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**ESTEEM**

**Effective Schools Through Enhanced Education Management  
The DFID component of PEDP**

The Cambridge Consortium

ESTEEM Research Series

Study 2

**Educating Children in Difficult Circumstances:  
Children With Disabilities**

**Conducted by:**

**CSID  
CENTRE FOR SERVICES AND INFORMATION ON DISABILITY**

ESTEEM Project

July 2002

**DIRECTORATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION  
PRIMARY AND MASS EDUCATION DIVISION**

# Guaranteeing Rights To Education Children With Disabilities

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## Educating Children in Difficult Circumstances:

### Children With Disabilities

ESTEEM (The DFID component of PEDP)

#### Study-II

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## ESTEEM

Effective Schools Through Enhanced Education Management

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The document series consists of :

CODE	TITLE	DATE
<b>ESTEEM Study 1</b>	Early childhood care, education and development	July 2002
<b>ESTEEM Study 2</b>	Educating children in difficult circumstances: Children with disabilities	July2002
<b>ESTEEM Study 3a</b>	Contribution of civil society to the development and provision of primary education in Bangladesh – Educational inputs	(in progress)
<b>ESTEEM Study 3b</b>	Contribution of civil society to the development and provision of primary education in Bangladesh – Educational processes and practices	(in progress)
<b>ESTEEM Study 4</b>	Closed /NGO- run Community Primary Schools	July 2002
<b>ESTEEM Study 5</b>	Case studies of quality in Bangladesh Primary Schools	(Proposed)

## Foreword

Disability has always been treated as *welfare* and a *charity* issue since time immemorial. Over the last few decades or so, it has been gaining some recognition as a crosscutting development issue. Only recently, both the development professionals and the disability activists have been demanding that Disability should be considered a 'rights based' issue.

While the Constitution of Bangladesh, the subsequent amendments and supplementary Acts that have been adopted ever since, and the different charters, declarations, conventions that the Government has signed and ratified over the last three decades, have spelt out the rights and privileges of people with disabilities, either separately, or collectively as common citizens of the country, the mere recognition of them as individuals, and their true inclusion in nation-building activities, until recently, has remained a far cry. One such example is the "Education For All" movement.

In a country, where a plethora of non-government organizations (NGOs) are working hand in hand with the government as a nation-building partner, a mere 1% or fewer NGOs are working directly with people with disabilities, who constitute an approximate population of 13 million. These NGOs, and their coordinating networks have been trying to influence all national policies and programs to become more sensitive and supportive to people with disabilities. But the response from the government has, until recently, remained confined to only the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Department of Social Services and the National foundation for the Development of the Disabled, which all fall under the purview of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Following the Jomtien Declaration (1990) of "Education For All", Bangladesh also actively took up initiatives to this end. However, education of children with disabilities was not adequately addressed. The Ministry of Education (along with its supplementary departments and divisions) took the main initiative for the EFA movement. But the education of the disabled remained with the Ministry of Social Welfare, who were not adequately sensitized about the EFA movement. As a result, these children could not adequately benefit from the EFA movement.

The ESTEEM –II research initiative (Educating Children In Difficult Circumstances: Children With Disabilities), currently commissioned by the ESTEEM Project of the Department of Primary Education (DPE) under the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) of the Government of Bangladesh, is a recognition by the government, that the EFA movement of the country will not be successful until the education of children (and thus people) with disabilities is effectively addressed. On behalf of Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), I take this opportunity to thank the ESTEEM Project, and thus the Government of Bangladesh for taking this vital and timely initiative.

Over the last four years, CSID has been working in the area of research, information exchange and development in the field of disability. We feel honored to have been given this opportunity to play our part in this study. However, with caution I would like to add that, the current situation looks very grim, and an enormous challenge for the future remains. If adequate measures are not taken soon, the dream for "Education For All" will forever remain a myth more than a reality!

**Khandaker Jahurul Alam**  
**Executive Director**  
Centre for Services and Information on Disability

## Acknowledgement

Following an agreed upon terms of reference, the team had conducted a review of the scopes and limitations, opportunities and barriers, i.e. the entire situation prevailing in the country in the area of education of children with disabilities. The team consisted of seven members including professionals from the disability development field and educationists. The objective of the study was to enable the Government of Bangladesh in developing and/or reforming appropriate policies for the education of children with disabilities in Bangladesh in view of the present situation, in order to ensure a more qualitative approach towards ensuring the "Education For All" movement in Bangladesh.

The team had sincere efforts to make a comprehensive study on the issue and came-up with a report. This report reflects the findings of primary data collected from over 350 children with disabilities and the intensive study through practical visits, interviews of and discussions with representatives of all the stakeholders, including the direct grassroots level children with disabilities, community people, representatives of development organizations working in the field of disability, schoolteachers, representatives of school management committees, instructors of teachers' training institutes, relevant local and national level government staff. It also reflects on the analysis of a rich amount of relevant secondary literature collected and compiled by the team. It is hoped that the views expressed in this report will further encourage the Government of Bangladesh in adopting necessary steps to take the work that is being undertaken in this sector to newer heights.

The significant aspect of the study was its participatory methodology, which reflects the free and sincere opinion of the community people and representatives of the different agencies. The findings and recommendations of relevant documents in neighbouring countries was a helpful point of reference for comparative analysis.

The members of the Study Team would like to thank the ESTEEM Project for commissioning this timely initiative, and helping out with letters and references. The Team is particularly appreciative of the time, attention, care and guidance given to it by Mr Jake Ross of the ESTEEM Project during the few months of the review, and then during drafting and finalizing this report. The team also deeply appreciates the contributions of the individuals who were present at the draft-report presentation ceremony arranged by ESTEEM, and who enriched this report with their valuable comments, suggestions and critics. The team also appreciates the contribution of the ESTEEM Project Research Team for helping to enrich this report.

The review team deeply appreciates the sincerity, time and all-out cooperation of all the children with disabilities, their family members and the community people in the fields of the twelve districts under the study, and the other stakeholders, including the representatives of the Government of Bangladesh, without whose cooperation it would not have been possible to get their views. The team also acknowledges the hard work and sincerity of the field workers in the twelve districts, who tirelessly worked day and night, in order to collect and compile the primary data and the detailed case studies within the timeframe, and appreciates the contribution of their respective organizations for allowing these workers the space to work for this study.

Finally, we deeply appreciate the enormous efforts of Mr Tanvir Hasan of Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) for developing the data processing software, training the field workers accordingly, then later for data entry and processing, and also that of Mr. Mahbubur Rahman of Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) for data inputs and processing, and that of Ms Shahida Afrin of CSID for meticulously organizing all the logistics during the meetings, discussions, field trips and report preparation period, and efficiently maintaining all the detail accounts. The team also deeply appreciates the enormous contributions of Mr Masudul Abedin Khan of CDD for layout designing and graphics, in the race against time during the final stages to see that this report is published. We also acknowledge the contribution of Mr Braja Gopal Saha of CDD for filming our work in the fields and then producing the video documentary that accompanies this report

**A.H.M. Noman Khan, Principal Researcher  
and The ESTEEM Study– II Team Members**

## i. Executive Summary

The ESTEEM Project under the auspices of the Primary and Mass Education Division of the Government of Bangladesh has planned to undertake a study titled "Educating children in difficult circumstances: Children with disabilities". The broad objective of the study is to provide background data and information on education of disabled children, to assist the government in developing and/or reforming policies on the education of disabled children in Bangladesh. Centre for Services and Information on Disability has been assigned to conduct the study.

Appropriate methodologies have been adopted to extract the maximum possible range of information within the stipulated framework and set timelines. Surveys have been conducted, software for data input and analysis has been developed, literature, existing documents, available statistical data has been reviewed and analyzed. Series of consultations have been held with key informants, including government representatives, children with disabilities, their parents, education authorities, teachers, SMC members, NGO representatives. Discussions were held in terms of interviews, Focus Group Discussions and PRA sessions. A total of 12 districts, 2 from each of the 6 administrative divisions have been considered for information collection. The districts were selected considering the divisional head quarter district and one remote district under each division.

Case studies have also been collected to further enrich the findings and support the analysis. The analysis of the findings was done on the basis of both quantitative and qualitative information. For the sake of comparison, existing policies and practices in other neighboring countries were also consulted.

The findings of the study reflect that highest percentage of children with disabilities were found in the age group of 6~10 at 44%, the lowest being in the 16~18 age group at 15%. The majority of 56% are male. 86% of the children are from Muslim families. The lowest are Christians at less than 1%. For 85% of these children the head of the household is their father, and mothers headed 8% of the families. In 91% cases, principle-care givers for the children were the parents (mainly the mothers). The heads of the families are employed at different sectors. 85% of them are self-employed. Access to government service is only 5%. 66% of the children were residing at rural areas. They had the least scope of access to education mainly because of limited number of schools and attitudinal problems.

Major findings of the study indicate that while most of them expressed a keen interest to enroll in schools, a mere 11% of children with disabilities within the school going age, with a simple majority of boys over girls, have so far gained access to education. The difference in terms of enrollment in education between boys (56%) and girls (44%) is not that much significant. 12% of the interviewed children with disabilities were in education in the urban areas in comparison to 10% in the rural areas. This could be attributed to the availability of better education scopes and also, to some extent, a higher level of income of families in the urban areas over the rural areas.

A major contributor to this percentage has been the presence of disability related activities by adequately qualified service providing organizations. The served areas showed an enrollment rate of 18%, while that for areas without disability activities showed a mere 4% enrollment. This indicates that, despite all the problems prevailing in the society, with proper guidance, counseling and appropriate initiative, inclusion of children with disabilities in schools can be enhanced. This study especially focused on children receiving education.

Amongst the enrolled disabled children, 55% were with physical disabilities, followed by visual, hearing and speech, and lastly the children with intellectual disabilities. The children with visual impairments constituted 13%. Children with Hearing and speech impairments were 12% followed by the children with intellectual disabilities at 10%. 48% of these children were pursuing education in formal education

setups devoid of systematic inclusion systems. 23%, 15% and a mere 5% were in integrated, special and systematically developed inclusive schools respectively.

Apart from the latter, in all other setups, the enrolled children are facing enormous problems, including, a negative attitude expressed towards them by peers and teachers alike. 73% of the children with disabilities faced problems while even enrolling into educational institutes.

As the government supported integrated schools are residential, the scope for enrollment is limited. This is even worse for girls than boys. In all other setups, for 83% of the children no classroom adaptations were made at all. Even in the cases of special schools the environment were mostly not found ideal.

A lack of assistive devices for both mobility and communication, and also a lack of classroom adaptations were acting as major barriers for children with disabilities. Braille books were not available, even though the Government has a Braille press and a policy to provide free primary level books in Braille to children with visual impairments. As there is currently no common sign language in Bangla, communication is difficult for children with hearing and speech impairments. Besides, the teachers also have no skills on communicating with these children in most cases. There is also no support with regard to speech therapy and assistive devices, including hearing aids.

Regarding learning performances, non-disabled learners are higher in most subjects (with a 78% average in class I, II and III) than the children with disabilities. Amongst these children, those visual impairments fared the best (71%). This group was closely followed by the group of children with hearing and speech impairments (70%), but the children with intellectual disabilities were far below (32%). The children with physical disabilities were considered as intellectually sound, and so were recorded along with the non-disabled group. The children with multiple disabilities were not found in the tests applied in the different educational settings.

73% of the children with disabilities faced problems while enrolling into educational institutes. The parents had found it extremely difficult to convince the school authorities in most cases for allowing scopes to enroll their children. While an inclusive environment in the mainstream education is being suggested as the best possible option, it is recognized that, many children with disabilities, especially those with profound degrees, will need to be enrolled in integrated and special education setups. But, such integrated and special education setups should be designed such that, they will prepare the learners gradually towards inclusion into the mainstream education system. However, for most of the children with a moderate to profound level of intellectual disability, only partial inclusion should be expected and might be possible.

The curriculum is not flexible and humane enough, that could promote inclusion of all children, especially those with special needs into education. The primary schoolteachers in general do not have even the minimally required level of knowledge and skills on disability concerned issues. The teachers training curriculum of PTI do not cover areas of disability-concerned issues. Very surprisingly a chapter of the PTI training curriculum indicates a very negative notion towards learners with disabilities.

Bangladesh is either a signatory or active follower of many international declarations and charters. These have highlighted enrollment of disabled children into education. Over the last three decades, the government of Bangladesh had formed three Education Commissions, which also have recommended education for children with disabilities. However, the National Policy on Education, has not addressed it adequately.

Without systematically addressing the issue of education of children with disabilities, by changing and/or reforming policies, legislation, and rules at different levels, achieving the goal of Education For All will remain beyond reach.

At the National level, appropriate policy formulation and adaptation, development of national execution plan, provision in national budgets, adaptation of training packages and human resource development are necessary prerequisites in



the change process of inclusion of disabled children in the mainstream education. At the secondary level, adaptation of local policies, creation of accessibility and other required facilities, technical resource integration at local level,

sensitization and awareness raising, information exchange at various level, monitoring and evaluation etc. need to be addressed systematically. A system should also be developed for smooth coordination and facilitation between these two levels.

So far, in spite of it being an education issue, the education of disabled children has remained with the Ministry of Social Welfare. Without locating the issue within PMED and Ministry of Education, such mainstreaming will not be possible. The Ministry of Social Welfare should take a proactive role in preparing the disabled learners for systematically including them in mainstream education.

“প্রতিকূল পরিস্থিতিতে শিশুদের শিক্ষাদান : প্রতিবন্ধী শিশু”

গবেষণার সার সংক্ষেপ\*

(ESTEEM Study-II)

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা বিভাগ এর ESTEEM প্রকল্পের অধীনে “প্রতিকূল পরিস্থিতিতে শিশুদের শিক্ষাদান : প্রতিবন্ধী শিশু” শিরোনামে একটি গবেষণা কর্ম-সম্পাদন করার পরিকল্পনা হাতে নেয়। গবেষণাটির সাধারণ উদ্দেশ্য হলো প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষার উপর উপাত্ত ও তথ্য সরবরাহ করে বাংলাদেশের প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত নীতি প্রণয়ন ও সংস্কার সাধনে সরকারকে সহায়তা করা। সেন্টার ফর সার্ভিসেস এন্ড ইনফরমেশন অন ডিসএ্যাবিলিটি (সিএসআইডি) গবেষণা কর্মটি পরিচালনার দায়িত্ব পায়।

নির্ধারিত সময়সীমা ও চুক্তির রূপরেখা অনুযায়ী সর্বোচ্চ পরিসরে যথার্থ ও নির্ভুল তথ্য সংগ্রহের জন্য গবেষণাটিতে যথোপযুক্ত পদ্ধতিসমূহের অবতারণা করা হয়েছে। প্রশ্নপত্রের মাধ্যমে জরীপ পরিচালিত হয়েছে, প্রাপ্ত তথ্য ও উপাত্ত প্রকিয়াকরণ ও বিশ্লেষণের নিমিত্তে কম্পিউটার সফটওয়্যার তৈরী ও ব্যবহৃত হয়েছে। তাছাড়াও বিদ্যমান গবেষণা সমূহ, ডকুমেন্ট সমূহ বা দলিল দস্তাবেজ এবং প্রাপ্ত পরিসংখ্যানিক উপাত্ত বিবেচনা ও বিশ্লেষণ করা হয়েছে। মুখ্য তথ্যদাতাদের সাথে ক্রমান্বয়ে একাধিক আলোচনা ও মতবিনিময় সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। সরকারী প্রতিনিধি, প্রতিবন্ধী শিশু ও তাদের অভিভাবকবৃন্দ, শিক্ষা সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্তৃপক্ষ, শিক্ষকবৃন্দ, বিদ্যালয় ব্যবস্থাপনা কমিটি (এসএমসি)র সদস্য এবং এনজিও প্রতিনিধিদের সাথে একাধিক ধারাবাহিক সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। বাংলাদেশের ছয়টি প্রশাসনিক বিভাগের প্রতিটি হতে দুইটি করে সর্বমোট বারোটি প্রশাসনিক জেলা থেকে তথ্য ও উপাত্ত সংগ্রহ করে গবেষণাটি সম্পন্ন করা হয়েছে। প্রতিটি বিভাগ হতে বিভাগীয় সদর ও অন্য একটি প্রত্যন্ত জেলা নির্বাচিত করা হয়। তথ্য সংগ্রহের জন্য এক সেট উদ্দেশ্য ভিত্তিক প্রশ্নমালা প্রস্তুত করা হয়। প্রাক-পরীক্ষণে প্রাপ্ত ফলাফলের ভিত্তিতে প্রশ্নমালাগুলোকে পূর্ণবিবেচনা করে অবশেষে চূড়ান্ত করা হয়েছে। তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীদের জন্য প্রশিক্ষণেরও ব্যবস্থা করা হয়েছিল।

প্রাপ্ত ফলাফল সমূহকে আরো সমৃদ্ধ ও যথার্থতার মাপকাঠিতে নির্ভুল করার জন্য জীবন বৃত্তান্ত বা কেসস্টাডিও সংগৃহীত হয়েছে। একই সাথে গুণগত ও পরিমাণগত উপাত্তের উপর ভিত্তি করে গবেষণার বিশ্লেষণ তৈরী করা হয়েছে। ব্যক্তির জীবন বৃত্তান্ত (কেসস্টাডি) বিশ্লেষণের মাধ্যমে প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যসমূহ সুনির্দিষ্ট ও সূশৃঙ্খলভাবে সংগ্রহের নিমিত্তে একটি নিয়মাবলী তৈরী করা হয়েছিল। কেসস্টাডির মধ্যে কোন কোন বিষয়ের ওপর আলোকপাত করা হবে তা নির্দেশনাটিতে সুস্পষ্টভাবে উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে। তুলনামূলক বিশ্লেষণের নিমিত্তে প্রতিবেশী দেশসমূহে বিদ্যমান প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত নীতিসমূহ ও প্রচলিত ব্যবস্থাদির পর্যালোচনা করা হয়েছে।

গবেষণা লক্ষ ফলাফলে প্রতীয়মান হয় যে সর্বাধিক সংখ্যক ৪৪% প্রতিবন্ধী শিশু ছিল ৬ থেকে ১০ বছর বয়সসীমার মধ্যে, অপরদিকে ১৬ থেকে ১৮ বছর বয়সসীমার মধ্যে ছিল সর্বনিম্ন সংখ্যক ১৫%। এদের মধ্যে বেশীরভাগই ছিল ছেলে, সংখ্যায় ৫৬%। ৮৬%

\* বাংলা অনুবাদঃ মুহাম্মদ মাহবুবুর রহমান

শিশুই ছিল মুসলিম পরিবারের এবং সবচেয়ে কমসংখ্যক ১% ছিল খ্রীষ্টান পরিবারের। এই শিশুদের ক্ষেত্রে শতকরা ৮৫ ভাগের পরিবার প্রধান ছিল তাদের পিতা এবং মাত্র শতকরা ৮ ভাগের ক্ষেত্রে ছিল মাতা। শতকরা ৯১ ভাগ ক্ষেত্রে এই শিশুদের মূখ্য সেবা ও যত্নদানকারী হিসাবে পিতামাতা(প্রধানত মাতা)কেই নিয়োজিত থাকতে দেখা যায়। গবেষণা উপাত্ত প্রমাণ করে পরিবার প্রধানগণ বিভিন্ন সেক্টরে কর্মরত ছিল, যাদের শতকরা ৮৫ ভাগই ছিল আত্ম-কর্মসংস্থানে এবং অপরদিকে মাত্র শতকরা ৫ ভাগকে সরকারী চাকুরীতে নিয়োজিত থাকতে দেখা যায়। শতকরা ৬৬ ভাগ শিশুই গ্রামে বসবাস করে। দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিগত সমস্যা ও প্রয়োজনীয় সংখ্যক বিদ্যালয়ের অপ্রতুলতার কারণে তাদের শিক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ খুবই সীমিত বলে পরিলক্ষিত হয়েছে।

গবেষণার ফলাফল নির্দেশ করে অধিকাংশ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুরই বিদ্যালয়ে ভর্তি হবার ব্যাপারে গভীর আগ্রহ রয়েছে, কিন্তু বিদ্যালয় গমনোপযোগী প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের মাত্র ১১% শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে প্রবেশাধিকার লাভ করেছে, যাতে ছেলে শিশুদের সংখ্যা মেয়েদের তুলনায় সামান্য বেশী পরিলক্ষিত হয়েছে। শিক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে ছেলে (৫৬%) ও মেয়েদের (৪৪%) মধ্যকার ভর্তির হারে বিশেষ কোন তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ পার্থক্য পরিলক্ষিত হয়নি। যে সব প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে- তাদের ১২% শহরাঞ্চলে শিক্ষারত এবং ১০% গ্রামাঞ্চলে শিক্ষারত ছিল। অর্থাৎ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের ক্ষেত্রে গ্রামাঞ্চল অপেক্ষা শহরাঞ্চলে শিক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ বেশী পরিলক্ষিত হয়। এটা হতে পারে তুলনামূলক উন্নত শিক্ষা সুযোগ ও পরিসর বিদ্যমান থাকা এবং অনেক ক্ষেত্রে গ্রামের তুলনায় শহরের পরিবাসমূহের গড় আয়সীমা বেশী হবার কারণে।

এলাকা ভিত্তিক উপযুক্ত সেবা প্রদানকারী সংগঠন কর্তৃক প্রতিবন্ধিতা সংশ্লিষ্ট কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা ভর্তির এই হার অর্জনের পিছনে বড় অবদান রেখেছে। একটি উল্লেখযোগ্য ফলাফল হচ্ছে, সেবা প্রদত্ত এলাকায় ভর্তির হার ১৮%, অপরদিকে যেখানে প্রতিবন্ধিতা সংক্রান্ত কার্যক্রম নেই সেসব এলাকায় এই হার মাত্র ৪%। এতে প্রতীয়মান হয় যে সমাজে অন্য সকল সমস্যা বিরাজমান থাকা সত্ত্বেও যথাযথ নির্দেশনা প্রদান, পরামর্শ দান এবং উপযুক্ত উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের বিদ্যালয়ে একীভূতকরণকে বাড়াতে ও শক্তিশালী করতে পারে। গবেষণাটিতে শিক্ষায় সম্পৃক্ত শিশুদের পরিস্থিতি বিশেষ ভাবে বিবেচনা করা হয়েছে।

বিদ্যালয়ে ভর্তিকৃত শিশুদের মধ্যে সর্বোচ্চ সংখ্যক ৫৫% শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী, এরপর পর্যায়ক্রমে দেখা যায় দৃষ্টি, বাক ও শ্রবণএবং সবশেষে বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধীদের অবস্থান। যার মধ্যে দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিশু রয়েছে ১৩%, বাক ও শ্রবণ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুর হার ১২% এবং সবশেষে বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের হার মাত্র ১০% পরিলক্ষিত হয়েছে।

এই শিশুদের মধ্যে ৪৮% পরিকল্পিত একীভূত ব্যবস্থা থেকে বিচ্যুত আনুষ্ঠানিক শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থায় অংশ নিয়েছে। সমন্বিত, বিশেষ ও নিয়মতান্ত্রিক ভাবে বেড়ে ওঠা একীভূত বিদ্যালয়ে যথাক্রমে ২৩%, ১৫% ও ৫% শিশুকে অংশ নিতে দেখা যায়। সব ব্যবস্থাতেই ভর্তিকৃত শিশুদেরকে অসংখ্য সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হতে হয়। যার মধ্যে অন্যতম হচ্ছে সমবয়সী ও শিক্ষকদের নেতিবাচক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি বা মনোভাব। দেখা গেছে, ৭৩% শিশুই শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভর্তির সময় কোন না কোন সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হয়েছে।

সরকারী অর্থায়নে পরিচালিত সমন্বিত বিদ্যালয় গুলো হচ্ছে আবাসিক, যেখানে ভর্তির সুযোগ অত্যন্ত সীমিত কেননা আসন সংখ্যা প্রয়োজনের তুলনায় অত্যন্ত নগন্য। এখানে ছেলেদের তুলনায় মেয়েদের জন্য সুযোগ আরো সীমিত। অন্য সকল ব্যবস্থাতে ৮৩% শিশু শ্রেণীকক্ষে একেবারেই খাপ খাওয়াতে পারে না, এমনকি অধিকাংশ বিশেষ বিদ্যালয়েও প্রত্যাশিত পরিবেশ পরিলক্ষিত হয়নি।

চলাচল ও যোগাযোগের জন্য সহায়ক উপকরণের অপ্রতুলতা এবং শ্রেণীকক্ষে অভিযোজনের (Adaptation) সমস্যাই প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে প্রধান অন্তরায় হিসাবে কাজ করে। দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের জন্য পাঠ্যবইয়ের ব্রেইল সংস্করণ সুপ্রাপ্য নয়, যদিও সরকারের একটি নিজস্ব ব্রেইল প্রেস রয়েছে এবং 'সবার জন্য শিক্ষা' কার্যক্রমের অধীনে ঘোষিত সরকারী নীতি অনুযায়ী দৃষ্টি প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদেরকে বিনামূল্যে ব্রেইল বই প্রদানের কথা রয়েছে। অপরদিকে বর্তমানে বাংলা ভাষায় কোন আদর্শ ঈশারা ভাষা (Sign Language) না থাকার কারণে বাক ও শ্রবণ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুরা ভাবের আদান প্রদান তথা যোগাযোগের ক্ষেত্রে গুরুতর সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হচ্ছে। দেখা গেছে বেশীরভাগ ক্ষেত্রেই এই শিশুদের সাথে যোগাযোগের জন্য শিক্ষকদেরও কোন দক্ষতা নেই। এই শিশুদের সার্বিক বিকাশের জন্য স্পীচ থেরাপী (Speech Therapy) এবং শ্রবণ যন্ত্র (Hearing Aid) সহ অন্যান্য সহায়ক উপকরণের সহায়তা প্রদানের কোন ব্যবস্থাই নেই। তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ বিষয় হচ্ছে আলোচ্য গবেষণার মাধ্যমে প্রমাণিত হয়েছে যে এতসব বাধা ও প্রতিকূল পরিবেশ বিরাজ করা সত্ত্বেও প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষার্থীদের মূল শ্রোতধারার শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত হবার বা অংশগ্রহণ করার সুযোগ ও সামর্থ্য রয়েছে।

