

Ex-Post Evaluation Report

Quality Primary Education for Children (QPEC) from Extreme Poor Families and Indigenous Children in Bangladesh



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Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| AC | Area Coordinator |
| ACS | Anandalok Community School |
| ADPEO | Assistant District Primary Education Officer |
| ASPR | Annual Sector Performance Report |
| AUEO | Assistant Upazila Education Officer |
| BDT | Bangladesh Taka |
| CMC | Center Management Committee |
| DPE | Directorate of Primary Education |
| DPEO | District Primary Education Officer |
| ED | Executive Director |
| EDC | Education Development Committee |
| EFA | Education For All |
| ESO | Education Support Organizer |
| EWC | Education Watch Committee |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| GoB | Government Of Bangladesh |
| GPA | Grade Point Average |
| GPS | Government Primary School |
| GUK | Gana Unnayan Kendra |
| HSC | Higher Secondary Certificate |
| JSC | Junior Secondary Certificate |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| NER | Net Enrolment Rate |
| NFPE | Non-Formal Primary Education |
| NGO | Non-Government Organization |
| PEDP | Primary Education Development Program |
| PO | Program Organizer |
| PSC | Primary School Completion |
| QPEC | Quality Primary Education for Children |
| RNGPS | Registered Non-Government Primary School |
| SMC | School Management Committee |
| SSC | Secondary School Certificate |
| SUS | Sabalamby Unnayan Samity |
| TOT | Training Of Trainers |
| UN | United Nations |
| URC | Upazila Resource Center |
| USS | Udayan Swabolombbee Sangstha |

1. Summary

1.1 Background

NETZ Bangladesh is a non-governmental development organization working in various fields including education since 1991, aiming to improve human capacity especially for marginalized people for sustainable development. Quality Primary Education for Children from Extreme Poor and Indigenous Families (QPEC) is one of the education projects of NETZ in Bangladesh and was funded by the BMZ. QPEC started on 1st January 2008 and successfully completed at the end of 2011.

Education is one of the strong social investment sectors for human capacity development. However, the selection of beneficiaries was focused on marginalized people living in difficult circumstances. The project aimed to ensure access and completion of primary education of the children of these families with quality so that they can go for further education.

The project had been implemented by some well-known local NGOs specialized in working with marginalized communities with direct and indirect involvement of local government education authority in the districts of Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Kushtia, Nilphamari, and Netrakona by Ashrai, Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK), Sabalamby Unnayan Samity (SUS) and Udayan Swabolombe Sangstha (USS) respectively. The major technical assistance was provided by NETZ Bangladesh.

NETZ implements all projects through partnership with NGOs specialized in the area for common interest. Providing quality education to the children of extreme poor and indigenous families in North-Western Bangladesh was the target of the project.

1.2 Major findings and recommendations

- Children of poor and marginalized families vulnerable to either 'dropout' or to remain 'out-of-school' were supported by the QPEC project. Of all enrolled children under QPEC project 98.76% completed the primary education cycle and 80% continued their further education. During this evaluation, 75% of them were found studying in grade 9 in different secondary schools. Since the dropout rate in formal primary education sector is 19.5% (ASPR 2014) and they are mostly from disadvantaged communities, NFPE initiatives should be continued.
- Awareness of the parents regarding educating their children substantially increased, but this should be nurtured for further improvement to the extent to sustainability of the concept on benefit of education.
- Since the Anandalok Community Schools (ACS) created evidence-based examples of quality education for children from disadvantaged families and ensured community participation, funding support needs to be continued to the existing schools for helping them to become self-sufficient. At the same time, good practices should be scaled up into other un-served and/or underserved communities.
- The formal schools, which were supported by this project, have achieved the goal of access and retention of the children in primary education. EDCs have been well recognized by the community and ESOs played a vital role in activating SMCs. But more quality needs to be determined through the support of this project in the existing ones. Since many newly

nationalised schools are lacking capacity in terms of quality and management, this efforts need to be extended in similar kind of schools to make it capable like other government schools.

2. Introduction

Bangladesh is committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as one of the signatories to the UN Millennium Declaration in 2000. The MDG-2 targets for ‘Achieving Universal Primary Education’ showing remarkable achievements in terms of net enrollment rate in primary education.

The Government of Bangladesh has taken many initiatives, including the Compulsory Primary Education Act 1993, which made the 5-year primary education program free of cost at all primary schools. For the last few years, government has started pre-primary schooling in existing primary schools. The government adopted as well demand-side intervention policies such as food for education program and stipend program for primary education.

The government introduced the Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP III) which aims to increase access, quality and efficiency across the board in the primary education sector and tries to establish an efficient, inclusive and equitable primary education system delivering effective and child-friendly learning from pre-primary throughout grade five.

According to the Annual Sector Performance Report (ASPR) of the Directorate for Primary Education (DPE) 2014, the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) was 97.3% in 2013 (boys 96.2% and girls 98.4%); in 2012 it was 96.7%. The percentage of grade one students with Pre-Primary Education increased from 50% in 2012 to 67% in 2013.

However, there are regional disparities among upazilas (i.e. sub-districts) in Bangladesh. Some are performing better, while others are doing not good regarding the achievement of education goals. Reasons are remoteness, economic hardship, marginalization, natural disaster, migration, child labor, no support at home for education, family ignorance and so on.

NETZ Bangladesh is a non-governmental development organization working in various fields of human progress since 1991 of which education is one of the focus areas to improve human capacity for sustainable development of individuals and the country at large. NETZ has long experience in the education sector mainly in primary education through the implementation of various projects and interventions, which differ from other conventional inputs in the education sector.

QPEC was one of the projects of NETZ, which successfully completed in 2011. The major focus of educational support was to provide assistance to children of very marginalized people living in difficult circumstances to complete their quality education.

NETZ commissioned a team of two consultants to analyze the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, overall developmental impacts and sustainability of the project to determine future needs of such projects in Bangladesh. The team investigated the inputs, outputs, effects and influences of the project as a whole – with especial attention to the impacts on the target population. The consultant team included NETZ, the partner NGOs, government authorities and target groups in the evaluation process to analyze and assess the in-depth action, reaction and achievement of the target communities.

The team also analyzed the situation of external factors influencing the implementation of the project, especially the government's role in mainstream primary education and its perception and support to QPEC. Traditional community leadership roles were as well considered, as they are important for the implementation of such a project.

