে শিক্ষার্থীদেরকে কি বাড়ির কাজ দেওয়া হয়?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
2	প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণিতে মূল্যায়ন/পরীক্ষা দেওয়া হয় কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
3	মূল্যায়ন/পরীক্ষা দেওয়া হলে তার ধরন কী?	লিখিত 1 মৌখিক 2 উভয় 3 প্রযোজ্য নয় 9
4	বছরে মোট কতবার মূল্যায়ন/পরীক্ষা দেওয়া হয়? <span style="float: right;">প্রযোজ্য নয় = 99</span>	
5	মোট কত নম্বরের ওপর মূল্যায়ন/পরীক্ষা দেওয়া হয়? কোড: নির্দিষ্ট মার্ক স্কেই = 7777, প্রযোজ্য নয় = 9999	

### I. সহশিক্ষামূলক উপকরণ (প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য নিচের কোন উপকরণগুলো প্রেনিকস্কে/বিন্যাসে রয়েছে?)

ধরন	নং	প্রকার	আছে কি? হ্যাঁ = 1 না = 2	সংখ্যা	কোথায় রাখা হয়? প্রেনিকস্কে = 1 অফিসকক্ষে = 2 শিক্ষার্থীদের কাছে = 3	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
শেখনা	1	মাটি				
	2	কাঠ				
	3	প্লাস্টিক				
	4	পাট				
	5	অন্যান্য (লিখুন).....				
নেছনে প্রদর্শিত উপকরণ	6	সংখ্যার চার্ট				
	7	বর্ণের চার্ট				
	8	ছবি/দৃশ্য				
	9	অন্যান্য (লিখুন).....				
ছবি আঁকার উপকরণ	10	কাগজ/খাতা				
	11	রং পেনসিল				
	12	অন্যান্য (লিখুন).....				
মাচ, গাম ও বাটকের উপকরণ	13	ক্যাসেট প্রেয়ার				
	14	মোবাইল				
	15	পোশাক				
	16	নুপুর				
	17	অন্যান্য (লিখুন).....				
স্বীকৃতি ও খেলার উপকরণ	18	দড়ি				
	19	বল				
	20	ডামেল				
	21	অন্যান্য (লিখুন).....				

### J. সহ-পাঠক্রমিক কার্যক্রম (শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি)

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড
1	শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের নির্দিষ্ট পোশাক পরে স্কুলে আসার বিধান আছে কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2, স্কুলের নির্দিষ্ট পোশাক নেই = 3, জানা নাই = 8	
2	শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীরা জাতীয় পতাকা উত্তোলনে অংশ নেয় কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2, স্কুলে জাতীয় পতাকা উত্তোলন করা হয় না = 3, জানা নাই = 8	
3	শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীরা জাতীয় সঙ্গীত গায় কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2, স্কুলে জাতীয় সঙ্গীত গাওয়া হয় না = 3, জানা নাই = 8	
4	শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীরা পিটি/প্যারেড/শরীরচর্চা ইত্যাদিতে অংশ নেয় কি? কোড: হ্যাঁ = 1, না = 2, স্কুলে পিটি/প্যারেড/শরীরচর্চা হয় না = 3, জানা নাই = 8	

### K. শিক্ষাকর্ষক্রমে (শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি) বাবা-মায়ের অংশগ্রহণ (জানুয়ারি-মে, ২০১৩)

ক্রমিক	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর/কোড
1	এ বছর (জানুয়ারি-মে) শিক্ষার্থীর স্কুলের কোনো শিক্ষক শিক্ষার্থীর পড়ালেখা/স্কুলে উপস্থিতি-সংক্রান্ত কোনো বিষয়ে আলোচনার জন্য শিক্ষার্থীর বাড়িতে গিয়েছিলেন কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
2	কোনো মা-বাবা শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি কার্যক্রম পরিদর্শন করতে এসেছিলেন কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
3	শিক্ষার্থীদের মা-বাবা তাদের সম্বন্ধে পড়ালেখা সম্পর্কে শিক্ষকের সঙ্গে কোনো আলোচনার অংশ নিয়েছেন কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
4	শিক্ষার্থীদের মা-বাবা এই শিক্ষাপ্রতিষ্ঠান/শিক্ষক/শিক্ষার মানউন্নয়নে কোনো পরিবর্তন আনতে পরামর্শ দিয়েছেন কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
5	শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণির শিক্ষার্থীদের মা-বাবার সাথে স্কুলে কোনো সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছিল কি?	হ্যাঁ 1 না 2
6	হয়ে থাকলে, মোট কতটি সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে? <span style="float: right;">প্রযোজ্য নয় = 99</span>	