শিখন দক্ষতা যাচাইকরণের লক্ষ্যে বিভিন্ন প্রকার প্রতিবন্ধী ও অপ্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের উপর প্রাথমিক কৃতি অতীক্ষা (Primary Achievement test - PAT) প্রয়োগ করা হয়। অতীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত ফলাফলে দেখা যায় যে বেশীরভাগ বিষয়েই (১ম, ২য় ও ৩য় শ্রেণীতে গড়ে ৭৮%) অপ্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষার্থীরা প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষার্থীদের তুলনায় ভাল করেছে। এই প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের মধ্যে শিখন দক্ষতায় দুটি প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুরা সবচেয়ে ভালো (৭১%) করেছে, এর পরেই খুব কাছাকাছি রয়েছে বাক ও শ্রবণ প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুরা (৭০%) কিন্তু বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধীদের অবস্থান অনেক নীচে (৩২%) দেখা গেছে। শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের বুদ্ধিমাত্রায় কোন সমস্যা না থাকতে তাদেরকে অপ্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের দলে বিবেচনা করা হয়েছে। উল্লেখ্য যে অতীক্ষা প্রয়োগের সময় বহুমাত্রিক প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষারত অবস্থায় পাওয়া যায় নি।

প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের ক্ষেত্রে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয় হচ্ছে ৭৩% শিশুই শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ভর্তির সময় কোন না কোন সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হয়েছে। বেশীরভাগ ক্ষেত্রে সম্ভানকে ভর্তির সুযোগদানে কর্তৃপক্ষকে রাজি করানোর ক্ষেত্রে পিতামাতাকে কঠিন পরিস্থিতির মোকাবেলা করতে হয়।

এটি বাস্তবসম্মত যে শিক্ষার মধ্যে মূল শ্রোতধারায় একীভূতকরণের প্রচেষ্টাই বাংলাদেশে প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষা প্রসারের সবচেয়ে ফলপ্রসূ ব্যবস্থা। এটাও সেইসঙ্গে মেনে নেয়া প্রয়োজন যে অনেক প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুর ক্ষেত্রে; বিশেষ করে অতি গুরুতর মাত্রার প্রতিবন্ধীদের জন্য সমন্বিত ও বিশেষ শিক্ষা ধারায় অন্তর্ভুক্তিকরণ আবশ্যিক হতে পারে। কিন্তু এই ধরনের সমন্বিত ও বিশেষ শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থা এমন ভাবে হওয়া উচিত যেন প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষার্থীদেরকে ধীরে ধীরে মূল শ্রোতধারায় একীভূতকরণের লক্ষ্যে উপযোগী করে গড়ে তুলতে পারা যায়। কেননা ভুলে গেলে চলবে না যে, মাঝারি ও অতি-গুরুতর মাত্রার বুদ্ধি প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের জন্য আংশিক একীভূতকরণই হচ্ছে একমাত্র প্রত্যাশিত ও ফলপ্রসূ শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থা।

বর্তমানে বিরাজিত শিক্ষাক্রম সকল ক্ষেত্রে নমনীয় ও মানবিক নয়। তাই এই শিক্ষাক্রম সকল শিশুকে বিশেষ করে বিশেষ চাহিদায়ুক্ত শিশুদেরকে শিক্ষায় একীভূতকরণের জন্য যথোপযুক্ত নয় বলে প্রতীয়মান হয়। এমনকি প্রথমিক স্তরের শিক্ষকদের প্রতিবন্ধী বিষয়ক প্রয়োজনীয় জ্ঞান ও দক্ষতা নেই। পিটিআই কর্তৃক পরিচালিত শিক্ষক প্রশিক্ষণ কার্যক্রমের শিক্ষাক্রমেও প্রতিবন্ধিতা সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়াবলী যথাযথভাবে অর্ন্তভুক্ত ও প্রতিফলিত হয়নি। অত্যন্ত আশ্চর্যের বিষয় হচ্ছে পিটিআই শিক্ষাক্রমের একটি অধ্যায়ে অত্যন্ত অস্পষ্টভাবে প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষার্থীদের সম্পর্কে ধারণা দেয়া হয়েছে।

বাংলাদেশ বিভিন্ন আন্তর্জাতিক চুক্তি ও ঘোষণাপত্রে স্বাক্ষরকারী অথবা সক্রিয় সমর্থনকারী দেশ। এগুলোতে প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদেরকে শিক্ষাক্ষেত্রে ভর্তি করানোর বিষয়টি বিশেষ গুরুত্বের সাথে বিবেচনা করা হয়েছে। গত তিন দশকে বাংলাদেশ সরকার তিনটি শিক্ষা কমিশন গঠন করেছে, সেখানেও প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের জন্য শিক্ষার সুপারিশ করা হয়েছে। কিন্তু শিক্ষা বিষয়ক জাতীয় নীতিমালায় এ ব্যাপারটি যথাযথ ভাবে বিবেচিত হয়নি। যথাযথ ও সু-সংগঠিত ভাবে প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষা বিষয়টি বিবেচনা ব্যতিত শুধুমাত্র আইন প্রণয়ন, ধারা বা নীতির সংস্কার ও পরিবর্তন করে 'সবার জন্য শিক্ষা'র লক্ষ্য অর্জন কখনোই সম্ভবপর হবে না।

মূল ধারার শিক্ষায় প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের একীভূতকরণের লক্ষ্যে প্রয়োজনীয় পরিবর্তন প্রক্রিয়ার আবশ্যিকীয় পূর্বশর্ত হচ্ছে ৪- জাতীয় পর্যায়ে যথাযথ নীতি প্রণয়ন ও অভিযোজন, জাতীয়ভাবে বাস্তবায়ন করার কর্ম-পরিকল্পনা প্রণয়ন, জাতীয় বাজেটে অন্তর্ভুক্তি, প্রশিক্ষণ প্যাকেজ প্রবর্তন ও মানব সম্পদ উন্নয়ন এবং স্থানীয় পর্যায়ে স্থানীয় নীতির অভিযোজন, প্রবেশগম্যতা ও অন্যান্য প্রয়োজনীয় সুবিধাদি সৃষ্টি, স্থানীয় কারিগরী ও কৌশলগত সম্পদের সমন্বিতকরণ, জনগনের মাঝে সংবেদনশীলতা ও সচেতনতা সৃষ্টি, বিভিন্ন স্তরের মধ্যে তথ্যের আদান প্রদান, পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ণ ইত্যাদি যথাযথ ভাবে করা প্রয়োজন। এই দুই স্তরের মধ্যে নির্ভেজাল সমন্বয় ও পারস্পরিক সহযোগিতার জন্য একটি কাঠামো তৈরী করা প্রয়োজন।

যাই হোক, প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষা বিষয়টি একটি শিক্ষা সম্পর্কিত বিষয় হওয়া সত্ত্বেও এ বিষয়টি সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীনে পরিচালিত হচ্ছে। প্রকৃত প্রস্তাবে প্রাথমিক ও গনশিক্ষা বিভাগ এবং শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীনে বিষয়টির অর্ন্তভুক্তি ব্যতিত প্রতিবন্ধী শিশুদের শিক্ষাকে সত্যিকারভাবে মূল শ্রোতধারার সাথে সম্পৃক্ত করা সম্ভব হবে না। তাই প্রতিবন্ধী শিক্ষার্থীদের নিয়মতান্ত্রিকভাবে মূল ধারার শিক্ষায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার জন্য তাদের প্রস্তুত করণ সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক আশ কার্যকরী ভূমিকা গ্রহণ প্রয়োজন।

### iii. Contents

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SL. No.	Contents
	Cover Page
	Credit Page
	Report Distribution and Revision Sheet
	Note on Document Series
	In Memory of Dr. Nirafat Anam
	Foreword
	Message
	Acknowledgement
i	Executive summary
ii	Bangla Executive Summary
iii	Contents
iv	List of Tables
v	List of Figures
vi	Acronyms
vii	Definitions
viii	Research Management
Chapter 1	Introduction to study
Chapter 2	Conceptual Framework
Chapter 3	Study Design
Chapter 4	Commitments, Legislations and Reality: An Analysis of Documents
Chapter 5	Major Findings
Chapter 6	Analysis and Interpretation
Chapter 7	Policy options and critique Three Tire Role Recommendations Further Research Suggestions
Chapter 8	Suggested Plan of Action
Appendix A	References
Appendix B	TOR
Appendix C	Works Done According To TOR References

#### iv. List of Tables

---

SL. No	Title of the Table
1	Study Location
2	Selected Field for Information Collection
3	Category of Stakeholders Interviewed
4	The Data on Special Education of Pakistan
5	Education in Served and Un-Served Areas
6	Location and Education
7	Disability-wise Enrollment in Education
8	Individual Group of Disabilities and Type of Education
9	Disabilities and type of Education
10	Family Income and Education
11	Annual Expenses Incurred by an Average Family with a Child in Class V in a Rural setting in Faridpur (...PRA exercise)
12	Attitude Towards Children with Disabilities
13	Comparison between Assistive Device Users and Non-Users
14	Class wise Distribution of the Respondent
15	Cost Incurred by an Average Family for a Child in Class V in a Primary School in Faridpur
16	Education Related Problems, Their Causes and Effects According to the Villagers of Isanagar, Chittagong
17	Problems Identified by School-Going Girls of Isanagar, Chittagong
18	Tables of Recommendations

## v. List of Figures

---

SL. No.	Title of the Figure
1	Conceptual Framework
2	Study Design
3	Age of Respondent (Percentage wise)
4	Income of Respondent
5	Types of Disability
6	Education : Served Area Vs Un-Served Area
7	Poverty and Disabilities - A Vicious Cycle
8	Faced Problem/Barrier During Enrollment
9	Adaptations Brought Forth in Classrooms
10	Subject-Wise Performance of Class I
11	Degree-Wise Performance of Class I
12	Subject-Wise Performance of Class II
13	Degree-Wise Performance of Class II
14	Subject-Wise Performance of Class III
15	Degree-Wise Performance of Class III
16	Merit Level of Hearing-Impaired Pupils
17	Vertical Comparison of PAT Scores
18	Calendar of Crops and Work Load of Children due to Crops
19	Mobility Map of Shovarampur Village in Faridpur District Sadar, Showing Where and How for They Acquiring Education
20	Daily Routine of Boys and Girls at Isanagar Village in Chittagong (A Scenario of an Un-served Area)
21	Map of Isanagar, Chittagong
22	Three Tier Model

## vi. Acronyms ---

AID	:	Action In Development
CAHD	:	Community Approaches to Handicap in Development
CBR	:	Community Based Rehabilitation
CDD	:	Centre for Disability in Development
CHDRP	:	Community Handicap in Development Resource Person
CRC	:	Child Rights Convention
CSID	:	Centre for Services and Information on Disability
DFID	:	Department For International Development
DPE	:	Directorate of Primary Education
EFA	:	Education for All
ESCAP	:	Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific
ESTEEM	:	Effective Schools Through Enhanced Education Management
FAVH	:	Fellowship for the Advancement of the Visually Handicapped
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussions
GBS	:	Gram Bikash Sangstha
GJSSS	:	Gono Jagoron Shomaj Kallyan Shangstha
GoB	:	Government of Bangladesh
HI	:	Hearing Impaired
ID	:	Intellectually Disabled
IDEAL	:	Intensive District Approach to Education For All
IE	:	Inclusive Education
IER	:	Institute of Education and Research
IQ	:	Intelligence Quotient
MoE	:	Ministry of Education
MoSW	:	Ministry of Social Welfare
ND	:	Non-Disabled
NFOWD	:	National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled
NFPE	:	Non Formal Primary Education
NGO	:	Non Government Organizations
PAASDO	:	Poverty Alleviation and Social Development Organization
PAT	:	Primary Achievement Test
PMED	:	Primary and Mass Education Division
PRA	:	Participatory Reflection and Action , Primary Rural Appraisal
PTI	:	Primary Teachers' Training Institute
SMC	:	School Managing Committee
SSDP	:	Southern Socio-economic Development Program
UN	:	United Nations
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund
VI	:	Visually Impaired
WHO	:	World Health Organization
YPSA	:	Young Power in Social Action
CWD	:	Children with Disabilities
PWD	:	Persons with Disabilities
WWD	:	Women with Disabilities

## vii. Definitions

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### **Disability**

A disability is the functional consequence of impairment. If a child with polio (=impairment) can not walk because of this impairment, (s)he has a disability. However, if impairment is corrected (e.g. short sightedness can be corrected with glasses), than the person has no disability (WHO, 1992). Disability is a permanent condition of a person.

### **Educational Placement**

Selecting the appropriate educational provisions (Special education, Integrated Education, Inclusive Education or Home service) for school-age children on the basis of screening of their special needs (i.e. disability), aptitude and learning performance.

### **Enrollment**

Registration of school-age children into any educational provision.

### **Handicap**

A handicap is the social or environmental consequence of a disability. Most people with a disability do not feel handicapped till society makes them handicapped by creating barriers of rejection, discrimination, prejudice and barriers to physical access, preventing them from making choice and decisions that affect their lives. For example, if a child who uses a wheelchair cannot enter the community school, he will have a handicap in making use of the school. When the school is made accessible for users of wheelchairs, this handicap disappears. (WHO, 1988).

### **Hearing and Speech Disabilities**

Hearing impairment is defined as the inability to hear any sound of an intensity of 40dB or more in the better ear. Speech disability is defined as the partial or total inability to utter meaningful phonemes.

### **Home Education Services**

Education through home tutors (itinerant teachers) especially for the multiple disabilities and profound level of intellectual disabilities.

### **Impairment**

Impairment is an abnormality in the way organs or systems function which is treatable. Impairment usually refers to a medical or organic condition, e.g. shortsightedness, hearing problems, cerebral palsy (WHO, 1988).

### **Inclusive Education**

"Inclusive Education is an approach, which addresses the needs of all learners in a regular classroom situation including learners with special needs, and creates an effective classroom environment where the educational needs of all children irrespective of ability, socio-economic or cultural consideration.

Inclusive Education means improving the learning environment, so that all children can learn successfully. The school and the teachers accept that educational environment is flexible and could find ways to meet the needs of all children. Teachers must have knowledge to help all children in the class when they face learning problem. There should be a spontaneous acceptance of learners with disabilities so that they can learn with all other children in the class" (UNESCO 2001).



Inclusive education gives all the learners including learners with disabilities right to enter into nearest regular school of the community.

#### **Integrated Education**

The pedagogic concept of integration refers, " ... it involves the admission of children with special educational needs in 'ordinary' or 'regular' schools and may be described as 'pedagogic integration'. This may be mandatory under legislation, or it may take the form of statements of policy which aim to encourage such integration" (UNESCO 1996).

Those practices and measures in the sphere of education, which maximize a person's (potential) participation in the mainstream of their culture (Wolfensberger, 1972). Educational integration refers to measures taken to provide education within the regular education system with some extra support (i.e. resource room, resource teacher etc.) for children with special educational needs.

#### **Intellectual Disabilities**

Intellectual disability is defined as the delayed and/or immature intellectual development and functioning, not developed at par with the person's chronological development, and where the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is below the average range (100).

#### **Learning Performance**

Academic performance of children with disabilities in particular subjects according to primary curriculum (Grade I-III).

#### **Mainstream**

Mainstreaming means that children with disabilities are placed in mainstream general schools provided they are able to follow the mainstream curriculum without problems. Mainstreaming occurs for children who suffer from (chronic) illness, which have no impact on their cognitive ability. For example: Children with epilepsy are normally mainstreamed, but also children with mild visual or hearing impairments or those who only have a physical disability. (Jönsson,1994).

#### **Physical Disabilities**

Physical disability is defined as the loss of one or more limbs, or the sensation in limbs, either partially or totally, or if limbs are weaker than what is considered average for persons within the same age and sex group, having similar physique. It also refers to the physical deformity and/or abnormality, and/or the permanent loss of physical equilibrium.

In most cases, the children with cerebral palsy (CP) are considered as physically disabled. Children with mild CP will require very little adaptation. But children with severe CP may require special seating, special desks and communication boards. The child may even require assistance to use the toilet.

#### **Regular/ Formal education**

Regular education means the type of education, which follows national curriculum and every school eligible (considering age, background of education etc.) citizen has equal right to get access there. This type of education is comparatively rigid in timeline or age limit, goal-oriented, planned, state controlled and stratified. However, it is the core initiative of any government of any country regarding educational activities.

#### **Resource room**

A specially equipped and managed school setting where a teacher with special training instructs students who are assigned to go there at designated times for assistance in some aspect of learning or guidance (Corn and Koenig, 1996).

**Resource teacher**

A specialist who works with students who are having difficulty learning in the regular classroom setting. This teacher serves as a consultant to the regular classroom teachers and searches to secure appropriate to teaching these children (Punani and Rawal, 1997).

**Served Area**

Served areas are considered those areas where any sort of disability intervention took place.

**Special Education**

Every child is unique, and every child needs help in developing and adjusting to life. Some children need more help than other. And some need special help over longer or shorter periods of their lives, for example, during their school years. This special, extra help is often referred to as 'Special Education' (Jönsson,1994).

**Un-served Area**

Un-served areas are considered those areas where no disability intervention took place.

**Visual Impairments**

Visual impairment is defined as the absence of vision in one or both eyes with a visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (on the Snellen's chart) in the better eye even with correcting lenses, or a limitation of the 'field of vision' subtending an angle of 20° (degrees) or worse.

**Viii. Research Management**

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**1. Research Team**

Principal Researcher : **A.H.M. Noman Khan**

Professional Team Members : **Mr. Monsur Ahmed Chowdhury**

**Mr. Khandakar Jahurul Alam**

**Dr. Azharul Islam**

**Mr. Mohammad Tariq Ahsan**

**Dr. Nafeesur Rahman**

**Mr. Nazmul Bari**

## Research context and supervision

This study was commissioned by the ESTEEM project of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Funds were provided from the ESTEEM grant from the Department for International Development, UK. The project technical assistance is managed by Cambridge Education Consultants Ltd, UK, on behalf of the Cambridge Consortium.

The DPE's Research Committee approved an open tender process, advertised by the Project Director, ESTEEM, through which the Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) was selected on the merit of its technical proposal to be awarded the contract to complete the study. The contract came into effect on 01 September 2001. A mid-term presentation of progress was made to the Research Committee on 27 November 2001. The draft final report was subject to peer review at a discussion session hosted by ESTEEM on 14 February 2002. The final report was approved by a meeting of the DPE Research Committee on 02 July 2002.

## 1. Introduction to the Study

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Effective School Through Enhanced Education Management (ESTEEM) project of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), PMED, under the auspices of the Primary and Mass Education Division of the Government of Bangladesh has planned to undertake a study titled "Educating children in difficult circumstances: Children with disabilities". The study was guided by the DPE Research Committee.

The broad objective of the study is to provide background data and information on education of children with disabilities, to assist the government in developing and/or reforming policies on the education of children with disabilities in Bangladesh. The following four broad areas of concerns have been identified to reach the objective:

- Review and analyze the current situation and policy environment of children with disabilities in Bangladesh,
- Review of best practices,
- Suggest policy options for Bangladesh and
- Provide a commentary for policy development.

Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), a leading Non-government Organization concerned with disability information and research has been assigned to conduct the study. The terms of reference are included in Appendix B. The study was managed through a contract between Cambridge Education Consultants, and CSID, utilizing ESTEEM funds from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

## Outline of the Report

The study report starts with a general introduction in **chapter 1** that includes the information on background of the study, study team and study period, objectives and methodology of the study and the outline of the report.

A key output required from this study is a conceptual framework on the rights of children with disabilities to education. This is presented in **chapter 2**, followed by a summary of the current approach to education services for children with disabilities of Bangladesh and a statement of the study team's values.

**Chapter 3** sets out the approach to implementation of the study. The outcomes of literature review are in **chapter 4**, which establishes the study context in terms of international agreements, practices in neighbouring countries, legislation, education policies and planning documents in Bangladesh.

**Chapter 5 and 6** contain major findings and analysis respectively. An extended section based on PRA methods is included. **Chapter 7** relates the study findings to policy considerations for Bangladesh, with commentary on the implications for those responsible for education services for children with disabilities. These are related in term to a strategic Three-Tire Model of facilitating education of children with disabilities. **Chapter 8** suggested a National Plan of Action including evaluation Determiners regarding the education of the children with disabilities.

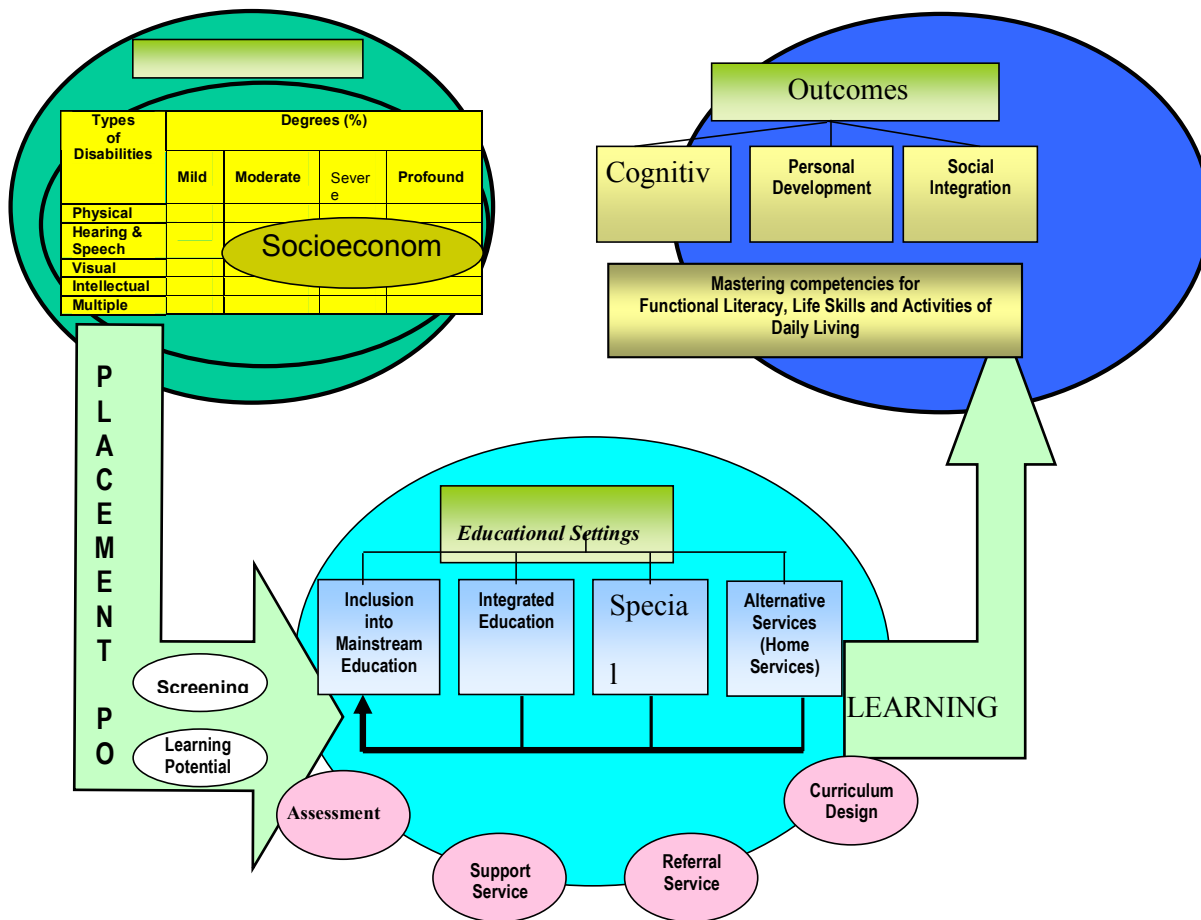
The report concludes with a table of recommendations based on the policy options. The table shows interventions, short term and long term objectives, and indicates those responsible for change.

## 2. Conceptual Framework

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### ***Guaranteeing Rights to Education of Children with Disabilities:***

The conceptual framework has been formulated to serve as a guideline for policy formulators and program implementers involved in mainstream primary education of what to consider to facilitate education of children with disabilities. The purpose of the framework is to provide conceptual understanding of the issues and linkages between factors related to education for children with disabilities in the context of Bangladesh. The fundamental requirements that need to be considered for systematic process of educating children with disabilities are discussed. The conceptual framework has been developed based on the situational analysis through this study, sharing findings with people concerning education of disabled learners and review of primary and secondary documents and information.



**Present Scenario:**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 10% of any given population is suffering from a disability of one type or other. This large number of people has the equal right to participate in all spheres of mainstream development including education. It is estimated that in Bangladesh, approximately 1.6 million children with disabilities are in school-going age group of which around 15-20 thousand receive education in special, integrated and casual inclusive educational settings. A notable percentage of the children with disabilities who are left out, have the potential to be included into the education system.

According to the organ or function affected, disability is classified into four broad areas of Physical, Hearing and Speech, Visual and Intellectual. There also could be the blend of two or more types of disabilities leading to multiple disabilities. Each of the disabilities can again be categorized into four different degrees considering their level of complexity such as mild, moderate, severe and profound. The educational support requirement varies based on the types and degrees of disabilities.

There still remains a large poor section among the general mass that still refrain from sending their children to education. They caught between the dilemma of immediate survival and the long-term benefit of education. For the families who sell labor for earning a livelihood, the peak earning period of the day coincides with schooling. The children who are refrained from education in quest of economic benefits also include children with disabilities.

The misconception of associating disability to inactiveness is still strong in the communities. The lack of social awareness and positive attitude is keeping many of the children with disabilities away from primary education in Bangladesh. Gender disparity also still plays a part in the education of children. The boys are still preferred over girls while sending children to schools for education by the parents. This is more dominant among children with disabilities.

Religion has been seen to have little influence in terms of sending children with disabilities to education. In the schools the children with minor disabilities, especially children with physical disabilities seem to be enrolling most. The most missing are the children with intellectual disabilities, who are still commonly interpreted as mentally ill.

The location of schools and the difficult access withdraws many families from sending their children with disabilities to the schools. In many cases the school infrastructure is also not supportive. The education curriculum is very structured, with little or no scope for flexibility. Teachers in most cases are not supportive either.

Overall the major factors still refraining children with disabilities are poor economic conditions, a lack of motivation and awareness, a lack of knowledge and skills in the educational institutes, and mostly importantly, a curriculum that is not flexible, humane, and supportive enough to take responsibility of all children equally.

