

Report on the Baseline Study of the project “Promoting Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities”



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Abbreviation

BPF	Bangladesh Protibandhi Foundation
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CWD	Children with Disability
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)
CSID	Centre for Services and Information on Disability
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CPE	Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990
DSS	Department of Social Services
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DPO	Disabled Peoples' Organizations
CECCD	Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education for All
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Government Primary School
HT	Head teachers
HIES 2010	Household Income & Expenditure Survey of Bangladesh (2010)
IE	Inclusive Education
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
JPUF	JatiyoProtibandhiUnnayan Foundation
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LGI	Local Government Institute
MoPME	Ministry of Primary & Mass Education
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
PPE	Pre-primary education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SMC	School Management Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TK	Taka
UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
WHO	World Health Organization

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Executive Summary

Bangladesh is a signatory to key education and inclusion international instruments and it has attempted to create some enabling environment in the national policy and legislative frameworks in context of inclusive education. Yet the country still seriously lags behind in implementing inclusive education. There's a scarcity of data in context of disability and inclusive education. According to the latest only 11 per cent of children with disabilities received any form of education in Bangladesh (UNICEF Bangladesh)ⁱ, which is far too low as compared against primary school enrolment rate of children without disabilities.

“Promoting Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities” a project of the Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) therefore, plans to create an enabling environment for children with disabilities in a particular locality in focusing mainly government primary schools (GPS) and also in registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS) in Bangladesh through demonstration in a selected number of schools. The project plans to turn selected schools into models of disability inclusion by contributing to inclusive education (IE). In order to do so, the project plans to identify children with disabilities, motivate parents, children, teachers, school administration, communities and policy implementers. The project aims to seed the conditions for the longer term systemic change objective of attitudinal and behavioral change.

A baseline exercise was conducted during July to November 2020ⁱⁱ with both quantitative (till August) and qualitative (till November) methodologies. The prolonged period required to conduct the baseline was due to the unusual situation of all schools' and office closedown because of the unprecedented COVID -19 pandemic that affected almost every single operations within the country and the globe.

Following are key findings of the baseline exercise:

Demography

1. A total of 400 children with disabilities (includes 60%, n=240 boys, and 40%, n=160 girls) against the required target of 384 were identified as part of the quantitative survey. 82.75%, n=331 of the quantitative survey respondents (i.e. parents/other

guardians/other caregivers) were females, which is usual in other such surveys conducted in Bangladesh.

2. A total of 98 children with disabilities belong to 6 to 7 year's age range, while another 40 and 33 children belong to 8 and 9 years age range, respectively.
3. Among the children identified, 19.3%, n=77 has cerebral palsy, 18.8%, n=67 has intellectual disabilities, 17.1%, n=68 has hearing and speech disabilities, 16.5%, n=66 has physical disabilities, and 8.5%, n=34 has visual disabilities, and the rest have other forms of disabilities as indicated in Chart 5.
4. A total of 371 children (includes 229 boys and 142 girls) with disabilities belonging to 6 years to 14 years were found out of school. While school enrolment for the 6 to 8 years old would need to be targeted, plan to enroll older group must be there within the project for which contact and advocacy with the Under Privileged Children's Program (UCEP) and Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) may be useful.

Willingness of parents to send their children with disabilities in to schools if provisions are there

5. An overwhelming 86.5%, n=346 respondents want to send their children with disabilities to school if possible. Although a number of parents correlated school enrolment with good social outcomes such as making friends, scope to engage in cultural activities, connection with rewards in sports and studies, and feeling proud as some of their children are more attentive in class than their peers without disabilities, and overwhelming number of parents (64.9%, n=131) do not think there's any positive impact on children of going to schools. The project, therefore, seriously need to raise awareness and motivate, and also advocate with entities within the government, CSO networks such as CAMPE and others to play their role in awareness raising.

Various causes contributing to keep children with disabilities out of schools

6. Children with disabilities remain out of school or drop out of schools due to various reasons including the following six: i) Lack of awareness/motivation of parents and families, ii) lack of proper teacher training on IE & lack of monitoring by those concerned, iii) Unwillingness/lack of interest of schools/authorities to enroll children with disabilities, iv) Parents' concerns around safety of children with disabilities (road safety and also abuse), v) Costs associated with education (and loss of wage for commuting and accompanying the children to schools, and vi) feeling of 'shame' of parents.

7. Other areas of importance include: i) ensure availability of needs-based educational/teaching-learning materials, ii) creating physical accessibility in schools, iii) creating provision of representation of persons with disabilities in the SMC, and iv) ensure counselling among peer students and other students at school to eliminate bullying of CWDs, v) use media to raise awareness of all, and vi) as parents work to survive, children with disabilities are often left alone at home in slums – need comprehensive plan.

School enrolment among identified children with disabilities and associations of school enrolment and type of disabilities

8. Only 7.25%, n=29 of the identified children with disabilities were enrolled in school when the baseline survey was conducted.
9. For Cerebral Palsy, OR=0.07 & p=0.010 indicates that the chance of getting admitted in school for children with Cerebral palsy is 93% lower compare to the children with physical disability after adjusting the sex of the respondent. For Intellectual disability, OR=0.168 & p=0.034 indicates that the chance of getting admitted in school for children with Intellectual disability is 84% lower compare to the children with physical disability after adjusting the sex of the respondent. No significant difference was found for the other type of disabilities compare to physical disability.

Availability of primary schools in the locality and teachers awareness/capacities on IE

10. About 35 to 42 primary schools including at least 8 government primary schools could be identified in the project area. Selection of school must consider: Proximity to the dwelling of CWD, road safety, no monthly fees and availability of stipend and/or allowance.
11. None of the interviewed teachers received any training on IE, and they are unclear about the difference between inclusive schools and special school, apart from knowing 'only CWD' study in 'special schools'.
12. Currently there's an urgent need to conduct orientation on IE for teachers, and introduce accessibility features at schools etc.

Other issues including emergencies

13. Only 76 (19%) of the identified children with disabilities have their own disability identity cards; and a good majority have no access to allowances/safety-net.
14. Assistance during Corona: Field findings reveal that quite some families of children with disabilities received different types of assistances provided by local government

authorities. Some of them also received assistances provided by different NGOs including BRAC, World Vision, and BangladeshProtibandhi Foundation (BPF) etc. However, based on discussion with participating local government institution (LGI) representatives, it appeared that disability was not perhaps a common criteria for selection of beneficiaries by all LGI representatives for these assistances. The concerned representatives of LGI could not share the criteria or the list of service recipients with the field team. Awareness on precautions needed for Corona among children with disabilities and family members met are there although many do not practice these preventive measures.

15. The project had taken necessary measures such as providing masks, making available sanitizers and maintaining social distancing while conducting the survey and qualitative exercises for both the community people including children and staff members/consultants.

Recommendations:

1. Continue motivating teachers and advocate with selected schools, particularly head teachers and associate teachers of GPS to promote effective delivery of inclusive education in a barrier-free environment.
2. Develop an Advocacy Plan targeting both policy makers and policy implementers. Engage senior level representatives of CSID and if necessary its Board members and others in the advocacy initiatives with particularly high-level policy makers and education networks.
3. There's still a significant level of ignorance among parents that create barrier in regard to education of children with disabilities. The project should take initiative to try to admit equal number of boys and girls with disabilities in schools.
4. Take initiative to motivate and also build capacities of Head Teachers in management and monitoring of IE initiatives. Include Education officers in IE orientation program and improve their knowledge on IE and issues to monitor to ensure its full implementation.
5. Conduct a training needs assessment targeting teachers and head teachers to design an effective IE training/orientation program. Take initiative to build needs based capacities of teachers in areas e.g. inclusive education, braille, sign language etc. too. Plan continuous follow-up and support system for trained teachers to sustain the learning and ensure its application in teaching.
6. Take initiative to link concerned school teachers with potential resources persons of CSID as well as other theme-based Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPO) for getting regular support on technical areas. However, make sure existing school teachers are motivated, and engaged in the whole process and shoulder the main responsibility of teaching children with disabilities alongside other children.
7. Identify disability champions among e.g. head teachers, teachers, peer students, parents, education officials and school management committees to promote inclusive education in '**practice**'. Introduce teachers to developing individual learning plans for students with disabilities. And provide support to conduct individual needs assessment of students with disabilities for schools to utilize their school based budgetary provisions or seeking appropriate support for relevant educational and learning materials from DPE.
8. The duration of the project is extremely short to achieve the project's objectives. Education project such as this should be longer-term in order to be able to make a

sustainable change. The pandemic caused by COVID - 19 since early March 2020 has further disrupted the implementation of the project. The project period should be reviewed and extended.

9. In order to make the effort sustainable it's essential for the project to thrive to bring about changes in three dimensions: i) addressing capacity gaps and knowledge on IE particularly in context of disability, ii) contribute to changing mind-set and conduct advocacy targeting systemic change in regard to IE – particularly targeting teaching and education officials, and iii) showcase accessibility – physical and attitudinal.
10. Conduct anti-discrimination activities and initiatives aimed at preventing teasing/harassment/ violence at the school level and on ways to schools to protect children with disabilities irrespective of their gender, types of disabilities, age and socio-cultural status.
11. Most primary schools particularly the GPS provide pre-primary education (PPE) to children aged 4 to 6 years. The PPE enrolment still remain low (52% in 2013) in comparison with primary school enrolment rate. Although there may be issues of quality of education both at PPE and primary level, access to PPE is crucial for children to transit to primary section. Therefore, it is recommended that children with disabilities who cannot directly get admission into class-1 of primary schools are supported by the project to be admitted to the pre-primary education section.
12. Approach UCEP to explore free access to their school and vocational training for older children with disabilities at their center at Mirpur, Dhaka.
13. Informally take record to existing professional development program offered by DPE related to inclusive education and try to capitalize it in favor of project goals and training activities.
14. Carry out assessment of accessibility issues in and around schools to address physical barriers utilizing the concerned questionnaires.
15. Build rapport with other NGOs collaborating with DPE to support IE to better utilize existing resources of all stakeholders to bring about features of accessibility in schools.
16. Record classroom practices to support process documentation targeting peer students, teachers, management/school authorities etc.

17. Explore existing support available within government and other NGOs to promote early detection and intervention so as to include internal and external measures for quality assurance in line with the human-rights model.
18. High-level advocacy should be in place in collaboration with DPOs, NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure standard inclusive education service.