### L. বিদ্যালয়ে শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি কার্যক্রমের সফলতা, প্রতিবন্ধকতা এবং এ থেকে উত্তরণের উপায় সম্পর্কিত নিচের প্রশ্নগুলো প্রধান শিক্ষককে করুন।

1. শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার ধারণাটি আমাদের দেশে নতুন। আগের খুব কম সংখ্যক স্কুলেই এ ধরনের শিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা ছিল, যদিও দিনে দিনে তা বাড়ছে। আপনার মতে শ্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থার উপকারিতা কী কী? (আপনার বিদ্যালয়ের অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে বলুন)

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2. প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেণি/স্কুল পরিচালনার ক্ষেত্রে আপনি কি কোনো প্রতিবন্ধকতা/সমস্যার সন্মুখীন হয়েছেন? যদি হন, তবে সমস্যাগুলো কী কী?

পাঠ্যক্রম সংক্রান্ত: .....

.....

শিক্ষাউপকরণ সংক্রান্ত: .....

.....

বৌতত্ত্ববকাঠামো সংক্রান্ত: .....

.....

শিক্ষক সংক্রান্ত: .....

.....

অন্যান্য: .....

.....

3. এই প্রতিবন্ধকতা/সমস্যাগুলো দূর করার জন্য কী কী ব্যবস্থা নেওয়া যেতে পারে? আপনি কী কী ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করতে পারেন?

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তথ্যসংগ্রহকারীর নাম: ..... তারিখ: .....

তত্ত্বাবধায়কের নাম: ..... তারিখ: .....

### Annex 3.3 Calculation of weighting factors

The problem arose with considering an equal number of schools for each type because these were not equal in the population. Thus, a weighting factor needs to be used in order to have pooled estimates from school survey data. Following formula was used.

$$P = S_i \times W_i$$

Where, P is the pooled estimate

$S_i$ 's are the estimates for different type of school

$W_i$ 's are the weights

Information on the number of various types of pre-primary schools gathered during school listing (sampling frame) was used for this purpose. Following table provides the weights.

School type	Number of school	% distribution	Weights
Government primary	1,924	28.42	1.421
Non-government primary	996	14.71	0.736
Kindergarten	1,052	15.54	0.777
Non-formal pre-primary	1,210	17.87	0.894
Mosque based pre-primary	1,588	23.46	1.172
Total	6,770	100.00	

### Annex 3.4 Background of the study upazilas

#### 3.4.1. Selected socioeconomic indicators

Socio-economic indicators	Mean/Percentage
Household size (mean)	4.5
Non-Muslims HHs (%)	14.7
Small ethnic groups (%)	2.5
Electricity at home (%)	69.7
Food security status (%)	
Always in deficit	5.1
Sometimes in deficit	21.3
Breakeven	34.9
Surplus	38.7

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

### 3.4.2. Number and percentage of schools providing pre-primary education by school type

Name of school	Total school	Having pre-primary	% of pre-primary
<i>Pre-primary/kindergarten</i>			
BRAC Pre-primary	864	864	100.0
Other NGO pre-primary	346	346	100.0
Mosque-based pre-school	1588	1588	100.0
Kindergarten	1052	1052	100.0
Sub-total	3850	3850	100.0
<i>Primary or higher</i>			
Government primary	1960	1924	98.2
Non-govt. primary	1311	996	75.0
BRAC primary	1052	0	0.0
Other NGO primary	457	117	25.6
Ebtedayee Madasa	148	37	25.0
Dakhil/Alim/Fazil/Kamil madrasa	423	100	23.6
Junior secondary	8	2	25.0
Non-govt. high school	115	44	38.3
Govt. high school	14	1	7.1
School and college	24	16	66.7
College	3	0	0.0
Sub-total	5515	3237	58.7
Total	9365	7087	75.7