### **Placement Policy:**

The mandates and national plans for achieving goals of Education For All should include children with disabilities in mainstream education practices. Ratifying the CRC in itself gives the government of Bangladesh enough mandate to include children with disabilities into the education system. The required steps should be to reform relevant policies to support children with disabilities enroll into education along-with other students in order to fulfill their educational needs. Educational policies at different levels, both national and local, should include options for inclusion of eligible children with disabilities into nearby mainstream schools.

Placement of children with special needs in different educational settings and in different levels is the vital factor for inclusion of these children within the learning process. Since there is a negative attitude and a lack of understanding towards disability as a whole, unplanned placement creates hindrance and frustration to the desired outcome of such inclusion. Proper screening of disabilities and assessment of the learning

performance is the pre-condition of successful and appropriate inclusion of children with disabilities in different educational settings.

## **Educational Settings:**

The present educational settings allowing education of children/people with disabilities in Bangladesh can be described into four broad categories:

### **a. Mainstream Education:**

Regular schooling run by the government, non-government and private sectors, which includes all learners. There are systematic or casual inclusions of children with disabilities, but to a very nominal extent.

### **b. Integrated Education:**

Integration of children with visual impairments in selected government schools, which provides special needs services under special arrangements. But this too is restricted to less than 100 of such schools.

### **c. Special Education:**

Special schools are particularly designed to address the special needs of specific children with disabilities like visual, hearing and speech, intellectual and multiple. However, instead of confining this set-up for children with profound degrees of different types of disabilities, due to a lack of proper screening and also a lack of conceptual clarity, children with even mild to moderate degrees of disabilities are also enrolled in many cases. But these schools are mainly located in the large cities, and in most cases are so expensive that they are out of the reach of the common people. Moreover, there is also a huge scarcity of appropriately trained personnel to run this sort of educational set-ups.

### **d. Itinerant Teaching / Home Education Services:**

Education through home tutors (itinerant teachers) especially for the multiple and profound level of intellectual disabilities. However, there is no systematic process to this approach in the country as yet. In most cases, these are being organized by individual and isolated initiatives. There is a serious need to extend this type of educational support extensively, including in rural areas, through developing the appropriate skills of local teachers.

The placement of learners in different settings requires systematic consideration of factors to enable the educational settings creating access to education of children with disabilities. These are:

- Assessment of disability types and degrees.
- Support services required facilitating learning, such as counseling, speech therapy, physiotherapy, Assistive Devices and its Maintenance etc.
- Referral services for treatment and correction/minimization of impairment,
- Curriculum design demands reformation of National Curriculum (such as, curriculum modification and simplification) to addressing of the needs of all children including the children with disabilities.

Curriculum should be flexible enough, and bestow authority to schoolteachers to simplify the curriculum in a systematic manner to address the required needs of the children, especially in the case of children with special needs.

The access to any of the educational settings should facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream educational provisions. The children who have profound level of multiple disabilities, to some extent can also be included in mainstream education.

## **Learning Environment**

Learning process includes psycho-social and favorable physical environment for learning such as, age appropriate teaching materials, supply of educational materials, teachers' skill to teach learners according to their aptitudes and abilities, appropriate teaching approach, accessible school environment, evaluation system, attitudes of surroundings on education of the disabled. The primary curriculum should include

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## **Educational Settings:**

The present educational settings allowing education of children/people with disabilities in Bangladesh can be described into four broad categories:

### **e. Mainstream Education:**

Regular schooling run by the government, non-government and private sectors, which includes all learners. There are systematic or casual inclusions of children with disabilities, but to a very nominal extent.

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Education through home tutors (itinerant teachers) especially for the multiple and profound level of intellectual disabilities. However, there is no systematic process to this approach in the country as yet. In most cases, these are being organized by individual and isolated initiatives. There is a serious need to extend this type of educational support extensively, including in rural areas, through developing the appropriate skills of local teachers.

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The access to any of the educational settings should facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream educational provisions. The children who have profound level of multiple disabilities, to some extent can also be included in mainstream education.

## Learning Environment

Learning process includes psycho-social and favorable physical environment for learning such as, age appropriate teaching materials, supply of educational materials, teachers' skill to teach learners according to their aptitudes and abilities, appropriate teaching approach, accessible school environment, evaluation system, attitudes of surroundings on education of the disabled. The primary curriculum should include pre-vocational and interactive societal activities for developing the children in order to attain sustainable development of learners with disabilities.

## Outcomes

Education is for comparatively permanent and positive change in behavior. The outcome of primary education for any type of setting requires acquiring competencies of basic education.

Mastering competencies- the ultimate achievement of successful completion of primary education will include functional literacy (reading, writing, speaking, numeracy and comprehending in functional level), life skills (skills on fine motor and gross motor activities for daily life) and activities of daily living (such as mobility, sign language, alternative communication, personal management etc.) for all children including disabled learners. The competencies can be achieved through the following dimensions:

- Cognitive development-  
This reflects the knowledge and comprehension ability of children with disabilities through which they will be able to cope with the environment for further development.
- Personal development-  
This includes the psychological development, attitudes and values (both self and others towards disability), moral development of all children including children with disabilities.
- Social Integration-

This involves equal and active participation of children with disabilities in all spheres of life through interaction, communication and involvement in developmental activities etc.

## Special Focus on Inclusive Education

In a study of this kind, it is helpful to set out the core value of the study team. We subscribe to the guidelines (below) designed by the UNESCO on inclusive education. They inform our recommendations and are potentially useful for improving education of all children, including safeguarding of disability rights.

### **Nine Golden Rules of Inclusive Education Dealing with Children with Special Needs:**

Inclusive Education is an approach, which addresses the needs of all learners in a classroom situation including learners with special needs, and creates an effective classroom environment where the educational needs of all children irrespective of ability, socio-economic or cultural consideration.

Inclusive Education means improving the learning environment, so that all children can learn successfully. The school and the teachers accept that educational environment is flexible and could find ways to meet the needs of all children. Teachers must have knowledge to help all children in the class when they face learning problem. There should be a spontaneous acceptance of learners with disabilities so that they can learn with all other children in the class.

Followings are the nine golden rules of inclusive education:

**1. Including all pupils**

The value of inclusive education to learners comes from mixing and sharing with other children. The teachers need to encourage this to happen, as experience suggests that children with special needs can become isolated within classes and schools.

**2. Communication**

Communication is central to teaching. Teachers need to communicate with the children, the children with the teachers and others. People usually send messages by talking. But this is not only the way we have of communicating. The teachers need to make their communication very clear when teaching. All learners are different, some learn best by seeing, other by hearing or doing. A good communicator always uses various channels or ways to communicate and repeats essential contents by using different learning activities in the classroom and elsewhere.

**3. Managing classrooms**

The layout of classrooms can help or hinder children's learning.

**4. Lesson planning**

Lesson planning makes the teaching more effective. When planning a lesson, think of the outcomes you are setting for the class as a whole, and then for certain individual pupils.

**5. Individual plans**

Every child is an individual. Hence teachers need to bear in the mind individual children's needs when planning their lessons.

**6. Individual help**

By definition, children with special needs need support. They will therefore benefit more if the teaching is directed towards addressing their particular needs.

**7. Assistive aids**

Children's difficulties can sometimes be overcome by using special aids and equipments to overcome their particular impairments.

**8. Managing behavior**

Some pupils can be disruptive in class. But children need to learn to behave in socially acceptable ways.

**9. Working together**

Teachers should not be expected to work only on their own.

(Adapted from Understanding and Responding to the Children's Needs of Inclusive Classroom, UNESCO,2001)

### 3. Study Design

---

#### The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Review and analyze the current situation and policy environment for the education of children with disabilities in Bangladesh.
- Review the best practices related to education of children with disabilities.
- Suggest policy options for Bangladesh for inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education.
- Develop a commentary for policy development to facilitate education of children with disabilities in Bangladesh.

#### Study period:

The stipulated period of the study was during September 2001 – February 2002 and has been completed within the time frame.

#### Study team:

The study team consisted of 7 members with adequate background in disability issues and research. The members are:

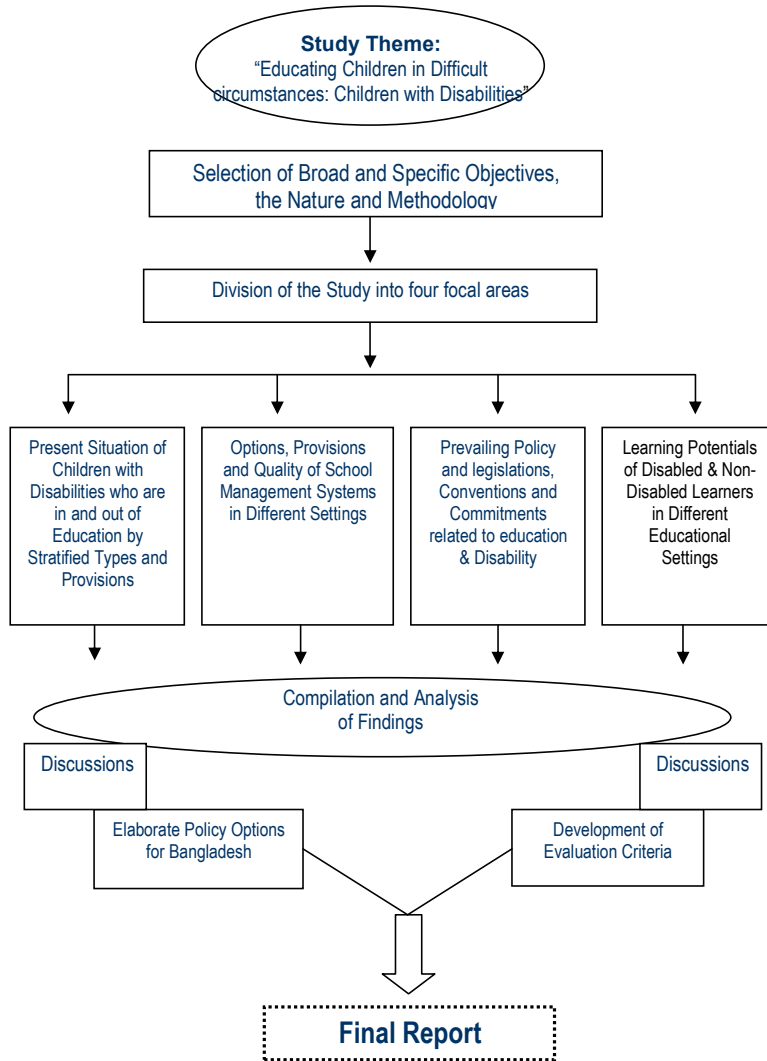
- |                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Mr. A.H.M.Noman Khan       | Principal Researcher |
| ▪ Mr. Monsur Ahmed Chowdhury | Research Team Member |
| ▪ Mr. Khandakar Jahurul Alam | do                   |
| ▪ Dr. Azharul Islam          | do                   |
| ▪ Mr. Mohammad Tariq Ahsan   | do                   |
| ▪ Dr. Nafeesur Rahman        | do                   |
| ▪ Mr. Nazmul Bari            | do                   |

#### Approach and Methodology:

The study has been conducted in different phases and on different aspects specified in the terms of reference. Based on the objectives and requirement, the study was split into four broad focal areas, which are:

1. Children with disabilities in educational situations.
2. Options, provisions and operational management in educational environment.
3. Assessment of prevailing education policy and Legislations.
4. Educational Learning Performance of children with disabilities.

**Study Design:**



## Methodology:

Appropriate methodologies have been adopted to extract the maximum possible range of information within the stipulated framework and set timelines. Surveys have been conducted, software for data input and analysis has been developed, literature, existing documents, available statistical data has been reviewed and analyzed. Series of consultations have been held with key informants, including government representatives, children with disabilities, their parents, education authorities, teachers, SMC members, NGO representatives etc. Discussions were held in terms of interviews, focus group discussions and PRA sessions.

Case studies have also been collected to further enrich the findings and support the analysis. The analysis of the findings was done on the basis of both quantitative and qualitative information. For the sake of comparison, existing policies and practices in other neighboring countries were also consulted. The details of the methodologies that were applied for the study are described as follows:

## Selection of study location:

A total of 12 districts, 2 from each of the 6 administrative divisions have been considered for information collection. The districts were selected considering the divisional head quarter district and one remote district under each division. The selected districts are:

Division	Districts	
Dhaka	Dhaka	Faridpur
Chittagong	Chittagong	Bandarban
Khulna	Khulna	Jhenaidah
Barisal	Barisal	Borguna
Rajshahi	Rajshahi	Bogra
Sylhet	Sylhet	Moulvibazar

## Information collection from field:

Data has been collected from 360 respondents (all children with disabilities) from the said 12 districts, (30 from each district) through a pre-set questionnaire (containing both close

District	Organization	District	Organization
Dhaka	Adesh	Faridpur	FAVH
Chittagong	YPSA	Bandarban	PASDO
Khulna	Annanna	Jhenaidah	AID
Barisal	CSID	Borguna	SSDP
Rajshahi	GJSSS	Bogra	GBS
Sylhet	CSID	Moulvibazar	CSID

and open-ended questions), which was duly field-tested. A total of 12 trained disability workers from 10 development organizations concerning disability issues were involved in the process.

## Selection of Respondents:

For selection of respondents a set of pre-set criteria had been developed. The criteria are as follows:

- A proportionate balance between all different types of disabilities
- An equal balance between girls and boys,
- An equal balance between Urban and rural areas,
- An equal balance between served and un-served areas
- Age group from 6-18 years
- The selections from the served areas have been made using stratified sampling methods keeping in mind the above criteria, based on the information record of the relevant organizations.
- The selection of respondents from un-served areas has been made using key informant survey methods keeping in mind the above criteria.

Served areas are those, where disability related awareness raising, counseling, therapeutic and/or rehabilitation services etc. are being provided, for at least one year by a development organization, who has the required capacity and appropriately trained personnel to carry out the job.

## Interviews:

Interviews have been made by the study team members with people concerned with primary education and education of disabled learners, members of school management committees, local elite etc. Interviews have been made following a pre-set guideline covering all the six divisions.

	Category of stakeholders interviewed	Number
1	Government Education related Officials	21
2	Government Social Services Officials	18
3	School teachers (mainstream / regular schools)	48
4	School teachers (integrated / special schools)	05
5	School management committee members	17
6	PTI administrators / instructors	08
7	Parents/Guardians	42
8	Community/political/religious/local leaders	18
9	Community/political/religious/local leaders (FGD Sessions)	48
10	Community people (as participants) in 3 PRA Exercises	128
	<b>Total interviewees</b>	<b>353</b>

### **Focus group discussion:**

Focus Group Discussions have been held in three amongst the twelve districts. These were participated by community people, schoolteachers, parents of disabled children, local elite etc. The study team members facilitated the FGD sessions, where the situation of disabled children, in and out of education, has been discussed. People's attitudes, prevailing scopes, limitations, possibilities and potentialities etc were highlighted in the FGD sessions.

### **Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA):**

PRA exercises have been conducted in three districts, of which two were in served areas and the other in an un-served area. Community people from all walks of life participated in these sessions, which were facilitated by the study team members. Common people's perceptions, aspirations, attitudes, prevailing scopes, limitations, barriers, problems, possibilities, potentialities and solutions to the prevailing problems regarding education of children with disabilities were highlighted in these sessions.

### **Collection of case studies:**

Case studies have been collected focusing on children with disabilities both in and out of education, reflecting both successful and failure cases. The information collectors have recorded 15 case studies from 10 districts. A few of the cases have been documented in video form.

### **Information collection from mainstream education institutions:**

Information has been collected from mainstream education institutes where children with disabilities are studying. Efforts have been made to find out existing scopes of provisions, demand of educational opportunities, and to draw an estimate on the children with disabilities who are out of education. Information has also been collected from school authorities, concerned development players and government officials involved in education.

### **Analysis of Secondary Literature**

Available documents and records have been collected, studied and analyzed by the review team. The documents are like National Acts on Education, National Educational Policies, National and International commitments and conventions on education, National Budget documents, Government regulations for concerned ministries related to education, concept paper of alternative approaches presently

being offered, theoretical foundations of educational services, documents of School Management System etc. Relevant documents of other neighboring countries have also been compared. The results of the literature review are shown in chapter 4.



## **Learning performances and achievement test**

Aptitude/achievement test has been applied in selected educational institutions on children both with and without disabilities. A set of recognized tools were used for the achievement test. Documents from available records of the educational institutions were consulted and analyzed. A total of 130 children along with 30 children with disabilities have been covered under the learning performance test. The findings have been analyzed based on the study requirement.

### **Limitations:**

- The first and foremost limitation of the study was the sudden demise of Dr. Nirafat Anam, who passed away on the 27th of August 2001. Dr. Anam was proposed as the Principal Researcher of the study team in the original proposal submitted by CSID to ESTEEM. During the study, at every step, the team missed the keen observation skills, depth of knowledge on the subject, thoughtful analytical skills, informed guidance and leadership of this revered colleague.
- Secondly, considering the timeframe allotted to complete the study, the only period of time that was available to the team members to go out to the fields for collection of primary data from schools in terms of aptitude tests and interviews, coincided with vacations in most of the schools across the country. This prevented the study team, in some of the sample areas, to observe and interview the disabled children in their own classroom settings.
- Thirdly, the location of the PRA sessions conducted in the un-served area was found to be a blend of both urban and rural situations, without having the classical characteristics of either. This locality has remained un-served not only in the context of disability, but has been left out of any development initiatives overall. Moreover, the presence of the seaport in its vicinity has opened up petty employment and income earning opportunities to even uneducated people and people with very little education. This has resulted in the people's lack of initiatives to invest in their children's education. As a result, the disinterest expressed by the people to further their children's education, may not be a proper representation of the nationwide un-served area scenario.
- As part of the secondary literature review, the team had access to the policy and legislation related documents of the neighboring countries. However, no document had mentioned the problems arising out of and the context prevailing in the field level, based upon and in order to mitigate which, such policy and legislative Acts were formulated by the respective countries. This information would have helped the team in better analyzing the prevailing country-wide situations in comparison to other neighboring countries.
- In the absence of a recognized standardized screening procedure in the country, many organizations working in the field of disability tend to apply their own methods to identify children (and people) with disabilities. In the course of this study however, in all the twelve districts, one uniform procedure has been followed, which has been prepared by the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), and is currently in practice by close to 150 organizations working in both urban and rural settings in 45 districts across Bangladesh. But this too has not been

standardized as yet, as such, reliability of screening process for identification of children with disabilities may come under scrutiny.

- The largest group of children with disabilities, that teachers have to deal with are, children with learning disabilities. In a country like Bangladesh, where adequate assessment tools are absent, and professionals for assessing such children are scarce, these children are generally categorized within other groups of disabilities. Moreover, organizations working with children with learning disabilities in Bangladesh are either absent, or extremely rare. Where a nation-wide general comparison cannot be made, in spite of recognizing the magnitude of the problem, the research team had to leave out this particular category of disability, and assess their problems under the four broad categories of Disability.
- In the absence of authentic and reliable statistical data on persons with disabilities (including children with disabilities) in the country, the research team found it difficult to make an estimate of the number of children with disabilities across the country, let alone estimate the number of children with disabilities within the school-going age, and their presence (or absence) in education, which could be compared with the findings of this study. As such the team had to rely on the WHO estimate (of 10% of any given population in a country).
- Finally, while the relevant reports had been studied and analyzed as part of secondary literature review, the team did not get an opportunity to meet key members of any of the three Education Commissions formed in 1974, 1988 or 1997.

#### 4. Commitments, Legislation and Reality:

##### An Analysis of Documents

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##### The universal declaration of human rights:

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in which the Education for all is declared in following manner. The General Assembly proclaims that--this universal declaration of human rights, as a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the people of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

In the Declaration, Education issue is particularly mentioned in Article 26 and 27-

#### **Article 26**

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

#### **Article 27**

- (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

#### **UN convention on the rights of the Child (1989):**

Apart from two countries, this convention has been ratified by all the nations of the world. The Convention on the Rights of the child (CRC) highlights the survival, protection, development and participation rights of all children, without exception or exclusion of any children.

One of the basic articles of the CRC is Article 2: Non-discrimination. The CRC emphasizes that education is a basic right for all children on the principle of equal opportunity (Article 28). Education is not a privilege or social service – it is a human right. Equal opportunities do not just happen. They must be created, and require political will!

The CRC also states that the purpose of education is to help develop a child's full potential, tolerance and gender equity are an integral part of such education (Article 29).

By ratifying the CRC in 1992, the Government of Bangladesh is now legally obligated to ensure education for all children, which include children with disabilities.

#### **Salamanca Declaration (1994) World Conference on Special Needs Education:**

This international declaration states "Schools should accommodate all children conditions." Inclusive education was adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education as a principle in

addressing the learning needs of various disadvantaged, marginalized and excluded groups. This includes children with disabilities and gifted children, street and working children, children from ethnic minorities, refugee children and other children marginalized or disadvantaged. In this context “special education needs” refers to all children that experience barriers in equal access and equal participation in education. Special needs education is (since Salamanca) viewed as an integral part of all Education For All (EFA) discussion.

### **Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993):**

These standard rules state that general education authorities are also responsible for the education of children with disabilities, and as such should form an integral part of national education planning curriculum development and school organization.

### **Education For All (EFA): Jomtien (1990)**

The basic idea of inclusion can also be found in the Jomtien Declaration where Education for All (EFA) emphasizes the inherent right of every child to a full cycle of primary education and commitment to a child-centered pedagogy where individual differences are accepted as a challenge and not as a problem. The Jomtien Declaration also emphasizes the need for improvement of the quality of primary education and teacher education, recognizing and respecting the wide diversity of needs and patterns of development among primary school children.

### **Dakar Framework (2000):**

This was again repeated the Notes on the Dakar Framework for Action: “...In order to attract and retain children from marginalized and excluded groups, education systems should respond flexibly – Education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled and responding in a flexible way to the circumstances and needs of all learners...”

The achievements of 10 years since EFA have been assessed and analyzed. The Jomtien goals have not been reached and some of them have been taken on board again in Dakar giving extended time for achieving the goals.

### **E-9 Declaration (2000):**

The declaration on EFA agreed upon during the fourth summit of the Nine High Population Countries (which includes Bangladesh) in February 2000, also highlights as one of the main goals that “all children with special needs will be integrated in mainstream schools.”

## **National Literacy Policy of Bangladesh:**

The National Literacy Policy of Bangladesh states its goal to ensure a 100% literacy rate across the nation by the year 2015.

### **National policy and Strategies**

National policies on Literacy /Non formal Education in the latest Policy Document on Education

In the words of a recent official report by the government's Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED), the non formal education (NFE) system caters to those children who cannot or do not get enrolled in primary schools those who drop out of schools, the adolescents who relapse into illiteracy or those young and adult people who have never benefited from any schooling.

### **The Fifth Five -Year Plan (1997-2002)**

The Five-Year Plan of Bangladesh (1997-2002) states that, "...the purpose of non-formal education, besides empowering the learners with skills related to literacy, numeracy and communications as well as internalizing socio-cultural traits, should extend to such areas as emotional and physical well-being, self-actualization, creative aesthetic expression, basic technological skills and orientation, entrepreneurial traits leadership skills..."

In one of its strategies, The Fifth Five-Year Plan refers to the expansion of non-formal education such that it will be expanded with strengthening the Government Mass Literacy Center, mobilizing NGOs and utilizing the skill development/income generating efforts of the agencies outside the Ministry of Education. NGOs and private organizations will be involved in a larger way for the improvement of the primary education, which will include setting up of Ganobidyalays at the village level."

**National Education Policy (1997)**<sup>1</sup> described *Special Education as in the following manner*

#### Aims and Objectives:

The children unable to fulfill their daily needs and physical and mental problems, need special education, competent remedial measures, and special care nursing. The deaf, blind, physically handicapped, mentally handicapped and the epileptic fall within the purview of special children. In accordance with the degree of disability, they are identified as lightly, moderately and seriously handicapped. The principal aim of special education is to help the handicapped establish themselves in the society through special programs depending on their degree of disability.

#### Strategy:

1. Survey is to make to ascertain the exact number and identify the type and degree of disability of the handicapped of the Bangladesh.

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<sup>1</sup> The Policy was formulated by a Commission headed by Dr Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin in 1997, but was published later in 2000.

2. Coordinated education system has to be introduced for the handicapped in selected schools. The handicapped children develop fast if they are allowed to receive education with normal children.
3. It is necessary to develop the 64 schools under the Social Welfare Directorate where coordinated education program for the blind is in operation. This system can be introduced for the deaf and the dumb as well as for the mentally and physically handicapped people.
4. Coordinated education program has to be introduced in primary schools at district thana levels for the deaf and blind and mentally and physically handicapped people.
5. It is necessary to develop the existing Government and non-government primary schools for the handicapped immediately.
6. It is necessary to set up schools for special education according to the degree of disability of the handicapped.
7. Training college / institute has to be set up for teachers of schools for the handicapped.
8. In order to create knowledge and awareness about the handicapped, subjects related to the handicapped should be included in the curriculum from the primary age of education.
9. Alternative curriculum has to be followed for those handicapped students who are unable to study one or more subjects due to disability.
10. Equal opportunity for service has to be ensured for the deserving handicapped, they also deserve some special consideration.
11. Arrangements have to be made to supply necessary education materials for the handicapped learners free of cost or at a low price.
12. In order to introduce the proposed coordinated education in general schools, special education and subject relating to the handicapped should be included in the curriculum of Teacher's Training College. This will make it easier for teachers to handicapped learners in the general class.
13. At least one teacher of special education has to be appointed in the schools under the purview of coordinated education program.

*Reflection of Commitments on reality:*

The government of Bangladesh has taken different initiatives and programs to establish the compulsory primary education in light of the "Education For All" movement. However, children with disabilities are almost remaining out of the programs. But as a ratifying country of the Child Rights Convention (1989)<sup>2</sup> the government of Bangladesh is responsible and legally bound to provide educational opportunities equally for all children. The recently ongoing Asia Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993 - 2002) also emphasized on ensuring education for all, which is also absent in the practices in Bangladesh.

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<sup>2</sup> The Government of Bangladesh however ratified the CRC in 1992.

Education is a fundamental human right for all children. It has been a decade since the United Nations declared the "Education for All" in 1990; Bangladesh government too made a declaration on "Education For All" and introduced Compulsory Primary Education through constitutional means.