List of some immediate actions:

- Conduct a training needs assessment of teachers on IE and arrange teacher training immediately
- Bring in accessibility features in schools which give permission at least to demonstrate
- Advocate to provide support for poor families to take care of costs e.g. for commuting, educational materials etc. by linking them with education stipend and/or allowances of ministry of social welfare (MoSW)
- Increase awareness of parents to send children with disabilities to schools

Introduction

'Persons with disabilities comprise an estimated 15 per cent of the world's population, of whom 80 per cent live in developing countries and are overrepresented among those living in absolute poverty'ⁱⁱⁱ. The Household Income & Expenditure Survey of Bangladesh (2010) puts the prevalence rate of disability at 9.1%. Taking these estimations in consideration, Bangladesh may have an estimated 15.1 to 24.9 million people who are with disabilities^{iv}. No matter what the actual number is, persons with disabilities in Bangladesh like in any other countries in the world often encounter discrimination and exclusion on a daily basis. World Bank report suggests that on a global scale, people with disabilities are highly likely to suffer more discrimination, exclusion, violence, and adverse socio-economic outcomes such as less education', 'lower levels of employment, higher poverty rates than those without disabilities'^v. Persons with disabilities often face exclusion in a range of areas including in education. Only 11% children with disabilities against 97 per cent non-disabled children are enrolled in primary schools and many of their birth go unregistered (UNICEF Bangladesh) due to discrimination starting at their own families. As a result of not registering their birth, many of them may be subject to automatic dropping out of education survey conducted by teachers usually on an annual basis to promote primary education enrolment in the country.

According to UNESCO inclusive education (IE) is an 'education system that includes all students, and welcomes and supports them to learn, whoever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements'^{vi}. It implies that all relevant aspects including teaching methodologies, education contents & curriculum, school infrastructures and even ways to school, classrooms, play grounds, transport and washrooms/toilets, not to mention practices, behaviors, attitudes of teachers and peer students – appropriately fit for every child including child with disabilities at all levels. One of the pre-conditions of inclusive education is every child learn together in the same school as it is her/his rights.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) signed and ratified key international instruments including the Education For All (EFA), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) of which Article 24 declare that 'i) States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education ... realizing this right without

discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:

- b. The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
- c. Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society'. And that '2) In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
 - a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability'and
 - 'b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live'

The Government of Bangladesh introduced the National Education Policy 2010 and the Compulsory Primary Education (CPE) Act 1990, and enacted the Disability Rights and Protection Act 2013 which too emphasizes on inclusive education (IE) under 9(Tafsil 9). Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 wants to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". The 2010 National Education Policy of Bangladesh stresses the need for inclusion of children with disabilities in education, and the Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development (CECCD) Policy approved in 2013 emphasizes inclusion right from early learning centers/ pre-schools. Early Childhood Care and Development in Bangladesh is usually used to indicate pre-primary education (PPE) for children between 3 and 5 years of age. Although there are policies and act but the principle of inclusive education in Bangladesh has not gained adequate attention at community and national level^{vii}.

Although most children with disabilities still remain out of schools, among those who are enrolled in school - a large number of them are studying in regular schools instead of special schools and/or schools offering integrated education mostly operated under the directives of the MoSW. However, government primary schools (GPS) still do not have adequate options, appropriate environment, IE skilled teachers and facilities to include a range of children with different types and degrees of disabilities in mainstream primary

schools. Due to lack of capacities, most primary schools (e.g. GPS) and including those operated as registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS) do not have options to support their educational needs.

This project

The overall goal of the project “Promoting Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities” of the Centre for Services & Information on Disability (CSID) is to create an enabling environment for children with disabilities in primary schools in Bangladesh through demonstration in selected schools in project areas within Mirpur of Dhaka. By i) fostering inclusion, learning, participation, socialization, empathy and bonding through exposure, awareness, and sensitization, and, by ii) creating momentum for action by stakeholders, the project aims to seed the conditions for the longer term systemic change objective of attitudinal and behavioral change among the targeted schools.

The project aims to address the learning needs and try ending the exclusion of children with disabilities utilizing options of IE. It implies all learners with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to existing common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate **network** of support services. This is possible only in a flexible education system that assimilates the needs of a diverse range of learners and adapts itself to meet these needs. It aims to work with almost all formal and informal stakeholders in the system (i.e. learners, parents, community, teachers, School Management Committee (SMC), administrators, and policy makers) to be comfortable with diversity and see it as a challenge rather than a problem.

The project also considers measuring how changemay take place and what works and what does not work. Although the target population of the project include children with disabilities (aged 7-14), the baseline has included students of 6 years (considering primary school enrolment age in Bangladesh) up to 14 years; and interviewed parents/caregivers/ other guardians).

Methodology

A mixed method approach combining both quantitative and qualitative tools were proposed. However, due to lockdown to combat COVID - 19 pandemic situation since

March 2020 till date, the implementation have got delayed.

Door to door survey was carried out using mainly structured questionnaire in the community to assess the status of the households and its members on over 20 indicators on KoBo. A second set of questionnaires targeting teachers/schools were developed but could not yet be implemented due to unavailability of permission of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) for a long time – therefore, a decision was taken to drop the second tool as part of the baseline exercise. (But data will be generated utilizing the second tool to support project implementation). Moreover, schools remain closed till the date and teachers/head teachers have started coming to schools periodically only in the recent months (Oct. /Nov. '20).

The tools include the following:

Tables of Tools

Tools	Baseline	Process Documentation	Evaluation
Key Informant Interview (KII)	<p>√ 15 to 21* (not conducted yet)</p> <p>Update: 23 KII conducted against the target of 15. These included 8 KIIs with parents, 5 KIIs with teachers, 5 KIIs with representatives of Local Government Institutes (LGI), 5 KIIs with NGO representatives.</p>	<p>√ 18 (Govt. Officials & Head Teachers)</p> <p>Update: 11 more KIIs conducted with different groups against the target of 18. These included 5 KIIs with teachers, 5 KIIs with parents. 4 officials of DPE were reached at, and only 1 gave interview informally, while another shared some information.</p>	<p>√ 15 – see list given below</p>
Focus Group Discussions (FGD) – 3 FGDs conducted every quarter (only for process documentation and evaluation – total number will depend on the period of implementation of project)	<p>Originally there was no Plan for FGD considering the pandemic.</p> <p>Update: Two FGDs were conducted with two groups of teachers – of GPS and RNGPS.</p>	<p>√ -With Children with disabilities in and out of schools (6-14 yrs.)</p> <p>-With peer students without disabilities in school</p> <p>-with parents of children without disabilities (initially separately, by year 2 together)</p> <p>-teachers and SMC members</p> <p>-Project staff/NGO representatives</p>	<p>√ -With Children with disabilities in and out of schools (6-14 yrs.)</p> <p>-With peer students without disabilities in school</p> <p>-with parents of children with and without disabilities (initially separately, by year</p>

<p>For example, If the project actually operates for 18 months there will be 18 FGDs.</p>		<p>Update:A total of 5 FGDs were conducted with four different groups. These included Focus Group Discussion (FGD)s with i) CWDs in homogeneous group (2), ii) children without disability in mixed group (1) in terms of gender. One FGD each was conducted with iii) parents of children with disabilities and iv) community people.</p>	<p>2 together) -teachers and SMC members -Community people/representatives -Project staff/NGO representatives</p>
<p>In-depth Interview – 6 (total)</p>		<p>√ -With Children with disabilities in and out of schools (6-14 yrs.) -With peer students without disabilities in school</p>	<p>√ -With Children with disabilities in and out of schools (6-14 yrs.) -With peer students without disabilities in school</p>
<p>Most significant change stories – 20 (total)</p>		<p>√ -10 - With Children with disabilities in and out of schools (6-14 yrs.) -With peer students without disabilities in school - Teachers/head Teachers Update:This activity could not be undertaken as there is no progress due to COVID 19 and school closed down.</p>	<p>√ -10 - With Children with disabilities in and out of schools (6-14 yrs.) -With peer students without disabilities in school</p>
<p>Quantitative Survey</p>	<p>√ 400 against the target of 384 conducted for Parents/Guardians of children with disabilities (6yrs. – 14 yrs.)</p>		<p>√ Parents of children with disabilities (6 yrs. – 14 yrs.)</p>

* Interview conducted of one DPE field representative against 2planned,KII conducted of 5LGI representatives against 2 planned, 10 teachers against 3 planned, 14 parents of children with disabilities were also interviewed.

For quantitative survey the following sampling was proposed for baseline & final evaluation:

Sample Size for Unknown Population

The sample required to estimate a proportion with an approximate 95% confidence level, we will use W.G. Cochran's widely used formula for estimating the sample size for unknown population,

$$n = \frac{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 p(1 - p)}{e^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384$$

Where,

$Z_{95\%}$	=	Z value for 95% confidence interval	1.96
p	=	The proportion of the population	0.5
e	=	The degree of precision (Margin of error 5%)	0.05
n	=	Sample size	384

Qualitative questionnaires: A total of 15 to 21 key informant interviews (KIIs) were planned to be conducted, against which 23 KII were conducted for baseline & 11 more KIIs for process documentation. Targets for KII included staff members/social workers (includes NGO staff), parents, teachers, local government representatives, other community people, and staff members of Directorate of Primary Education of Bangladesh. Interviews with peers (at school) and members of child protection committee could not be conducted due to unavailability.

A total of 7 focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted for baseline as well as process documentation with the following groups: teachers (2), community people, parents of children with disabilities, girls with disabilities, boys with disabilities and children without disabilities. Baseline data collection in the community to identify children with disabilities completed in August, while KII and FGDs were completed by November 2020.

COVID 19 situation: Considering the health & safety issues in context of the COVID - 19 situation, some KIIs were undertaken over phone/ and for those who were willing to give interview in person maintaining standard pre-cautions were reached out for interview. All participants at the quantitative survey, KII & FGDs were provided with masks, while hand sanitizers were made available during the sessions. The project operates in densely populated slum/camp areas, where maintaining social distancing remains an issue. Yet attempts were made to maintain social distancing as much as possible.

Consent: All participants were asked for consent prior to participation in interviews/FGDs.

Exclusion criteria & Ethical consideration: Only willing group of people were considered for participation in the quantitative survey, KII and FGD. Those who were unwilling or not available were not interviewed. Child safeguarding policies of member organization (i.e. CSID) were consulted. Meetings were held in pre-decided local venue used by other NGOs and/or school premises to maintain confidentiality. Willing parents accompanied children with and without disabilities for participation in FGD sessions. Sessions were conducted in venue maintaining presence of at least three to four representatives of the project (including staff and external consultants) who facilitated the discussions.

Data analysis: Quantitative survey was conducted using KoBo on smart phones. Majority of quantitative questionnaires were transformed into KoBo. Data was later on transformed into excel for analysis. Qualitative data analysis was done manually.

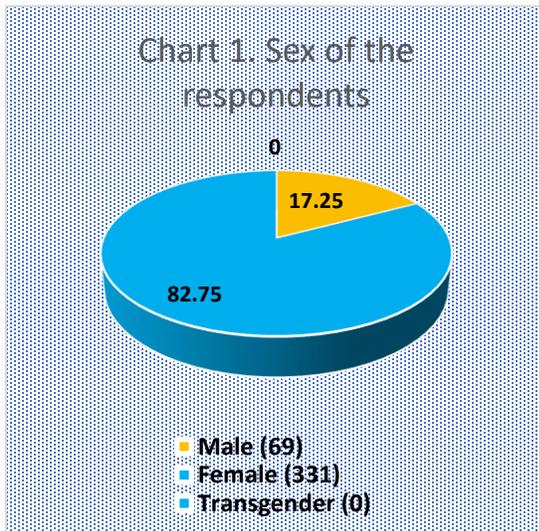
Project Location: The baseline was conducted focusing the following areas of Mirpur in Dhaka Metropolitan City.