Source: Education Watch School Listing, 2013

### 3.4.3. Educational situation

Educational Indicators	Male	Female	All	Level of significance
Net enrolment rate (6-10y)	93.3	95.3	94.3	p<0.01
Net enrolment rate (10-15y)	80.0	89.0	84.5	p<0.001
<i>Schooling of population (%)</i>				
Ever enrolled (6y+)	74.3	70.9	72.6	p<0.001
Primary completer (11y+)	56.3	53.6	54.9	p<0.001
Secondary completer (17y+)	22.9	14.5	18.6	
<i>Literacy rate (%)</i>				
All population (7y+)	54.4	51.0	52.7	p<0.001
Adult population (15y+)	58.3	51.9	55.0	p<0.001
Population 15-24years	77.3	82.6	80.2	p<0.001
Literate household			82.9	

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 4.1**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary students by school type and age**

School type	Age (year)						All
	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5 yrs.	6 yrs.	7 yrs.	8+ yrs.	
Government primary	4.5	17.0	35.3	29.8	9.9	3.5	312 (100.0)
Non-govt. primary	8.2	21.9	33.6	21.2	9.6	5.5	146 (100.0)
NGO school	9.2	16.7	32.8	25.9	10.9	4.4	293 (100.0)
Madrassa	0.0	27.3	31.8	22.7	6.8	11.4	44 (100.0)
Kindergarten	2.7	16.4	29.4	28.1	16.4	6.9	377 (100.0)
High school	9.1	27.3	27.3	18.2	18.2	0.0	11 (100.0)
Mosque based	8.3	29.8	33.3	18.5	7.1	3.0	168 (100.0)
Total	5.8	19.3	32.5	25.8	11.5	5.0	1351 (100.0)

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 4.2**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary students by school type and location**

School type	School location				All
	Own village	Adjacent village	Other village within union	Other union	
Government primary	67.0	28.8	2.2	1.9	312 (100.0)
Non-govt. primary	82.2	17.1	0.7	0.0	146 (100.0)
NGO school	87.4	10.6	1.7	0.3	293 (100.0)
Madrassa	79.5	15.9	4.5	0.0	44 (100.0)
Kindergarten	56.5	33.7	4.2	5.6	377 (100.0)
High school	54.5	45.5	0.0	0.0	11 (100.0)
Mosque based	81.0	17.9	0.6	0.6	168 (100.0)
Total	72.2	23.3	2.4	2.1	1351 (100.0)

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 4.3**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary students by school type and fathers' education**

School type	Fathers' education				All
	Nil	1-4 years	5-9 years	10+ years	
Government primary	38.5	15.7	32.4	13.5	312 (100.0)
Non-govt. primary	47.3	12.3	26.7	13.7	146 (100.0)
NGO school	46.8	15.0	29.0	9.2	293 (100.0)
Madrassa	40.9	18.2	22.7	18.2	44 (100.0)
Kindergarten	17.2	7.4	38.2	37.1	377 (100.0)
High school	0.0	18.2	45.5	36.4	11 (100.0)
Mosque based	39.9	14.3	30.4	15.5	168 (100.0)
Total	35.2	12.8	32.2	19.8	1351 (100.0)

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 4.4**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary students by school type and mothers' education**

School type	Mothers' education				All
	Nil	1 – 4 years	5 – 9 years	10+ years	
Government primary	26.9	20.8	44.6	7.7	312 (100.0)
Non-govt. primary	35.6	19.9	39.0	5.5	146 (100.0)
NGO school	39.6	15.4	38.9	6.1	293 (100.0)
Madrasa	25.0	20.5	38.6	15.9	44 (100.0)
Kindergarten	10.9	7.7	52.0	29.4	377 (100.0)
High school	0.0	18.2	45.5	36.4	11 (100.0)
Mosque based	20.8	17.3	52.4	9.5	168 (100.0)
Total	25.1	15.4	45.6	16.9	1351 (100.0)