The Constitution of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh (in Article 17) suggests that Bangladesh needs to initiate a need based compulsory and free education with necessary legal basement. The Constitution offers a uniform, mass oriented and universal system of education, extending free and compulsory education to all children. It has also provided for relating education to the needs of society, producing skilled and motivated citizens to serve the societal needs and removing illiteracy

The most recent Education policy of Bangladesh suggested in its chapter 18 (article 12.1, 12.3) for the provision for Integrated Education along with Special Education provisions depending on the need of children with disabilities. Moreover, in the article 1.12.13 the necessity of including disability issues in teachers' training curriculum was mentioned so that the regular teachers could manage children with disabilities in regular settings.

Recently enacted Bangladesh Disability Act 2001 provides legislative support to ensure education of children with disabilities. The Bangladesh National Policy on Disability 1995 indicated creation of options for proper education of children and people with disabilities.

The EFA 2000 assessment for Asia and the Pacific took place in Bangkok. During the conference, government delegations presented their findings, followed by questions and discussions. The Bangladesh country report was not very strong in general aspects. The report does not mention children with disabilities or other marginalized and excluded children as part of EFA (e.g. street children, refugee children, children born in brothels). Neither does the report offer new visions or strategies to initiate a change for quality education, to become a reality for all children.

The United Nations convened the "Child Rights Convention" (CRC) in 1989 to facilitate equal education for all children. Article 23 of the convention states that children with disabilities have the right to special care and assistance to ensure their fullest possible inclusion in development. As a ratifying country, Bangladesh is obligated both nationally and internationally for the proper implementation of the CRC.

The Salamanca "World Conference on Special needs" declared "Education for All" (EFA) in 1994 considering the fact that a large number of people including people with disabilities were out of education, not even acquiring basic education. The conference was participated by representatives of 92 countries and 25 international organizations, and the purpose was to evaluate and give a feedback on previous international educational declarations and programs. The Salamanca declaration called for ensuring the equal rights of education for all considering the child's individualities. The declaration also suggested that children with special needs should have the right to be enrolled in regular schools, and that cost effective, child centered education systems should be initiated.

Rights issues linked with Education for All campaign. The Dakar Framework for Action has called for a commitment to the achievement of education for all (EFA) goals and targets for every citizen and for every society. It has further committed to ensuring that all children have access to complete, free and compulsory education of good quality by 2015.

The discussion above<sup>3</sup> concludes a common platform of goals to reach educational targets. Bangladesh is far behind from the platform of Education it wanted to reach. Though the literacy rate is increasing day by day, the quality of education is falling behind. The causes of failure were not identified much. The enrollment in primary education is satisfactory but the drop out rate is very high in real sense, which is not found in papers. Another crucial failure is absence of planning to involve people with disabilities in education. The people with disabilities always added a large number in illiteracy percentage in our country. Some researches were conducted to draw the disability situation in Bangladesh through some non-government organizations. One such study on Disaster and Disability<sup>4</sup> issues found that only 17% (the largest proportion) of people with disabilities attended free primary education and 1% went for non-formal education (during their childhood) and a large number (76%) did not get access to any kind of education. Another study on Women and Adolescent girls<sup>5</sup> with disabilities reflects that only 3.75% girls with disabilities have proceeded on to acquire education at the university level. A massive 64% (average figures of girls and women with disabilities combined) dropout rate occurs from primary to secondary level. So, it can be easily seen that among girls and women with disabilities, in an average 80% (considering the drop out rate) are out of basic education. Amongst the adult women under the same study, their enrollment rate in the primary schools were at 21.25%, while that amongst the adolescent girls with disabilities were at 30.67% respectively during their childhood. While this does show a positive trend of increasing enrollment of girl children over time<sup>6</sup>, it could be argued that, this increasing trend did not occur due to any systematically planned initiative, but happened as a result of general and incidental improvement in the overall education system of the country. The situation encountered by this research team during the current study did not encounter any specific changes to this end either. One major cause and the most important one can easily be identified that is lack of sufficient fund flow and distribution of funds in an irrational proportion. It is creating both physical and qualitative (as, skill development of teachers) incapacity to enroll persons with disabilities in education. The study on women and adolescent girls with disabilities mentioned above also reflects the education facilities and the economic condition of persons with disabilities in our country. According to the study findings, most of the girls and women with disabilities who are in education attend in formal educational settings due to provision of free primary education. The second highest number of learners attends in non-formal education because of the low cost, flexible environment, convenient time, relaxation of age limit, use of appropriate teaching materials/ curriculum, and continuous assessment system. Enrolment in special education is much lower being expensive, not fully accessible due to far distance and being urban based. Persons with hearing, visual, intellectual and multiple disabilities have to face various problems for enrollment in such education.

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<sup>3</sup> Ahsan M. T and Rahman W. T: A Study on Participatory Education Budget Analysis; Context: Education for the Children with Disabilities, ActionAid Bangladesh, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> *Unveiling Darkness*, A situation analysis of how people with disabilities cope with natural disasters in the coastal areas of Bangladesh, Center for Services and Information on Disability (CISD), 1999.

<sup>5</sup> *The Feminine Dimension of Disability*, A Study on Situation of Adolescent Girls and Women with Disabilities in Bangladesh, Center for Services and Information on Disability (CISD), 2001 (Unpublished)

<sup>6</sup> There has not been any study on the masculine dimension of disability so far, especially focusing on their education. So it was not possible for the research team to compare data with the feminine dimension, nor was it possible to find a trend of their enrollment into education over time. As such, in the case of education of male children, the research team had to confine their findings from this study (ESTEEM-II) only.



The education of the children with disabilities is much more vulnerable than the other learners regarding this situation. A study on situation of street children with disabilities indicates that only 20.45% of street children with disabilities go for government primary schools, 56.81% attend non-formal primary education and again a large quantity (63.33%) do not get any kind of education.

The research findings focus the reflection of gap between the reality and national international commitments and practice of legislations into national education budget. Total cost of basic education project from the year 1992 to 2000 is 191,122.6 million taka (104,781.6 million from the Development budget and 86,341 million taka from Revenue Budget). The allocation for the education of children with disabilities is not the part of this amount and the fund allocated for the children with disabilities are much lesser than the amount allocated for basic education.

In the year of 1999-2000, the government of Bangladesh had allocated Tk.1,334 crore at primary and mass education sector. Not a single amount is spent for children with disabilities of that allocation. Similarly in the fifth five-year plan primary sector allocation is 68,594.20 million taka, where the percentage of people with disabilities who are 10% of total population is not mentioned.

### **Neighboring Country Practices:**

In Bangladesh the current Literacy Rate is 65.5% where literacy has been defined as reading, writing and simple numeric skills<sup>7</sup>. The Literacy Target is to attain 70% literacy by the end of the year 2002 in order to achieve 100% literacy within the next 10 years. However, this information does not include the education situation of children with disabilities, including budget allocation for this marginalized group of the society. In order to compare with practices existing and/or adopted in neighboring countries in this subcontinent, a summary of their initiatives are described hereunder.

#### **India**

India is the most important neighboring country for Bangladesh considering the geographical, socio-economic and anthropological viewpoints. The educational situation of India is a little better than that in Bangladesh, though the literacy is 57.7% (1997). India defined literacy as "A person is literate if he or she can read and write with understanding in any language." The education situation of children with disabilities in India is in a development stage. The steps taken by their government for ensuring education of the children with disabilities are:

**Acceptance in the Constitution:** The state policy regarding right to work in case of disablement is enshrined in the Directive Principle under Section 41 of the Constitution of India. It states that "States shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision of securing the right to work, to education and public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved wants."

As regard to education, Article 45 of the Indian constitution on the Directive Principles of State Policy states that "...the State is to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete

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<sup>7</sup> Three years of primary education and literacy course of DNFE are used for calculation of a literate person

the age of fourteen years". The persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 goes a step further and desires provision of free education to children with disabilities till the age of 18 years. Thus the Constitution of India has duly recognized provision of education to all children including those with disabilities, and made the policies flexible when they concerned children with disabilities.

**National Policy on education (1986)** of India ensures equal educational opportunities for the children with disabilities by stating the objectives as, "...to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence." It envisages that "whatever it is feasible the education of children with motor handicaps and other mild handicaps will be common with that of others."

**The plan of action 1986** also stresses that "...the education of children with disabilities in special school is very costly, it will be ensured that only those children whose needs cannot be met in common schools be enrolled in special schools. Once they acquire communication skills and study skills they will be integrated in common schools." The Baharul Islam committee on legislation for persons with disability in 1988 mentioned that, "...the State should endeavor to provide free Universal elementary education to children with physical and mental disabilities."

Central scheme of integrated education for the disabled children (revised 1987, 1989 and 1992) envisages coverage of children with disabilities as well, the Ministry of social Justice and empowerment introduces the scheme. It was a centrally sponsored scheme with 50% financial support to State Government by the Ministry for the purpose. The scheme was liberalized during April 1981 providing for 100% financial support to the State Government in addition to other facilities, such as setting up of assessment room, recourse room and special pay to special teachers.

With the coverage of education of children with disabilities in the National Policy on education during 1986 the scheme was shifted to the Ministry of human resources development. In light of successful experience of this project the scheme was revised further during 1992 to give an opportunity to the NGO's to implement the scheme.

**The District Primary Education Program (DPEP):** The Government of India had presented a successful program to put local communities in charge of education in their area and enhance investments in primary education, popularly known as the District Primary Education Program (DPEP). The DPEP attempts to make an almost complete overhauling of the system of educational planning in the country, and to implement interventions in primary education in a holistic and coordinated fashion. From the year 1995, the education of children with disabilities had also been included as an integral part of this program. Like all other students, the children with disabilities would be enrolled for inclusive education at the primary level in selected districts where DPEP was practiced. The DPEP covered following issues concerning education for children with disabilities:

- Providing all children including children with disabilities, access to primary education, either in a formal system or through non-formal education program.
- Facilitating access of disadvantaged groups such as girls, socially backward communities and children with disabilities.
- Improving effectiveness of education through training of teachers, improvement of learning materials and upgrading of infrastructure facilities.
- Short training of selected primary teachers as regard to imparting education to children with disabilities.

- Appointment of special teachers at district and cluster level for providing support services to class teachers.
- Provision of assistive devices and educational devices to children with disabilities.
- Involvement of experts on disability development in the State Co-ordination committee.
- Orientation of Master trainers at the State and District level in respect to the educational needs of children with disabilities.
- Improving the quality of education through a process of demand creation for better services.

DPEP has proved to become an excellent and bold step towards promotion of Inclusive Education for children with disabilities.

The National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT), a premier institute run under the auspices of the Ministry of Human Resource Development has established the department of special education for promoting the education of persons with disabilities. This department is playing a key role in promotion of integrated education, teachers training and the implementation of district primary education program.

Persons with disability Act 1995 - The Act came into force with effect from 7th February 1996. The Act desires the appropriate Government and local authorities to ensure free education for every child with disabilities till he or she attains the age of 18 years. It also ensures reservation of at least 3% seats in the educational institutes for the children with the disabilities.

### **Pakistan**

Pakistan is our second largest neighbor among the SAARC countries. The literacy rate of Pakistan is 42.7%(1997), and there, a literate person is defined as, "One who could read a newspaper and write a simple letter in any language."

The literacy target of Pakistan is 55% within the year 2003 and 70% within the year 2010. After the United Nations declared the decade of disabled persons, Pakistan allocated a large amount of money in their National Budget for addressing education to develop the living style of persons with disabilities. Pakistan established and rapidly expanded the Federal Government network of special education centers in various parts of the country. In a matter of months in 1985, 46 special education centers had been established in selected parts across the country.

At the same time some national level institutes were also established at Islamabad, such as the National Institute of Special Education (NISE) for man power training, National Institute for the Handicapped (NIH) for early detection, diagnoses, treatment and surgical interventions, a Braille press for reproducing books in a large scale, A Talking Book Center for recording text books and cassettes, speech therapy, Sign language and mobility training opportunities.

The data on special education of Pakistan is as follows<sup>8</sup>:

	Hearing Impaired	Mentally Retard	Physically Handicapped	Visually Impaired	Multiple Disabled	Total
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<sup>8</sup> Directory, Special Education and Welfare Services for Disabled Persons, National Institute of Special Education, Islamabad, 1994

<b>No. of Centers</b>	79	37	42	62	62	282
<b>No. of Children</b>	8057	2711	1447	2209	4100	18524
<b>No. of Teachers</b>	808	279	189	232	373	1981

The National Institute of Special Education started to function as a Board of Examination for class five for Federal Special Education Centers. The purpose was to create a common curriculum, syllabus and teaching method.

The Curriculum Wing of the Ministry of Education of Pakistan was approached for exploring the avenues of modifying the curriculum and syllabus of regular schools to suit the needs of the children with special needs. The Ministry was convinced to do so. Then contact was made with some heads of regular schools in Islamabad through the Federal Directorate of Education to evaluate the attitudes towards mainstreaming their education. The response was positive in general, and on the basis of initial positive responses the training of head teachers was conducted. Curriculum at the primary level had been modified on the basis of types of disability. Those selected schools were developed as models for others.

## Nepal

Nepal is one of the SAARC countries having 21 million people. The literacy rate of Nepal is 44.8% (1997). The literacy target of Nepal is to raise literacy rate to 70% (age 6+) by the end of their Ninth Development Plan (2002), and also to reduce the gender gap in literacy rate from 30% to 20%. Nepal's first attempt towards inclusion of children with disabilities into education dates back to the early 60s, with the inclusion of some students with visual impairment in the regular classroom setting. In the early 70s the Special Education Council was established to coordinate special education programs in the country.

The implementation of the Basic and primary Education Plan (1991-2001) on 1992, resulting into the initiation of the National Special Education Program in 1992-93, marked a shift in approach to special needs education. The concept of resource room and resource teacher was introduced in 1993 by implementing the special education program in five to seven administrative districts. The program has spread across 23 districts now covering disability areas like mental retardation, visual impairment and hearing impairment, with the resource room and resource teacher concept introduced to include children with disabilities into regular education.

The faculty of education and some NGO's were jointly running teachers training programs for educating children with disabilities till 1990 with support from the Special Education Council. But assistance from the Council suddenly stopped. Then in 1993 the Ministry of Education (with financial and technical assistance from DANIDA) included a special education unit in the Basic Primary Education Program with a broad coverage (aiming to cover all districts of Nepal). This initiative established the right of schooling for all children in Nepal. Nepal is also doing well in sign language development. As a new member in the field of disability development Nepal is moving forward with a positive motion. Financial support from DANIDA helped them to move forward in this arena.

## Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is a country of around 80 million people. Many activities are run by NGO's for the education and development of people with disabilities. The Government had limited participation in this regard a few years back. But very recently the government has started an integrated education program for the children with disabilities. The Government has recently set up a separate Ministry to deal with the aspects of Social Services. This is an indication of the Government's increasing interest in the issues of persons with disabilities.

In 1996 the Government of Sri Lanka approved the legislation for the protection of persons with disabilities and also set up the National Council to implement the legal and other requirements under the Act. The Council enjoys both administrative and financial power. The education related activities of the Council are developing appropriate teaching aids and materials, organizing regular teaching courses for staffs, establishing vocational training centers, developing services for pre-school children, and inter changing information amongst Government agencies etc.

The activities reflect that Sri Lanka is in the primary stage of educational development of children with disabilities, though the country is much more advanced considering the literacy rate. It can be easily noted that the budget allocation for the education of persons with disabilities is currently very poor. But it can be expected that the situation will improve very rapidly as the Government of Sri Lanka is showing a keen interest now a days.

## 5. Major Findings

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This section reflects the major findings of the study gained through different interventions like data collection through questionnaire, PRA exercises, focus group discussions, discussions with individuals, secondary literature review and analysis, primary achievement tests etc. The detail information is in other sections, which carries analysis and comments. Some of the major observations are as follows:

### Enrollment in education:

- Only 11% of the children with disabilities had received some form of education. 8% of the children with disabilities are currently enrolled in some form of educational set up. The remaining 3% have either completed primary education, or have dropped out.
- Children with disabilities that had dropped out from education were mainly because of an unfriendly attitude and situation prevailing both at educational settings and at home. Failure to achieve expected results had also caused many to lose confidence and drop out from schools.

- The enrollment rate varied in served and un-served areas. In the served areas, where adequately trained workers were working for a period of at least over a year, providing required therapeutic support, combined with adequate counseling to children, their parents, and adjoining schools within the locality, enrollment was higher (18%) in comparison to the lower (4%) rate in the un-served areas.
- Among the children with disabilities, boys were enrolled more than girls at a ratio of 56:44.
- Children with disabilities were marginally more in education in urban areas compared to rural areas.
- 74% of the respondents among those that are currently not enrolled in any form of educational settings, expressed a keen interest to receive education.
- 68% of the enrolled children with disabilities were in primary schools (either run by the government or in the private sector). This was followed by pre-primary educational settings at 15%.
- Among the enrolled children, 48% were mainly seeking formal education. 23% were in integrated schools, 15% in special education and a mere 5% were in inclusive education.
- Among the enrolled children with mild and moderate disabilities 79% are enrolled in formal educational settings, while amongst those with severe and profound disabilities, 83% are enrolled in special education.
- Among the enrolled children, 55% are children with physical disabilities. The children with visual impairments constituted 13%. Children with Hearing and speech impairments were 12% followed by the children with intellectual disabilities at 10%.

#### **Financing education of children with disabilities:**

- Level of family income has not influenced enrollment significantly, but was seen to be marginally lower in the lower income group. Rather families with far higher level of income were happy to confine their children, especially girls with disabilities, at home fearing stigmatization from other children and teachers at school, and social disgrace.
- In 65% cases, the family members were mainly covering the educational expenses for the children. Such expenses of 20% of the respondents were being supported by the government, and followed by different organizations at 13%.
- In the urban areas, parents mentioned special schools being extremely expensive. It becomes very difficult for a large section of the families to bear such costs. Special schools were virtually non-existent in the rural areas.

#### **While inside the schools:**

- Children with disabilities expressed their satisfaction mostly in the schools that had teachers with previous experience in teaching such children with disabilities. The peer students in these schools also exhibited better cooperation towards children with disabilities in comparison to other schools.
- The school structures, in most cases, are not mobility-friendly, for the children with physical disabilities and visual impairments.
- A lack of assistive devices for both mobility and communication, and also a lack of classroom adaptations were acting as major barriers for children with disabilities. For 83% of the children with disabilities who required adaptations of some sort, none were brought forth at all.
- Braille books were not available, even though the Government has a Braille press and a policy to provide free primary level books in Braille to children with visual impairments.
- Although there is a provision to provide sighted writers for children with visual impairments to participate in examinations, and the respective class teacher has the responsibility to arrange for a writer, in most of the cases the teacher finds it extremely difficult to find one.
- As there is currently no common sign language in Bangla, communication is difficult for children with hearing and speech impairments. Besides, the teachers also have no skills on communicating with these children in most cases. There is also no support with regard to speech therapy and assistive devices, including hearing aids.
- Among all the major disabilities the educational situation of the children with intellectual disabilities appeared to be among the worst.

#### **Learning performances:**

- Regarding learning performances, non-disabled learners are higher in most subjects (with a 78% average in class I, II and III) than the children with disabilities. Amongst these children, those visual impairments fared the best (71%). This group was closely followed by the group of children with hearing and speech impairments (70%), but the children with intellectual disabilities were far below (32%). The children with physical disabilities were considered as intellectually sound, and so were recorded along with the non-disabled group. The children with multiple disabilities were not found in the tests applied in the different educational settings.
- In all types of disabilities, the children with mild degrees fared the best. Among the group of children with intellectual disabilities, the scores decreased remarkably (and not proportionately as in other groups) to the increased level of their disability.
- Assistive devices and early diagnosis played an important role in educational achievements in the case of the children with visual and hearing impairments.

**Attitudes and awareness:**

- 33% of the peer learners are exhibiting unfriendly attitude. The community and teachers are exhibiting a similar negative attitude at 14% and 12% respectively.
- 73% of the children with disabilities faced problems while enrolling into educational institutes. The parents had found it extremely difficult to convince the school authorities in most cases for allowing scopes to enroll their children.
- As the government-integrated schools are residential, the scope for enrollment is very limited. This is even worse for girls with disabilities, which was evident from the interviews with parents of children with disabilities.
- The curriculum is not flexible and humane enough, that could promote inclusion of all children, especially those with special needs into education.
- The primary schoolteachers in general do not have even the minimally required level of knowledge and skills on disability concerned issues. The teachers training curriculum of PTI do not cover areas of disability-concerned issues. Very surprisingly a chapter of the PTI training curriculum (Educational Psychology) indicates a very negative notion towards learners with disabilities.

**At the policy level:**

- Existing policies related to education and disability were found to be contradictory to each other. Appropriate policy formulation and adaptation is required to overcome such barriers.
- The concerned people involved in education are not adequately informed on the situation of children with disabilities. In most cases, there are misconceptions on disability issues. District primary education officers are not at all aware about the ongoing education programs and set-ups of learners with disabilities.
- The school management policy does not promote inclusion of learners with disabilities into the schools; rather a negative attitude exists in case of such inclusion.
- While an inclusive environment in the mainstream education is being suggested as the best possible option for children with disabilities, it is recognized that, many of these children, especially those with profound degrees, may need to be enrolled in integrated and/or special education setups. However, for most of the children with moderate to profound level of intellectual disabilities, a partial inclusion could be expected and might be possible. As a complementary system to the mainstream education, special education and integrated education should be designed such that, they prepare children gradually to pave the way for including them into the mainstream education system.



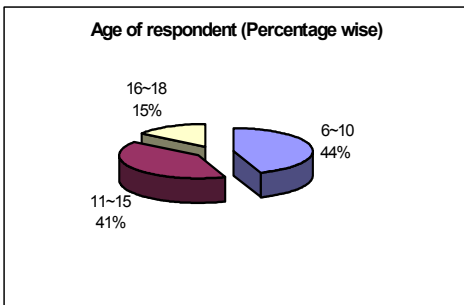
## 6. Analysis and Interpretation

### **Basis:**

The following analysis have been developed based on the findings of data and information collected through formats, participatory rapid appraisal, focus group discussions, interviews and study of secondary sources of information. Data were collected from both served and un-served areas. The study took into consideration children with disabilities of school going age. Though the primary education age group is between six to eleven, it is seen that children with disabilities, due to delayed education and other barriers, are studying at primary education level up to an age of even eighteen years. So in this study, the age range was considered from six to eighteen years.

Data were collected on 360 children; all had a disability of some or other type. The children with disabilities were asked to provide information on different aspects. The data in this section reflects the actual responses from these children. The non-responses have been left out. In cases where the children with disabilities could not respond, either due to a problem in their communication skills, or due to a profound degree of disability, assistance was taken from a reliable representative of the children, which in most cases were their mothers.

### **Area One: Socio-economic situation of Children with Disabilities**

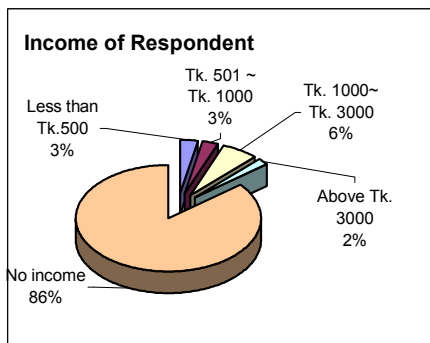


The highest percentage of children with disabilities were found in the age group of 6~10 at 44%, the lowest being in the 16~18 age group at 15%. The majority of 56% are male. 86% of the children are from Muslim families. The lowest are Christians at less than 1%. For 85% of these children the head of the household is their father, and mothers headed 8% of the families. In 91% cases, principle-care givers for the children were the parents (mainly the mothers). The heads of the families are employed at different sectors. 85% of them are self-employed. Access to government service is only 5%. 66%

of the children were residing at rural areas. They had the least scope of access to education mainly because of limited number of schools and attitudinal problems.

Very few (3%) of the children are married. On the one hand, this may look encouraging. But in the practical sense, considering the average practices prevailing in our societies regarding child marriage, it tells another story. It is not due to the positive attitude of the families that they are not married off at such an early age, rather it is difficult for the families to organize marriages for children with disabilities. The parents face this difficulty of arranging marriages for the children with disabilities at a later stage also. This is particularly difficult

for the girls. Parents mentioned that some could be married off after paying an unusually high amount of dowry.

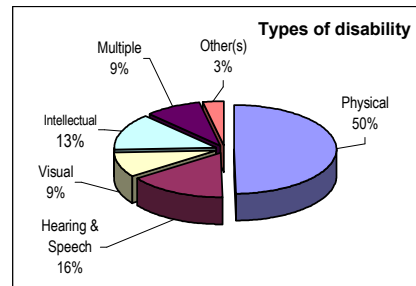


The income of 54% of the families is less than Taka 3,000 per month. The income of the family has a direct relevance with regard to children with disabilities and their education. Poverty refrained many

families to seek for the essential therapeutic and assistive device services required by children with disabilities to enable them to enroll into education. Education facilities for children with disabilities are also not always available at accessible distance. The parents were at times unable to bear that extra transport cost for the children with disabilities to continue education at integrated or special schools.

**Area Two: Types and degrees of disability<sup>9</sup>**

The majority (50%) of children had a physical disability. The lowest (9%) were from the multiple disability groups. Most (40%) of the children in consideration of degrees are in the moderate degree level, closely followed by severe degrees of disability at 37%. The lowest number considering the degrees of disability are in the mild category at 11%.



**Area Three: Children In and out of education**

Only 11% of the children with disabilities had received some form of education. The findings also show that 8% (40 children) of the children with disabilities under the study are currently enrolled in different educational setups. However out of the remaining 320 children that were out of schools, 74%

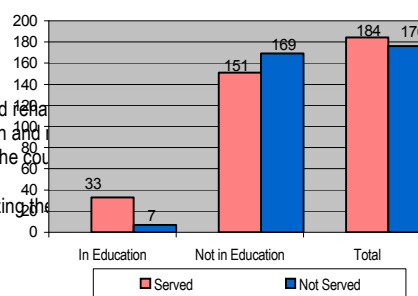
Education in served and un-served areas			
Status	Served area	Un-served area	Total
In education	18%	04%	11%
Not in education	82%	96%	89%

a mere

expressed a keen interest to receive education. Education for these children was not possible due to many factors. These included their physical condition, a lack of required assistive devices, inaccessibility to and inside the educational structures, a lack of interest of the family members, a negative attitude of the schools, a lack of skills amongst schoolteachers to handle these children etc. Where, the curriculum is not flexible enough, where in many cases, schoolteachers lack the basic skills to cater to the needs of even non-disabled children, where there is a lack of appropriate training on varied and effective training methods, and/or appropriate classroom management and also behavior management skills<sup>10</sup>, there is very little scope for proper inclusion of children with special needs (including children with disabilities) in the mainstream education system.