Name of district	Name of municipality/union
Dhaka	Mirpur section 6, 11, 11.30, 12 and 14 in Dhaka North City

Findings of the Baseline

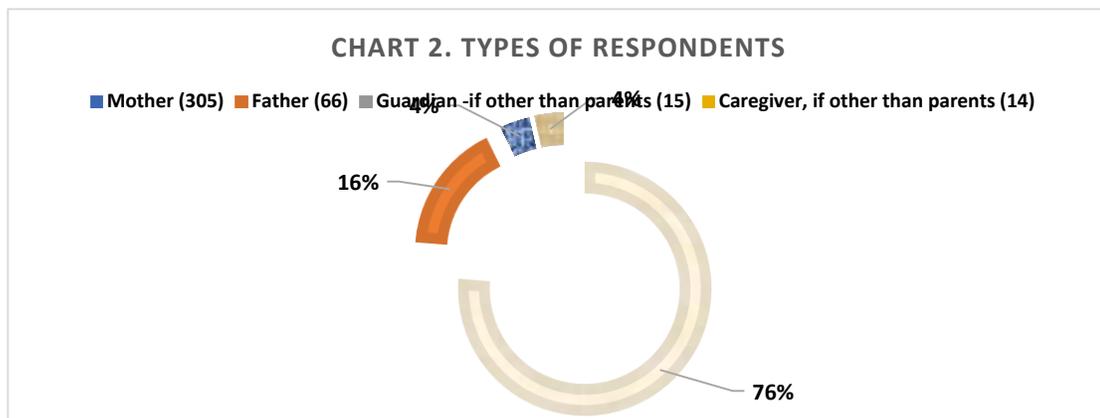
Socio-Demographic Scenario of Baseline Population

Sex of the Respondents: A total of 400 persons participated in the community based part of the quantitative survey. 82.75%, n=331 of the quantitative survey participants were females, mostly mothers of children with disabilities. 17.25%, n= 69 participants were males.



The huge gender difference may be mainly due to unavailability of male members in the household during survey. Part of this may be attributed to the fact that in most cases mothers/women are responsible for taking care of children with disabilities, which is why during such surveys other family members usually avoid taking part in responding due to inadequate knowhow about the concerned child. No respondents belonging to the third gender/transgender community were found by surveyors.

Type of the respondents: 76%, n= 305 respondents were mothers; 16%, n=66 were fathers; while approximately 4% each n=15 & n=14 were other guardians or other caregivers within the family.



Number of children with disabilities identified during the door to door survey: 60%, n=240 of the identified children with disabilities are boys, and 40%, n=160 girls. No child with disabilities of third gender group were identified during the survey.

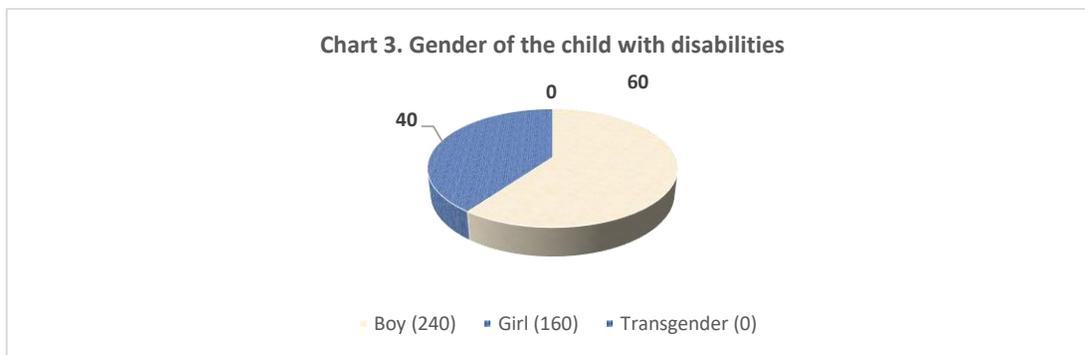
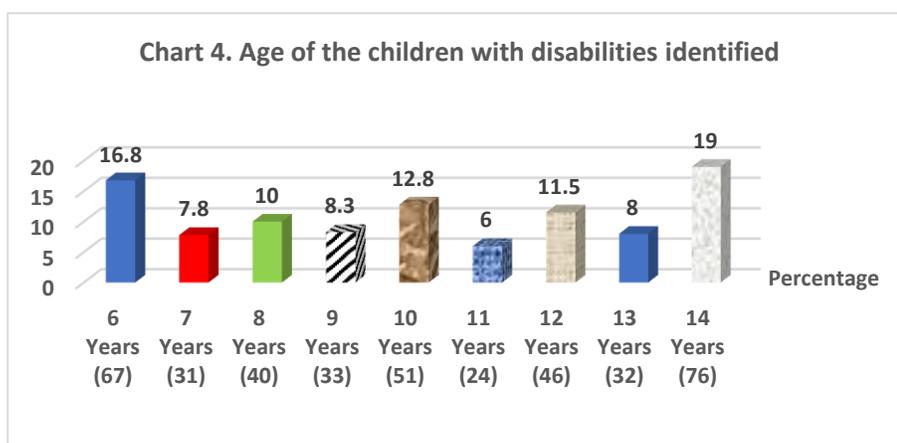


Table1: Age range of children with disabilities identified

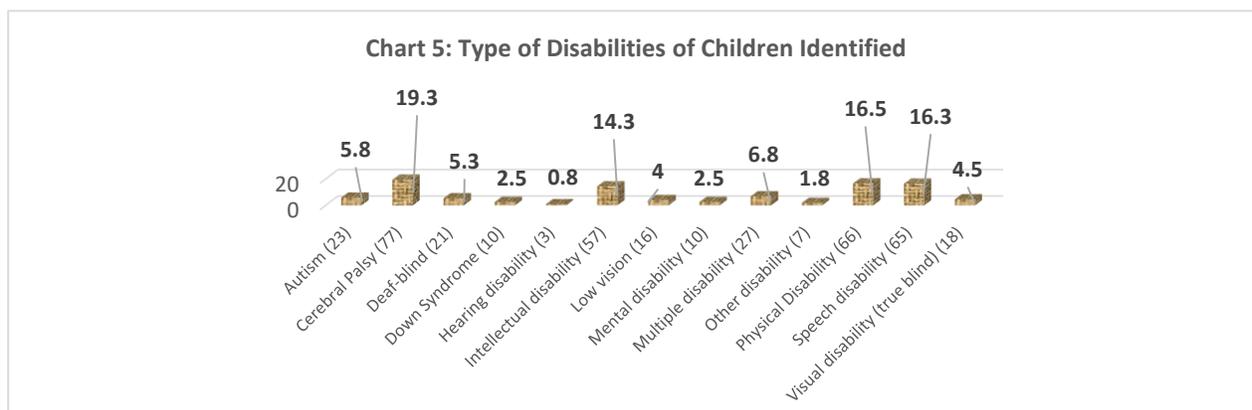
Age	Freq.
6 yrs.	67
7 yrs.	31
8 yrs.	40
9 yrs.	33
10 yrs.	51
11 yrs.	24
12 yrs.	46
13 yrs.	32
14 yrs.	76
Total	402



A total of 98 identified children with disabilities belong to 6 to 7 year's age range, while another 40 and 33 children belong to 8 and 9 years age range, respectively. The project will need to explore options for school admission of some of these children in the next school year starting in Jan. 2021 (Bangla medium) as all schools are currently closed due to COVID 19 situation.

The project could also look for possibilities of enrolling the older group of children in appropriate facilities, including in NGO offered education cum skill development programs.

Types of disabilities of 400 identified children with disabilities are as following:



n=77 (19.3%) children have various degrees of cerebral palsy, n=66 (16.5%) children with disabilities have different types of physical disabilities, another n=65 (16.3%) children with disabilities have speech disabilities, while n=3 (0.8%) only have hearing disabilities. The number of children having different forms of neuro-development disabilities (including intellectual disabilities,

Autism, Down syndrome etc. is quite high too. n=34(8.5%) children with disabilities have visual disabilities including low vision. 16.8% children with disabilities or n=67 have intellectual disabilities includes down syndrome. The project will need to take specific needs based strategies and advocacy initiatives based on type & degree of disabilities.

Association between type of disabilities and child's admission in school

Table 2: Association between guardian's interest on child's admission in nearby school and type of disabilities

Type of disabilities		Does your child with disability go to any school?		P value (Chi square test)
		No	Yes	
Autism	n	3	20	<0.001
	%	13.04	86.96	
Cerebral Palsy	n	41	36	
	%	53.25	46.75	
Speech & Hearing disability	n	1	67	
	%	1.47	98.53	
Intellectual disability	n	2	65	

	%	2.99	97.01
Mental disability	n	2	8
	%	20	80
Physical Disability	n	2	63
	%	3.08	96.92
Visual disability	n	2	31
	%	6.06	93.94
Deaf-blind	n	0	21
	%	0	100
Total	n	53	311
	%	14.56	85.44

Association between guardian's interest on child's admission in school and type of disabilities was investigated. Highly significant association is found between guardian's interest on child's admission in nearby school and type of disabilities. More than 90% of the guardians of the children with every type of disabilities were interested to send their children to nearby school except the guardian of children with Cerebral Palsy. Only 46.7% guardian of children with Cerebral Palsy were interested to send their children to school.

Table 3: A comparison between type of disabilities and admission in schools

Type of disabilities		Does your child with disability go to any school?		P value (Chi square test)
		No	Yes	
Autism	n	22	1	0.006
	%	95.65	4.35	
Cerebral Palsy	n	76	1	
	%	98.7	1.3	
Speech & Hearing disability	n	62	6	
	%	91.18	8.82	
Intellectual disability	n	65	2	
	%	97.01	2.99	
Mental disability	n	10	0	
	%	100	0	
Physical Disability	n	56	9	

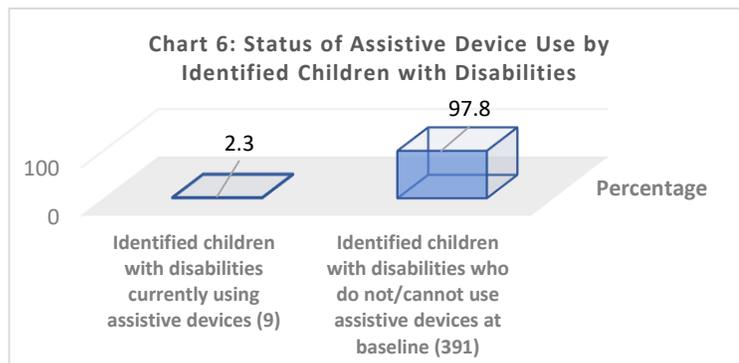
	%	86.15	13.85
Visual disability	n	26	7
	%	78.79	21.21
Deaf-blind	n	19	2
	%	90.48	9.52
Total	n	336	28
	%	92.31	7.69

Child's school admission varies significantly by their disability types ($P=0.006$). Maximum 21.2% children with visual disability were going to school followed by physical disability (13.8%), Deaf blind (9.5%). DPE usually allows regular school admission for children with 'mild' form of disabilities.