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 4.5**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary students by school type and household food security status**

School type	Household food security status			Total
	Deficit	Breakeven	Surplus	
Government primary	35.6	35.9	28.5	312 (100.0)
Non-govt. primary	34.9	32.2	32.9	146 (100.0)
NGO school	33.1	34.1	32.8	293 (100.0)
Madrasa	25.0	38.6	36.4	44 (100.0)
Kindergarten	15.4	24.1	60.5	377 (100.0)
High school	27.3	9.1	63.6	11 (100.0)
Mosque based	26.2	36.9	36.9	168 (100.0)
All	27.8	31.8	40.4	1351 (100.0)

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 4.6**  
**Age distribution of pre-primary students by year, 1998–2013**

Age	Year				
	1998	2000	2005	2008	2013
3y	-	-	-	-	5.8
4y	12.6	15.4	13.7	9.6	19.3
5y	29.9	27.9	30.1	28.1	32.5
6y	22.1	23.2	24.4	31.3	25.8
7y	20.1	17.5	20.3	18.8	11.5
8y	8.7	9.6	6.8	8.8	3.3
9y+	6.6	6.5	4.5	3.3	1.7

Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013

**Annex 4.7**  
**Distribution of pre-primary students by school type and year**

School type	Year				
	1998	2000	2005	2008	2013
Government primary	60.8	37.3	42.8	36.6	23.1
Non-govt. primary	20.7	40.0	15.3	15.4	10.8
Non-formal school	2.7	1.2	15.7	16.4	21.7
Madrasa	3.1	7.8	6.4	1.9	3.3
Kindergarten	9.7	11.4	17.1	28.4	27.9
High school	3.0	2.3	2.7	1.3	0.8
Mosque based	-	-	-	-	12.4

Sources: Education Watch Household Surveys, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2008, and 2013

**Annex 4.8**  
**Percentage of students by reasons of not taking pre-primary education**

Reasons	3–10y		11–15y		16–20y	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
School is away from home	3.3	2.0	0.9	1.2	0.5	0.5
Transportation problem	1.1	3.1	1.6	1.5	0.5	0.5
School refused admission	5.2	3.3	2.4	2.1	3.5	1.8
No school available nearby	32.3	33.3	46.6	51.8	59.2	62.6
Under-aged	1.4	1.5	0.8	1.2	0.4	0.3
Parents did not wish to admit*	44.0	44.4	34.3	28.0	24.4	23.8
Parents were not aware of pre-primary	9.5	9.6	11.0	11.4	10.1	10.1
Scarcity of money	2.2	1.8	1.4	2.2	1.2	0.5
Others	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Or they thought that pre-primary is not necessary/required

**Annex 5.1**  
**Percentage of madrasa educated teachers in pre-primary education by school type**

Madrasa type	School type					All
	Govt. primary	Non-govt. primary	Kindergarten	NGO school	Mosque based	
General	1.7	5.4	5.3	3.3	48.8	10.4
Kowmi/kharizi	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	9.3	1.5
Total	1.7	5.4	5.8	3.3	58.1	11.9

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Annex 5.2**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary teachers by stream and level of education**

Stream	Level of education			
	SSC/Dakhil	HSC/Alim	Bachelor/Fazil	Master/kamil
Humanities	64.4	70.0	80.1	75.9
Science	25.5	14.1	9.7	10.8
Business studies	9.5	15.5	10.1	12.4
Muzabbid	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.9
Vocational	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Annex 5.3**  
**Percentage distribution of pre-primary teachers by stream and level of education**

Stream	Level of education			
	SSC/Dakhil	HSC/Alim	Bachelor/Fazil	Master/kamil
GPA 3-5	24.3	25.6	2.5	4.8
GPA 2-<3	9.4	11.4	3.1	0.7
GPA 1-<2	0.6	1.4	0.2	0.0
First division	19.4	8.1	4.0	9.0
Second division	38.2	39.3	64.0	76.3
Third division	8.0	14.3	26.2	9.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Annex 5.4**  
**Attendance rate of the students on survey day by school type and gender**