3. Methodology

The evaluation considered primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources included Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and interviews with key stakeholders in Dhaka and project sites. The itinerary for the fieldwork is found in annex 2. A full list of people interviewed and focus groups discussion conducted is found in annex 3, while a list of the documents reviews is found in annex 4. The interview and FGD checklists are found in annex 5. School observations were also conducted in schools where focus group discussions were held.

Secondary sources included QPEC project documents, including the project proposal, monitoring reports and relevant government policy documents. Furthermore documents pertaining to the national primary education development project PEDP II have been reviewed.

Key informants for interviews were chosen from all relevant NETZ and QPEC project personnel, officials of the partner NGOs, and project-funded NGO officials. They were chosen in such a way as to ensure that one or two people from 3 partner NGOs (ED, AC, PO) could be met. Besides, DPEO (Gaibandha) and ADPEO (Joypurhat) were contacted and met, based on advice provided from the NETZ personnel in Dhaka.

A purposive sample of schools was selected, designed to cover school types and categories. During the evaluation, 5 ACSs was observed, 15 teachers were interviewed and 50 students brought in discussion. 48 parents and 18 teachers of NFPE schools participated in FGDs. 20 former NFPE graduate students, who are now studying at high schools, participated in FGDs. 70 EDC and SMC members got the opportunity to express their views about formal schools. 10 teachers were interviewed and 2 FGDs were conducted with 16 ESOs.

Data from FGDs were recorded during the discussion on large sheets of paper so that all participants could see what was recorded and commented on it. This text, representing responses to each question or discussion topic, was then translated into English.

The recorded data was then used to identify all the occurrences of particular issues either on each sector or in the entire documentation. Where necessary, useful and relevant notes were made concerning the number of responses of that kind or the characteristics of the respondents who provided such responses.

4. Framework conditions

4.1 Challenges and Potentials

Establishing community schools, NFPE centers and supporting existing formal primary schools in remote areas were the main interventions that taken place under QPEC. Emphasis of interventions were given to areas having no or poor facilities of education for children (i.e. “C category”). Before QPEC these areas had rare scope for primary education and the next schools have been far away. Thus many children remained out of school.

The implementing partners had their strong presence in the project locations for a long time. During their work with the communities the demand was raised by community members to provide quality education for their children. The poorest people and especially indigenous community had little

confidence in the existing formal education system. The implementing partners had continuous dialogues with the community people about the interventions. Based on local needs the partners conducted surveys, which let them to establish NFPE centers and to select formal schools to be supported. In establishing ACSs, contribution of the land by the community was a selection criteria.

The interventions faced many challenges from the beginning. NFPE centers and ACSs were run following the national curriculum. In many cases the teachers were less qualified at the start of the project compared to those of the formal system. The training courses of teachers were also shorter. Interactive teaching methodology, community mobilization, peoples' participation and ownership were the major strategies to face the challenges for effective continuations of the interventions.

4.2 Presence and activities of other actors

The project included local level reputed NGOs to work as implementing partner. Besides, the whole project was presented to government education authorities to make them understand what the project is about and the expected roles of the authorities. The Government of Bangladesh has the official responsibility to bring every child in primary education. The project was supporting government towards its goal. However, government officials extended their support the project as much as possible for them within their limited resources. Some other NGOs, including BRAC, in other areas of North-Western Bangladesh have NFPE Programs with same target group, but none of them have established sustainable community schools nor established mechanisms for supporting formal schools. However, at the time of set up phase of the project it was observed that there was no NGO intervention in very remote areas, as for example in Adivasi areas.

4.3 Risks to the success of the development measure

Presently, huge numbers of registered primary schools have been taken over by the Government of Bangladesh to convert those fully into government schools. Government has got extra budgetary pressure to cover the costs of the larger system adaptation. And the pressure seems to be continued for some more years to be fully adjusted and copped with the necessary expenses. So, it is difficult for government to accommodate newcomers in the areas where there is no school or the capacity of existing school is inadequate for the next couple of years. On the other hand, ACSs must have sustainable plan for ensuring effective community participation and external funding support, and also require further government linkage. The Chief Executive of GUK suggested developing a trust fund, which deserves consideration as a part of sustainable strategy. However, he thinks that if such trust fund comes into existing to scope of support to these will be significant. He proposed to come forward to create a sustainable strategy for ACSs.

5. Capacity development of project executing agency & its partners

Designing a project is less difficult than its successful implementation and continuation. There were obviously challenges in guiding the project in its own way. Bringing all the potential stakeholders under one common goal and make them understand was a long process. Trainings, discussions, meetings, workshops, information sharing, study tours, exposure visits were interventions taken by the project to achieve its target. Main capacity building agenda are shown below.

5.1 Staff qualification

The consultant team visited and met a number of project staff members in various occasions like partners' office visits, FGDs, school visits and in several meetings during the field work. The team

analyzed and evaluated the capacity of the staff of the project implementing agencies. Based on the review findings it was found that the project staff members under the partner NGOs were recruited carefully with very good academic background and commitment.

Minimum academic qualifications for teacher of ACS and NFPE were Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC). Minimum academic qualification for supervisor of ACS and NFPE was postgraduate with relevant experience. Supervisors like Education Support Organizers (ESOs), Program Organizers and Area Coordinators have educational qualification ranging from HSC to post graduate level and all of them have experience in one or multiple capacities varying from 3-10 years working experience in similar jobs.

While interviewing the supervisors, teachers and other project staffs, it was learnt that they were mostly familiar with the project purpose and the strategy of implementation. While inquiring about the purpose of the project, all the teachers were found convergent about the objectives, implementation strategy, linkages with different stakeholders including government and linkages with MDG 2.

Prior to establishing a community school or NFPE center or supporting an existing primary school, the project conducted area auditing and area mapping about the quality and quantity of education of the respective area and the scope of local resources such as potential donors for establishing ACSs.

Based on the needs assessment of teachers and staff members, the project designed following courses for the teachers to implement the project. NETZ prepared the all the training manuals and conducted the trainings with assistance of educational experts.