For Cerebral Palsy, $OR=0.07$ & $p=0.010$ indicates that the chance of getting admitted in school for children with Cerebral palsy is 93% lower compared to the children with physical disability after adjusting the sex of the respondent. For Intellectual disability, $OR=0.168$ & $p=0.034$ indicates that the chance of getting admitted in school for children with Intellectual disability is 84% lower compared to the children with physical disability after adjusting the sex of the respondent. No significant difference was found for the other type of disabilities compare to physical disability.

Children with disabilities and assistive devices

A very small number of identified children with disabilities i.e. only 9 (2.3%) currently use assistive devices, part of this may be related to lack of assessment, inadequate awareness and financial inability.

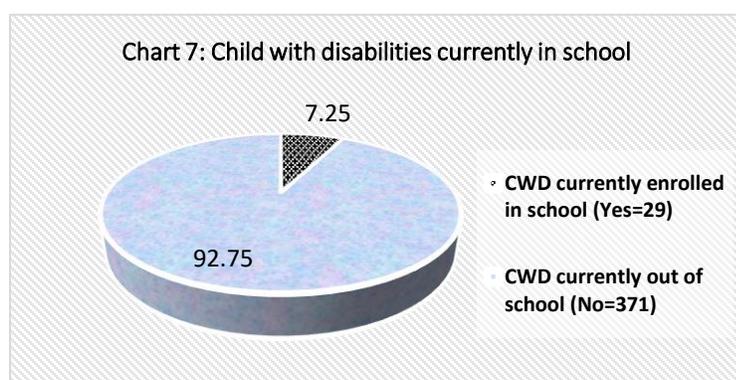


Findings on school enrolment and other issues

Table4:School enrollment of children with disabilities identified by gender

	Boys		Girls		Total
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
CWD currently enrolled in school	11	4.6	18	11.3	29
CWD currently out of school	229	95.4	142	88.8	371
	240		160		400

A total of 371 children (includes 229 boys and 142 girls) with disabilities belonging to 6 years to 14 years were found out of school.



Door to door survey identified a total of only 7.25%, n=29 (includes 11 boys and 18 girls) out of 400 children with disabilities currently enrolled in school in the project areas. Among those enrolled 37.93%, n=11 are boys and the rest are girls.

The baseline study has good reason to conclude that the gender gap favoring girls with disabilities among the identified children with disabilities in school is not a regular trend, and it may be influenced by, other determinants such as the number of samples in just one area i.e. Mirpur, the education level and financial conditions and the urban nature of the area^{viii}

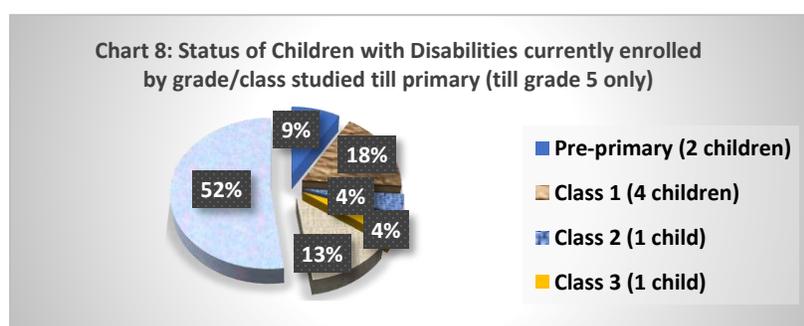


Chart 8 reveals the status of CWDs enrolled by class/grade. Some of these children are studying in NGO run schools for children with disabilities alongside non-disabled children.

Willingness of parents to send children with disabilities to schools



86.5%, n=346
respondents want to send their children with disabilities to school if possible.

Table 5: Parental willingness on school enrollment of children with disabilities by gender

	Boy		Girl	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Parents willing to send their children to school by sex	208	86.7	138	86.3
Parents not interested to send their children to school by sex	32	13.3	22	13.8
Total	240	100	160	100

Effect of Child's sex and type of disability on guardian's interest on child's admission in nearby school

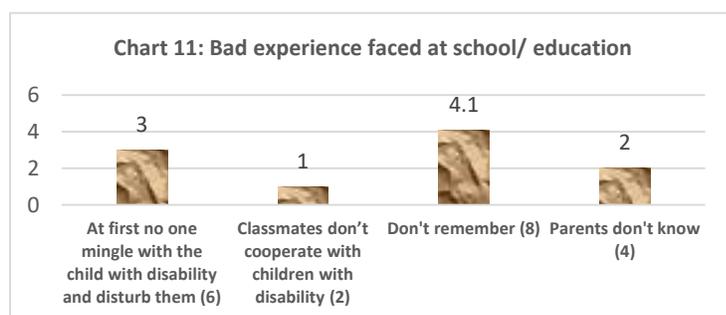
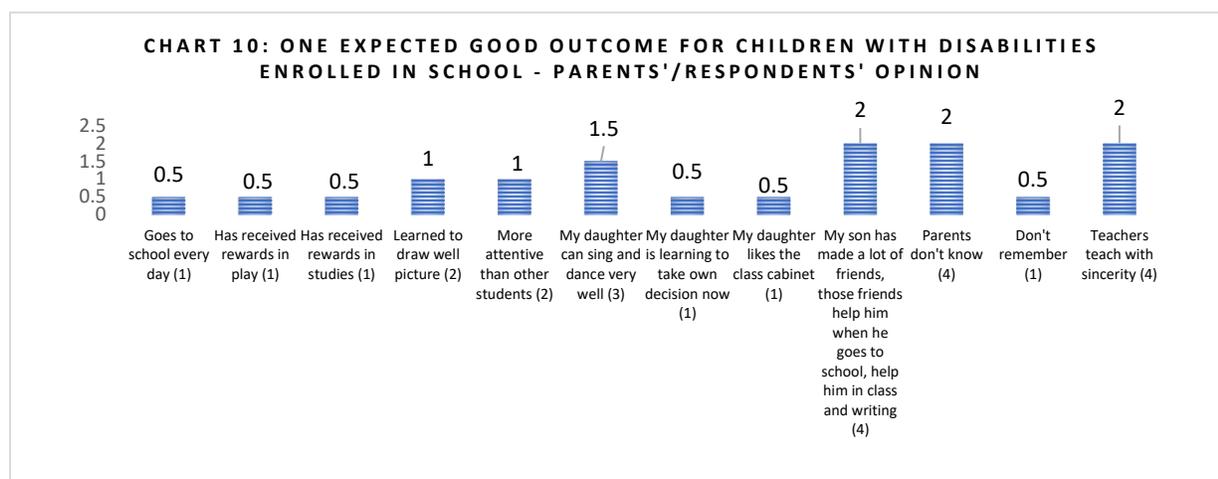
Table 6: Association between sex of the CWD and guardian's interest on child's admission in nearby school

Gender of the child		Does your child with disability go to any school?		P value
		No	Yes	
Boy	n	32	206	0.931
	%	13.45	86.55	
Girl	n	22	138	
	%	13.75	86.25	
Total	n	54	344	
	%	13.57	86.43	

As p value (0.931) >0.05, no significant association is found for sex of the child with disabilities and guardian's interest on child's admission in nearby school i.e. guardian's interest on child's admission in nearby school did not vary with their sex. Much of it may be related to the location i.e. urban nature of the location (Dhaka city). However, during the FGD the team came across two girls with disabilities, one adolescent girl had to drop out of school due to distance and one girl child were never admitted to school as her father feels

ashamed of sending his daughter to public places such as school. No nation-wide conclusion in context of gender can be drawn based on this findings.

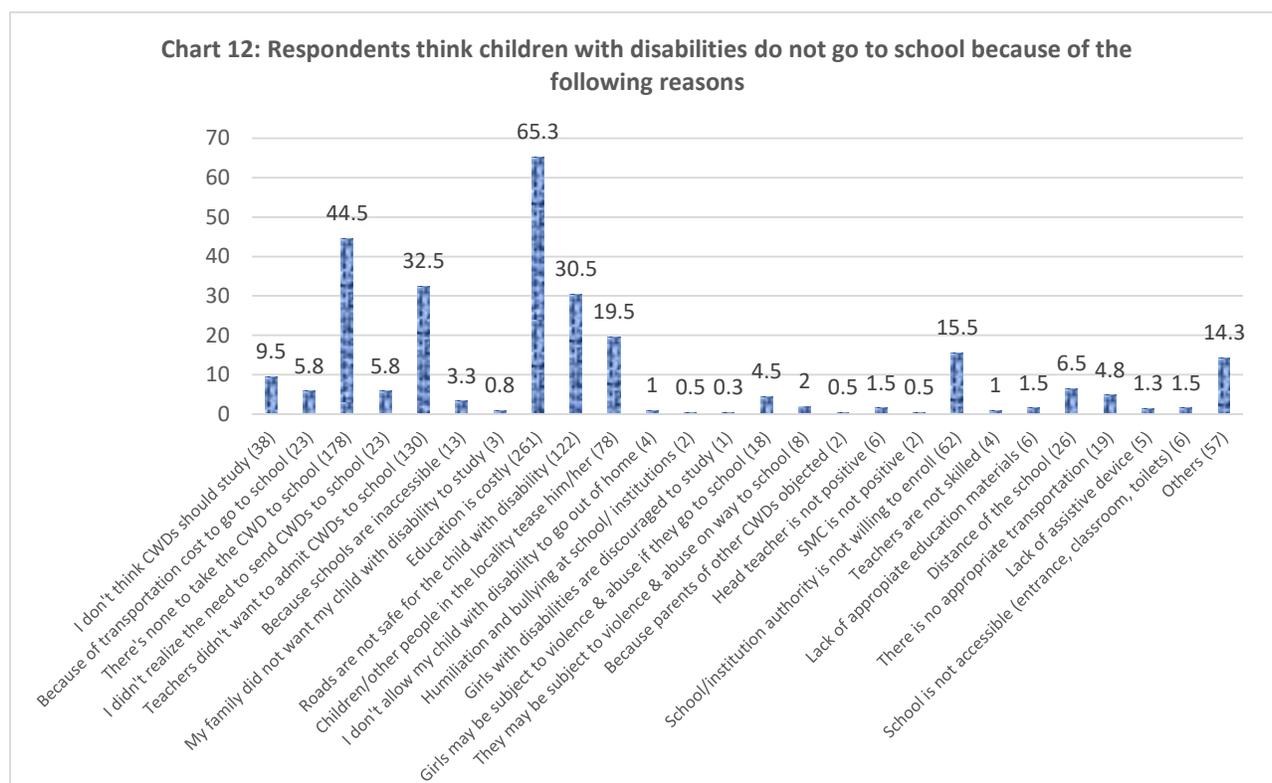
A number of parents associated school enrolment with good social outcomes such as i) their children can make friends at school, ii) it can increase children's scope to engage in cultural activities like singing, dancing and drawing, iii) they may have possibilities of getting rewards in sports and studies, iv) it teaches them to take decision, and v) two parents even said their children are more attentive in class than their peers without disabilities. Four respondents mentioned that teachers are sincere in imparting teaching-learning exercises to children with disabilities. However, a good number of parents (64.9%, n=131) still do not think there's any positive social and/or developmental impact on children of going to schools. However, during KII some parents particularly mothers have shown their concern about their children with disabilities in their absence. They would like options for sending their children to schools so that they can prepare themselves for future to take care of themselves.