During the PRA exercises, some of the family members had expressed that, while education is termed as “free”, they do have to incur a considerable amount of expenses. Since there is limited scope for employment (or income earning opportunities) for people with disabilities, they fear that by investing into educating their children with disabilities would bring no financial benefit for the family in future.

Education: Served Area Vs Un-served Area



<sup>9</sup> Type and grading of degrees of disabilities was done by trained staff using a system developed by CDD and used extensively in both urban and rural areas. In the absence of a standardized screening system customized for the country's system.

<sup>10</sup> Based on interviews with authorities of three PTI's and analyzing the

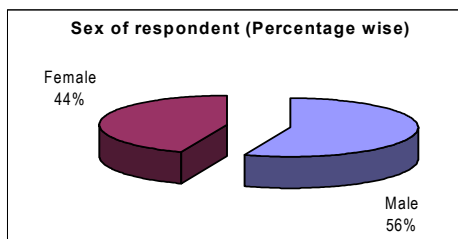
Out of the 40 children with disabilities who had received some form of education, 75% are currently studying in different institutions, 15% had completed some recognized standard of education, but 10% had dropped out. The drop out was mainly caused by a negative attitude expressed towards them at both educational institutions and at home. Teachers were unable to teach due to a lack of the required skills. As they felt teaching the children with disabilities were taking extra time and load, teachers gradually became reluctant. Some of the enrolled children were also not able to cope with the required standard of education at a school. Failure to achieve expected result has caused many children to lose confidence and drop out. The distance of the schools from their homes was also a cause of drop-out or non-attendance.

The 40 children with disabilities were enrolled in different educational standards. The highest (68%) were in primary schools (government and/or private). This was followed by pre-primary educational settings at 15%.

However, the enrollment rate varied in served and un-served areas. In the served areas, where adequately trained workers were working for a period of at least over a year, providing required therapeutic support combined with adequate counseling to children, their parents, and adjoining schools within the locality, enrollment was higher 18% in comparison to the low 4% in un-served areas. Social acceptance was also better, and there was more integration of children in day-to-day social activities. There was a better acceptance amongst peers. Teachers were also found to be tolerant to the additional attention required for the children with disabilities. This resulted in higher retention in schools.

**Area Four: Gender and location**

The difference in terms of enrollment in education between boys (56%) and girls (44%) is not that much significant, and was found similar to the national figure.



It was also found that the enrollment of children with disabilities in education was marginally more in urban areas than rural areas. 12% of the interviewed children with disabilities were in

Location and Education			
Location	CWDs	In education	Percentage
Rural	239	25	10%
Urban	131	15	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>11%</b>

education in the urban areas in comparison to 10% in the rural areas. This could be attributed to the availability of better education scopes and also, to some extent, a higher level of income of families in the urban areas over the rural areas.

#### Area Five: Type of Disability and Education

The children with physical disabilities were the most (55%) in education among the 40 children that have been enrolled in some form of education. This group is followed by the group of children with hearing and speech disabilities at 15%. The children with Visual and Intellectual disabilities make up 13% and 10% enrollment respectively.

Another comparison within each of the individual disability groups shows that 15% of all the children having some form of a visual impairment have received education. For all the children having physical, speech and hearing, and Intellectual disabilities, enrollment stands at 12%, 11% and 8% respectively. This may be attributed to the presence of the 64 integrated schools for the visually impaired children run by the government in all the districts across the country.

Disability-wise enrollment in education		
Disability	In education	Percentage
Physical	22	55%
Visual	5	13%
Speech & Hearing	6	15%
Intellectual	4	10%
Multiple	2	05%
Others	1	03%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Children with physical disabilities

In general, the higher (55%) level of enrollment of the children with physical impairments are mainly because, in spite of their physical disabilities, in most cases, none of their sense organs, especially hearing and sight was affected, and so they could learn at par with other non-disabled children. Their communication skills are also not affected. These allowed them to learn without many additional barriers. From interviews with children, parents, teachers and peers, it was found that, when children have minor grades of physical impairments, often the children themselves do not perceive themselves as facing barriers, nor does the family, the peers, the school authorities perceive them as requiring special attention. As a result, they get included into the schools without much hindrance. Children with amputated or inactive arms however were in difficulty, but they were able to overcome the problem to some extent by using the other arm or their leg.

#### Children with visual impairments

The visual groups were found to be behind in education mainly due to dependency in mobility. For most of them, someone has to take them to educational institutions. It was found to be difficult for a family member to regularly manage time for accompanying the visually impaired children to and from school. Sometimes the attitudes are also not positive. It is also difficult, as they need to use Braille. Braille books were not always

available, even though the Government has a Braille press and a policy to provide free primary level books to children with visual impairments, most of the times the books are not available. Besides, teachers in a regular school are not trained on Braille. As such it is difficult for them to oversee the performance and progress of visually impaired children.

The school structure is also not mobility friendly for the visually impaired. The primary schools, with their limited budgets, cannot afford to bring about major changes. In most cases, the schools have no say in their budgets either.

It is a government directive to provide a sighted writer for a visually impaired child to participate in examinations. It is up to the class teacher to manage the writer, but in most of the cases the teachers found it extremely difficult to find one. This is mainly because, as the rule goes, the sighted writer must be from a junior class. Since all classes in the schools have exams at the same time, also other schools in the vicinity have their examinations at the same time, this writer also has his or her own examination to attend to at the same period of time and so cannot help the child with visual impairment.

#### Children with hearing and speech impairments

It was seen that children with mild speech and hearing impairment were enrolling in the school. A few with moderate to severe impairments were also found enrolled. Their main problem was their inability to communicate with teachers and peers. A majority of them dropped out being unable to participate in the learning activities. As there currently is no commonly used, and universally accepted sign language in Bangla, communication is difficult. Besides the teachers also have no skills on communicating with the children with hearing and speech impairments. There is also no support in regards to speech therapy and assistive devices, including hearing aids. In the urban areas it was found that, only if the parents had the financial capacity, they were sending their children to special schools. On the other hand, in rural areas most of the children were out of education. Besides, listening-friendly environment was absent in all the educational institutes, which were extremely crowded and noisy. Regardless of all the barriers, many parents have taken the maximum effort to enroll their children with speech and hearing impairments into schools.

#### Children with intellectual disabilities

Among all the major disabilities, the educational situation of the intellectually disabled appeared to be among the worst. Mainly the mild and moderate intellectually disabled were in some form of education. One of the major barriers that prevented them from education was their behavioral approach, that are not usually accepted by the their peers and the teachers alike. Their intellectual limitation also acts as a barrier for them to study at the regular standard with other students. There were hardly any available educational institutes that could accommodate the intellectually disabled. In most cases, the teachers did not have the right training or the skills essential to teach them in mainstream educational setting. Special schools for them are also limited and could enroll only a few. This is even worse in the rural context of Bangladesh. Despite all these barriers, many parents were still trying to enroll their children into mainstream or special educational settings. But in most cases these efforts resulted in only placement of the children, with no academic developments. We may have to accept that full inclusion into the mainstream education will not be possible for all children with intellectual disabilities. It has to be done in consideration of their degree of disability and learning abilities. For most of the children with moderate to profound level of intellectual disabilities, only partial inclusion could be expected and might be possible. As a complementary approach to the mainstream education system, special education could



Holy Koran, believing that, this will bring a divine blessing upon their child, and this, in their adulthood, will help them earn a living.

The high percentage into formal education is mainly due to 79% children with physical disability receiving such education.

*Note: Children with cerebral palsy have been considered in the category titled "others" as it is often very difficult to categorize them in any of the other specific types*

Interviews of parents and teachers revealed that, one of the reasons that have seen more children with disabilities in formal school is because it is being offered free of cost. The government also offers integrated education for free. Enrollment into non-formal education is low. A lack of appropriate policy and interest among such institutes is acting as a barrier. Besides it is still a common belief amongst the teachers, community people and parents that, children with disabilities can only be taught at special education centers. 79% of children with mild and moderate disabilities are enrolled in formal educational settings, however a majority (83%) of the children with severe and profound disabilities are enrolled in special education.

### Area Seven: Family Income and Education expenditure

It was found that families with a comparatively lower level of income were sending their children with disabilities to

#### **Children of Diapara, Barisal (From a PRA exercise)**

Diapara is an agricultural prone area, and the entire living (income, expenditure, socio-cultural activities) depends upon agricultural growth. The principal crops grown in the area are two types of paddy (IRRI and Amon), Kheshari (pulses), and different varieties of vegetable. These are produced both for their own consumption, and also as cash crop. Most of the villagers own a little piece of land, but are in the lower income group, and so during planting and harvesting, cannot hire external help. Since most of them own land themselves, they need to tend to their fields and so cannot migrate to other places for the extra income either. In all these activities, children have to help their parents in the activities, both in the fields, and at home. In general practice, the boys are at the fields with their fathers, while the girls are at home helping out their mothers. As a result, during these agricultural events, in most cases, they have to assist in the bread-earning activity first, and then attend school.

Another issue that came out from the exercise was the timing of the school exams. The final exams were being held during November-December, which in no way hampers their household and agricultural activities. When they would require to remain busy, the exams are over, and in most cases they are on holidays. So this would not affect either their education, or their household activities. The problem was in the case of the first term exams, which in most cases are held during middle to late April. On the one hand, the children do not get all their books before the middle or end of February, then by the middle of April, they have to start working either in the fields, or at home for harvesting paddy and vegetable. So they do not have adequate time to prepare for this round of exams, and on top of that cannot afford the time to stay away from the bread-earning work. A similar problem arises during the second term also, which is held around August, which coincides with the Amon (paddy) planting season. So, some children do not appear in these examinations at all, which in turn affects their whole year's performance.

Family Income and Education Income	
	CWDs in education
Less than Tk 3,000	11%
Tk 3,001 ~ Tk 6,000	12%
Tk 6,001 ~ Tk 12,000	10%
<b>Above Tk 12,000</b>	<b>11%</b>

educational institutes almost at par with the families with a higher level of income. During interviews, it was also revealed that, some of the families with high level of income were happy just to

#### **Annual Expenses incurred by an average family with a child in Class-V in a rural setting in Faridpur (as revealed during a PRA exercise)**

School Fees	Free
Books and stationery	1,000.00
Examination fees	45.00
School uniform	700.00
Private tutor@150.00/month	1,800.00
Miscellaneous subscriptions	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,645.00</b>

keep their disabled child at home rather than sending them for education. In spite

of having an economic stability, exposing the child could socially stigmatize the family. Some also feared mis-treatment and abuse from other children and teachers at schools.

Despite primary education declared as 'free', in reality, it is only the schools fees that are for free. Some books are usually supplied from the schools, while the remaining ones need to be bought from the market. Teachers do not adequately guide the students in the classrooms; as a result they require buying additional notebooks, and also the assistance of private tutors at home. In most cases, it is the same schoolteacher, taking more care as a private tutor, than he or she would care in the classroom. In other cases, elder students living within the same community earn their own education expenses supporting the junior children as tutors. In either case, this calls for extra expenses. Children also require school uniforms and stationery around the year. Parents also complained that the school authorities charge examination fees, and demand additional subscriptions at every available chance, including charging additional money during admission, and while distributing books, which are supposed to be free. So the families end up with meeting a fairly large expenditure list.

In 65% of cases, the family members were covering the educational expenses for the children with disabilities in education. In 20% cases, the government, followed by different organizations at 13%, was sponsoring their education.

#### **Area Eight:** Disability, Poverty and Education

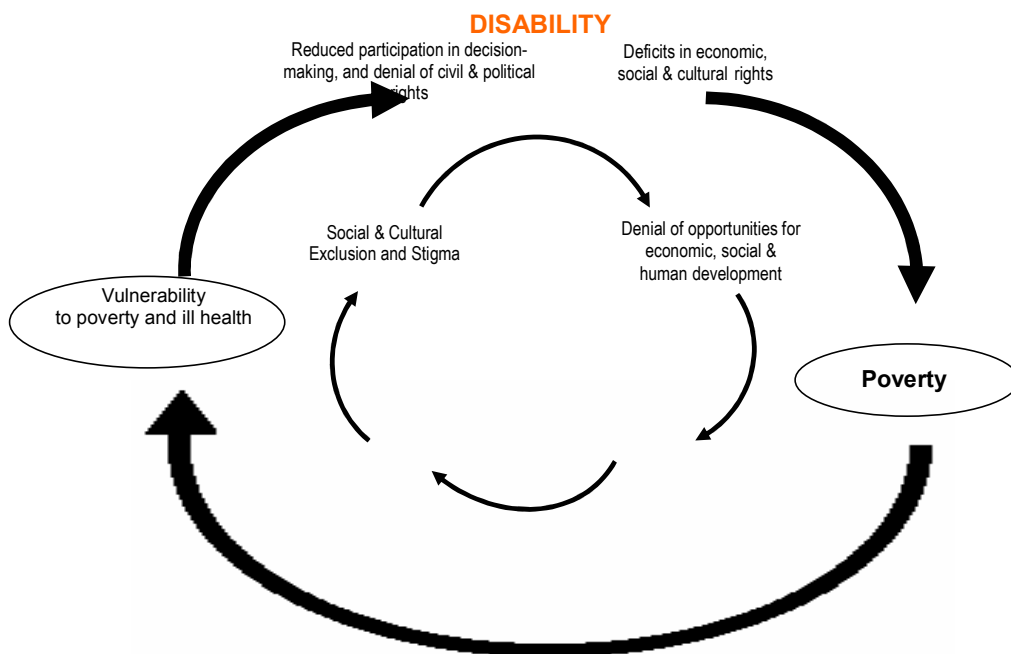
Poverty is both the cause and consequence of disability. Poverty and disability are interrelated to cause vulnerability. In developing countries most of the people have to be engaged in income generating activities from the early years of their life. Even when a child is in school-going age, he/she has to involve into household or income related activities. So, participating in education is considered as luxury to them. In such feeble situation children with disabilities are in much more critical condition considering the issue of participation in education. They are left out of education because the enrollment and continuation in education requires a notable amount of costs and time, which the children with disabilities might not be able to feed back into the family in the future. Recent UNESCO studies suggest that only 1-2% of children with disabilities in developing countries receive an education<sup>11</sup>. This figure reflects the poor condition of educational involvement due to poverty.

Sometimes poverty is also the consequence of disability. Management of disability is giving extra financial pressure to families who have disabled members in their family. Disability and attitudes towards disability is also isolating these children from the societal settings like educational, future job placement etc. This isolation is also throwing children or persons with disabilities back into the poverty cycle.

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<sup>11</sup> *Disability, Poverty and Development*, DFID, 2000





**Figure: Poverty and Disability- a vicious cycle**

(Source: Disability, Poverty and Development, DFID, 2000).

It is agonizing that most of the disabilities are preventable. According to WHO, 20 million women a year suffer disability and long-term complications as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. Moreover, children often become disabled due to malnutrition. Absence of education is often making people less aware of issues causing disabilities, which could easily be preventable. This less awareness is making the people spend more money for lifelong period for managing disability consequences. According to WHO, 70% of visual impairments and 50% of hearing impairments can be preventable or treatable by taking immediate measures in proper time.<sup>12</sup> So, it is necessary to take a total effort considering all issues resulting in disability along with poverty to break the cycle.

**Area Nine:** Attitude towards children with disabilities

<sup>12</sup> *Disability, Poverty and Development*, DFID, 2000.

The areas focused to assess the attitudinal responses towards children with disabilities with regards to education had spotlighted on parents, siblings, teachers, peer learners and community people. The children with disabilities were asked to provide information on the attitudes of the aforementioned groups on the issue of their education. The data reflects the actual responses from the children with disabilities. The non-responses have been left out. It has to be acknowledged that many children with disabilities or their representatives had felt uncomfortable to express the negative attitude or treatment that they had received from other family members or the aforesaid groups of people, about whose attitude towards the children with disabilities were sought.

A family constitutes of different members, amongst which the children with disabilities should also be considered as an equal member. It is of extreme importance that they receive adequate support, motivation and encouragement to receive education, and also for those already enrolled, to continue and complete their education. This support is essential from all members including the parents and siblings. Beyond the family members, the encouraging and positive attitude is also essential from the community members. The education for children with disabilities also requires the support in their respective educational institutes. The positive attitude of school authorities, teachers and essentially the peer

Attitude of parents:	
Special attention	06%
Cooperative attitude:	76%
Normal attitude as like as others:	14%
Attitude not in favor:	04%
Attitude of siblings:	
Special attention:	19%
Cooperative attitude:	61%
Normal attitude as like as others:	13%

#### Why is Shonai in a special school ?

Shonai is a twelve year old girl from Faridpur. Since her birth she cannot see. Her father is a farmer, and has a very little income. They are six brothers and sisters, and with this limited income, she had to suffer from her very early childhood. She is the only child in the family, who is different from others. While her siblings went out to play with their peers, she was never allowed to leave the house.

They live close to a school, and since education was free, all her siblings went to school. They could not afford to buy books, but her mother used to work in a rich man's house in the town nearby. This generous man always gave away the old books of his children to Shonai's mother. She always wanted to go to school too. But her parents always told her that since she was a blind girl, teachers would never take her in. By the time she was ten, two of her younger siblings were in school. She started revolting. So finally her father took her to school one day to talk to the teachers.

This was the first time, in all the years that she could recall, that she had accompanied her father to some place outside her home. Her eldest brother also went along. Even though her siblings were in this school, and the teacher knew every one of them, he never knew about the existence of Shonai.

Her father and brother tried to explain to the teacher how passionately she wanted to enroll into school. But the teacher kept interrupting through the conversation. From the tone in his voice, she could guess that the teacher was gradually getting angry. At one point he stopped her father rudely and said, "Listen you fool, it is good that you have sent all your five children to school. I didn't even know you had this dumb girl. But even my knowing would not help. Do you think I am crazy enough to take her in? Don't you know that there are no rules to admit children like these in schools?"

learners play an influential factor in the education of children with disabilities. The policy and the facilities may exist but if the positive attitude and proper environment is not available, it may deter children with disabilities and their families from enrolling into, and then continuing education. This negative environment may also result in many of the children with disabilities to drop out from schools.

The data reflects positive attitude from the parents, siblings and the teachers. But children with disabilities have to spend most of the time with peer learners in educational settings. The data here has a negative picture as 33% of the peer learners are exhibiting an unfriendly attitude. Where such a large number of peers (about a third of the whole group), a 14% of the community members and a 12% of the teachers are unfriendly, a mere 3% of teachers are proactively paying special attention. This does not describe the situation as learner-friendly for the children with disabilities, but rather calls for immediate interventions to create positive attitudes and environment in the aforesaid groups. However, it should not be expected, nor would it be possible to change the negative setting overnight. Concentrated efforts need to be taken by all concerned actors at all levels to gradually change the situation.

#### Area Ten: Feelings at present education setting

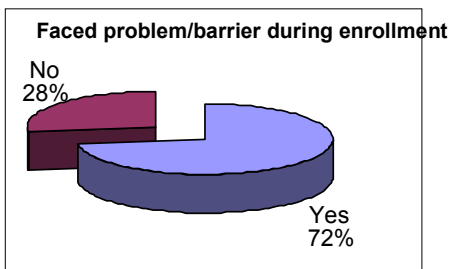
Despite all the barriers, a majority (68%) of the children that are currently in enrolled in various educational settings expressed that they are happy to be involved in academic activities. They feel that this has given them a chance to build a future of which they and their parents could be proud off. If at home, they would have been locked within small boundaries and would not be able to express themselves to others.

The Children with disabilities expressed greater satisfaction mostly in the schools that had teachers with an experience in previously teaching other children with disabilities. The non-disabled children in these schools also exhibited better attitude towards them than in other schools. On the other hand teachers with no previous experience had in some cases misbehaved with the children with disabilities, mostly out of ignorance than intention. It had hurt the feelings of the children with disabilities, but in many cases did not demoralize their determination to acquire education.

In some cases, even if teachers and peers mistreated the children with disabilities at schools they seldom changed educational institutes. 75% of the children with disabilities had never changed their school. This is mainly because of the difficulties of enrollment into other schools and also the fewer numbers of schools that are willing to take them in.

#### Area Eleven: Problem in enrollment

It has not been very easy for the children with disabilities to get enrolled into mainstream schools. In 72% cases, parents faced problems while enrolling their children with disabilities into educational institutes. The parents in most cases had found it extremely difficult to convince the school authorities for allowing scopes to enroll their children. There were also recorded cases where parents and



children with disabilities were disheartened as they were barred from entering into mainstream education. For most of them it was mainly due to ignorance, a negative attitude of the school authorities and fear of not being able to handle them rather than the limitation of abilities among the children with disabilities. Some school authorities also possess fear of repercussion from other parents and students in the school for allowing such children to mingle with the children who have no disabilities. At the same time there is a common belief prevailing amongst the teachers and most of the non-disabled peers alike that children with disabilities can only be educated at special educational institutes.

As the government-integrated schools are residential, the scope for enrollment is very limited. The situation is even worse for girls with disabilities, as opined by parents and guardians. Authorities of such a residential school informed the research team that, a large section of the guardians, after enrolling their children or wards into such institutes are limiting or not maintaining further contact. This reduces family and community ties with the children. The parents also gradually start to exhibit a tendency that the responsibilities of their children lay more on the schools than on themselves. On the other hand, a few of the seats of these schools remained vacant. This was mainly due to the location of the school being at a distance far from the residing villages. Some concerned parents were reluctant to keep children at a faraway place, where they would have limited scope of contact.

The parents mentioned of high costs at special schools available in the urban areas. It becomes very difficult for a large section of the families to bear the expenses. Special schools were virtually non-existent in the rural areas.

### **Suruj Miah, a role model**

Ten years old Suruj Miah is the youngest among four brothers and three sisters, hailing from a rural community adjacent to the district town called Jhenaidah. Before he was born, from her previous experiences, his mother, Khaleda Begum could feel that the pregnancy was going to be complicated. So they kept in close contact with a health center. But could not prevent the complications. Suruj was born on a chilly December morning, almost two months premature. For over two weeks Khaleda could not breast feed her newborn son, moreover, on the third day, he developed pneumonia. 27 days later, he got cured and came home. But Khaleda noticed that he could not move his legs. As he grew up, the legs became stiff. She learnt that their child had been diagnosed with an incurable condition called cerebral palsy.

His father Mintu Miah is an educated person and so is Khaleda. They both understand the needs of education, and believe that education could change the fate of their children. So all his siblings has gone to school. Mintu Miah runs a small restaurant in the town. But the income is not sufficient to meet all the needs of this large family. So when Suruj's elder brothers grew older, they started earning by teaching other children of the locality. As Suruj was growing up, Mintu Miah and Khaleda became desperate to find help, with whatever treatment they could afford.

Fortunately, they came to know about a development organization that had just started working with children who had disabilities in the Jhenaidah town. Mintu Miah took Suruj to them, where they assessed his condition. Luckily they found out that, since Suruj has all along lived an active life, playing around with his siblings, going places with his father, the contractures had not set in too stiffly. They informed Mintu that Suruj would never be able to walk like every other person walks, but with appropriate therapy, and with some assistive devices initially, his condition could improve to a great extent. Mintu had found some hope, and was prepared to move from his village and relocate somewhere in the town so that Suruj would get the therapy regularly. But the organization informed him that they soon would start expanding their program to the nearby rural areas, and Mintu's village was first on the list.

Like his siblings, Suruj also wanted to go to school, but he was falling behind because of age. So he first enrolled into the inclusive school run by this organization. The organization found that, even though he was a very naughty child, he was catching up fast. Soon they realized that he could be included in a regular school. Back in the village, Mintu Miah and his children were well known in the local school. The teachers respected him for his willingness to send all his children to school, and at home guiding his children and helping them out with their studies. So after ten months of inclusive schooling at the organization, when Suruj erectly walked up to the local school in a walking frame with his father, the teachers readily agreed to take him in. Teachers here take a little extra attention, and so he is doing well in his studies. His family members take turns in helping out with his daily exercises, and so his stiffness is also relaxing gradually.

**Other families in the locality who have children with disabilities look up to Suruj now as a role model for their children, and this one case has opened the door for inclusion of many more in the local school.**

**Comparison between Assistive Device Users and Non-users in and out of Education**

**Area Twelve: Use of Assistive Devices**

It was found that 16% of the respondents were using an assistive device of some sort, which included aids for mobility and communication. It has been mentioned earlier that assistive devices were not easily available, especially in the rural communities. These were also expensive, and in most cases, people had to procure them from the large cities. Amongst the users, 14% children were found enrolled in education, while this was a little lower (11%) in non-user children with disabilities. A positive relationship can be derived between early use of assistive devices with academic and social performances. However, for the children that were using assistive devices for mobility purposes, little or no classroom adaptations were acting as a major barrier for their education.

Assistive Device Users	In Education	Not in Education
	14%	86%
Non-users	11%	89%
Total Children	11%	89%

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**Area Thirteen: Classroom and School Adaptations**

A large number of children with disabilities are enrolled in formal education. Many of such children require some or other form of adaptation in the classroom or the school infrastructure as a whole, but at the same time keeping it rather discreet than too obvious, so that it does not disturb the harmony of the school environment. But during the course of this study, the team observed that in most cases little or no adaptation has been made either at the classroom or at the school to facilitate the education of the children with disabilities. This is mainly because of the limitation in knowledge amongst the school authorities on the required adaptations, and also in many cases, due to a scarcity of funds. It has been reported that for 82% of the children with disabilities who would require some adaptation or other, no such adaptations were made at all. Even in the cases of some special schools the environment was mostly not found supportive.

***Learning Performances of Children with Disabilities***

To explore the learning performances of children with disabilities a standardized achievement test, Primary Achievement Test (PAT)<sup>13</sup> was applied to children both with and without disabilities. Available secondary literature has also been analyzed, Interviews were conducted with teachers, school-management authorities, parents and other relevant people and some classroom activities were observed to draw a clear understanding on the learning performances of the children with disabilities.

