

# Final Evaluation Report

---

Active communities for humanitarian engagement (BD1873); Reduction of child labour (BD1936); Promotion of ECD (BD1985); Ending violence against women and girls (BD1874); Child agency for protection (BD1935); Adolescent and youth development for social change (BD1934)

Bangladesh, 2020

# ACRONYMS

ECD	Early Childhood Development
IGA	Income Generating Activity
KII	Key Informant Interview
PECE	Primary Education Completion Examination
SMC	School Management Committee
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
WCS	Working Children School

**Executive summary extracted from document “Integrated Evaluation of the Development Projects implemented by Educo Bangladesh in 2020” by A M Rasheduzzaman Khan, in Bangladesh in February 2019.**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

Educo Bangladesh designed and implemented 10 development projects in 2020. Before entering the new strategic cycle (2020-2030) fully, Educo Bangladesh undertook an integrated evaluation of the 06 internally funded projects with a view to assessing the achievements including overall effectiveness of the interventions and capturing the lessons learnt. This document is a summary of the evaluation outcomes of those six development projects, which are:

- **Building Active Communities for Humanitarian Engagement (BACHE) (Project Code: BD1873):** This project implemented in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Mymensingh during the period from May 2018 to December 2020. The overall objective of this project is to support school authority, education personnel, learners, and community to build a safer and secure learning environment from natural and manmade disaster
- **Reduction of child labour in urban areas through education and awareness (Project Code: BD1936):** This project was implemented in 5 urban slums (Korail, Banshbari, Hazaribag, Shampur, and Nayanagar) of Dhaka city in 2020. It aimed to contribute to reducing worst form of child labour in Slum areas of Dhaka City.
- **Promote ECD Opportunities and Quality Primary Education in Bangladesh (Project Code: BD1985):** The specific target of the project is (a) to promote early childhood development (ECD) opportunities through ensuring inclusive and community based ECD centers and (b) strengthen right to quality education through a collaborative and creative education systems and process in Educo primary schools. It was implemented in Dhaka, Gazipur, Mymensingh and Narayanganj Districts in 2020.
- **Promoting protective and safe environments for children's overall well-being through Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (Project Code: BD1874):** The project aims to reduce violence against women and girls that contribute to the overall well-being of the children through creating supportive environment in the family and communities. The previous year project had piloted in five communities in five Dhaka city and Bhaluka of Mymensingh district. Based on experience, it was scaled up across further ten communities
- **Children agencies makes system accountable to child protection (Project Code- BD1935):** This project aims to promote child protection in 28 communities in Dhaka (11), Narayanganj (1), Mymensingh (9) and Gazipur (7). It is expected to result in: (a) enhanced children agency to raise their issue. (b) Community Based Child Protection System strengthened to respond child protection issues, and (c) Local governance system demonstrated accountability towards child protection, especially child marriage
- **Adolescents and Youth Development for Social Change (Project Code: BD1934):** The project implemented in 28 targeted communities of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Mymensingh districts from January 2020 – December 2020. The overall objective of the project is to empower adolescents and youth to exercise active citizenship.

## METHODOLOGY APPLIED

The evaluation employed a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative research tools. The sequence of the mixing was designed to ensure the effectiveness of the quantitative tools to support the qualitative ones.

The review of the related documents and the secondary sources helped to establish the key insights of the project.

Considering the Covid-19 context, a small purposive sample of the project participants – children, adolescents and parents through distant data collection approach (survey interview over mobile phone then posting to web base Solstice software) provided their reflections of the project. The same approach (mobile phone, Solstice software) applied for collecting qualitative data using KII tools.

Downloading from Solstice software, the data were organized in excel based system. Survey data was analyzed with SPSS and KII data with standard qualitative data analysis protocols.

### Challenges related to the methodology

COVID 19 context narrowed the scope of carrying out the planned evaluation activities and they were done alternatively by limiting the sample size. Secondly, data from parents and adolescents collected over mobile interview technique and a number of technology related challenges were to overcome. Thirdly, absence of baseline data made the evaluation team restrained from comparative analysis of the progress fully in line with the indicators. Finally, since it was not possible to collect information for each indicator of the projects, progress against some indicators had to be measured based on the data as of the 2019 report.