When asked a smaller number of parents associated school enrolment with bad experiences such as, 'at first none mingle with the child with disability (6), classmates don't cooperate' (2), while 66.5%, n=131 parents don't see any relationship at all.

Factors that contribute to leave Children with Disabilities out of School/Education as Identified by Participants at the Baseline

Children with disabilities remain out of school and/or dropped out of school due to various reasons including the following five major causes i) Lack of awareness/motivation of parents and families, ii) lack of capacities/training of teachers and others on IE affecting its implementation and unwillingness/lack of interest of schools/authorities to enroll children with disabilities, iii) parents' concerns about safety (road safety and issues of protection to some extent) of children with disabilities in & on ways to school, iv) costs associated with education (for commuting, for educational materials, for possible wage loss due to accompanying to schools & home) and v) other. See Chart 12.



Lack of awareness/motivation of parents and families in sending their child with

disability to school: 9.5%, n=38 parents think there's no need for children with disabilities to study. Parents (5.8%, n=23) and family (0.8%, n=3) remain unaware/unwilling to send their child with disability to schools. During FGD, the team came across a child with disability, whose father feels ashamed to enroll his daughter to schools because of her disability.

i) Unwillingness/lack of interest of schools to enroll children with disabilities: Although over the last several years number of children with mainly physical disabilities are increasingly getting enrolled at primary schools, many school authorities (15.5%, n=62)/school management committees (0.5%, n=2), head teachers (1.5%, n=6), teachers (32.5%, n=130) often do not encourage and/or enroll children with certain categories of disabilities into school on various grounds.

Concerns around safety of children with disabilities: 44.5%, n=178 parents do not have anyone to take their children with disabilities to schools. This is due to both a safety and financial concerns/implications. Often both the parents are engaged in doing menial jobs and cannot afford to take the children to schools. 30.5%, n=122 parents are concerned about road safety issues. Roads are often unsafe and accidents may occur anytime. Road to schools may be unsafe for children and particularly children with disabilities due to reckless driving, over speeding, violation of traffic rules/ laws, which worries parents.

4.5%, n=18 parents are worried that their daughters with disabilities may be subject to abuse/violence, another 2%, n=8 have the same concern for all children with disabilities. 19.5%, n=78 parents complained of their child with disabilities being teased at by people in the community, while some don't want them to go out of home. 20.91% parents said children with disabilities are bullied/teased at the community which too hinder their access to schools.

ii) Costs associated with education: Over 65.3%, n=261 parents mentioned that children with disabilities remain out of school because of costs associated with education. Although primary education is free in Bangladesh particularly in the GPS, moreover, a small amount of education stipend is given to almost all poor children on a monthly basis by the government, yet additional costs e.g. for transportation, learning materials etc. incur. These costs incur more for children with impairment/disabilities. During KII with parents they also mentioned about school fees at RNGPS and other private schools to be a barrier to their child's education. Besides, wage loss of family member may be associated with accompanying the child with disabilities to school. However, when enrolled at schools, particularly at GPS, children with disabilities may be connected to certain needs based assistive

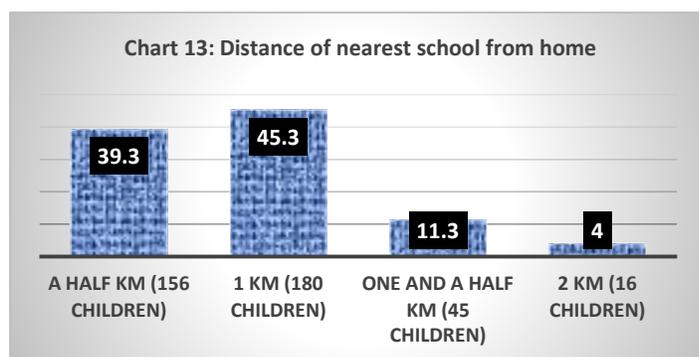
devices. During KII, a Head Teacher mentioned that they arranged hearing aid worth TK. 40,000 for a poor child with hearing impairment at their school.

- iii) **Others:** 6.5%, n=26 parents are concerned about the distance between their home and school. 5.8%, n=23 parents cited transportation cost to be high for children with disabilities for going to school. 3.3%, n=13 said schools are not accessible, while 1%, n=4 said teachers lack skills to teach children with disabilities.

Identified schools in the vicinity

About 35 to 42 primary schools including at least 8 government primary schools (GPS) could be identified in the project area. A list of schools identified so far by field staff is available. Due to COVID-19 complete assessment of school infrastructure could not be undertaken by the project yet.

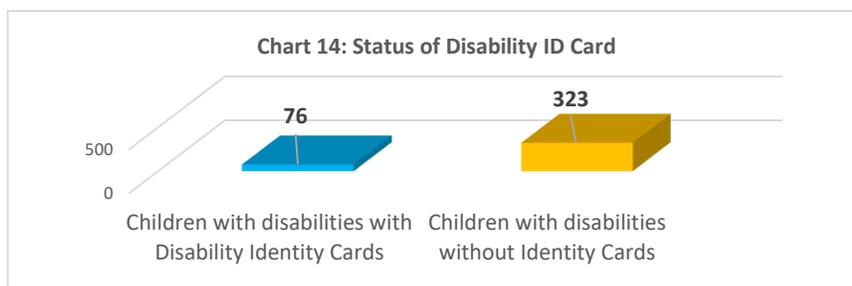
Most of the schools are located within 1 kilo meter.



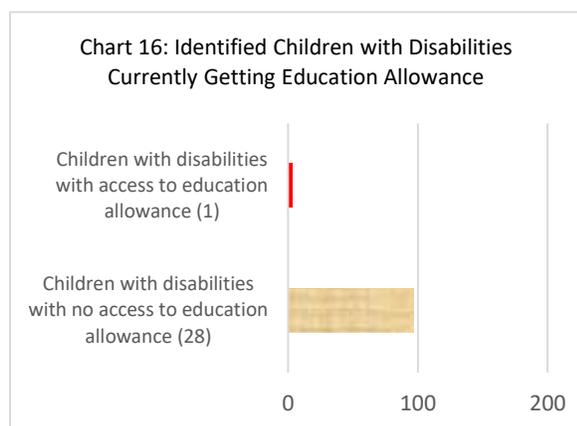
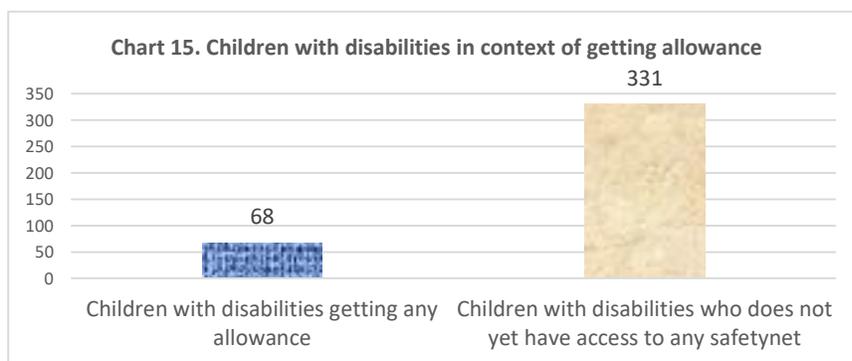
As these schools are located within Dhaka City Corporation area, the functional distance between home and school may be more than the actual distance, which can pose some issues for some children with disabilities.

Access to Safety-net and Disability Identity Card

Availability of disability identity card is a potential pre-requisite to receive some other services including disability allowance, but only 76 (19%) of the identified children with disabilities have their own disability identity cards at base year. Information is not available for 1 of the child with disabilities.

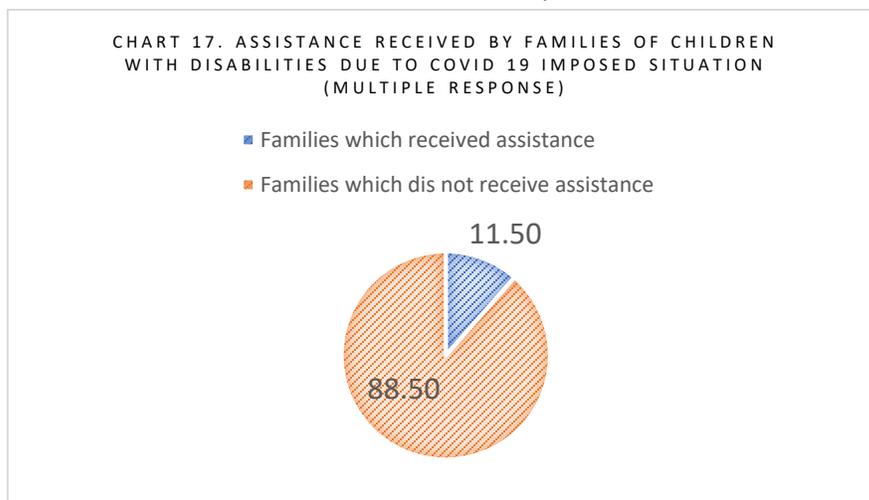


Only 68 (17%) of the identified children with disabilities are getting one or other form of allowances in connection with their disabilities as according to information collected during baseline. 331 (82.75%) children with disabilities have no access to allowances/safety-net according to interview/survey. (Chart 15)



300 parents responded to this question on education allowance or education stipend. Access to education stipend has immensely contributed to increasing overall school enrolment rate of primary school going children across Bangladesh. One of the identified children with disabilities during survey conducted by the project have access to education allowance or education stipend.

11.5%, n=62 families of children with disabilities received any assistance during COVID 19 outbreak. 88.50%, n=477 did not receive any support. Unfortunately the surveyors could not cross-check this with the service providers.



Key Findingsutilizing Qualitative Tools

KII with Teachers/Head Teachers - 10

Knowledge/ Interest on IE and other relevant issues:

All teachers and head teachers interviewed indicated they know there are children with disabilities in the locality although except three, most of them said there is no student with disabilities in the schools they teach. None of the teachers interviewed received any training on IE, and some of them appear to be not very clear about the difference between inclusive education and special schools. They have heard that children with disabilities study in 'special schools'. Most of them suggested that children with disabilities should study in special school, as they already have *'too many students with a very limited number of teachers in the schools'*. Many of them think there should be *'separate classrooms, or separate schools and separate buildings'* for children with disabilities.

However, all agree on the need to create access to education of all children with disabilities as it will give them the opportunity *'to socialize and learn about others'*. They want children with disabilities to be treated with care and love as any other children.