Training for the teachers of ACS

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| • Basic course including pre-primary | 15 days |
| • Monthly refreshers | 1 day each month |
| • Quarterly refreshers | 3 days in each quarter |
| • Subject based training English, Math & Science | 2 days each |
| • Materials development | 4 days |
| • Classroom management training | 2 days |
| • Competency based training | 3 days |
| • Pre-school learning methodology training | 3 days |

Training for the NFPE teachers

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Basic course including pedagogy | 12 days |
| • Monthly refreshers | 1 day each month |
| • Subject-based training | 3 days in each quarter |

Training for the Education Support Organizer and Project Organizer

- Active teaching learning methodology
- TOT
- Classroom management training
- Materials development training
- Basic training

Training for the Area Coordinators

- Active Teaching Learning Methodology

- TOT
- SMC Training
- Class Room Management Training
- Basic Training

To judge the quality and capacity of the teachers and other project staffs, analysis of Primary School Certificate (PSC) examination can be taken as consideration. In all the interventions, result of the PSC examination of 2011 was found excellent. Most of the children were obtained GPA 3.5-4.0 out of scale of 5. Few children obtained GPA 5. Only 3% children were unsuccessful. Of the children who passed PSC, almost all participated in the Junior School Certificate (JSC) examination at the end of class 8 in 2014 (only 8 children dropped out by this time). The published result of this examination was also found very well. Most of the children scored between GPA 4 out of 5.

5.2 Other changes within the project

Capacity within the senior level of staffs of the partner NGOs is quite remarkable since they are dedicated and have a clear concept about the project. While discussing with the senior executive of the partner NGOs it was found that they are also well informed about the sustainability of the interventions.

6. Development Policy Impact

6.1 Relevance of the Activities and Outputs to the Objectives of the Project

6.1.1 The policy focused advocacy work

The policy and advocacy work was relevant to the objectives of the project, because government policies at the time were not favorable to establish and access to quality primary education in the projected districts. Three examples of obstacles of the government system at the beginning of the project: (1) The requirements regarding the population of a community and its school-aged children for establishment of a government primary school (GPS) were too high for the remote parts of the embankment areas of Gaibandha and Adivasi areas of Netrakona. (2) The pre-requisites for teacher training and teacher employment prevented adequate numbers of local teachers being employed in project area. (3) Many teachers and management of those schools were not adequately supported by the government mainstream system. Because of these lacks and because of the remoteness of the areas government support was generally very low.

6.1.2 The recruitment, support and capacity building of formal schools and education staff

The formal education system, especially PEDP-2 at the time of the project, has a mandate to manage and deliver quality primary education. However, due to lack of experience and capacity, quality primary education was not achieved up to the expectation level. Furthermore, before the project start there was a lack of designated positions in the projected formal schools to work successfully in the area of basic education and community mobilization. As a result, this project's support and capacity building of existing school staff, as well as the recruitment of one ESO for each RNGPS was highly relevant to implement the provisions of PEDP-2.

6.1.3 Capacity building of CMC and SMC

The by the project provided capacity building for CMCs of NFPE centers and SMCs of formal school and ACSs was very much needed. This activity was especially relevant for existing formal schools

supported by the project, since in many instances these groups had become inactive. The conducted advocacy work was relevant and essential for mobilizing communities and informing them of the value of education. It was important to mobilize communities to support and monitor schools and teachers, form or revive CMC and SMC and to encourage student attendance.

6.1.4 The construction and renovation of schools

The construction of community schools was important as these schools were constructed in areas where no school had existed before. The selection criteria ensured that needy areas were prioritized and duplication and overlap avoided. Including enough classrooms to accommodate pre-primary students was also relevant to implementing good quality based pre-primary, primary and enhancing access and retention. For example, the nearest primary school to Kobi Sufia Kamal Anandalok School (ACS) is Nashratpur Government Primary School, which is more than 1.5 km away. The highest distance from an established community school to a government primary school is even 6 km. Still, even today some children remain out of school in the project areas because of non-availability of school facilities.

Renovation of existing formal schools was a very relevant activity since it enhanced the facilities and made them more child-friendly. Installation of water supplies facilities and toilets in particular were important for the well-being of students and school staff. Adding extra classrooms to existing schools was a relevant activity as it provided more space to enhance school access.

6.1.5 Recruiting and training teachers

The recruitment and training of local teachers were not only relevant, but also essential for the success of this project. It addressed two issues. Firstly, local teachers have higher attendance rates because they are part of the community. Secondly, local teachers speak the local language and can therefore communicate better with students and community members. The salary support was also essential. Although the amount paid to those teachers was only about half the amount paid to teachers in GPS.

6.1.6 Relevance of the activities and outputs to the intended impacts

The major impacts of the project are reflected in its main components. Since the activities designed in the project achieved very encouraging results, it can be stated that the project was fully relevant.

6.1.7 Improving access to education

Establishing community schools and NFPE centers and recruiting teachers were essential to improving access to education in places where no schools existed before. Repairing existing formal schools also contributed to improving access by providing a healthier environment that was more conducive to attending school. Children got admitted in those facilities created by the project and it is obvious many of the children who completed primary education cycles would not have been able to complete their education if the facilities were not there.

6.1.8 Improving the quality of education

Most teachers were only familiar with traditional, lecture-based teaching. Thus, providing teaching and learning materials and training teachers in child-friendly methods were very relevant to improving the quality of education in project areas. NFPE and ACS created a good academic environment from which all enrolled children benefited.

6.1.9 Relevance to the Government of Bangladesh

Overall the QPEC project's focus on reaching remote areas, providing child-friendly schools and promoting NFPE was highly appropriate to fulfilling the aims of the Bangladeshi Constitution and National Education Policy 2010. The QPEC project also contributed to meeting Bangladesh's EFA and MDG2 commitments to provide basic education for all students regardless of context. Furthermore, it contributed to fulfilling the legal requirements of the National Education Policy 2010. The QPEC project replicated some of the activities in the PEDP-II (and PEDP-III). However, during the formulation of the project it was recognized that PEDP-II, as a national program working at GPS, will not be able to address many of the basic education needs in the project areas, especially in areas where there was no GPS and RNGPS. In particular, QPEC had undertaken some of the activities in PEDP-II's Action Plan that were not implemented in remote areas through PEDP-II itself. These included recruiting and training local teachers, introducing NFPE schooling, improving school infrastructure, strengthening supervision and monitoring, establishing community schools, implementing NFPE and building the capacity of CMCs and SMCs.