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

### Building Active Communities for Humanitarian Engagement (BACHE) (Project Code- BD-1873)

- The achievement of the indicators for the general objective (To build a disaster resilient schools and communities in Educo working areas) is more than 80%.
- The indicator of the Specific Objective shows that boys have more access to safer education and secure environment. The youth claim (100%) more regarding boys' access to safer education in safer environment than that of girls than the parents do (63%), both youth and parents informed that 63% of the girls got access to safer education and secure environment that minimizes the impact of disaster and promote gender equality.

### Reduction of child labour in urban areas through education and awareness (Project Code – BD 1936)

- As per Monitoring Report 2019, 99% students passed the public examination (PECE) in 2019 with excellent records (A+15%, A 59%) and 100% of them entered the secondary level.

### Promoting protective and safe environments for children's overall well-being through Ending Violence against Women and Girls (Project Code BD 1874)

- Among the parents, more than 90% (male 94% and 82% female) claimed their knowledge of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) increased and they recognized VAWG as criminal offence, while among the youth/adolescent, 100% girls and 98% boys claimed their increased knowledge of VAWG.

- The data shows that more than 90% of the survey participants knowledge on gender equality increased and about a quarter female and girls and over one third male and boys protested cases of VAWG, while 18% female and 21% male raised their voice for the victim of VAWG.

#### **Children agencies make system accountable to child protection (Project Code- BD 1935)**

- Over 70% of the parents claimed that incidence of corporal punishment had reduced.
- 52% parents and 59% youth claimed that the prevalence of child marriage was decreasing, which is more than the target (25%).

#### **Adolescents and Youth Development for Social Change (Project Code – BD 1934)**

- 75% (59% girls & 90% boys) youth have knowledge on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, against a target of 50%.
- 94% girls and women are managing their menstrual in hygienic way by using sanitary pad, clean cloth and tissue, against a target of 60%.

## **ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION CRITERIA**

### **Relevance**

The projects promoted education status of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in both rural and urban areas under the programmatic areas 1 & 2 aligned with the needs and priorities of the GoB following the respective laws, policies and strategy documents. These three projects addressed the needs of the local communities through stimulating access to ECD and formal primary schools, improving quality of teaching and learning, and building management capacity of SMCs. Educo schools demonstrated quality education environment.

2 projects (BD 1985 and BD 1874) under PA-3 (Children Free from Violence and Exploitation) to protect the children from abuse, negligence, violence and exploitation has been highly relevant to the overall child rights needs in Bangladesh.

The project (BD 1934) under the PA -4 (Promotion of social transformation through adolescent and youth development) aims to empower adolescents and youth to exercise active citizenship. It has encouraged adolescents and youth to share their views, raise their voices or question to adults on matters affecting their lives. The project (BD 1934) provided IGA training to address the unmet need of youth.

### **Coherence**

Educo Bangladesh projects are complementary to the national policy and plans, particularly to the National Education Policy (2010), 7th and 8th Five-year plan, Education-Sector-Plan of Bangladesh (2020-21-2024-25), the National Disaster Management Policy 2015. European Union (European Commission) UNICEF, UNESCO, Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and World Bank funded Educo initiatives. The projects are also in line with the PEDP4, the national programme for primary education development for the period 2018-23.

The intervention for reducing child labour in urban area is aligned with the commitment of Bangladesh Government to eliminate hazardous child labour by 2021 and all other forms of child labour by 2025.

The action to reduce VAWG and promote gender equality is aligned with Bangladesh Government priorities and commitment as per the constitution, Women Development Policy, National Action Plan (2018-2030) including the National Women Development Policy, 2013 and National Plan of Action to End Child Marriage 2018-2030.

### **Efficiency**

We have to note that, since 17 March, almost all the activity implementation postponed or suspended in COVID-19 pandemic context, there is naturally under-accomplishment. Thus, it is unwise to draw confirm conclusion of quality performance.

Despite of such unavoidable challenges, the responses of the surveyed parents and adolescents indicated about full achievements or almost full achievement as per the results indicators. Based on accomplishment report up to June 2020 and results of the survey, the efficiency level of the projects found high.

### **Effectiveness**

As per half yearly report, 39 ECD centres established, and 780 children enrolled. All of the enrolled children received textbooks. In the first quarter, 63 days joyful interactive learning sessions were conducted both at Educo schools and community based ECD centres. The parents opined, the ECD students completed their cycle, entered the next grade.