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<sup>13</sup> Primary Achievement Test (PAT) is a Standardized Achievement Test of Bangladesh for measuring learning performance of pupils of class I, II & III developed by Muhammad Nazmul Haq, Associate Professor of I.E.R.; University of Dhaka, in association with the World Bank in 1994.

The purpose of these interventions were to measure the learning performances of children with disabilities and non-disabled children, comparing the academic abilities, identifying the factors that affect the learning ability etc.

### PAT and its Application in the Study

Primary Achievement Test (PAT) is a standardized achievement test designed to assess students' performances/achievement of essential learning on four subjects i.e., Bangla, Environmental Science, English and Mathematics in the first three grades (class I-III). PAT was practiced through individual verbal type tests (for class I and II) and written multiple-choice test (for class III).

In the ESTEEM Study-2, PAT was to 110 respondents among which 35 Disabled (ND), 25 were Hearing (HI), 25 were Visually Impaired (VI) rest 25 were Intellectually Disabled child with a Multiple Disability was any of those educational settings.

Class	N D	HI	VI	ID	TOTAL
I	10	10	10	10	40
II	05	05	05	05	20
III	20	10	10	10	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>110</b>

Class wise distribution of the respondents.

applied were Non Impaired and the (ID). No found in

Respondents were selected from different educational settings of

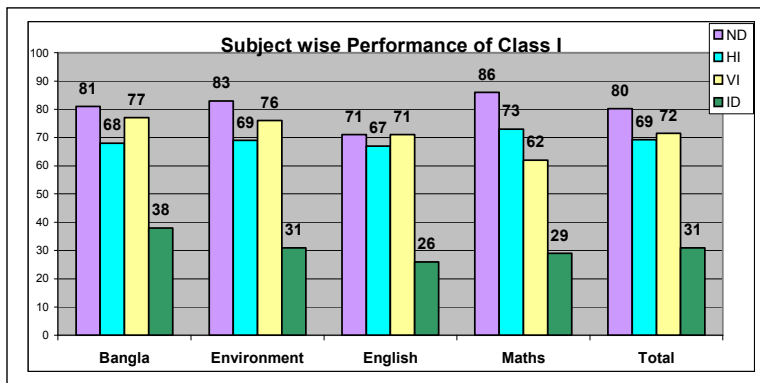
3 different divisions. All the settings were urban based, as there were time constraints. The number of children with different disabilities was equal (25 each). Some NGO schools and special educational settings were selected for this study. While applying the test the degrees of disability of the children were also identified through a commonly used screening guideline or through secondary sources. In cases of children with visual impairments the test items that requires vision were avoided and duly considered during analysis. Total score of each subject achieved by the learners were converted into percentage (%).

randomly 3 districts

### Findings on Learning Performances:

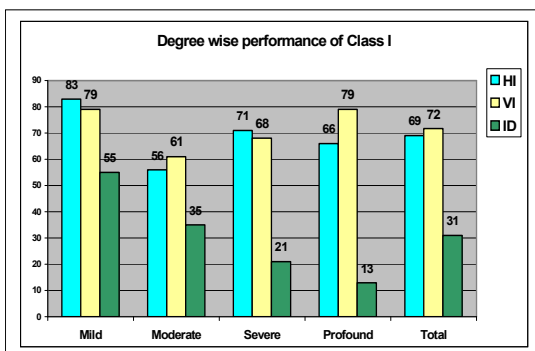
#### Class—I

In class I, the total score of non-disabled learners are 80%. The second is visually impaired (72%). The hearing impaired group is third (69%) while the intellectually disabled group is in the bottom (31%).



The non-disabled group performed almost equal performance in all subjects. They were comparatively weaker in English (71%). The visually impaired groups performed better in comparison to others. However, they were found to be weaker in Mathematics (62%). The schoolteachers, who also reported that the visually impaired learners are comparatively weaker in mathematics, but strong in memorizing, could substantiate this. However, upon observing the classroom activities, the study team believes that, the teacher's lack of appropriate skills and not using proper teaching materials is making most of the concepts abstract and unfamiliar to children with visual impairments; as such, they have no choice other than memorizing it. The hearing-impaired learners showed better performance in Mathematics (73%), but poor in Bangla (68%) and Environment (69%).

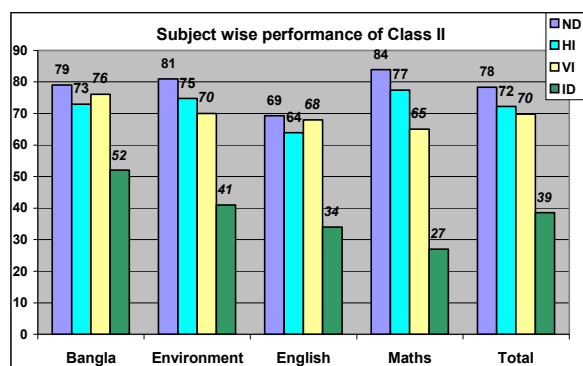
The teachers and parents opined hearing impaired learners are memorizing broad topics. It also found during observation improper teaching approaches inefficient communication skills teachers and parents, and not appropriate visual aids also making the subjects more complex. The children with intellectual disabilities are far in comparison to other groups. are weak in almost all



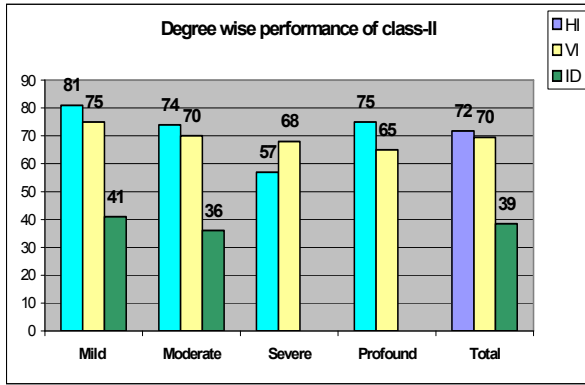
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subjects, and among all they showed a little better performance in Environment (31%) and Bangla (38%) as the topics were comparatively real life oriented. It was revealed by the classroom observation and interview with parents that teaching children with intellectual disabilities is the most difficult job than the other groups. Teachers need skills, proper teaching materials, authority of curriculum modification and simplification to ensure the learning of children with intellectual disabilities, which is almost absent in all educational settings in Bangladesh. The Observation also found that, even the special educational settings are also not playing a sound role for teaching children with intellectual disabilities due to a lack of skilled human resources with a background in the relevant field.

Comparing the degrees of disability and the learning performances it was found that in all the types the children with mild degrees of disability levels fared well. However, in hearing impaired and visually impaired groups, the differences in performances are not much vast. But in the intellectually disabled group, the scores decreased remarkably according to increased level of disability. In the Hearing Impaired group the severe level did well than the profound level. Most of the children with severe hearing-impairment (among those chose for PAT) got early diagnosis and hearing aids,



and this might also play a vital role to give and influence such result. No significant difference was found in learning performances of different educational settings, as all the settings were urban based.



### Class—II

In this class, total score of non-disabled learners are higher (78%). The hearing impaired is the second (72%). Visually impaired students are in the third (70%) and the intellectually disabled got 39%.

The non-disabled groups are in a better position in all subjects. Again they are comparatively weaker in English (69%). The hearing impaired group did slightly better than the visually impaired learners. The subject wise performance gives almost similar picture

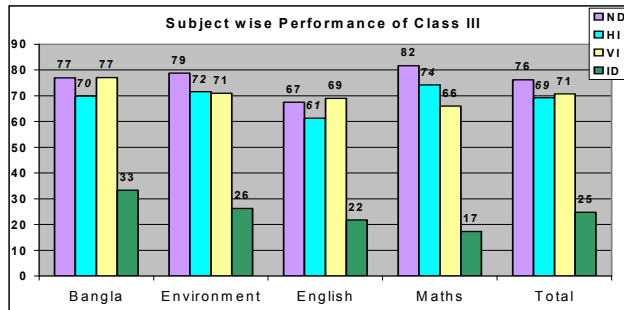
as found in class I.

Again the children with mild degrees of disability performed well. However, the differences in performances of hearing impaired and visually impaired groups are at close range. Only mild and moderate intellectually disabled learners were found in educational settings where PAT was applied. The children with intellectual disabilities were the lowest in position again. In the Hearing Impaired group, the profound level did well than the severe. It was found through interview that the reason behind this better performance could be due to the profound hearing-impaired learners got early diagnosis and intervention. Another reason found meeting with them was that they are doing better in communicating through gestures than the children with other degrees of hearing impairments, as they are not able to produce recognizable speech at all. It is helping their cognitive and social development; which were also reflected in their academic performances.

### Class—III

The class III performance is worse than that in the previous classes. The non-disabled group tops the with 76%, followed by visually impaired group (71%). The hearing impaired group is very close (69%).

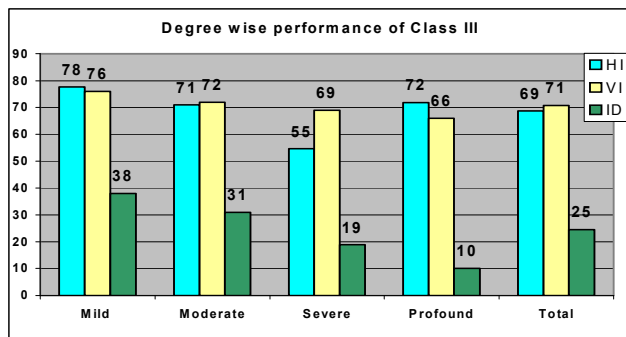
The intellectually disabled group is far behind (25%) in performances of all subjects. In this class, the visually impaired groups got comparatively poor marks in Mathematics (66%), while the non-disabled and hearing impaired got 82% and 74% respectively.



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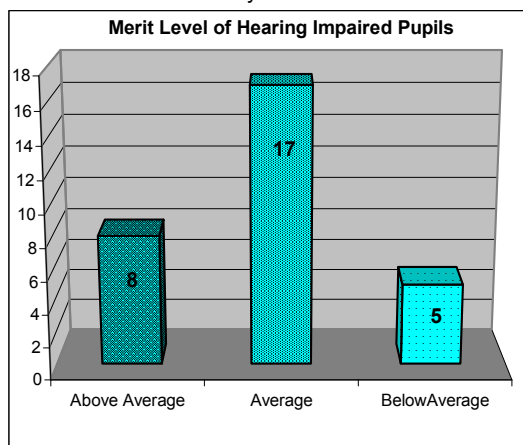


The degree wise performance in class III of visual and hearing impaired groups do not indicate a huge difference. But the downward trend of children with intellectual disabilities in academic performance is continued in this class also.

### **Analysis of secondary literature on academic performance of children with disabilities:**

Very few secondary documents were available on the topic of the learning performances of children with disabilities in the context of Bangladesh. A study on Academic and Social Development of Hearing Impaired learners who casually integrated themselves into mainstream educational settings<sup>14</sup> reflects some information on academic learning performances. The study was conducted on 38 hearing impaired children among whom 30 were collected from the questionnaire and 8 from secondary documents of academic results. It needs to be mentioned that the study reflects only the

situation of Dhaka city.



According to the merit scale of 30 hearing impaired learners, 8 were in the above average level, who placed (1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>) in the class examination. Between one to ten, 17 of them were in average level, i.e. passed all the subjects without any problem, and only 5 of them were in below average level, who had some weakness in one or two academic subjects and failed to get promoted.

Among 8 above average hearing-impaired learners, 7 had profound hearing loss and 1 had severe hearing loss but all of them were diagnosed early and got early intervention. Among the 17 average level pupils, 13 had profound, 3 had severe and 1 had moderate hearing loss respectively.

Among the rest 5 learners who were in below average level, 3 had profound hearing loss and 2 of had severe hearing loss. These numbers show that the degree of hearing loss was not the main factor, which could affect much of academic development. The mentioned study also collected secondary

<sup>14</sup> Anam N. & Ahsan M. Tariq; Academic and Social Integration of Hearing-impaired Pupils into Mainstream Educational Settings; Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, 2000.

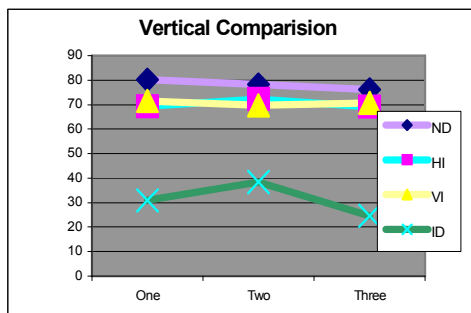
information for Document Analysis of hearing impaired learners of different schools of Dhaka city. For this purpose documents of academic development (Academic Progress Reports) of 8 learners were collected (among which seven were in the primary level and only 1 was in the junior secondary level). Among them 4 were placed within 1<sup>st</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> (3 of them stood first and the other one in the 6<sup>th</sup> position) in the merit list of annual examination. 3 were promoted to the next class regularly passing in all the subjects. Only one student failed to get promoted to the next class.

The distributions of merit show that the most of hearing impaired children were in average merit level and some of them were in above average group and few of them were in below average group. The above findings show that favorable environment; early detection and intervention and little extra support could bring lots of positive change in their academic career.

**Discussion:**

PAT and other sources provide a gross concept on the learning performances of children with disabilities comparing them with the non-disabled learners. The overall academic performance of children with disabilities is satisfactory. But this is due to the socio-economic and educational

background of the children with disabilities, who were chosen as the PAT participants. All of the children with disabilities that were subjects of the PAT had received early intervention and early diagnosis. However, the children with hearing and visual impairments did well, as their cognitive and intellectual development is not much hampered as a result of their disability. The vertical comparison of performances of the children shows that, the score gradually decreases in higher classes. This could be as a result of the increasing complexity of subjects. However, observation showed that the quality of teaching remained as poor, or almost similar in upper classes also, even though the complexity of subjects increased in higher-level classes. Both interviews and observation showed that teacher oriented teaching



approach and a scarcity in using appropriate teaching materials, are two major causes of downward trend of quality of education. This is not only hampering the learning of children with disabilities, but that of the non-disabled learners of Bangladesh also. In such an obstructive situation, it is rather unfair to expect good performance from children with disabilities and compare their performance with non-disabled children.

The findings reflect that there is a strong influence of early use of assistive devices to some groups of disabled learners. The findings also indicate that a favorable environment is essential for the learners with disabilities to build their learning performance. The performance of children with intellectual disabilities and their decreasing scores according to degrees of disabilities indicate the requirements of special support in regular schools, teachers' training and special education and other alternative services where required. The performance of children with disabilities in PAT, document analysis, interview and observation of classes reveal that children with disabilities, in such unfavorable environment, are not much far behind from the non-disabled groups. If all the factors

influencing learning could properly be controlled and presented to the children with disabilities, considering their individual needs, their academic performances would increase considerably, and a notable number of placement in mainstream education could take place gradually all over the country.

### Tang Reng Murong of Bandarban has a language disability

Sixteen years old Tang Reng Murong hails from a hilly rural area under the tribal district of Bandarban, and is the second among four brothers. His father, Rengpu Murong is a landless farmer using indigenous farming techniques (*joom*) on the hills, as many others do in the locality. The only property that they own is a bamboo hut (*machan*), resting on bamboo stilts. The area is highly prone to malaria, but as a preventive measure, these families drink a specially concocted homemade alcoholic drink, the stench exuberating from the body, that keeps mosquitoes away. Young children, who are not old enough to drink alcohol, cling to the mothers, and thereby remain protected.

When Tang was four months old, he contracted high fever. Twenty days later he recovered, but gradually lost the mobility of his left hand and left leg. As he grew older, he could not stand without support, nor could he grasp anything with his left hand. His parents took him to the local (traditional) healer and spent all that they could afford, but no notable improvement came about. The healer read his fortune and professed that, he would walk like other children at the age of seven. But when at the age of seven he could not even stand without support, let alone walk, his father gave up hope and took him to the district hospital. Rengpu learnt that his son had contracted a condition known as Cerebral Palsy. He also learnt that the condition had no cure.

While there are schools in the vicinity, education is not popular amongst children from these communities. The main reason is, while children speak the local language both at home and in every social activity, all the books used in the schools are in Bangla. The teachers, who are mostly not locals, also teach in Bangla. While non-disabled children face this enormous language barrier and cannot cope with this situation, education for children with disabilities is a far cry.

An organization working on disability prevention and rehabilitation in the locality identified Tang two years back. Even though they have started therapy exercises, they feel that Tang's age is a bit too high to expect very positive results. The age is also a major obstacle to bring him under any mainstream education program. Tang has a few friends, but they too dropped out of schools at a very early stage. They help out their parents in agriculture and household chores. Unfortunately, Tang has not learnt any of these skills.

Over the last few years, a few educated Murong people have returned to the community and joined these schools as teachers, and they have started teaching in local dialects. But the books are still in Bangla, and so children still find it difficult to cope with their studies. Prem Reng Murong, one such teacher informed that, about 13 different tribes reside in the four hilly districts in Bangladesh. Everyone has their own languages and there are numerous different dialects. Only a few of such tribes have developed languages in a well established written form (with specific alphabets), while the others use only the spoken form. In his opinion, the Marma Tribe has the best language, which is based on the Burmese alphabets. He also mentioned that, the common perception that non-tribal people hold against them as being intellectually dull, in no way should be generalized. The barriers they face in their sheer access to education have been their largest problem, so it is not unusual that other people would derive at this perception. He understands that, since not all the Tribes have alphabets of their own, it would not be possible to print books for children of all the tribes. But even where there are alphabets, the relevant authorities are not paying attention to this end. Where there are alphabets, if books were printed for the elementary classes in local languages, with a gradual conversion into Bangla in the higher classes, more children would find education interesting, and not a complex barrier that they see it as now.

When asked about scope of education of Tang, he laughed. "You can go ahead and define or classify disability in as many ways you may wish so," he said. "Here we have an additional type, you can call it – mother language disability!"

# PRA analysis from three communities

Village : North Diapara : Shovarampur : Isanagar  
Union : Kashipur : Ombikapur : Isanagar  
Thana : Barisal Sadar : Faridpur Sadar : Chittagong Sadar  
District : Barisal : Faridpur : Chittagong  
Type of program in area : Disability program : Disability program : Un-served area

Total Households covered : 246

Total child population : 606 (within school going age)

Children attending school : 371

CWDs in school-going age: 24 (10 boys + 14 girls)

CWDs attending school : 1 girl (In Barisal, 2 were in schools but now are drop outs, In Faridpur, 25 CWDs of the nearby localities go to 10 different educational institutions at different levels but only one girls from the visited village attends school, at Chittagong no CWDs from the visited area attends school)

Schools in the community : Four primary schools, two maktabas, one high school and only one BRAC NFPE center

## Education related problems of children with disabilities, as identified by the community people:

1. In primary schools, books are not distributed according to need, wheat is not supplied according to the need, educational allowances are not distributed impartially
2. In primary schools, while distributing books and while admitting students, the school authorities charge money
3. Children with disabilities do not have scope for acquiring education
4. School authorities do not want to allow admission of children with disabilities
5. Most of the schools have a severe shortage of teachers.
6. Teachers invent funny ways of measuring age of children during admission
7. Teachers do not give adequate attention to children who need extra care and support
8. Teachers do not have adequate training to handle children with disabilities
9. Assistive devices are not available
10. Children with hearing disabilities cannot listen to what is being said, and so do not pay attention.
11. They do not get required support from peers, and the teachers do not initiate the process either.
12. All children with disabilities cannot go to all kinds of schools, so there should be relevant types of educational facilities for all children.
13. Without extra attention, children do not perform well in class examinations, and so it becomes difficult to get admitted into higher



classes. As result, they also lose interest in education.

14. Topics on ideal and moral issues are gradually fading from the curriculum, and so social and moral values are disappearing from the society.
15. Expenses relating to education increases at the end of the year, when families cannot bear such additional costs
16. Each family has to spend (on an average) approximately Taka 1000.00 per child per year, in spite of the education being called as 'free'. Some of this money would return if the child had an employment or earning opportunity, but such scopes are not available at all. They could easily be involved in poultry, cattle and goat rearing, small cottage industries, making *bidi* (local cigarettes, which is a common income earning source for the local women and children).
17. Road communication is extremely bad in most cases, which get inundated or muddy during the monsoons, and so children cannot attend school.
18. Since the initiation of the IDEAL Project, teachers have to be more involved in filling up forms and writing reports, and so they do cannot spend time for children.

### **Other problems of children and adults with disabilities, as identified by the community people:**

1. People tease them always
2. They cannot express their feelings adequately
3. They do not always understand the social dynamics
4. There is no scope for adequate treatment facilities
5. They cannot take care of themselves
6. There is no scope for adequate therapy services
7. They require additional care, which is not always possible by families
8. Physically disabled people/children face serious problems in moving about
9. Visually disabled children/people cannot move about without help
10. It is difficult for girls with disabilities to get married, but even if that can be arranged, parents need to provide for excessive dowry during the marriage of daughters who have disabilities.
11. Since they were 'disabled', no one came to them seeking their support during the last national parliamentary elections.

### **Some solutions suggested by the community people:**

1. Awareness on disability should be increased among both children and adults in rural areas.
2. Children with disabilities should not be discriminated against and isolated from any social activity.
3. At the beginning of the year, the school authorities should inform the parents what amount of expenses they may have to incur at what time in advance, so that families could save the money accordingly.
4. Parents and elder siblings should help guide the education of the children with disabilities.
5. Parents should arrange for private tutors according to their abilities.
6. Some children will require to be admitted to special schools, and such facilities should be made available adequately.



7. Teachers should take more care of children with disabilities.
8. Adequate training should be provided to teachers so that they can handle CWDs.
9. Different teachers from adjoining schools within a locality should be trained to handle children with disabilities of different types, so that children with all types of disabilities from that locality can go to school, and in that case, do not have to go too far from home.
10. They should be given equal rights and opportunities as other children in education and game activities.
11. In order to raise self-reliance, scope and opportunities for vocational and functional education should be increased.
12. Communication should be improved and accessibility should be ensured.
13. Adequate health facilities and care-delivery system should be established.
14. People in general should be more cooperative and supportive to people and children with disabilities.
15. They too should be recognized as contributing actors for change, and should be allowed to vote in local and national elections.
16. All people in the society should come forward to help in the development of people with disabilities.

### Calendar of crops and workload of children due to crops:

Bangla Month	Baisha	Jaisthha	Ashar	Shravan	Bhadra	Ashwin	Kartik	Agrahayan	Poush	Magh	Falgun	Chaitra	
Corresponding English Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
IRRI (paddy)	Harvesting									Planting			
Amon (paddy)				Planting						Harvesting			
Kheshari (lentils)							Planting			Harvesting			
Leafy vegetable							Planting		Harvesting				
Other vegetable	Harvesting						Planting					Planting	
Workload													
Girls	10	10	2	4	3	2	2	3	8	8	5	5	
Boys	10	10	2	6	6	2	4	2	10	10	4	4	

Diapara is an agricultural prone area, and the entire living (income, expenditure, socio-cultural activities) depends upon agricultural growth. The principal crops grown in the area are two types of paddy (IRRI and Amon), Kheshari, and different varieties of vegetable. These are produced both for their own consumption, and also as cash crop. Most of the villagers own a little piece of land, but are in the lower income group, and so during planting and harvesting, cannot hire external help. Since

most of them own land themselves, they need to tend their fields and so cannot migrate to other places for the extra income. In all these activities, children have to help their parents in the activities, both in the fields, and at home. In general practice, the boys are at the fields with their fathers, while the girls are at home helping out their mothers. As a result, during these agricultural events, in most cases, they have to assist in the bread-earning activity first, and then attend school. The situation is much worse for the children with disabilities, as their physical limitations prevent most of them from becoming as adept as the non-disabled children are. As a result, in most cases, they have to skip school altogether.

Another issue that came out from the exercise was the timing of the school exams. The final exams were being held during November-December, which in no way hampers their household and agricultural activities. When they would require to remain busy, the exams are over and in most cases, they are on holidays. So this would not affect either their education, or their household activities. The problem was in the case of the first term exams, which in most cases are held during middle to late April. On one hand, the children do not get all their books before the middle or end of February, then by the middle of April, they have to start working either in the fields, or at home for harvesting paddy and vegetable. So they do not have adequate time to prepare for this round of exams, and on top of that cannot afford the time to stay away from the work. A similar problem arises during the second term also, which is held around August, which coincides with the Amon (paddy) planting season. So, some children do not appear in these examinations at all, which in turn affects their whole year's performance.

A veteran schoolteacher (also a resident on the locality) commented that, earlier, when there was the two-exam system, there were not many schools around, and very few children went to school. But whoever was in school, did not have to face this problem as the half-yearly exams were held in June or early July, which is an agricultural lean period. So children could give more time for his or her studies.



**Confessions of Abdul Latif \*(54), a schoolteacher of Diapara:**

The government is trying hard to increase the education standard of the country. But unless the government takes better care of the teachers, this will not happen. We are the machines that refine the raw children into first class citizens. But how can you expect that the output will be good if the input is not? You come up with new projects and call them IDEAL, ESTEEM and what not. That only increases our workload. Not our package, at least not proportionately! If you keep the dog hungry, it will howl all day, but not bark at the right time of need. We have to keep busy filling up forms and writing reports. The money we get at the end of the month, that too if we get regularly is so meager, that you can't live on that, so you need extra income. So ultimately the children's education suffers.

I know every child in the area, including all the children with disabilities. But in the survey report of the catchment area, I have not reported any of those children. I have my reasons. If I show them in my report, I will have to admit them in my school. I don't have any training on how to handle them. No teacher in this locality has this training. So how could we take care of them? I have almost hundred children in each class, but we are only three teachers. So we have two shifts. That's how we manage the school. We don't have enough time take care of the normal children, how could we give attention to the children who have problems. Then at the end of the year, if many children fail, it is our reputation as teachers, which is at stake. Our increments, promotion etc. all depends on our output as teachers. These disabled children will ruin the situation even more. So we thought it is best not to report these children at all in the very first case.