Teachersemphasized to ensure the following: i) training of teachers on IE, ii) availability of needs-based educational/teaching-learning materials, iii) creating physical accessibility in

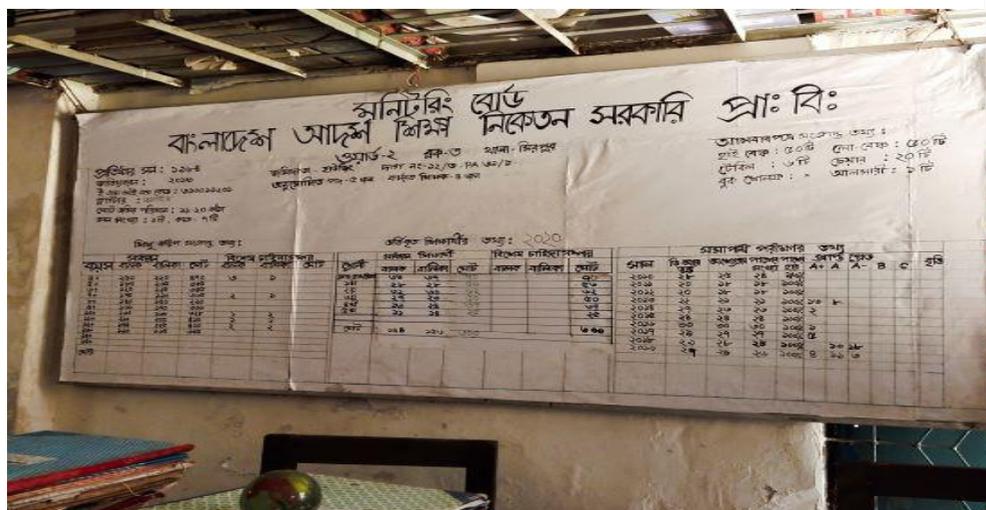
schools, iv) creating provision of representation of persons with disabilities in the school management committee (SMC), and v) ensure counselling among peer students and other students at school to eliminate bullying of children with disabilities. All teachers are willing to get training on IE. One teacher who has children with disability studying at her school said that IE creates the environment of healthy competition, and allows children to learn from each other.

None of them heard or remembered what's in the Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act, 2013. Most of the teachers/head teachers are not aware if children with disabilities receive any educational stipend or allowance. However, three teachers at a GPS indicated that all children with or without disabilities in their school will receive education stipend provided by the Ministry of Primary & Mass education (MoPME).

They linked the drop out of children with disabilities from school with poverty, lack of awareness of parents and problems of commuting to school and home. Only a smaller number of teachers (3) agreed that physical inaccessibility as well as bullying by others in the school and community may cause children with disabilities to drop out of schools. Most think children with disabilities should be sent to special schools.

Information on School Survey on catchment areas:

Teachers at RNGPS could not provide any specific information on the school catchment area survey. But all agreed that there are children with disabilities in the school catchment area. Except for two out of 10 schools already having over 14 CWDs as students, the rest of the schools did not have any children with disabilities currently enrolled there.



A notice board at a GPS with information on school catchment area survey usually conducted annually/biannually.

If they are willing to admit children with disabilities: Most of the teachers said they already have too many students and limited teachers in the school, and they cannot take care of children with disabilities.

Providing needs based & educational materials: Govt. has allocated TK. 10,000 for pre-primary education per school, and kept provision for supplying needs based support for students with disabilities in the primary level. Some teacher at the GPS are not aware of these provisions. However, during a discussion with one GPS, the Head Teacher informed of such provisions and she also mentioned of her school providing hearing aid worth Tk. 40,000 to a student with hearing impairment. She also mentioned that children with disabilities enrolled at her school will highly likely to get education stipend. MoPME provides TK. 100/month per student at PPE level and TK 150/month per student at primary level to motivate parents to send their children to schools.

Conditions of the schools, particularly GPS: All three GPS and one of two RNGPS visited by the team are of poor conditions in-terms of infrastructure, maintenance, cleanliness, and accessibility. Due to lockdown teachers come to schools occasionally, which is why we could not meet all teachers at these schools, or went to all class rooms. Teachers of at least one GPS are expecting their school building to be rebuilt completely within the next two years.

Facilities needed to ensure education of children with disabilities: Most parents emphasized on the following issues to create an enabling environment for children with disabilities studying at schools: way out for children with disabilities to commute to school safely, provision for financial assistance, accessible toilet facilities, physical accessibility of schools, availability of drinking water, ensure teachers can teach their children, assistive devices, recreational facility for children with disabilities, availability of learning materials, etc.

Why children with disabilities are lagging behind in education as according to parents: According to parents following barriers affect education of children with disabilities: i) lack of awareness of parents/guardians, ii) cost of education, iii) environmental barriers and physical inaccessibility of schools, iv) bullying and insecurity faced by children with disabilities, v) negative attitudes of parents of non-disabled students, vi) parents of children with disabilities are ashamed of their children, vii) negligence of teachers, teachers aren't willing to enroll children with disabilities in their schools, viii) no one have time/scope to accompany children with disabilities to schools, ix) distance of educational institutes and problems of commuting, x) road unsafety, and xi) negligence of parents/family towards children with disabilities.

Willingness of parents of CWDs to send them in mainstream schools/inclusive schools:

Parents of children with disabilities are willing to send their children to inclusive schools so that they can learn from each other. They want teachers to counsel non-disabled students and their parents to create scope of education for children with disabilities in the same school.

Recommendations given by parents of children with disabilities are as following: i) Arrange teacher training to promote education of children with disabilities alongside non-disabled children, ii) Bring in accessibility features in schools, iii) Support provisions for poor families to take care of costs e.g. for commuting, educational materials etc., iv) Counsel other students to address bullying, v) Counselling, training and monitoring of school based support staff to ensure security and prevent abuse of children with disabilities, vi) Create accessible toilets and drinking water points, vii) Create more scopes of interaction between school authorities, viii) Counsel teachers and parents of children with disabilities, and ix) increase awareness of parents of CWDs to send children to schools.

Socio-economic status: The baseline survey was conducted targeting mainly the poorer sections of the community – in i) slums and ii) camps (where former stranded Pakistanis) reside. The children identified belong to poor families with most of their parents illiterate or semi-literate and many depending on day labor. Some of them has reduced scope of job or have lost jobs due to COVID 19. Children belonging to these household have limited scope to get educational support at home from a family member. All of these further limit their scope to access education or get admission at primary schools unless they go through pre-primary education.

KII with NGO representatives – 4

How to promote educational access of children with disabilities?

1. Raise mass awareness on inclusive education and inclusive practices
2. Increase follow-up of students. And set criteria of IE for school inspection
3. Improve physical accessibility of schools
4. Abolish school fee for children with disabilities in RNGPS and other private educational institutes
5. Motivate teachers, parents of children with and without disabilities
6. Arrange training on IE and disability for concerned groups, particularly teachers
7. Aware non-disabled children
8. Increase enrolment of children with disabilities in GPS
9. Provide customized and needs-based assistive devices to children with disabilities
10. Address bullying against children with disabilities in the community and in schools, if necessary by forming children's forum or utilizing existing e.g. adolescent clubs etc.
11. Arrange counselling for parents of children with and without disabilities, children with and without disabilities

KII with elected representatives of the Local Government Institutes (LGI) - 5

Data on children with disabilities and persons with disabilities:

Most LGI representatives said there are many children and/or persons with disabilities in their locality, but they could not share any list with our team. None of the LGI representatives could give any example of disability inclusive initiatives taken by them. However, they assured project staff that they will provide needs-based support to promote education of children with disabilities. They also assured of support to help families of children with disabilities obtain disability identity card for their children. If necessary they can join the project staff for discussion with schools/ request RNGPS to reduce monthly fees and admission fees, and raise awareness in the community.

According to them children with disabilities lag behind in education because of the following issues:

- lack of awareness of parents of children with disabilities and teachers
- poverty
- negligence of families towards children with disabilities
- lack of specially trained teacher at schools
- negative attitudes of community people

Awareness level of LGI representatives on IE: LGI representatives interviewed had very limited or no idea about inclusive education. They recommended some exclusive initiatives such as keeping separate 'special classroom' for children with disabilities.

Assistance during Corona: A number of Government assistance to community people during Corona crises have been operated through LGI. During conducting interviews attempts were made to know if families of children with disabilities have received such assistance. Field findings reveals that some families of children with disabilities received different types of assistances provided by local government authorities. Some of them also received assistances provided by different NGOs including BRAC, World Vision, and Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF) etc. However, based on discussion with participating LGI representatives, disability was not perhaps a common criteria for selection of beneficiaries by all LGI representatives for these assistance.

Discussion with Education Officials under DPE - 4

At least four officials (two are field based and two DPE based) could be reached over phone. Only one gave an interview, while another provided some information. The field based *thana* education officers assured of providing support as long as DPE gives permission to work in government primary schools (GPS).

According to a Thana Education Officer (TEO), the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) provided training on inclusive education to at least one or two teachers of each primary schools. The Education Official could not however, specify contents of IE training of DPE for teachers. But it has component on disability, instruction of behavioral aspects towards children with disabilities, and preliminary assessment. When asked how they monitor inclusion or inclusive education they mentioned that they check if students are following

classes/progressing etc. When asked if they think persons with disabilities should have representation at SMC to promote the agenda of IE, the respondent had no specific comment. The respondents did not remember any key features of the Act on education.

DPE instructs schools to enroll children with 'mild' disabilities, which is why it's often difficult to admit students who cannot see or hear or speak at all.

At pre-primary education (PPE) level, schools have provisions of TK. 10,000/school for needs-based materials/instruments support for children with disabilities. DPE has provisions of needs-based support for children with disabilities at primary level too.

FGD with Children with Disabilities – 2 (7 Girls and 6 Boys)

Two groups of children with disabilities (a girls' group and a boys' group) participated in two FGDs. Following are findings of the FGDs:

- **One of the school dropout child with disability used to be acknowledged by his peers without disability for helping them out on maths.**
- **One child with physical disability has dropped out of school due to distance. It's difficult to walk to the school.**
- **One child has dropped out of school as teachers were not positive.**
- **One child said her father did not arrange for her admission at school because 'he feels embarrassed due to her impairment'.**
- **One child complained about punishment given at school (although corporal punishment is banned and it has reduced over time but could not be eliminated yet)**
- **One child complained about not being able to use the school toilet because of inaccessibility.**

The Children think there should be school van (i.e. small three wheelers used for commuting to schools) or other support for helping them commute between school and home. The children with disabilities interestingly had no complain about peer students.

Their aim in life includes: to become a teacher, a doctor, a police officer, a tailor. Adolescent school drop outs would also like to learn skills including vocational skills.

Most of the children could demonstrate hand washing practices. They are aware of Corona and the need to wear masks and keeping social distancing. However, practice of wearing

mask may need to improve – partly if affordability of mask increase along with support of adult family members.

FGD with Children without Disabilities – 1 (4 Girls and 4 Boys)

Unlike most of the Children with Disabilities, most of the children without disabilities who participated in FGD were enrolled either in school or madrasah (Islamic religion-based school). Due to COVID19 pandemic all of them now have to stay in their dwellings, within their community. They are aware of Corona and precautions required, although practice of wearing masks and hand-washing and maintaining social distancing etc. need improving.