6.1.10 Relevance to schools and their communities

The activities in this project were highly relevant to schools and their communities. As noted above, the communities that benefited from this project either had no school previously, or had a school that was in need of improvement. The PEDP-II of the government would have been unable to address these needs. In terms of supporting formal primary schools, infrastructure was poor and quality of teachers a big concern. Poor quality of teachers has a direct negative influence on quality education and student performance. Students were mostly from poor and marginalized communities. There was no monitoring of school level monitoring. In this situation school support intervention was very relevant.

6.2 Efficiency

6.2.1 Cost Efficiency

Table 3 shows the project expenditure per calendar year, the number of students enrolled in project schools and the expenditure per student in each year and overall.

Project Expenditure Per Student Per Year

| Year | ACS | | | NFPE | | |
|---------------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|------------|-------------|
| | Students | Budget BDT | BDT/student | Students | Budget BDT | BDT/student |
| 2008 | 900 | 16,561,734 | 18,401 | 600 | 2,407,535 | 4,012 |
| 2009 | 1,200 | 5,180,362 | 4,316 | 600 | 1,332,250 | 2,220 |
| 2010 | 1,500 | 5,662,948 | 3,775 | 600 | 1,511,465 | 2,519 |
| 2011 | 1,800 | 5,721,249 | 3,178 | 600 | 1,641,098 | 2,735 |
| Totals | 5,400 | 33,126,294 | 6,134 | 2,400 | 6,892,347 | 2,872 |

Note-1: For ACS, per capita expenditure in four years: BDT 24,536

Note-2: For NFPE, per capita expenditure in four years: BDT 11,488

Note-3: Since the major part of expenditure of the first year was invested in infrastructure development, it looks higher compared to the following years. However, the establishment will belong to the community thus helping to achieve sustainability of the impact of the interventions. This infrastructure will continue to exist and utilized even after the project is over.

The average annual project costs are about BDT 6,134 per student for ACS (including investment costs) and BDT 2,872 per student for NFPE (including investment costs). If the capital cost is taken out, the regular cost per student for ACS and NFPE is reduced significantly. It is difficult to compare per capita costs across systems and contexts of formal primary schools. Nevertheless, these figures are comparable to per capita costs to other interventions providing and supporting contextually appropriate education systems with similar kinds of inputs in other remote settings.

6.2.2 Time efficiency

The project was originally scheduled to run from January 2008 to December 2011. All project funds were disbursed on time as per payment schedule. All the planned activities were completed within the stipulated deadline but internal changes were made especially for ASHRAI, the implementing NGO in Joypurhat due to some changes at top management. Without BMZ funding the partner NGOs and NETZ continued their support for the first six months in 2012 to support a 100% passing and admission process of all students at nearby high schools. Furthermore special coaching to the students at grade six was provided.

6.2.3 Comparison with alternate approaches

There were advantages that NETZ was undertaking the intervention through implementing partner NGOs. For example, the NGOs had already executing a very substantial amount of community mobilization work in the project area. This included the formation of education development committees at the village level in hundreds of communities. Since the project was implemented in areas where the partner NGOs already had a significant presence, they had existing community relationships and people in the community had already been empowered to think about and plan their own development activities. This meant that there was already a pool of people at community level who could make important contributions to CMC and SMC.

Formal schools with an adequate number of classrooms were funded for renovation work, including earth filling, making furniture, ensuring water and sanitation system. In some cases, school buildings were constructed partly. In each case, community members participated actively with matching funds. For community schools the scenario was different. QPEC provided the full expenditure for construction, while community members provided the required land. These big contributions can be as matching funds. For NFPE the community provided low-cost houses and QPEC provided the rental cost. The rent of schoolhouses for NFPE centers was a temporary settlement.

This meant that other aspects of the project, such as improving teaching and learning, could be implemented more quickly. If a formal school was in relatively good condition and of reasonable size, this was also taken as an indicator that the school community was relatively well-organized and that any further inputs would be sustainable. This was more efficient than selecting schools that needed major renovations or where signs could be found that the community was not supporting the school. However, it also had the consequence that other schools in great need of renovation or in great need of community mobilization may have been excluded from the project.

The NFPE used to follow the NCTB curriculum, i.e. the official national curriculum. The DPE is responsible to supply the textbooks once a year, i.e. in January. But NFPE maintained a condensed academic course calendar: within 4 years they completed the full 5-year primary education cycle. In doing so, they required some textbooks for the next class during the middle of a calendar year, but it was very difficult to manage those books at time. Since the partner NGOs had prior linkages with

education offices, they collected sufficient copies of textbooks in January, stored those in their offices and used them when required as per of the condensed academic calendar year of NFPE.

6.3 Effectiveness

6.3.1 Effectiveness of the linkage and coordination with the education administrators and officials

Liaison with DPEO appears to have been effective, with official textbooks being distributed and official examinations conducted. Furthermore, the quality of the data coming from the schools increased greatly over the course of the project. This indicated the growing liaison with the education officers to support the schools in their data collection and reporting. Furthermore, the education officials became proactive and made a video of pre-school sessions at ACS and replicated them at formal schools (other than those supported by the QPEC).

6.3.2 Effectiveness of the capacity building of the CMC, SMC and EDC

The meetings, regular discussions and informal trainings of CMC, SMC and EDC members were very effective. Members who received the training reported that as a result they were able to contribute to the schools by supporting children to attend, keeping the school clean, keeping children safe, monitoring student attendance, supporting students' learning, and learning how to run their respective committee. There was no indicator in the project documents for the activity of providing initial or refresher training for CMC, SMC and EDC. However, great contribution in regards to management of the schools and NFPE center were visible. Besides, mobilizing funds for ACS through SMC was also very helpful.

The interviewed SMC members reported that they developed their capacity in a number of ways. SMC focus groups discussion in 8 schools (ACS-4, formal school-4) reported that the training helped them ensure more regular attendance of students, while a similar number said it enabled the SMC members to ensure the best use of funds. Four focus groups discussions (ACS) also stressed that community members had donated land for the school construction.

Other participants in this evaluation noted that SMC capacity building interventions are needed to enhance their capacities for future success in empowering school communities and raising awareness on the importance of education. One respondent opined that the SMC in the project schools were stronger than those in the GPSs in the same area.