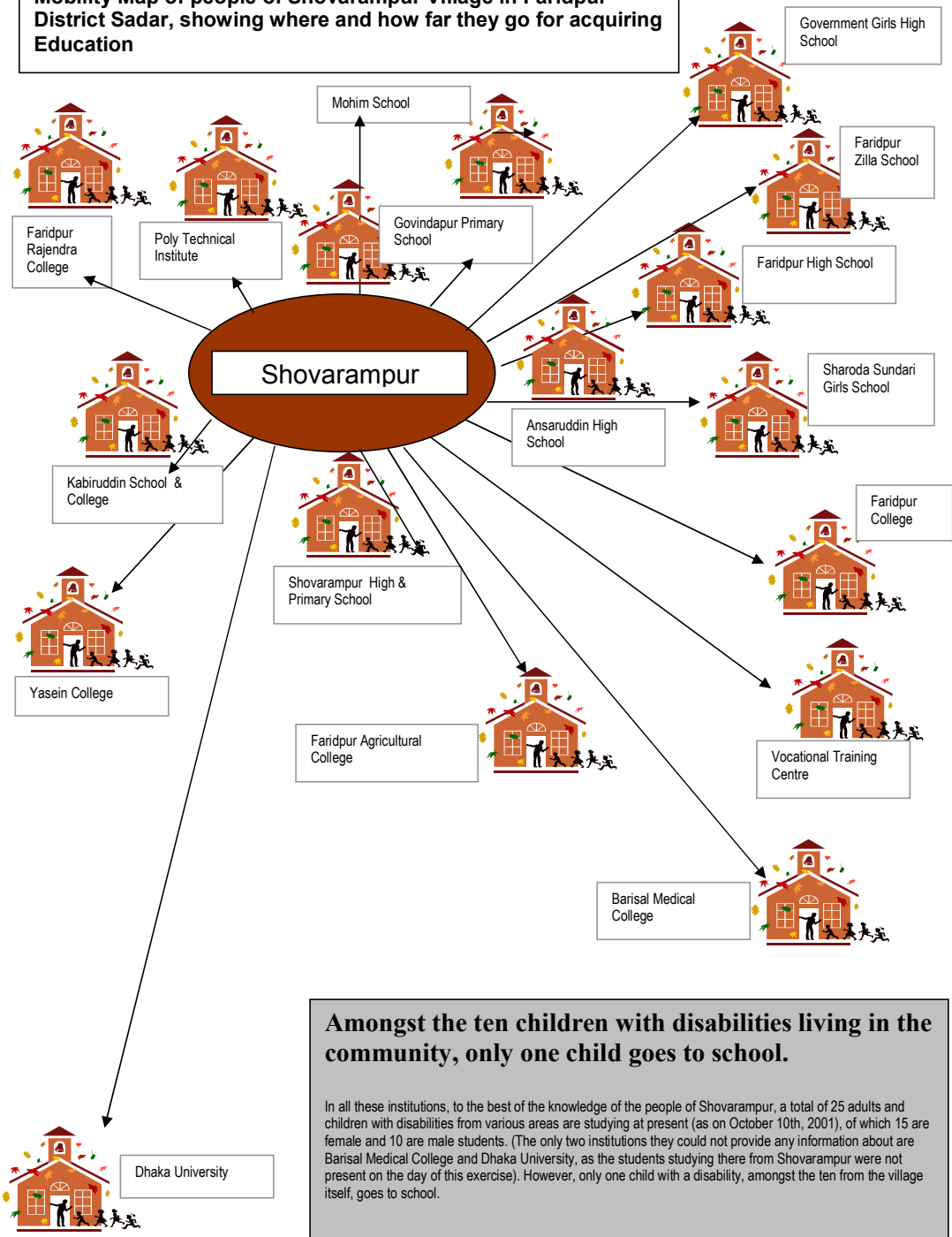
These projects have asked us to involve the management committees in all that we do. Who are these committee members? These are the so-called influential people of the area who have no respect for elders. They were our worst quality students in the past. But now power, politics and money have made them influential. They never turn up at the school. Rather, for a signature we have to run around the whole area, even at markets to catch them. They have no idea on what they are putting their signatures.

Many years back, the curriculum was very good. It taught children ideal and moral values through wonderfully written stories and poems. There were pieces of advice like, 'always speak the truth', 'respect your elders' 'never tease a visually handicapped person as blind' and so on. Nowadays, the stories and poems in the curriculum are mostly written by modern writers, and these teach no moral and social values. Rather these are filled with meaningless topics, like an imaginary bird that has two vertical horns and lays eggs in the middle of a field! I hate teaching my students these things. But what can I do?

There was a time, when I used to take pride in introducing myself as a schoolteacher. These days, I rather feel ashamed of being that. After all, who gives a damn about a schoolteacher these days anyway?

*\* Name changed to protect identity*

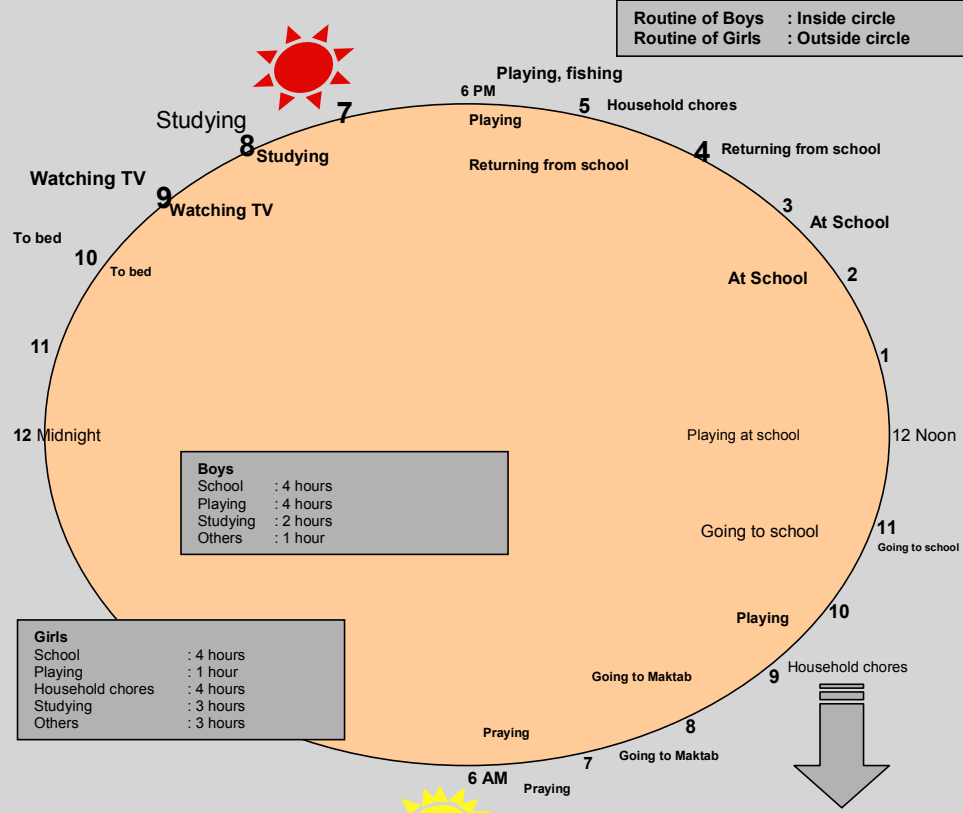
**Mobility Map of people of Shovarampur Village in Faridpur District Sadar, showing where and how far they go for acquiring Education**



**Amongst the ten children with disabilities living in the community, only one child goes to school.**

In all these institutions, to the best of the knowledge of the people of Shovarampur, a total of 25 adults and children with disabilities from various areas are studying at present (as on October 10th, 2001), of which 15 are female and 10 are male students. (The only two institutions they could not provide any information about are Barisal Medical College and Dhaka University, as the students studying there from Shovarampur were not present on the day of this exercise). However, only one child with a disability, amongst the ten from the village itself, goes to school.

**Daily routine of boys and girls at Isanagar village in Chittagong (A scenario of an un-served area)**



Neither the boys, nor the girls mentioned anything about the children with disabilities. When asked about them, both groups mentioned that the disabled children are different, and they had no idea what should be done with the disabled children. None of the groups were willing to include the disabled children even in their games, as "they (the CWDs) would not be able to play like us."

**Costs incurred by an average family for a child in class five in a primary school in Faridpur:**

School fees	: Free
Stationery	: 1,000.00
Examination fees	: 45.00
School dress	: 700.00
Private Tutor @150.00/month	: 1,800.00
Miscellaneous subscriptions	: 100.00
<b>Total annual expenses</b>	<b>: 3,645.00</b>

Education related problems, their causes, and effects, according to the villagers of Isanagar, Chittagong:

Problem	Cause	Effect
Insufficient schools	Lack of awareness and initiative. Villagers do not have unity	Children do not have access to education. They cannot grow up with required cognitive and functional living skills
Scarcity of teachers	Lack of initiative from both government and non-government authorities	Children are deprived of qualitative education. Dropout rates are increasing.
Poor communication	Union Parishad Members and Chairman do not pay attention. Local people do not have any initiative too.	Children do not want to go to school. They are also deprived of health services.
Low enrollment of girls	Families fear social condemnation and superstition. Schools are far away, communication is not good, there is a scarcity of schools.	Girls remain illiterate. Child marriage continues. Girls remain highly dependent on others.
Less interests of parents to send girls to schools	Boys disturb them on the way. Parents do not think it necessary to send their daughters to school once they have crossed Class-V. Education also becomes expensive. Parents have too many children to think about.	Girls are being deprived of education. They have to stop studying midway through their education.







**Note:** No development organization (NGOs) works in the village. So general awareness level of the villagers is poor. They have no idea about the problems associated with disabilities, in spite of the presence of seven children (within the school going age) with disabilities in the locality. They live unattended, without any proper care and/or support. Where education of non-disabled children is at stake, parents do not even think about the education of the children with disabilities.

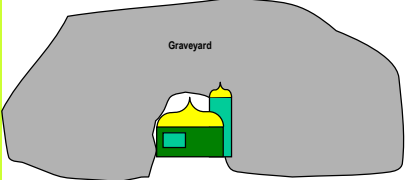
Isanagar village is located on the banks of the Karnaphuly River, opposite the Chittagong port. Any child (even male) who has completed secondary school is considered to have acquired enough education, and starts searching employment in the port, or gets involved in petty business, which in most cases is related to smuggling. The lone graduate of the village is the great great grandson of Muhammad Isa, the founder of the village, who migrated from (as the story goes) Saudi Arabia some 150 years ago.

**Problems identified by school-going girls of Isanagar, Chittagong**

- **We do not have enough money to pursue education**
- **Schools are very far from our homes**
- **Insufficient numbers of schools**
- **Communication system is very bad. During monsoons, the earthen roads become either inundated, muddy, or very slippery**
- **There are not enough teachers**
- **There are not many educated people in this area. So there are not many good teachers.**
- **Boys tease us on the way to school and also on the way back. None of the village elders scold them for misbehaving, and so they do this without fear.**
- **The awareness level of our parents is very poor.**
- **Our parents do not realize the importance of our education.**
- **Our parents do not want to send us far for acquiring education.**
- **If you are good looking, the problem is far more severe. Parents want to marry you off early, and boys disturb you even more.**

**Legends**

 Households	 Shops	 Water bodies
 Mosques	 Schools	 Agriculture fields



Earthen internal pathway

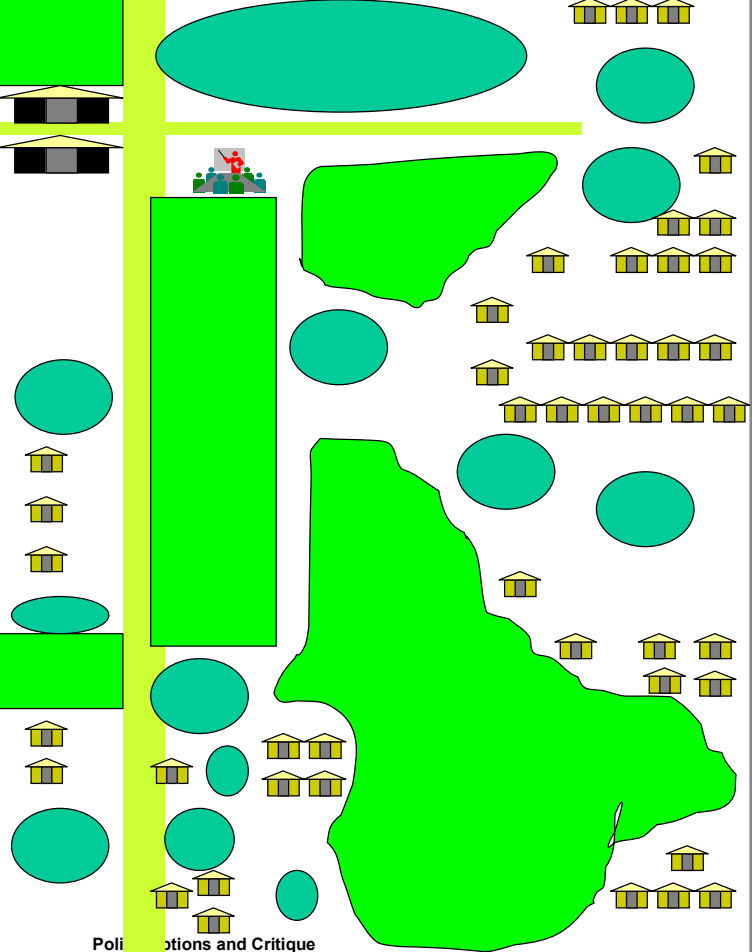
Diamond Cement factory

National Cement factory

North

KARNAPHULY RIVER

Metal Road



Pol... tions and Critique

**Map of Isanagar, Chittagong**  
By the villagers on November 8th, 2001

## **Policy Issues:**

The first step is to reform existing policies in order to support learners with disabilities along with other students. Educational policies at different levels, national and local, should include options for inclusion of eligible learners with disabilities in nearby mainstream schools. Attempts should be made to reduce contradictions in legislative and policy mandates in different national acts and policies, like the National policy on Disability, the National Education policy, the Employment policy, the National Health policy etc. Comprehensive efforts should be made to design complementary policies and legislative measures to facilitate education for children with disabilities and special needs. The mandate and national plans for achieving the goal "Education for All" should include children with disabilities in mainstream education practices. Where it is not possible to do so, there should be options to enroll such children in integrated and/or special education, but with provision for partial inclusion, as and where applicable.

## **School Management:**

The school management is the major concerned authority for inclusion of children with disabilities in regular schools. Presently the management is not adequately informed on the situation of children with disabilities. The school management policy should include the issues of education of learners with disabilities. Extensive motivation and sensitization would enable the school management to consider such issues. National policy for management of primary education should create options to enroll eligible learners with disabilities. Where children cannot be included in regular schools, to facilitate their education, management committees of regular schools should share experiences and acquire learning from integrated and special schools within the clusters and sub-clusters maintained in the present primary education system at the thana level.

## **Education Environment:**

The educational environment, both infra-structural and behavioral, should consider the handicapping situation of learners with disabilities. Positive attitudes throughout the school community, with effective cooperation of the people concerned, such as teachers, peers, school staff etc are vital factors for enrolling and retaining children with disabilities. The teachers should play the most significant roles to initiate and establish such environment.

## **Awareness Raising:**

Disability awareness should be raised among parents, community members, political and religious leaders in order to support inclusion of disabled children in schools. Substantial community awareness, sensitization and motivation are crucial for a successful inclusion. The disability concerned organizations and community development organization could play a vital role in raising awareness on the issues. Systematic inclusion of disability issues in general awareness-raising activities through development programs and mass media is one of the prime strategies to raise people's awareness. However, where

total inclusion in mainstream education is not possible, awareness should be raised to enroll such children in partial inclusion or appropriate alternative educational settings.

### **Information Dissemination and Research:**

Information on education of children with disabilities is still not adequately circulated amongst concerned stakeholders and actors. Authorities like the ministry, directorate and departments on education are also not always on the circulation list of much of the information that is available, which may have resulted in a negative attitude occasionally expressed by them and made them reluctant to include education of disabled learners within the mainstream education system. Adequate information on good practices on education of children with disabilities would encourage such inclusion. There have been a few research-based studies on inclusive education, but these were not widely disseminated. Some new research initiatives have been undertaken by different agencies in the non-government sector, which require wide circulation to all concerned. There should be ample information flow to both planners and implementing actors to enhance their level of involvement.

### **Facilities and Support Services:**

While the available facilities and support services in general schools is minimal, it is a common misconception that inclusion of children with disabilities in regular schools will increase the support requirement extensively. The findings from existing practices indicate that an increase of such support services, in order to create inclusion options for children with disabilities in regular schools does occur, but this increase is very nominal. Providing trained teachers to deal with learners with special needs is a priority support requirement for such inclusion. This can be made available by offering short training courses to existing teachers, or involving resource teachers from integrated schools. Inclusion of disability issues in regular teachers' training curriculum will enrich skills of teachers to deal with learners with special needs. A minimum level of support materials is required to create access to learning of children with disabilities, such as Braille, large print material, frames etc. There is a need for ensuring accessibility for learners with physical and visual impairments, which involves a little additional cost, but this too can be raised locally by mobilizing community people. Setting up special schools all over Bangladesh should possibly not be a logical option because of the high costs involved, the trained manpower required, and because the education system of the country as a whole may need to change into a more flexible learner-friendly system.

### **Teachers' Training:**

Disability issues should be included in the curriculum of the basic training course for mainstream primary school teachers. For teachers who have already gone through the basic course, it could also be provided as a refresher or in-service training course. Both teachers and supervisors will require the training. A short-term basic course can be offered which should be followed up with more advanced courses on specific techniques such as simple sign language or special techniques for working with the children with visual impairments. Children with multiple disabilities (such as cerebral palsy), intellectual disability and problem behavior are more challenging, and the teacher may need to have more skills and motivation,



similar to that required for other types of marginalized children (abused children, street children, children of sex workers, children from indigenous or ethnic minority groups etc.).

### **Curriculum and Teaching Materials:**

Regular primary curriculum should be modified at national level with the support from the education and disability experts. The class teacher should have proper authority and guideline to simplify curriculum to address the needs of individual learners including children with disabilities. Teaching curriculum should be incorporated with topics addressing the needs of all children including the needs of children with disabilities. Additional instructional support may need to be provided to the children with disabilities. Assessment procedures and appropriate tools need to be adopted based on the special needs of groups of learners with disabilities. Children with disabilities within the indigenous and ethnic minority groups face a double disability, where they have to face this enormous additional challenge of having to learn an entirely different language (Bangla) compounded with the problems associated with their individual disabilities, while in their day-to-day life they do not need to deviate from their own indigenous language. The non-disabled children in these communities almost equally share this problem, as there are no books or learning material written in their respective languages. For such areas, either books should be prepared in indigenous languages for the junior classes, or respective teachers should be empowered to modify the curriculum accordingly. Then a conversion into Bangla should be planned gradually as the children climb up to the higher classes.

### **Screening, Assessment and Placement Policy**

Types and degrees (gross) of disabilities need to be identified through proper screening for selecting the appropriate educational setting for the children with disabilities. On the other hand, assessment of learning abilities and aptitude of children with disabilities need to be done through applying standardized test (which also needs to be developed) for different classes at primary level.

A national policy should be developed for appropriate educational placement of children with disabilities on the basis of screening and learning ability. School management committee should have the authority to facilitate placement of children with disabilities in education. Schoolteachers should have the skills to screen the children with disabilities and assess learning ability.

### **Assistive Devices and Counseling Services**

The role of assistive device in learning process is significant. There must be provisions for providing required assistive devices for learners with disabilities according to their need at free of cost or in a subsidized rate. At the same time, assistive device support and maintenance service should be initiated at district level.

Counseling services for learners with disabilities and their parents need to be initiated and practiced on a regular basis to minimize or overcome handicapping environment in educational settings. Resource Centre at district level is required to provide assessment, assistive device and counseling services for the learners with disabilities.

## **Educational Evaluation Process**

Evaluation process at primary level needs to be redesigned considering the limitation of children including learners with disabilities. The tools and methodologies that applied for learners evaluation are not in addressing the limitation of learners in difficulties. There should flexible options for specific types of disability such as sighted writer, timing, etc. Continuous evaluation process is one of the appropriate one.

## **Conditions for Inclusion into the Classrooms:**

The disabled learners in their varied types and degrees can be expected to be enrolled and thrive in mainstream education. As mentioned earlier, it is imperative for teachers to be trained on the fundamental issues relating to teaching of disabled learners. It is also important for the designers of the teachers' training courses to be conscious of the many conditioning factors. The curriculum of the course should cover issues relating to identifying disabilities amongst the learners (gross identification without labeling), barriers to their learning and participation, the required essential classroom adaptations, appropriate teaching strategies, adaptation of curriculum etc. The course should also focus on the 'Nine Golden Rules of Dealing with Children with Special Needs', as mentioned hereunder. Also, teachers should be informed about how, when and where to refer a child in case of a gross identification of a disability, which also may be included in the training curriculum.

According to the organ/function affected/involved, disability is classified into four broad categories of Physical, Visual, Hearing and Speech and Intellectual. There also could be a simultaneous presence of two or more categories leading to multiple disabilities.

### **a. Physical Disabilities:**

Physical disability is defined as the loss of one or more limbs, or the sensation in limbs, either partially or totally, or if limbs are weaker than what is considered average for persons within the same age and sex group, having similar physique. It also refers to the physical deformity and/or abnormality, and/or the permanent loss of physical equilibrium\*.

In most cases, the children with cerebral palsy (CP) are considered as physically disabled. Children with mild CP will require very little adaptation. But children with severe CP may require special seating, special desks and communication boards. The child may even require assistance to use the toilet.

- Classroom adaptations

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\* This working definition was prepared and used by the research team for the purpose of this study, which was based upon the definition provided in the Disability Welfare Act 2001, and incorporating guidelines from other disability related publications.

Accessibility for children using assistive devices need to be ensured in both the approach and within the classroom. It would be easier for them if they were seated in the front row and close to the classroom door. The desks and seating facilities may also need to be adapted. A child using a wheelchair should be allowed to seat in the wheelchair in the classroom. If the child is required to write on the blackboard, it should be within the reach of the child.

- Teaching Strategies

Except for the CP children little changes may need to be taken by the teacher according to the nature of the problem associated with the physical disability. Like all other disabled children they should also be motivated and encouraged to participate in the learning activities. Simple occupational aids may be required according to the nature of the disability.

b. Visual Impairments:

Visual impairment is defined as the absence of vision in one or both eyes with a visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (on the Snellen's chart) in the better eye even with correcting lenses, or a limitation of the 'field of vision' subtending an angle of 20° (degrees) or worse\*.

- Classroom adaptations

The child must be consulted to locate the most suitable place for him/her to sit. If the child has trouble with light coming from outside, they must be allowed to have protective measures to block the additional light. The blackboard should not reflect any light. The writing on the board has to be very prominent. The child must also be provided with an orientation of the physical structure of the classroom for him/her to be able to move with more freedom and greater sense of security. School buildings should be mobility friendly for the visually impaired pupils.

- Teaching Strategies

Large writing must be used on the blackboard. It is also essential for the teachers to read aloud what has been written on the board. Large print materials will need to be used to allow the visually impaired child to read. Visual aids like magnifying glasses could also be used. The student could be paired with another child who has complete vision, to facilitate better learning. One extremely essential thing to be followed is, to encourage the student in the classroom. For children with no vision, learning Braille is imperative. Once children can use Braille they would also be able to learn alongside sighted children.

c. Hearing and Speech Disabilities

Hearing impairment is defined as the inability to hear any sound of an intensity of 40dB or more in the better ear\*.

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\* This working definition was prepared and used by the research team for the purpose of this study, which was based upon the definition provided in the Disability Welfare Act 2001, and incorporating guidelines from other disability related publications.

Speech disability is defined as the partial or total inability to utter meaningful phonemes\*.

- Classroom adaptations

The learner needs to be seated very close to the teacher. At times it is more beneficial to the learner if he/she can have a view of both the teacher and other pupils in the classroom. The disabled learner would be able to learn by seeing how the other pupils respond to the teacher. It is of immense importance that the child has a clear vision of the teacher's face, hands and lips. The teacher must be careful in ensuring that no light comes from behind placing his/her (the teacher) face in a shadow. While reading, the teacher must ensure that the book is held low allowing a full vision of the face. Efforts need to be taken to ensure a noise-free listening environment in the classroom.

- Teaching Strategies

Children with such impairment normally learn more from seeing than hearing. But both should be practiced. Pictorial materials could be used as a learning aid. The teacher could encourage the child to observe how the other pupils respond to certain queries. The hearing and speech-impaired child may fair better in pair situations than in groups. In the group, too many interactions may take place simultaneously, making it difficult for the child to catch up. All effort must be given to understand what the child is trying to communicate. It must also been seen that the child understands certain instructions. Sign language could also be used to communicate better with the child if applicable.

d. Intellectual Disabilities:

Intellectual disability is defined as the delayed and/or immature intellectual development and functioning, not developed at par with the person's chronological development, and where the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is below the average range. Children with such disabilities do not have intellectual equilibrium either totally or partially.\*

- Classroom adaptations

Attention must be taken so that there are no distracting materials on the desk or around the disabled learner. They could be seated by the wall or in such position that could act as a barrier for them to suddenly move around in the classroom. However certain common activities in the classroom, like distribution of exercise books and papers could be done through them. Such movement would not disturb the classroom environment. Sometimes it may be necessary for the teacher to give special attention to the child on a one-to-one basis. This could be done when other children are busy with other tasks.

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- Teaching Strategies

The child needs to be communicated with, using simple words and instructions. He/she should be shown, rather than simply told, what is expected of him/her. A child could respond better if the lessons are linked with the child's experience and daily life. Each activity needs to be completed first before the next one is initiated. It will be easier for the child to comprehend and carryout a certain task if it is broken down into smaller parts. The child must be given the same activity a few more chances than other children, in order to allow him/her practice and master the skill. This will also increase the confidence. But at the same time it has to be ensured that different materials are applied to keep it interesting. Other children in the classroom can be paired up with the child to assist him/her further. At times, the child might behave undesirably in order to draw extra attention. This should be ignored as much as possible. Praise and extra attention should be bestowed upon them, only when the child's behavior is suitable.

The child may have problems communicating due to speech problems. In such cases the aforesaid part on 'hearing and speech' could be followed. Other alternative means could also be designed as applicable to the student. The students may have difficulty in writing as they may have less control of their hands and arms. They will need additional time in this regard. The child must always be encouraged to interact with other children and vice versa. The child will also take extra time in responding to queries and questions. The children must understand that adequate effort is being taken to communicate with them.

Different levels have specific roles to play to make a better educational environment for all children. Here the roles are divided into three levels including mentioning the players.