FGD conducted with children
without disabilities

Some of these children have friends who have disabilities. They help each other, and some also play together. Participating children are advised by their parents to behave well with children with disabilities. Children with disabilities living in the community sometimes play with them.

They like teachers who behave well in the class and explains things many times without scolding them. They like going to school because there they can meet their friends and play. But their parents don't send the children with disabilities to school probably for fear of accidents.

They want to be doctors, pilots, and police. They don't think children with disabilities can become doctors or pilot.

Children without disabilities think children with disabilities should study with them in the same school/class as they can learn from each other.

A few of them have heard of adolescent clubs and Community Based Child Protection Committee. None of their schools have class/school cabinets. They think children with disabilities should be included and able to participate in the children/adolescent clubs.

FGD with Parents and other caregivers of Children with Disabilities– 1 (participants-6 women)

Parents' willingness to send CWDs to schools no matter what type of schools:

A majority of parents are willing now to send their children with disabilities to schools for education, but they are quite unaware of the existing scopes. Most of the parents in the community are poor and uneducated. Many of them live in slums and/or camps. They are worried about the future of their children and many would like to know about opportunities for older children with disabilities for whom skills based education/training may be required.

Parents/other caregivers identified the following issues which affect access to education of Children with disabilities:

- **bullying at community and schools**
- **lack of services including educational services**
- **other children don't want to mix with them or play with them**
- **lack of motivation of teachers**
- **vulnerability of children with disabilities, particularly girls to abuse at school and community (one of the parents specifically blamed a service provider at a particular school of attempting to abuse her daughter with disability because of which a few years back she had withdrawn her daughter with disability from the school).**

Some of these parents have heard about the Act of 2013 for persons with disabilities, but they do not exactly know what's in it.

A good majority of children with disabilities identified do not yet have disability cards.

Impact of Corona: All of the parents met know about Corona and the need to wear masks, keep social distancing and hand washing etc. However, some of them follow the instructions, some don't. As they live in slum areas, maintaining social distancing and/or cleanliness sometimes prove very difficult. Many of them or some of their earning family members have lost jobs (e.g. as guards, work as maids etc.).

FGD with Community People – 1 (6 people – 3 women and 3 men) Participants included teachers, representative of LGI, a man with disability, grocery shop owner

All participants said they have seen children with disabilities in their neighborhood. According to them boys with disabilities outnumber girls with disabilities, the reason of which is unknown to them. A representative of the woman ward commissioner said he is aware of at least 25 children with disabilities – he emphasized the need to increase the authority of the woman commissioners as ordinary people can approach her more.

Most of the children with disabilities never went to school or are school drop outs. This may be because of i) lack of awareness of their parents, ii) poverty, iii) parents go to work and cannot afford time to take them to schools, iv) some parents feel 'ashamed' of taking their children with disabilities outside home or even to schools, v) children with disabilities and/or parents fear of bullying at school, v) they feel demotivated or lacks purpose of sending the children to schools.

In order to change the situation, the participants emphasized on the following:

- **raise awareness of parents**
- **prepare schools for welcoming children with disabilities**
- **use media to raise awareness of all**
- **as parents work to survive, children with disabilities are often left alone at home in slums – need comprehensive plan**
- **make schools accessible**
- **provide teaching-learning and education materials**
- **arrange training of teachers on IE**
- **more consultation between teachers, students and parents**
- **teaching should also contribute to improve behavior of children with and without disabilities**
- **address bullying of children with disabilities at the community**
- **there's no field for children to play**
- **a limited number gets allowance, although many more need coverage through safety-net**
- **there's no scope for vocational training for older children in the locality**

According to the participants there's no CBCPC, adolescent clubs, school cabinets operating in their community.

COVID19: The pandemic situation has caused loss of jobs of many slum dweller women and men. Different NGOs, government and others have provided some supports to poor people during this time, but these are sporadic support.

FGD with School Teachers – 2 (1 GPS and 1 RNGPS)

RNGPS: They have no complete statistics on children with disabilities of school going age. The secondary section of the RNGPS has two children with disabilities (one with physical disability and one with mild hearing impairment) currently enrolled. They could not give

much information on the school catchment area survey. The primary section has one children with disabilities currently. Their teachers have no training on IE or on specific technical issues including Braille or sign language.

School cabinets don't have any mandatory provisions to include children with disabilities.

Teachers at the RNGPS were found interested to include children with disabilities having mild form of disabilities as according to them 'some children with disabilities disturb other students'. They would only like to enroll children with physical disabilities who can come and move around independently in their schools. They would prefer children with disabilities go to special schools or in separate rooms. Their teachers are willing to get training on IE. They are also interested to get support to recruit additional teachers to enroll children with disabilities.

There's no ramp to the ground floor of the school. The toilets and water points are also not accessible. The school is multi-storied and without lift. The school will start constructing a building within a few month. The project may advise them on how to make their new building physically accessible with their own funds.



Entrance to water points at an RNGPS

They charge some monthly fees. None of them are aware of the Disability Act of 2013.

GPS: They conduct school catchment area survey of children. Two children with disabilities are enrolled currently, but often they do not come to school on a regular basis. The teachers said both have intellectual disability.

5 boys and 2 girls with disabilities of 4 to 7 years (2019) have been identified in their locality by the teachers during school catchment area survey in 2019. The project will need to cross-check if these children are also in their list, if not include them.

One teacher received training by the Primary Teachers Training Institute so far on IE provided by DPE. But the teachers could not give details of the training. They mentioned it had information on disability and how to behave well with students with disabilities mostly.

Currently they have two children with disabilities enrolled. One child come to school but does not stay in the school fulltime. Both get education stipend of the Ministry of Primary & Mass Education (MoPME). TK. 100/month and TK. 150/month stipend are provided to pre-primary and primary level students, respectively by MoPME. So far they know they do not get allowance of the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW).

Schools have no system or do not attempt to find out the reasons of drop out of children with disabilities. Earlier they had students with speech disability who graduated from class-5. The child was provided with hearing aid (of TK. 40,000) by the government through the school. Education officers come to schools and try to assess performances of the students. The teachers raised the following issues:

- **They have 360 students to be taught by 4 teachers (including the Head Teacher (HT)). It's difficult to take special care of children with disabilities at a time. The teacher-student contact hour is limited.**
- **Children with disabilities should be given additional assistances to motivate parents to send them to school. Stipend has increased presence of students.**
- **Teachers said peer students are helpful towards the children with disabilities. Teachers facilitate the process.**
- **They are willing to enroll more children with disabilities if teachers are trained.**
- **They think SMCs should have representation of persons with disabilities to promote issues related to disability.**
- **School infrastructure will need some accessibility features. However, they are expecting the government to construct a new multi-storied building soon, which will give scope to the project to initiate a high-level advocacy to instill accessibility features.**
- **They also emphasized on awareness raising on the issue of IE and children with disabilities targeting all.**

Teachers are willing to participate in IE orientation if arranged and if they are given permission by the DPE.

This school collaborates with the 'Little Doctor' program, a joint program of the Directorate General of Health Services with the DPE. However, there's no school cabinet program in operation.

Teachers of these school, particularly the GPS were found reasonably cooperative. They agreed to enroll more children with disabilities. GPS offer education completely free. They provide mid-day meal. Sometimes, they have to collect TK. 5 to 10 per students monthly as per rule to provide salary of the support staff, who is not a government employee.

A Brief Analysis of the Qualitative Findings

All stakeholders reached agree on the following:

- There's a need to bring in children with disabilities to schools increasingly. A lot of emphasis is necessary to increase awareness of parents, teachers, and community people on the need of education of children with disabilities.
- Knowledge on inclusive education and its purpose is very much limited across all segments.
- Teacher training on inclusive education (IE) need to be strengthened drastically.
- Education system & decision-making at DPE and at the ministry level is highly centralized, which continue to delay work of potential non-governmental collaborators including CSID.
- Teachers in general are willing to enroll children with disabilities but they are afraid of dealing with a diverse range of disability as the training they currently receive from DPE appears to be inadequate. The teacher training manual on IE of DPE could not be collected.
- They already have a large size of class with limited teacher student contact hour.

A brief status at the end of the baseline:

- i) Permission of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) is finally obtained. Due to delays in getting permission **(a) the school based survey could not be conducted as part of the baseline (b) most importantly selection of schools is delayed (although a mapping of schools is done by project staff), (c) arranging teachers' training on IE, disability, certain technical aspects has got delayed too, (d) introducing accessibility features in selected schools, and (e) enrolling children with disabilities due to lock down of school to prevent COVID 19 will begin in 2021.**
- ii) Due to the pandemic caused by COVID19, all schools remain closed which is why identified children could not be enrolled into any schools yet. Despite these difficulties, about 20 teachers belonging to either GPS or RNGPS were reached in person and/or over phone for conducting KIs or one Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Based on these discussions and visits made to school premises the team came up with the following criteria for selecting schools:
 - **Preferably select GPS (considering i) the cost of education which is free, ii) mid-day meal as these children come from very poor family, iii) if teachers are willing & motivated, iv) the potential of advocacy through showcasing)**
 - **Preferably select schools which have past history of collaborating with other NGOs/INGOs**
 - **Select schools which already have some accessibility features installed, so that the project can enroll as many children with disabilities as possible there, and introduce needs based modifications**
 - **Select schools where the HT and associate teachers are motivated and already have some experience of dealing with children with disabilities, and continue to motivate teachers/HT of other selected schools**
 - **Select school considering the proximity of the school with the dwellings of the children with disabilities**
 - **Select schools where teachers are willing and have permission to be part of orientation on IE if necessary even during their holidays/off days**
 - **Preferably select schools with a good number of teachers (optional)**
 - **Select schools with plan for constructing new premises so that advocacy could be conducted to make new construction physically accessible. It's not easy, but it must be attempted.**

Note: **Although the project promotes inclusive education, where necessary it should also take opportunity to refer certain children with disabilities it identified to government special school program operated in Mirpur-14, Dhaka, if it is in the best interest of the child with disability.**

Type of schools	Pros	Cons	Way forward
GPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No school fees required. • Mid-day meal given to students. • Govt. supports @TK 10,000 for needs based support/instruments/educational materials for IE at Pre-primary level. Needs based support at school level for IE is available till primary education level. • Schools are more sustainable. • Any successful example could have greater advocacy impacts and contribute to system strengthening. • Possibility of getting educational stipend of the DPE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting permission to renovate for accessibility may be difficult. • Getting permission to arrange teacher training may be time consuming. • Admitting e.g. children with visual disability and speech disability may prove difficult unless the head teacher is highly motivated and the concerned education officer is cooperative. 	<p>Take a twin track approach and select both GPS and RNGPS sharing premises with the GPS.</p> <p>However, priority need to be given to GPS considering the issues of sustainability, incurring low cost for the parents, for exploring the possibility of bringing in long-term sustainable change.</p> <p>Consider providing regular support to teachers on issues such as IE including technical areas such as sign language, Braille etc. Try to customize the IE training based on the specific needs of the children with disabilities to be enrolled.</p>
RNGPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may be easily motivated to admit students with disabilities there • Easier to renovate to incorporate accessibility features there • Availability of teachers to take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admitting e.g. children with visual disability and speech disability may prove difficult unless the head teacher is highly motivated. • Most of the project 	<p>Given the delay in getting permission of DPE, work may start in at least 2 RNGPS who are willing to reduce monthly fees and admission fees for CWDs.</p>