6.3.3 Effectiveness of the school construction and renovation work

There is no doubt that the school construction and renovation work increased access to primary education in a large number of communities. However, a wide range of the participants in this evaluation noted the effectiveness of the project in extending access to education in remote areas.

The field work for this evaluation included observation of the conditions in and quality of the supported schools. All schools visited had buildings that were in good condition. Most of the schools were clean though a system of garbage collection was lacking. Eight schools observed had a water supply system. All of the schools had toilets and all of them were most of which were functional. All schools had water for washing hands. All schools had drinking water available.

6.3.4 Effectiveness of the teacher recruitment program

Most of the SMC members were positive about the teachers in their school. They praised them for being punctual, getting good results, visiting students' homes, putting in extra hours to help students, and generally teaching well.

The teachers themselves were satisfied with many aspects of their training. Some areas where they felt they needed more training in order to be able to apply them properly are a) developing and using teaching aids and b) lesson planning. Most the NFPE teachers mentioned that they were getting poor honorarium.

6.3.5 Effectiveness of the teacher training in child-friendly methods

The ACSs visited had children's work displayed inside and/or outside the classroom. At the formal schools it was reported that the children displayed their drawing and writing once annually. Some parents reported that children drew pictures as part of their exams, and these were displayed, although in some cases the displays were not changed frequently.

The formal schools had classroom seating arranged only in rows. Community Schools had a combination of rows and a U-shaped arrangement, which created opportunities for students to sit face to face in groups. In addition, students at eight schools reported that they sometimes sat in groups to do reading or other tasks.

6.3.6 Effectiveness of the project design

The project was designed very effectively by selecting some of the most needy areas of the country. The project certainly worked in and had a substantial and positive impact on the most remote parts of Netrakona, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Nilphamari and Kushtia.

6.3.7 Effectiveness of project management and coordination

The project was effectively managed and coordinated throughout the project period. In 2010, one of the implementing NGOs (Ashrai) was facing some internal management problem, which caused irregular disbursement of funds to the project site. But at last they were able overcome the problem. The monitoring and coordination unit of NETZ and all partner NGOs provided detailed feedback on all of the indicators and allowed progress to be tracked and adjustments to be made. This was reflected in an increase in the quality of reporting of the indicators in the reports

6.4 Overall developmental impacts

The interventions had the aim to ensure child-centered and activity-based teaching learning methods. It was found that these innovative approaches are specifically still being practiced at the existing ACSs. The project classrooms (ACS, NFPE) had a teacher-student ratio within an appropriate range, i.e. on average 1:30. This ratio was maintained throughout the whole project period.

From 2009, the DPE introduced a nation-wide compulsory public examination after the completion of the primary education cycle at the end of class 5. This new system created a challenge for all providers of primary education in a non-formal set up. All students of non-formal schools had to appear in these exams. In these exams, the QPEC project successfully proved the necessity of its presence in the project locations.

Generally, the primary education cycle in Bangladesh is five years. But considering the age and understanding level of NFPE students, the NFPE cycle was designed for four years, i.e. within four years they completed primary education cycle. Despite this shorter period of time, the NFPE students performed better at family, society and community level compared to other primary level students. This also saved time and costs compared to the formal system. The following table presents the comparison with formal schools:

| Type of education | Enrollment year | Appeared in PSC | % of appearing based on enrolment | % of pass in PSC based of appearing in the PSC exam |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| QPEC NFPE schools (4 years) | 2008 | 2011 | 92% | 97% |
| Formal schools (5 years) | 2007 | 2011 | 60% | 95% |

The formal schools, which were supported under QPEC, had been categorized in grade C by the government. That means that these schools had generally inadequate number of classrooms, lack of furniture, great absenteeism of teachers and learners, very few or no students in class five. Through the project the situation improved to a great extent, for example increased teachers' and students' attendance, increased enrollment, improved time-management of classes. In Gaibandha Sadar upazila 347 students from 22 formal schools under the BMZ supported project appeared in the PSC in 2011. All students of 18 formal schools passed in different grades. Only one student each from the other 4 formal schools did not pass. This was an outstanding result directly linked to the quality input of the project. The first students of the 10 ACS appeared only after the end of the project in the PSC exams. Since then all ACS students successfully completed the primary education cycle, passed the exams and got admission in nearby secondary schools.

The indicators set for NFPE schools were achieved. At formal schools teachers did not receive training on interactive methods. The ACS achieved all set indicators, but they lag behind to a great extent in terms of financial sustainability. It proves the necessity of similar projects for a good span of time.

The ACS are examples for the strength of community participation. The land that was donated by the community without pre-conditions, has comparatively a higher value than other areas in the village. The community donated 33 decimal lands for each community school. The market price of each decimal of land is around BDT 30,000-50,000 (at the time of the donation approx. 300-500 Euro). The schools proved that children of poor families are getting a better education for their holistic development.

40 NFPE centers in two districts, 10 community schools in three districts and 30 non-functioning formal primary schools as a beginning are not insignificant in number. These interventions have contributed to the education access and retention of about 9,000 children through NFPE and ACS. There was almost no drop out at these schools. The formal schools were able to enroll all school-aged children of the catchment areas.

The major still visible impacts of QPEC are (i) that the built ACS are still continuing and more ACSs have been established under new projects and that a democratic process is established in the formation of SMC and student councils of ACSs and the school are recognized as a model at upazila level; (ii) the supported formal schools already had been nationalized by the government. Before the beginning of QPEC, they had be categorized as C. Due to intervention of the project, the quality of those schools was significantly improved and currently they are in category B; and (iii) NFPE centers created a very good impact among marginalized communities and many NFPE centers of current education projects have establish in the same areas due to a high demand of marginalized communities.

If the project did not exist, a good number of children would remain out of school. Of enrolled and retained children through this project, more than 70% would remain either non-enrolled or dropped out before learning anything. Therefore this project can be considered as a great success.

6.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is a very important issue of any project. The interventions of the BMZ-supported project have not yet arrived in a full sustainable form, but there are elements of sustainability in each of the interventions. In this chapter these are discussed in brief.

6.5.1 Anandalok Community School

The land for the school was donated by local people. Donation of land for an ACS showed the eagerness of people for the education of their children. There was no condition from the land donor for registration of the school for the ACS except the expectation of quality education for their children. Donating an area of 33 decimal in a place where children from poor families have easy access is a major contribution of the community.