## Recommendations

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Short term action target	Long term action target	Responsible Player
<b>Reformation of policies</b> Children with disabilities have rights as full and equal members of society to enter into and benefit from education. It is important to reform existing national policies of different sectors related to disability issues.		
Inclusion of educational provisions for children with special needs into Ministry of Education (MOE) and PMED.	Develop rules and required procedural policies in support of inclusion of children with special needs through MOE and PMED.	Ministry of Education (MOE) and Primary & Mass Education Division (PMED) in collaboration with Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW).

Short term action target	Long term action target	Responsible Player
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of sections and clauses indicated in different national policies and legislations that create hindrance to the interest of education of Children with Disabilities.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert people on disability, education and legislative issues under the guidance of MOE, PMED and DPE.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of proposal for amendments of contradictory clauses of different policies and legislations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitation for enactment of amendments in concerned policies and legislations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOE, PMED and DPE.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coordination within ministry, inter-ministry and inter-department</b></p> <p><i>Disability is a complex issue that cuts across many developmental sectors. Coordination is essential within the ministry, inter-ministries and inter-departments for systematic and coordinated interventions towards promotion of education for children with special needs.</i></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up an inter-ministerial coordination structure to facilitate addressing the need of education of children with special needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up interdepartmental coordination structure in divisional and district level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOE, PMED and DPE with involvement of relevant authorities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>School Management</b></p> <p><i>School management is one of the major concerned players for inclusion of children with disabilities at micro-level. School management policy should include issues of education of children with special needs into their existing regulations.</i></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate disability concerned issues in existing school management policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish effective coordination with concerned agencies for exchange of resource and technical know-how.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMC and Education Officers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create options for initiating accessibility and built environment in School Management Committee (SMC) policy to facilitate education of children with special needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish physical facilities and non-handicapping environment to ensure education of children with special needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMC</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate scopes for resource sharing at the levels of technical information, materials and expertise with in existing and new</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop resource centre for providing educational and other relevant supports at district level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOE, PMED, DPE, MOSW, Responsible Universities, Educational institutes and Concerned NGOs.</li> </ul>

Deleted:

Short term action target	Long term action target	Responsible Player
resource organizations and agencies. .		
Initiate awareness and sensitization activities among students, parents, community people through school meeting, community meeting etc.	Include disability concerned issues in regular events like annual sports, cultural programs etc.	SMC
<b>Human Resource Development (HRD) inclusive of Teachers Training</b> <i>Disability issues as a whole are considered as a complex area as it deals with multi-dimensional intervention based on individual requirement by type and degree of disability. It is essential to develop human resources on specific areas of interventions.</i>		
Develop expert people on disability and educational issues.	Develop national level resource centre for providing supports for the education of children with disabilities.	MOE, PMED, DPE, Universities and NGO initiatives.
Develop expert people on assessment and management of disability issues.		MOE, PMED, DPE, Universities and NGO initiatives.
Provide in-service and pre-service training for primary and secondary school teachers.	Include disability issues into PTI curriculum.	MOE, PMED, DPE, NGOs, Expert individuals on Education and Disability.
	Develop resource teachers, and other technicians required for providing support services.	MOE, PMED, DPE, Universities, Ministry of Social Welfare, Expert individuals on Education and Disability.
<b>Curriculum Design and Teaching materials</b> <i>To develop a learner-oriented curriculum for better quality learning, it is necessary to fulfill the individual need, especially for the children with special needs. This requires curriculum modification and simplification.. Appropriate teaching materials are an integral part to make lessons attractive. .</i>		
Identification of issues in primary curriculum, which need to be reformed.	Work on modification and simplification of curriculum according to the need of learners.	MOE, PMED, DPE, NCTB, Responsible Universities, Expert individuals on Education and Disability.

Short term action target	Long term action target	Responsible Player
	Train teachers on use of curriculum with regard to needs of children with disabilities.	PMED, DPE, PTIs., NGOs.
Development and use of appropriate teaching materials.		SMC, Class teachers.
<b>Screening, Assessment of disability and learning abilities and design Placement policy</b>		
<p><b>Screening and assessment of disability is a precondition to provide accurate educational and other support services. On the basis of types and degrees of disability and the learning performances of children with disabilities, a standardized Educational Placement Policy need to be developed and practiced for ensuring total development of children with special needs.</b></p>		
Development of standardized screening procedures in the country.	Establishment of resource centres as assessment centres for all types of disabilities at district level.	MOE, PMED, DPE, Expert people on Education and Disability.
Development of screening skills at school/ local level.	PTI curriculum should add disability-screening procedures. .	MOE, PMED, DPE, SMC.
Development and dissemination of a standardized test on measuring the learning performanc of children with disabilities.	Development of a National level Educational Placement policy on the basis of Screening and measurement of learning performances.	MOE, PMED, DPE, MOSW, Expert people on Education and Disability.
<b>Assistive device and Educational Devices</b>		
<p><b>Assistive devices help the learning process, psychosocial development, communication and mobility of children with disabilities and educational devices help them to participate in classroom activities independently and efficiently . So, these services should be ensured for better quality education.</b></p>		
Create provision of assistive and educational devices at free of cost or at minimum cost for children with disabilities.	Establishment of maintenance services (servicing centres) both for assistive and educational devices at divisional level	MOE, PMED, DPE, Concerned NGOs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Expert people on Education and Disability.
<b>Accessibility, other facilities and Support service</b>		
<p><b>Accessibility is one of the major factors for handicapping environment of children with disabilities in any educational set up. Creation of accessibility is essential especially for physical and visual impaired people. Besides, other special need services like occupational therapy, speech therapy etc. are required to allow learners with disabilities to get in touch with education. Support provisions should consider possible options to meet the needs.</b></p>		
Include accessibility features in school Infrastructure policy	Create accessibility at school level.	MOE facilities department, LGED.

Deleted:



Short term action target	Long term action target	Responsible Player
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create provisions in the resource centre (mentioned above) for providing all therapeutic support services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOE, PMED, MOSW, Expert individuals.</li> </ul>
<b>Referral, Guidance and counseling Services</b>		
<p><b><i>Referral is required for assessment and management of special needs of people with disabilities. Proper counseling and guidance by school authority can facilitate children with disabilities, families, peers and community people to get access to the services and enable them to get in touch with the inclusion process.</i></b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide Referral, guidance and counseling services at school level.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMC, Schoolteachers.</li> </ul>
<b>Awareness Raising and Educational Environment</b>		
<p><b><i>Disability awareness should be raised among parents, community members, leaders and other concerned at all levels in order to support inclusion of disabled children in schools. Massive community awareness, sensitization and motivation are crucial for a successful inclusion at different educational provisions.</i></b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include disability awareness issues in community/school meeting.</li> <li>Initiate sensitization programme on issues concerning education for the disabled through mass media.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMC, Local NGOs,</li> <li>MOE/ PMED/DPE.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation and Feedback System</b>		
<p><b><i>To assess and maintain the quality of education and the system running the educational activities, continuous evaluation is must. It is also necessary to reform the existing approaches and practices by identifying their drawbacks. An evaluation process both for academic activities and the education system must be designed and placed in practice.</i></b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing evaluation and feedback process need to be practiced for assessing the academic performances of all learners including children with special needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation and feedback of total primary education system related to disability need to be ensured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOE, PMED, Monitoring and Evaluation Division of DPE, SMC, Class Teachers.</li> </ul>

## Further Research Suggestions \_\_\_\_\_

- Appropriate Disability statistics need to be confirmed through nationwide survey with skilled persons on disability.

- Standardized screening procedure and its effectiveness need to be developed through research.
- A standardized Placement Policy needs to be designed through conducting action research on conceptual framework.
- Identification of factors influencing academic and social development of children with disabilities.
- Scopes for GO-NGO collaboration regarding education for the disabled issues can be explored.

## 8. National Plan of Action including Evaluation Determiners

Action Target	Objectives	Target Group	Activities	Responsible Players	Ev
<b>Reformation of policies</b>	<i>To ensure rights of Children with disabilities as full and equal members of society to enter into and get benefit from education.</i>	Children with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion of educational provisions for children with special needs into Ministry of Education (MOE) and PMED.</li> <li>Develop rules and required procedural policies in support of inclusion of children with special needs through MOE and PMED.</li> <li>Identification of sections and clauses indicated in different national policies and legislation that create hindrance to the interest of education of Children with Disabilities.</li> </ul>	Ministry of Education (MOE) and Primary & Mass Education Division (PMED) in collaboration with Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW).	Polic in su child can t acce merr
<b>Ministerial Coordination</b>	To ensure coordination within the ministry, inter-ministries and inter-departments for systematic interventions for the promotion of education of children with special needs.	All concerned ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up an inter-ministerial and inter-departmental coordination structure to facilitate addressing the need of education of children with special needs.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED and DPE with involvement of relevant authorities.	Inter inter-coor estal prac/ neec child
<b>Budget allocation</b>	To ensure facilitation of education for the children with disabilities	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased and realistic allocation of money in education budget with specifically mention of educational need of children with disabilities.</li> </ul>	Ministry of Finance, MOE, PMED, Planning Commission	Moni confi educ addr educ child
<b>Enrollment of children with disabilities into education</b>	To ensure the registration of children with disabilities into education	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including all children with disabilities in the mainstream or any primary education provisions by any means.</li> </ul>	PMED, DPE and MOE, NGOs.	All cl enro For / prog
<b>Action Target</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Ev</b>

		<b>Group</b>		<b>Players</b>		
<b>Awareness raising</b>	To raise awareness on disability issues including their educational needs among parents, community members, leaders and other concerned at all levels in order to support inclusion of disabled children in schools	Mass people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include disability awareness issues in community/school meeting.</li> <li>• Initiate sensitization programme on issues concerning education for the disabled through mass media.</li> </ul>	SMC, Local NGOs, MOE/ PMED/DPE.	Parental involvement at all information issues education	
<b>Referral, Guidance and Counseling</b>	To ensure referral for assessment and management of special needs of children with disabilities. To practice proper counseling and guidance by school authority that can facilitate children with disabilities, families, peers and community people.	Children with disabilities, their families, peers and community people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Referral, guidance and counseling services at school level.</li> </ul>	SMC, schoolteachers under the supervision of DPE	Referral and counseling services for disabled children	
<b>Accessibility and Mobility</b>	To create accessibility and mobility friendly environment in school compound for children with disabilities.	Children with disabilities and school authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include accessibility and mobility features in school Infrastructure policy.</li> <li>• Create accessibility and mobility at school level.</li> </ul>	MOE facilities department, LGED	Accessibility and mobility in school compound	
<b>HRD and Teachers' Training</b>	To develop human resources on specific areas of educational interventions to deal with multi-dimensional individual requirements by type and degree of disability.	Teachers, Professionals, Experts, Educators and Technicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop expert people on disability and educational issues.</li> <li>• Include disability and their educational issues in all Teachers' Training curriculum.</li> <li>• Develop expert people and technicians on assessment and management of disability issues.</li> <li>• Provide in-service and pre-service training for primary and secondary school teachers.</li> <li>• Develop resource teachers, and other technicians required for providing support services.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, Universities and NGO initiatives. NAPE, NAEM, TTCs, PTIs, MOSW, Ministry of Health, Expert individuals on Education and Disability.	Expert individuals on disability education	
<b>Curriculum modification and simplification, Develop appropriate teaching materials</b>	To modify and simplify primary level curriculum to address the need of children with special needs and develop appropriate teaching materials according to the reference of curriculum.	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of issues in primary curriculum, which need to be reformed.</li> <li>• Work on modification and simplification of curriculum according to the need of learners.</li> <li>• Train teachers on use of curriculum with regard to needs of children with disabilities.</li> <li>• Include a chapter on disability at the primary curriculum and teach non-verbal communication techniques to all</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, NCTB, Responsible Universities, Expert individuals on Education and Disability. NAPE, NAEM, TTCs, PTIs, NGOs. SMC, Class	Curriculum modification and development of appropriate teaching materials	

			such as, sign language etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and use of appropriate teaching materials.</li> </ul>	teachers.		
<b>Resource Centre and Support services</b>	To develop National and divisional level Resource centre in order to provide required supports according to the need of children with diversified needs.	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop national level resource centre for providing supports for the education of children with disabilities.</li> <li>Develop resource centre for providing educational and other relevant supports at divisional/district level.</li> <li>Establishment of resource centres as assessment facilities and maintenance services (servicing centres) both for assistive and educational devices at divisional level.</li> <li>Create provisions in the resource centre (mentioned above) for providing all therapeutic support services such as speech/ language therapy, physiotherapy etc.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, Universities, MOSW, Expert individuals on Education and Disability.	Resc deve level grad level	
<b>Action Target</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Target Group</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsible Players</b>	<b>Ev</b>	
<b>Screening and Assessment of Disability</b>	To develop screening and assessment procedures of disability to provide accurate educational and other support services.	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of standardized screening procedures in the country.</li> <li>Development of screening skills at school/ local level.</li> <li>PTI curriculum should add disability-screening procedures.</li> <li>Provide assessment facilities of the degrees of disability.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, SMC, Ministry of Health, Expert people on Education and Disability.	Scre asse for th disal deve wher	
<b>Aptitude and Learning performance measurement</b>	To develop a standardized system for measuring aptitude and learning performances in order to select proper educational placement.	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and dissemination of a standardized test on measuring the aptitude and learning performance of children with disabilities.</li> <li>Development of a National level Educational Placement policy on the basis of Screening and measurement of learning performances.</li> <li>Development of a National level Educational Placement policy on the basis of Screening and measurement of aptitude and learning performances.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, MOSW, Expert people on Education and Disability, SMC	A str for th plac with educ deve of m and l perf screi	
<b>Assistive and Educational Devices</b>	To provide assistive and educational devices so that inside classroom activities can go smoothly.	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create provision of assistive and educational devices at free of cost or at minimum cost for children with disabilities.</li> <li>Create provision of assistive and educational devices at free of cost or at minimum cost for children with disabilities.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, Concerned NGOs, MOSW, Expert people on Education and Disability.	Assi: devic for th disal	
<b>Examination, Evaluation and feedback system</b>	To establish continuous evaluation and feedback system to assess and maintain the quality of education and the system running the educational activities, It is also necessary to	Children with disabilities And school system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing evaluation and feedback process need to be practiced for assessing the academic performances of all learners including children with special needs.</li> <li>Evaluation and feedback of total primary education system related to disability need to be ensured.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, Monitoring and Evaluation Division of DPE, SMC, Class Teachers.	Cont evalt syste and	

	reform the existing approaches and practices by identifying their drawbacks.					
<b>Presentation of reward and re-inforcer</b>	To ensure enrollment and decrease dropout of children with disabilities from education.	Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give reward to children with disabilities for their academic success.</li> <li>• Make children with disabilities as a role model for others to increase the enrollment of children with disabilities into education.</li> <li>• Provide stipend for all children with disabilities for enrolling in primary education.</li> </ul>	MOE, PMED, DPE, Ministry of Finance.	Child will be supported in education	

## References

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- Understanding and Responding to the Children's Needs of Inclusive Classroom, UNESCO, 2001.
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- Salamanca Declaration: World Conference on Special Needs Education-1994
- The universal declaration of human rights
- Ahsan M. Tariq and Tonmoy W. Rahman; Study on Budget Analysis: Education of Children with disabilities by ActionAid Bangladesh, 2002.
- Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, 1993.
- Dakar Framework for Action
- National Literacy Policy of Bangladesh
- Disability Welfare Act 2001
- National Policy on Disability 1995
- Bangladesh Five-Year Plan (1997-2002)
- Nazmul M. Hqu, Primary Achievement Test (PAT), The World Bank, 1994.
- Anam Nirafat and Ahsan M. Tariq; Study on Academic Social Integration of Hearing Impaired Pupils in Mainstream Educational Settings, I.E.R.; University of Dhaka, 2000.

# TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RESEARCH

## **ESTEEM STUDY 2: Educating children in different circumstances: Children with disabilities.**

### **Background and terms of reference**

The Government of Bangladesh has funds to undertake a study of the education of children with disabilities under the auspices of the Directorate of Primary Education's ESTEEM project. It is anticipated that the study will be completed in 2001.

Progress towards the goal of education for all in Bangladesh depends on ensuring that all children participate in education. The Constitution of the people's Republic of Bangladesh obliges the Government to provide education to all citizens. In line with international conventions, this means that the provision of education is a constitutional obligation and not an act of charity.

Currently, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) delegates responsibility for education disabled children to the Directorate of Social welfare. Many countries are moving towards integration of disabled children into the mainstream education system. The proposed study will investigate the current provision for disabled children in Bangladesh and the options for the future. This will assist the GoB to address its commitments within the *National Plan of Action for Education For All*.

### **Objective**

The study will provide background data and information on education of disabled children, to assist the government in development of policies on the education of disabled children in Bangladesh.

1. Review and analysis of the current situation and policy environment for the education of disabled children in Bangladesh.
  - 1.1 A conceptual framework for analysis of the diverse forms of disability and their interfaces with (a) learning potential, and (b) socioeconomic stratifies such as gender, income/vocation group, religion, locale, etc.
  - 1.2 Estimates of the current scope of provision of, and demand for educational opportunities for children with disabilities in Bangladesh, an estimate of those excluded from education.
  - 1.3 Description and evaluation of the quality of educational services currently provided for disabled children in Bangladesh, including staff/child ratios, facilities, qualifications and training of responsible staff, therapeutic regimes, care systems, curricula and teaching approaches.
  - 1.4 Ownership of institutions providing education services for disabled children in Bangladesh.
  - 1.5 Costs, financing and cost –recovery

- 1.6 Government regulation and support systems
2. Review of 'best practice'
  - 2.1 Major theoretical foundations for the provision of educational services for disabled children
  - 2.2. Alternative appreciates
  - 2.3 Research on impact (child development, learning outcomes, etc)
  - 2.4 Comparative developing country practice
  - 2.5 International conventions and commitments
3. Policy options for Bangladesh

With reference to the conceptual framework developed in 1.1 above, identify and elaborate policy options for future development educational services for disabled children in Bangladesh, including but not restricted to:

  - 3.1 Inclusion of disabled children in mainstream schooling
  - 3.2 Separate specialist educational provision
  - 3.3 Supportive home/community provision
  - 3.4 Alternative administrative arrangements for government regulation of education services for disabled children.
4. Commentary for policy development

Development of evaluation criteria and considerations for Government in deciding how to treat the options in 3 above, in the context of the development of a national plan of action, including:

  - 4.1 Social attitudes
  - 4.2 Relative cost-benefit between the options set out, and alternative investments (e.g., spending on primary education)
  - 4.3 Potential involvement of development partner, NGOs/IN GOs, civil society, etc
  - 4.4 Equity and rights implications

#### **Illustrative methods**

- Ⓜ Survey of present provision and needs
- Ⓜ Review of literature
- Ⓜ Analysis of available statistical data
- Ⓜ Consultations with key informants

#### **Reporting requirements**

The research team will provide:

- Ⓒ an inception report including implementation plan within one month of contract signature (10 copies)
- Ⓒ a progress report at the mid-point of an agreed implementation timeline (10 copies)
- Ⓒ a draft final report presented at a consultative seminar one month before the planned conclusion of the contract (25 copies)
- Ⓒ the final report (75 copies) including an executive summary in Bangla {Esteem will provide additional funds for translating/ printing the full report in Bangla if required}

### Technical proposal

A detailed technical proposal is required, plus a financial proposal, in separate sealed envelopes, to be deposited in the tender box in the Mirpur office of ESTEEM, by the date cited in the cover letter. These documents and the study will be in English.

The technical proposal will include:

Ref	Section	Max length (sides of A <sup>4</sup> )	Comment	Score (% of total)
1	an appreciation of the terms of reference	1	To demonstrate understanding of the requirements of the study. Concerns or comments on the TORs may be included.	10
2	a detailed approach and methodology	5	Adequate detail to provide full understanding of how the research will be implemented, analysis conducted and the conclusions reported	30
3	workplan	1	Tasks and sequencing including milestones, in chart form against timeline	5
4	staffing schedule	1	Personnel inputs in chart form against timeline	5
5	a dissemination strategy	0.5	Who should be made familiar with the outcomes of the study, and how?	5

Ref	Section	Max length (sides of A <sup>4</sup> )	Comment	Score (% of total)
6	a statement of institutional capability	1	Experience of similar work by the institution	5



7	CV and biosketches of all professional personnel proposed for this study	5 per CV 1 para per biosketech	The CV must be signed by the individual named, including a certification that the individual has read and understood the terms of reference, and is available for work for the dates cited.	40
Total				100

### Financial Proposal

A statement of costs (subject to negotiation) presented in Bangladesh taka will include:

#### **A Fees for personnel**

In table form for each individual, with column and row totals:

Name; designation; basic pay; social costs; overheads; institutional fee.

#### **B. Out of pocket expenses**

Materials and books

Secretarial

Data processing

Travel/vehicles at standard GOB rates

Out of Dhaka per diems

Printing of reports (commercial quality)

All other (such as rent, communications, taxes, utilities, etc) are covered under overheads and institutional fee. The Financial Proposal should not include the cost of the consultative seminar, nor of implementing the proposed dissemination plan.

#### **C Total (A+B)**

The study will be funded up to a ceiling cost of ten-lakh taka, and financial proposals will be subject to negotiation.

Payments will be made according to satisfactory completion of the reporting requirements as follows:

Acceptance of implementation plan: 20%

Acceptance of mid-point progress report: 25%

Acceptance of draft report: 25%

Acceptance of final report: 30%

## Evaluation

Evaluation of proposals will be undertaken by an Evaluation panel selected by the ESTEEM project. The decision of the Evaluation Panel will be final. The Evaluation panel is under no obligation to select one or any proposal, nor is it required to publicise the reasons for its decision. The Chair of the Evaluation Panel will instruct ESTEEM to negotiate a contract with the selected bidder, incorporating the comments of the Evaluation Panel where applicable.

## Contract

The study will be financed by the ESTEEM project, using DFID funds granted to GoB and managed by Cambridge Education Consultants Ltd. on behalf to The Cambridge Consortium. The contract for services will be issued by Cambridge Education Constants Ltd.

## WORKS DONE ACCORDING TO TOR REFERENCES

<b>TOR Reference No.</b>	<b>Page no. According to Availability</b>	<b>Heading</b>
<b>1. Review and analysis of the current situation and policy environment for the education of disabled children in Bangladesh.</b>		
1.1	Pages: 2 to 7	Chapter 2. Conceptual Framework
1.2	Pages: 33, 35 & 37	Chapter 6. Analysis and Interpretation (Area: 3, 5 & 6)
1.3	Pages: 32-71	Chapter: 6, Chapter: 7 & Three Tier Model
1.4	Pages: 37-38	Chapter 6. Analysis and Interpretation (Area: 6)
1.5	Pages: 38-41 & 60	Chapter 6: Analysis and Interpretation (Area: 7 and 8) & Cost Incurred by an Average Family for a Child in Class V in a Primary School in Faridpur.

1.6	Pages: 15,17-22,43,57	Chapter 4: Commitments, Legislation and Reality - An Analysis of Documents (Constitutional article no.26,27, National literacy policy, The fifth five-year Plan, National Education Policy , Reflection of Commitments on Reality) Chapter 6. Analysis and Interpretation (Area: 11 & A case study of a schoolteacher of Diapara).
<b>2. Review of 'best practice'</b>		
2.1	Pages: XII-XIV, 2-7	iv. Definitions Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework (Guaranteeing Rights to Education of Children with Disabilities Present Scenario, Placement Policy, Educational Settings Learning Environment, Outcomes, Special Focus on Inclusive Education- Nine Golden Rules of I.E) Chapter 4: Commitments, Legislation and Reality - An Analysis of Documents
2.2	Pages: 37 - 38	Chapter 6. Analysis and Interpretation ( Area: 6)
2.3	Pages: 45 - 51	Chapter 6: Analysis and Interpretation (Area Thirteen: Learning Performances of children with disabilities, PAT and its application in the study, Finding on Learning Performances, Performance of children with disabilities, Discussion)

<b>TOR Reference No.</b>	<b>Page no. According to Availability</b>	<b>Heading</b>
2.4	Pages: 22-27	Chapter 4: Commitments, Legislation and Reality: An Analysis of Documents; Neighboring Country Practices- India, Pakistan, Nepal, Srilanka.

2.5	Pages: 15-22	Chapter 4. Commitments, Legislation and Reality: An Analysis of Documents;
<b>3. Policy options for Bangladesh</b>		
3.1	Pages: 63-71	Chapter 7. Policy options and critique; Three Tire Role
3.2	Pages: 63-71	Chapter 7. Policy options and critique; Three Tire Role
3.3	Pages: 63-71	Chapter 7. Policy options and critique; Three Tire Role
3.4	Pages: 71-76	Three Tire Role & Recommendations
<b>4. Commentary for policy development</b>		
4.1	Pages:	Chapter:8 Suggested National Plan of Action
4.2	Pages:	Chapter:8 Suggested National Plan of Action
4.3	Pages:	Chapter:8 Suggested National Plan of Action
4.4	Pages:	Chapter:8 Suggested National Plan of Action

## Appeal for Donor Support \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of conducting this study, CSID is committed to furthering the rights of children with disabilities to education through the following actions.

We would like to engage in discussions with potential development partners and collaborators regarding:

1. It is necessary to develop a nationally Standardized Screening Procedure to identify children with disabilities. CSID has all the expertise and facilities to develop such tool.
2. It is essential to validate the Conceptual Framework proposed to the government through this study in rural and urban settings in order to make it more need oriented and realistic. To do this CSID is planning to develop an urban model and a rural model of the conceptual framework for initiating Action Research on it.
3. There is no existence of Placement Policy for the enrollment of children with disabilities in different educational settings. It requires the assessment of aptitude and performance of children with disabilities through formal tests and screening the child. There is absence of

such test. CSID would like to develop such tests and design a placement policy for the children with disabilities.

4. On the basis of study findings, there is a scope to develop materials, which would raise awareness, facilitate teaching and clear the concept in grass-root level.
5. The study findings reflect that there is a huge demand of train up teachers (specifically subject based training) in different educational settings to develop their skills and ideas for better management of children with disabilities. It requires both the government and non-government efforts to change the situation. CSID would like to participate in modifying Teachers' Training Curriculum with the government and simultaneously would like to initiate in-depth training for school teachers and practitioners to fulfill the massive and immediate need of development of human resources in this regard.