Report on 'Current education status of the children during the long-time school closures in 2020' indicates that regular communication with children and parents over telephone by the Educo teachers worked well and 70% students achieved competency to score 40% to 50% marks in small-scale formal assessment test. Also, corporal punishment and child marriage reduced in the working area

### **Sustainability**

Already a portion of the Educo operated ECD learner mainstreamed to pre-primary level after their graduation. In 2021, they were enrolled in Pre-primary level and the Grade V students promoted to the Grade-VI. Many of the Educo School learners are continuing their education despite of COVID-19 and during and after the other disasters in their community.

School Management Committee provided proactive cooperation to Educo, which indicates, in the long run, they will be able to take full responsibility of the institute. Different forums are continuing their meetings regularly.

### **Impact**

The immediate effects of the intervention designed under Programmatic Areas 3 are: (a) girls and boys of Educo operated school continued education during or after the disaster, (b) knowledge of male-female-boys and girls on VAWG and gender equality increased, they recognised VAWG as a criminal offence, a portion of the project stakeholders protested against VAWG and raised their voice against VAWG, (c) child marriage in the projects areas reduced, (d) IGA training recipients applied their skill acquired from the training to income activities, (e) youth and adolescent forum became vibrant organisation and they are participating in different development activates as well as issue based awareness raising activities.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICE

1. In terms of school location, some urban schools experienced unhealthy noise from the small industries around. Moreover, the classroom found too congested for the number of children.
2. Govt. and Educo supported schools lack menstruation management facility for the girls. Therefore, adolescent girls be absent in class during menstruation.
3. Considering the present scope of communication technology, distant method of education seems to be crucial in future education activities even in pandemic free time.
4. Due to long term school vacation for pandemic, both students and parents are frustrated for remaining without association and sharing. Effective mechanism would be crucial to healing children's mental pressure in the future education programme.
5. No remarkable progress in livelihood intervention. Group members being in scattered locations have not been followed up well and joint IGA activities could not succeed. New group formation process must keep the lesson in mind for designing future IGA intervention for the youth.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### General recommendations

- Considering the COVID-19 context, the project may be extended for at least another year with the ongoing activities or by merging with any relevant future project.
- A comprehensive assessment is needed for better planning by following the already developed Country Programmatic Framework for 2021 – 2025 for ensuring the best benefit of the target groups in the changed context of the CORONA and the affected world.
- Baseline value for each indicator should be specified at the inception of the project to monitor and track progress and measure effectiveness and results achieved during and after the implementation of the project interventions.
- Since Educo will implement its project through partnership approach from 2021, One Channel Reporting method should be established, and web and multi-user based MIS can be Introduced.

### Specific recommendations

- To revitalize education activities in the after-pandemic and after-vacation context, there should be a situation-adaptable plan for reopening of the schools. Conducting assessments to estimate learning gaps and prepare educative or accelerated learning programmes may be effective.
- Intensive Community Mobilization initiative can be an option for ensuring parents' engagement in education process for the most marginalized children.
- Besides technological supports, the learning need assessment and distant pedagogical skills for accelerated curricula and differentiated learning strategies should be introduced for coping with the after-pandemic schooling.
- Child protection interventions should be continued through ongoing and future projects especially for the marginalized and hard-to-reach communities.

- To fulfill the adolescents and youth needs, Educo Bangladesh should further expand programming for adolescents/youth, ensuring their involvement in SRH governance and advocacy initiatives.
- Continuous follow-up of the groups is needed for the sustainability of the project intervention. Mentorship and guidance can be the approaches of the follow-up activities.
- Educo should undertake initiative to link the youth and adolescent forums for creating synergies among and/or between them to better influence the authorities and committees to widen their scope of work and participation. Coordination meetings and solidarity events can be organized in this respect.
- Educo Bangladesh should reinforce linkages to local, national and international campaigns, community level dialogues and campaigns to prevent child marriage, gender-based violence, sexual harassment etc.
- Educo should undertake initiative to establish linkage between the IGA training recipients and the financial institutes for ensuring their startup capital.
- A smart phone-based app-driven comprehensive communication system among community members, public extension workers and project personnel can be established. This will allow the communities to establish instant access to health, response to VAWG, IGA and disaster-related public service providers at local level, media and the respective NGOs.
- Educo may seek more intensive connectivity with community radio to aware and increase knowledge sharing of and among the community people on gender equality, VAWG and child marriage. Youth and adolescent can be engaged in developing programme for the community radio as well as the active listeners of community radio programme.