Each school has a very active SMC. It comprises of 11 members of whom two are student representatives. This is a unique adaption in the ACS. During each meeting the student representatives describe the progress of the last month, raise demands of the students and let the other members know about the progress of the students. Local Union Parishad member and High School representatives attend each meeting, which is generally not seen in the GPS. The SMC has a term of two years and an election is held to form a new committee on a regular basis.

The teachers of the ACS were recruited considering the academic qualification, ability and commitment. They did perform very well during the project. The ACSs were started with the enrolment of the children of poor families. These families had no ability to bear the expenses of private tuition. The guardians were not capable to help them in teaching or learning at home. The teachers ensured their learning in the classroom. Home works were the practice of the learnt exercises.

Co-curricular activities were designed with a combination of creativity and the spirit of humanity. The students were adequately able in demonstrating their skills in public. The schools participated in parades and other physical demonstrations in upazila and district levels. The ACS students attained very good positions in these competitions. Generally the students participated as well in celebration of important national days.

A period of only four years after starting a system of primary education is not adequate to popularize it at the local level. But people in the school surroundings had much interest in the progress of the teaching and learning of the schools since the benefit goes directly to their own families.

Government officials like upazila and district level personnel of DPE have shown keen interest to replicate some of the good practices of ACS in mainstream primary education. Some of them visited the schools. NETZ arranged trainings of teachers by deploying trainers from its pool of trainers, but some sessions were conducted by instructors of the respective Upazila Resource Centers (URC) who are responsible for teachers' development of primary schools. Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEO), designated personnel for academic supervision of Government Primary Schools (GPS), also helped in conducting ACS's teachers training. This link is important for the sustainability of the system through good understanding and relationship with local education authorities.

According to government policies primary education is free of cost and poor students shall be provided with education allowances. These allowances are called stipend and are paid to the parents every three months (approx. 1 Euro per month). In this situation, primary education by any other actor cannot be financially sustainable. But the communities are aware about the phasing out of external funding. Since 2010, community members arranged a token financial participation. BDT 10 was collected every month from each student. Later the contribution increased to BDT 20 per month. These fees are creating a fund for the ACS. Local government bodies have a "discriminatory power"

in allocating funds to education institutions. Generally it is a small fund, but at the same time it is a good recognition of the relevant authorities. Community members are appealing to elected public representatives of the local government to include the ACS under this funding scheme in a regular basis.

From 2011, students from the ACSs have been participating in the Primary School Completion examination at the end of class 5. With few exceptions the students who were enrolled in particular cohort could appear and pass successfully in this examination. It has brought reputation to the ACSs among the people of the locality. Furthermore, every ACS has made a good linkage with nearby secondary schools. The teachers and the SMC introduced the children with the secondary school authorities, which helps them in getting advantages from these schools for education purposes.

ACS still have some areas to be developed. Firstly, there are three teachers in a school, but none is given responsibility as head teacher or school coordinator. It hinders the development of the management leadership in the ACS. After withdrawal of donor/NGO support, it may create management problem among the teachers. Secondly, the payment distribution to the teachers lay with the partner NGOs, which also hinders the community ownership.

The Chief Executive of GUK, which is partner NGO implementing the ACS, proposed to raise support from community level, partner NGO and NETZ to build a trust fund to run the ACS smoothly. Activities may be designed accordingly for the creation of a trust fund for the sustainability of ACS.

6.5.2 Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE)

The NFPE centers were opened to provide primary education to the children of most disadvantaged families, especially of indigenous communities. The implementing NGOs had intensive links with those communities for quite a long period and noticed the deprivation of education in these areas. The respective communities were motivated to send their children who were either not enrolled or dropped out from primary education system. Each of the NFPE started with 30 learners on average. The NFPE model was for 4 years to complete the 5 years primary education cycle. The full primary education curriculum was introduced within this time frame. It was possible because the age range (7-14) of the children enrolled was higher than that of the students of the mainstream education system (6-10). The vacations allocated for formal schools were also reduced in the case of NFPE centers.

Teachers with requisite qualification were recruited from the communities to ensure that they could speak mother tongue of the learners or convergent with the indigenous community. 80% of the NFPE students were from indigenous communities. There were wide ranges of capacity building initiatives of the teachers. They were provided a basic training of two weeks and refreshers training at the beginning of each academic year. Every month they participated in a daylong training on teaching learning pedagogy. This capacity building not only made them capable in running the NFPE centers, but also enhanced them as quality teachers for the future. It is reported that at present most of those teachers are still working as teachers.

The implementing partner NGOs follow integrated development approaches for poor people. As part of their general work they formed groups for saving and credits. When these groups are matured after a couple of years they are called “self help groups”. Though this was not part of QPEC project, these groups were formed in several of the targeted communities. For these groups the education of their children was one the most important agenda. During the 4 years of the NFPE cycle, the group members were involved in different ways. They used to send their children in NFPE centers, attend in

guardian meetings and participated in the formation of Center Management Committees (CMC). They also monitored the attendance of the teachers and learners.

Of the children who were enrolled in the NFPE schools, more than 90% percent successfully completed the primary education cycle. In the formal system, such completion of a cohort is not more than 60%. Some of the NFPE learners obtained merit-based scholarships. Most of the children passed in the PSC within the range of GPA 3.5 to 4 out of a scale of 5.

From the sampling report of Joypurhat Sadar, it has been reported that all children who completed the primary education cycle at a NFPE school got admission in grade 6. 80% of these learners are now in grade 8 and 9 after successfully passing the Junior School Certificate examination. Only few girls (4%) got married and left school. No boys have been yet dropped out from high schools and all of them are at present in grade 9. It is important to mention that some children remain in lower classes (class 8). Overall the enrolment of indigenous children in local high schools has increased from 2012 with the learners of supported NFPE centers.

This success of NFPE centers as very supportive for appointing teachers from the indigenous community. Some formal schools have now teachers from the indigenous communities as well, which was not the case some years ago. Other teachers, from the Bengali community, have been become sensitized to the situation of indigenous children, e.g. regarding the culture, values and norms of their communities.

