

CAMPAIGN FOR POPULAR EDUCATION (CAMPE) BANGLADESH CSO SPOTLIGHT KEY MESSAGES ON SDG 4

Accelerating actions for transformative and resilient education amidst COVID-19



BANGLADESH

Population:

164,689,383 (2020)

2020 Global Index Score:

63.5

2020 Global Index Rank:

109

SDG 4 Dashboard:

Challenges remain

SDG 4 Trend:

↑ On track

SDG 10 Dashboard:

Significant challenges

HDI Value/Rank:

0.614, 135 (UNDP, 2019)

GNI per Capita:

USD 1,940 (WB, 2019)

Secondary Net Enrolment:

53.10% (2018)

Literacy Rate

(15 years & older):

Total: 73.91%

Female: 71.18%

Male: 76.67%

(UNESCO, 2018)

Education Expenditure:

2.09% of GDP

11.69% of the total government expenditure

CAMPE recognises that Bangladesh has made visible progress in selected SDG indicators during the past few years, including GDP growth, poverty reduction, access to education, and women participation. The Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2020 report of Bangladesh has indicated that inclusive policy, social safety-net strategy, and institutional mechanisms, among others, have contributed towards achieving SDGs.

Between VNRs 2017 and 2020, while progress has been made in terms of enrolment, about 4 million children remain out of school, including working children, persons with disabilities, indigenous children, and children living in remote areas or slums. The government statistics show that, at the secondary level, the enrolment of children from poor households is at 76.8%, compared to 86% from non-poor households. Urban poor households are worse off in sending their children to schools urban (68.1%) compared to rural households.

Quality is a significant concern at all levels of education. The proportion of grade 9 students who mastered grade 8-level competencies in Bangla (Mother Language), English, and Mathematics is troubling, only at 44%, 44%, and 35%, respectively. In class five, it is 25% for Bangla and 24% for Mathematics.

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed the entire development graphs with reversal trends, uncertainties, and risks for the education sector, among others. Schools have been closed since 18 March 2020, which has led to continuing learning loss.

Although the government has initiated alternative learning programmes through television, internet, radio, and mobile phone, but the most marginalised are yet to get access to those services. Strengthening Information and communications technology (ICT) based learning environment, including the supply of ed-tech at the school level and capacity building of teachers, is critical.

A Rapid Response Survey was carried out by CAMPE in April-May 2020, which revealed that children from the most marginalised backgrounds face more trauma or stress-related challenges, as well as limited access to distance learning opportunities through television, internet, radio, and mobile phone. They also lack a conducive learning environment at home. Many non-literate parents and guardians are not aware of their role as caregivers to deal with trauma and facilitate learning at home. These learners are at high risk of being dropouts, and victims of early marriage and violence, among others.

It is essential that the SDG 4 Strategic Framework for Bangladesh be fully implemented. For this to be achieved, it is recommended to use the National Indicator Framework for collecting robust and disaggregated data and use the data collected to inform decisions and policies and to push for evidence-based advocacies. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has also become increasingly important to implement education in emergency response.

CAMPE has recommended developing an Education Recovery Plan for two to three years (2020-23) to stop the reversal process and recover the learning loss, with the help of the collection and analysis of robust, disaggregated data. To protect the gains in education and prevent the roll-back, the education budget needs to be raised to 15% of the National Budget. It is also paramount that more and judicious formula-based financing be employed to ensure better and targeted use of available resources.

¹ See: Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016



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