	<p>part in orientation on IE may be more</p>	<p>beneficiaries belong to the poorer sections of population, and they may be unwilling or unable to continue the education of children with disability in the RNGPS for fees.</p>	
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Findings Based on Objectives of the Baseline, Process Documentation

Objectives of Baseline and other activities	Brief status/Findings
<p>To identify the present situation on accessibility of children with disabilities in 10 schools.</p>	<p>Baseline conducted partially and 400 children with disabilities (including 160 girls and 240 boys) between the ages of 6 years to 14 years were identified.</p> <p>A mapping of government primary schools (GPS) and registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS) receiving government financial assistances located in project area has been done by the project staff of CSID. A listing of 35 schools was prepared preliminarily based on which 7 schools will be selected following agreed specific criteria set by the project team. This will be done based on analysis of the findings of KII, FGD and quantitative survey. However, school based quantitative survey to identify schools for collaboration to promote IE practices could not be done as schools remain closed as of today and permission of DPE to work in GPS is still pending.</p>
<p>To identify the current mind set of teachers/ parents/ non-disabled students/ communities/government regarding the Inclusive education of children with disabilities in targeted 10 communities.</p>	<p>Teachers' interviews as part of KII were conducted although all schools remain closed. The quantitative questionnaire to systematically collect school based data could not take place due to lack of permission by the Directorate of Primary Education. However, over 86% parents indicated their interest to enroll their children with disabilities into schools but the project will need to motivate them adequately in order to make sure they regularly send their children to school.</p>

	<p>Teachers will need strong motivation, good quality training/orientation on IE & certain technical issues and regular support of project staff to teach children with disabilities enrolled.</p> <p>Local education officers will need orientation on monitoring IE related issues.</p>
<p>To identify the present enrollment status of individual children with disabilities in the project area (Mirpur 6, 11, 11.30, 12 and 14).</p>	<p>The planned baseline study had two components: 1. Collect data on enrolment at community level, and 2. Collect data on enrolment from authorities and from a limited number of selected schools in the community. The first part of the baseline study could be conducted so far. This report is based on the 1st part of the baseline targeting parents/caregivers/guardians of children with disabilities in the community. The qualitative tools have however, tried to generate some data on school related issues.</p>
<p>To start the project implementation using the findings of baseline and to compare the baseline situation after the evaluation of the project.</p>	<p>The project started utilizing the baseline findings.</p>
<p>To accomplish comprehensive process documentation from start to end of the project to identify the interventions that are effective or the ones that needs correction to promote inclusive education.</p>	<p>Tools developed and report is to be prepared.</p>
<p>To get a significant evaluation report to find out notable changes as a result of the implemented project.</p>	<p>Not applicable for this report.</p>
<p>(Data: % of enrollment rate into mainstream and other quality</p>	<p>Update on national enrolment rate of children with disabilities could not be collected yet from the government. However, according to</p>

schools)	UNICEF 'only 11 per cent of children with disabilities received any form of education in Bangladesh' (2014). The school based data for Mirpur could not be collected yet, but based on the door to door interviews done in selected project areas with parents. So far, only 7.25% of children with disabilities (includes 11 boys and 18 girls) were found enrolled in different classes/schools. A total of 371 children (includes 229 boys and 142 girls) with disabilities belonging to 6 years to 14 years were found out of school against only 29 children with disabilities of same age who were enrolled in schools among the identified households having at least one child of this age with a disability.
% of retention rate	Data not yet available/ will be available during end line.
% of family members interested regarding the education of this children with disabilities	>86.5%, n=346parents indicated there interest to enroll their children with disabilities to nearby schools. 13.5%, n=54 parents/guardians/caregivers remain unwilling to send their children with disabilities to schools. Parents of boys with disabilities are slightly more willing to send boys to schools than parents of girls with disabilities. Parents of 86.25%, n=138 among 160girls with disabilities and 86.67%, n=208 among 240boys with disabilities would like to send them to schools.
% of the number of good result by children with disabilities	Will be available throughout regular monitoring and/or end line. However, given the COVID 19 situation, schools remain closed and therefore, it may be difficult to collect this data in a systematic and regular manner. The team may need to identify alternate ways to collect data on this issue.



Inaccessible toilet at a GPS



School gate that may need some adaptation



Inaccessible toilet at a GPS

Conclusion

Most of the respondents belong to households with relatively poor economic conditions. Besides, most of the families reached were suffering from the economic impact of lockdown during COVID 19 situation. Many people in the neighborhood had left the area and returned to villages to cope up with loss of income due to the new normal situation.

Interviews with school teachers, and other representative could be arranged at a limited scale, which has given limited scope to triangulate/enrich certain data e.g. school enrolment rate in the concerned school and/or locality concerning children with disabilities. Only 5 school premises could be visited partially due to lockdown for COVID 19 which did

not allow to review the accessibility features completely. Besides, the delay in getting permission of DPE to enable the selection of GPS have partially delayed the process of implementation of certain activities, such as installing accessibility features at schools, and arranging training of teachers particularly those belonging to the GPS etc.

Although a good number of responding parents/guardians/caregivers said they are willing to send their children with disabilities at nearby schools, yet almost a majority of them do not still see much positive relation between children with disabilities' enrolment at school and e.g. their positive social or other developmental outcomes through education.

The enrolment of children with disabilities has improved in all types of schools over the last several years in certain areas of Bangladesh. But despite several attempts mainly by NGOs, the concept of inclusive education is yet to be fully operationalized. As a result, while no school cannot disagree to admit children with disabilities most of the enrollment of children with disabilities occur when the children have certain types of physical disabilities, have poor eye sight, are short of hearing, has problem with speech, has mild intellectual disabilities and/or autistic. Therefore, in absence of special interventions operated by NGOs targeting certain pockets of the country, children with visual disabilities, children requiring support e.g., through sign language are usually left out of mainstream primary school for reasons including but not limited to inadequate teachers training on inclusive education, limited number of teachers, limited contact hour, large class size^{ix}.

The project need to work closely with the following entities in particular: children with disabilities, peer students, parents/representatives of parents of both sides, community, schools/teachers/head teachers, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) representatives, local government representatives, representatives of the Department of Social Services/JatiyoProtibandhiUnnayan Foundation, their special schools for potential technical resources and organizations addressing disability/Disabled Peoples' Organizations in the locality.

Given the new normal situation the duration of the project may be increased as no school based work could be commenced as of today.

The baseline situation analysis (although could not be implemented fully yet) clearly shows

children with disabilities have limited access to crucial services such as education, and they lack access to assistive devices and are subject to harassment when in the community. Less access to education, social negligence/lack of priority, limited access to safety-nets are making these children marginalized and more vulnerable.

Recommendations:

1. Develop an Advocacy Plan targeting both policy makers and policy implementers. Engage senior level representatives of CSID and if necessary its Board members and others in the advocacy initiatives with particularly high-level policy makers and education networks.
2. Continue motivating and following-up with teachers, head teachers of particularly schools where children with disabilities have been enrolled by the project.
3. There's still a significant level of ignorance and biases existing among parents that create barriers in regard to education of children with disabilities. The project should take initiative to try to admit equal number of boys and girls with disabilities in schools.
4. Take initiative to build capacities of Head Teachers in management and monitoring of IE initiatives. Include Education officers in IE orientation program.
5. Take initiative to build needs based capacities of teachers in areas e.g. inclusive education, braille, sign language etc.
6. Conduct a training needs assessment of teachers, head teachers, education officials first before finalizing the training/orientation for them. Training must include components of Braille, sign language, performance assessment of children with disabilities as well as how to monitor IE.
7. Take initiative to link concerned school teachers with potential resources persons of CSID as well as other theme-based Disabled Peoples' Organizations for getting regular support on technical areas. However, make sure existing school teachers are engaged in the whole process and shoulder the main duty of teaching children with disabilities alongside other children.
8. Take initiative to raise awareness and motivate a group of stakeholders, particularly, head teachers, teachers, peer students, parents, education officials and school management committees to promote inclusive education in '**practice**'. Introduce teachers to developing individual learning plans for students with disabilities. And provide support to conduct individual needs assessment of students with disabilities for schools to utilize their school based budgetary provisions for seeking support for relevant educational and learning materials from DPE.

9. Conduct anti-discrimination activities and initiatives aimed at preventing teasing/harassment/violence at the school level and on ways to schools to protect children with disabilities irrespective of their gender, socio-cultural status etc.
10. Facilitate enrolment of children with disabilities into pre-primary section if they do not qualify to be enrolled directly into primary education section of schools.
11. Approach UCEP to explore free access to their schools and vocational training for older children with disabilities at their center.
12. Consider and explore increasing the tenure of the project to cope up with the time lost due to the pandemic and also to sustain the initiative of the project as even two years is too short for such a project.
13. Take record to existing professional development program related to inclusive education and try to capitalize it in favor of project goals and training activities.
14. Carry out assessment of accessibility issues in and around schools to address physical barriers
15. Record classroom practices to support process documentation targeting peer students, teachers, management/school authorities etc.
16. Motivate teachers to involve class captains/develop class based 'champions' on disability to foster peer support for students with disabilities.
17. Explore existing support available within government and other NGOs to promote early detection and intervention so as to include internal and external measures for quality assurance in line with the human-rights model
18. High-level advocacy should be in place in collaboration with DPOs, NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure standard inclusive education service.

ⁱ<https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/greater-inclusion-children-and-disabilities> UNICEF, and the Situation Analysis on Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh 2014

ii The activity had to be conducted while the country was fully and later partially locked down due to COVID 19 pandemic, which delayed the regular intervention of the baseline e.g. qualitative interviews were delayed, and the quantitative survey had to be done only at the community level.

iii The World Report on Disability 2011

^{iv} NCDC, DGHS, MoHFW, Defining Disability: A Guideline for Medical Doctors and Primary Health Care Workforce, <https://dghs.gov.bd/index.php/en/home/5171-defining-disability-a-guide-line-for-medical-doctors-and-primary-health-care-workforce-is-published>

^v The World Bank, IBRD-IDA, Disability Inclusion, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability>

^{vi} UNESCO, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION including children with disabilities in quality learning: what needs to be done? September 2017

^{vii} Terms of Reference to Baseline study by CSID

^{viii} Samir Ranjan Nath, Educational marginalization in Bangladesh, Document code:

2010 / ED / EFA / MRT / PI / 15, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000186598>. and

Directorate of Primary Education, Annual Primary School Census 2019 (DRAFT),

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^xAnnual Primary School Census 2019 (DRAFT)

Annexure (1-6 in separate files)

Annex – 1: Quantitative Tools (available in both Bangla & English)

Annex – 2: Excel data sheets with information (English)

Annex - 3: Proposed data safekeeping policy (English)

Annex – 4: Photo files