During FGD with 10 students of grade 9 in a secondary school (Beer Nagar High School) at Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat district, who studied before in 3 different NFPE centers, mentioned that all of them obtained GPA 4 out of a scale of 5 in Junior Secondary Certificate examination. They claimed that their present results are better than that of the students who came from formal primary schools. The teacher responsible for sports and culture of that school mentioned that those students usually lead co-curricular activities too. Because of the NFPE background, they have developed leadership skills.

The high school authorities mentioned that they received the highest number of indigenous students in grade 6 so far in 2012, which was a contribution of QPEC (2008-2011). They do not take any tuition fees from these students. Moreover, they allow them to work for 1-2 weeks during the paddy harvest period, as the indigenous adolescent boys and girls are working during the harvesting time to support their families. Since they are the first generation learners, they as well assist their younger siblings in studying at home.

Several parents of the learners described that they started to send their children to formal primary schools, but after two years they found that many of them had not learned anything. Therefore many students drop-out of these schools. These students received a second chance to complete their education due to their enrollment at NFPE schools. In most of the NFPE catchment areas further NFPE centers were established based on a very high number of out-of-school children under a different project in 2012, which are about to be completed.

6.5.3 Formal Primary Schools

Formal schools were selected with very specific criteria by the project. All were Registered Non Government Primary Schools (RNGPS). The Government used to pay all RNGPS teacher a monthly salary of BDT 1,700, which is about one fifth of a GPS teacher remuneration. Teachers were mostly demoralized. Before QPEC the SMC was already formed as per government order, but were not active at all. Absenteeism and dropout rate was very high at the supported schools. Children of poor families rarely enrolled there. The infrastructure of the schools was poor, e.g. there was lack of

furniture. Before the start of QPEC, the needs of selected schools were assessed. Infrastructure facilities and furniture were provided accordingly. An Education Support Organizer (ESO) was appointed for each school. The ESO formed an Education Development Committee (EDC) with the participation of 20 to 30 people from the catchment area. There were overlapping members in the SMC and EDC. Both of these committees were supplement to each other. ESO arranged meetings of both committees on a regular basis. The problems of absenteeism and dropout of learners were discussed in these meetings with high importance. The ESO used to visit the families of the students to ensure their regular attendance.

The development of the schoolhouses as well as introducing toilets and tube wells in the school premises drew the attention of the local people and more students were enrolled, especially those suffering because of lack of such facilities. Bookshelves were given together with books for student to read besides their curriculum. For enhancing quality of teaching-learning pedagogy ESOs identified slow-learning students of each class and gave them necessary support for improvement. With the help of the community additional coaching had been provided to slower students after the end of regular classes. This motivated students and their parents to enroll their children in these schools. All these steps brought better result. During the project period the enrolment of students was increased and the dropout rate reduced to a great extent. Out of all students who were promoted up to grade 5 about 95% passed the PSC examination. Though the national pass rate is almost as high the project enabled these positive results for the most disadvantaged children.

Because of the project intervention those schools were able to fulfill some of the essential criterion of nationalization process and as a result, all QPEC-supported schools were nationalized by the Government of Bangladesh in 2013. These schools supported by the project are comparatively much better than other schools in the same areas and which were nationalized at the same time. The SMC of all schools were still functional at the time of this evaluation. Every month a SMC meeting is being held. At present the government not planning to nationalize any further primary schools during the upcoming years.

7. Cross-cutting issues

From the planning to implementation stage of the project, gender, inclusion, non-biasness to religion and children rights were considered as crosscutting issues. Around 80% of the teachers at ACS and in NFPE schools were female. 55% of the learners were female. There were two children with special needs at ACS. They received extra care from the teachers and peers. Children from indigenous communities were also enrolled both in ACS and NFPE centers. All policies and strategies developed for implementation of the project ensured the safe learning of children. In every step of the project, including capacity building of teachers and project personnel, the project showed zero tolerance for biasness to any religion.

This NETZ supported project was implemented by local partner NGOs in close collaboration with local education authorities and local community members. There was a common ‘code of ethics’ to maintain human rights issues for each and every selected NGO. While selecting partners, NETZ verified the capacity and commitment of the partner NGOs. During the regular monitoring of the project activities lessons learnt were reflected with all partner NGOs. A major emphasis was to given to see how far the partner NGOs were following their commitment to the project through their contributions.

8. Outlook and risk analysis

In spite of many efforts to ensure primary education for all children, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) cannot reach all remote areas, indigenous and some other disadvantaged communities because of a uniform policy of the state. The attitude of the government is positive in terms of welcoming NGO interventions especially for creating showcase of good practices and building capacity of school teachers, school management committees and overall quality primary education. Still the national dropout rate is around 21% (ASPR 2014) and a big number of children are out of school. The GoB welcomes NGO intervention especially for accommodating not enrolled or dropped out children. Many children of char and embankment areas cannot be enrolled because of non-availability of schools. Existing formal schools are not functioning well. In the national primary education program there is no plan to provide special attention to those areas in next few years. So the intervention of NETZ and its partner NGOs can keep a vital role in arranging quality education for the children of these areas.

For the last three decades the education sector has been considered as a common agenda by all major political parties. Political unrest is very usual in a country like Bangladesh. During the last ten years blockades and strikes took place in the country, but did not affect any educational project. Natural calamities like floods, especially in char and embankment areas, interrupted the regular classes for some time, but its impact can be overcome by taking appropriate measures.

During this ex-post evaluation it was observed that all visited NGOs, especially GUK and Ashrai, have good reputation in their working areas. They have their own training facilities, infrastructure, and capacity building arrangements for teachers as well as experienced staff for handling educational programs with bigger size in terms of budget, more schools and students as well. They have proven experience in working with indigenous and disadvantaged communities.

NETZ Country Office has been working in the non-formal and primary education sector for quite a long time. The organization has a good network. Presently there are qualified staff members with adequate experiences to steer, follow up and monitor education activities. They are capable to coordinate training of teachers and other personnel involved in education programs. If the program is extended to a bigger extent, some more staff might be required. NETZ has proven record to recruit efficient people with relevant experiences and comprehensive criteria for the selection of partners, working areas and target group in place.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

a. Conclusions

The project made substantial contributions to fill a gap created by the inability of the GoB to provide education to a large number of children of the disadvantaged families. Nevertheless, some underserved parts of the population in the project districts still remain without suitable access to basic education services.