School type	Attendance rate		
	Boys	Girls	Both
Government	52.0	52.9	52.5
Non-government	48.7	52.5	51.7
Kindergarten	72.6	73.5	73.1
NGO school	78.2	80.8	78.6
Mosque based	70.8	69.7	70.0
All	65.9	68.0	67.9

Source: Education Watch Pre-primary School Survey, 2013

**Annex 8.1**  
**Percentage of students had private expenditure during January–June 2013 by school type, gender and area**

School type	Gender		Area		All
	Boys	Girls	Rural	Urban	
NGO school	62.9	68.7	65.3	75.0	65.9
Mosque based	75.0	75.0	72.9	100.0	75.0
Government primary	95.5	96.1	95.1	100.0	95.8
Non-govt. primary	92.7	89.1	90.9	100.0	91.1
Madrasa	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Kindergarten	98.5	100.0	98.6	100.0	99.2
High school	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	86.9	87.8	84.9	98.4	87.3

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 8.2**  
**Percentage of students had private expenditure during January to June, 2013 by school type and heads of expenditure**

School type	Admission	Monthly fees	Book	Stationary	School bag	School dress	Private tutor
NGO school	16.0	5.5	9.9	31.7	41.3	10.2	9.9
Mosque based	8.3	1.2	6.5	56.5	38.7	2.4	8.3
Government primary	28.5	0.0	40.1	92.0	43.6	32.1	24.0
Non-govt. primary	21.2	2.1	32.9	89.7	35.6	26.0	15.8
Madrasa	61.4	54.5	75.0	95.5	50.0	38.6	11.4
Kindergarten	93.9	93.4	93.6	97.9	84.4	74.8	51.2
High school	100.0	100.0	81.8	100.0	81.8	100.0	54.5
Total	42.4	30.2	45.0	76.1	53.3	35.7	25.5

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

**Annex 8.3**  
**Percentage distribution of cost by heads of expenditure, gender and area**

Heads of expenditure	Gender		Area		All
	Boys	Girls	Rural	Urban	
Admission	18.1	16.5	10.3	22.7	17.3
Monthly fees	22.3	19.5	19.4	22.3	21.0
Books	8.0	8.4	9.1	7.4	8.2
Stationary	10.8	10.7	13.3	8.7	10.7
School bag	7.1	7.9	11.3	4.4	7.4
School dress	12.5	11.9	15.4	9.7	12.2
Private tutor	21.2	25.2	21.1	24.7	23.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Education Watch Household Survey, 2013

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Pre-primary education has started in Bangladesh aiming to create a 'strong foundation' at early years. The beginning was good as decisions on a number of policy directions have been taken and are already in place. These include curriculum, operational framework, expansion plan, GO-NGO collaboration guideline, pre-primary service delivery standard, and a comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy.

ECCD includes children from birth to eight years of age, a later part of which is early childhood education. The Education Watch 2013 has been devoted to early childhood education and this report presents data on the current situation in the country. It found a commendable improvement in access to pre-primary education in Bangladesh in recent years, a majority of whom are enrolled in non state (private and NGO) institutions. Many children are unfortunately still out-of-school. With a net enrolment rate of 52.5% at age 5, an estimated 1.5 million children are outside the network of pre-primary education across the country. The figure is 3.8 million if the children of age 4-5 years are considered. Although many different categories of pre-primary educational institutions exist, majority of them are not prepared to provide quality education. Parents showed their dissatisfaction with the current provision. Moreover, private expenditure persists even at this level, with highest proportion for supplementary private tuition.

This study suggests rigorous scrutiny of all schools/centres and strategies in line with national vision and service delivery standards already adopted by the government. Currently, the government is not capable enough to take the responsibility of all children's quality education. Improvement of government's capacity and effective engagement of all concerned is thus important. The government needs to play a pro-active role in this engagement. Recommendations were made to amend the compulsory education Act of 1990 towards broadening its scope to include pre-primary in primary, and vesting greater role, responsibility and authority to the Upazila Education Offices and local governments.

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