The project achieved its overall objective of contributing to improved socio-economic development of the project districts in line with the principles of the national education policy. It had intensive interventions in 10 ACS, 40 NFPE centers and 30 formal schools.

The quality of the teaching and learning process was improved through recruiting local teachers, training teachers in child-friendly and interactive methods, providing teaching and learning materials and building the capacity of CMCs and SMCs.

The activities were highly relevant to the objectives, purpose and intended impacts of the project as well as to the supported schools and the local communities. They were also relevant to the GoB's goals for basic education as enshrined in legal documents and international commitments.

b. Recommendations

For consideration of international development partners (BMZ)

- i. As per Regional Report 2014 (UNESCO & UNICEF; source: http://www.unicef.org/education/files/SouthAsia_OOSCI_Study_Executive_Summary_26Jan_14Final.pdf) on Out-Of-School Initiative, 5.57 million children of the age 6-14 are out-of-school in Bangladesh. Therefore, a similar approach of ACS and NFPE centers can create educational opportunities for those children still remaining out of school.
- ii. Continue construction of ACS and NFPE centers and renovation of formal schools in un-served or underserved areas based on a comprehensive mapping exercise.
- iii. Awareness of the parents regarding educating their children substantially increased, but this should be nurtured for further improvement to achieve sustainability of the concept and to comprehensively benefit the education sector at large.
- iv. Since the ACS created evidence-based examples of quality education for children from disadvantaged families and ensured community participation, funding supports needs to be continued to the existing schools for helping them to become self-sufficient. At the same time, good practices should be scaled up into other un-served and/or underserved communities.
- v. Support services to formal schools should be continued for retention and enhancement of the quality already achieved. Since many newly nationalized schools are lacking of the capacity in terms of quality and management, this efforts need to be extended in similar kind of schools to make it capable like other government schools.

For consideration of NETZ

- vi. The future project designs should focus first on equity, identifying the most needy communities using a participatory needs analysis, and then shape administrative, management and funding modalities accordingly.
- vii. Introducing comprehensive inclusive education in all supported schools and centers with quality training for teachers.

For consideration of implementing partners

- viii. Ensure more involvement of local education authorities to become part of the project to contribute and try to mobilize more government resources to achieve the project's objectives.
- ix. Explore alternative modalities for monitoring, e.g. by extending the involvement of upazila level and Union Parishad officials, mobile phone technology, civil society organizations, and by through further capacity building of CMCs and SMCs.
- x. Future trainings for SMCs should include aspects how to train the next generation of SMC members to ensure continuity of the capacity of its members to run the committees.

Composition of the evaluation team

A N S Habibur Rahman has long 37 years of experience working in the field of education especially in the area of Curriculum and Material Development (developing curricula, textbooks and supplementary learning materials for Non-Formal Primary Education, Adolescent Education and Adult Literacy Programs of PROSHIKA and Dhaka Ahsania Mission during 1992 to 2004. One of the major contributors in developing curricula and materials of the Government Adult Literacy and Adolescent Education Programs during 1990 to 1998). Worked as a consultant of UNICEF for developing curriculum and materials for Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children-BEHTRUWC in 1998 and jointly worked with Dr. James Jennings in FIVDB for developing curriculum and basic and supplementary materials for Adult Literacy Program 1981-1990.

He did his M.Ed. from Ahsanullah University of Science & Technology, B-Ed from Asian University of Bangladesh, MSS in Government and Politics from Asian University of Bangladesh, Visiting Fellow, Department of Education, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, Visiting Fellow, Department of Education, University of Leeds, UK, Certificate in Education (Habiganj Primary Teachers Training Institute), LL.B. University of Chittagong.

Conducted numbers of studies in different areas of education including assessment of literacy program of INFEP in 1994. Other major works include UNDP and UNESCO sponsored adult literacy Program in Chittagong Hill Tracts in 2014, Stromme Foundation sponsored moktab-based pre-primary education in Cox's Bazar in 2014, Care sponsored NFE and skill training Program of garments workers in 2008 Save the Children sponsored best practice and protocol services documentation in 2012, Assessment of adult literacy program of Shapla Neer in 1995, ARBAN in 1996. Assessment of Education Program of SUROVI in 1996, Slum Education Program at Tongi of TDH-N in 2005, Capacity of Teachers Training, UNESCO in 2009 and Evaluation of Early Childhood Program of Gram Bikash Kendra in 2005, Conducted a scouting mission for selecting few NGOS working in education for funding of OXFAM-Novib in 2013.

Expert contribution in developing TOT manuals for primary education, non-formal education and adult literacy programs, prepared planning of training courses, conducted training of teachers, facilitators, different level government and NGO personnel, evaluated training programs. Designed and implemented training courses of education program with innovative ideas.

Abul Kalam Md Saifuzzaman has long specialization on Education focus with primary education, Special and Inclusive Education, Governance and Human rights and Organization Management. He did numbers of studies in the area of evaluation, analysis, data management, monitoring, tools development, reporting especially in the area of primary education, adult education and education for children with disabilities.

Worked with DPE, DSHE, GIZ Education project, UNDP, UNICEF in different capacities in the area of primary education, early childhood development, advocacy education, awareness raising, training, curriculum development, need assessment study, module and manual development, facilitation,

teachers training, training of teachers' supervisors, reviewing the primary education curriculum, curriculum of C-in-Ed, and DPED.

Bearing hand on experience and skills in assessment, analyzing, data tabulation and interpretation, need synchronization and assessment, editing and organizing, research designing, proposal writing, case-study development, organizational capacity assessment & capacity building, installation of result-based management system, gender mainstreaming development, Strategic Planning and Organizational Development. With professional competencies he can efficiently do the Moderation and Facilitation, training development and implementation, Reporting, human relation, negotiation and consultation, communication in multicultural environment, out-put oriented, accommodating and effective team player.

He did his Master in Education 2010 from Ahsanullah Science and Technology University, Master in Social Science in 1982, Master in Arts in 1988 and Bachelor in Education in 1993 from Bangladesh Open University, Bachelor in Law in 1985 from Rajshahi University, Post Graduate Diploma in Management in 1991 from CMM, Certificate in English Language Proficiency in 1994 from Bangladesh Open University.

He had been working with local and national NGOs, local and international development partners and agencies since last 36 years.