



## **Embracing diversity in ASIA through the adoption of Inclusive Open Practices**

**618615-EPP-1-2020-1-UKEPPKA2-CBHEJP**

**WP2 – Development**

**D2.1c – Advancing Inclusive Education: A Comprehensive Analysis of Current  
Policies and Their Impact in Bangladesh – A BUET Viewpoint**

**A White Paper**

**Version – FINAL**

**WP Lead – NTU**

**Contributors: BUET (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, P4)**

**Edited and Compiled by NTU**

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## Contents

Introduction .....	4
National policies .....	5
References: .....	6
Policies and Initiatives Incorporated by NGOs .....	8
BRAC Education Program (1970s-onwards) .....	8
Handicap International in Bangladesh (Now Humanity & Inclusion) (1997-onwards).....	8
The Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (1998-onwards).....	8
Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) Reports (2022).....	9
Educating Children in Difficult Circumstances: Children with Disabilities (2002) .....	9
Save the Children's Inclusive Education Projects (Early 2000s-onwards).....	9
UNICEF initiatives: (2020-onwards) .....	9
World Learning and Sightsavers Collaboration (2020).....	10
National Survey on Persons with Disabilities: (2021) .....	10
ActionAid Bangladesh's Initiatives (1983-onwards) .....	10
Liliane Foundation's "Breaking Down Barriers" Study: (2015-onwards).....	10
UNESCO IIEP and Technology-Based Education (2014-onwards) .....	10
UNESCO's Accessible Reading Materials (ARM) Initiative:.....	10
SAJIDA Foundation's Response Framework (2021): .....	11
The Disability Alliance on SDG Implementation (2017-onwards).....	11
16. Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Involvement (Early 2000s-onwards) .....	11
17. USAID's Shobai Miley Shikhi Project (Early 2022-onwards) .....	11
References: .....	11
Review of Policies of Inclusive Education by Researchers .....	12
1. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh.....	12
2. Title: Variables affecting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Bangladesh .....	13
3. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Practice.....	14
4. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Are the Guiding Principles Aligned with Successful Practices? .....	14
5. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Digging Deeper into Educational Prospects of Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh .....	14
6. Title: Opportunities and barriers to the implementation of effective inclusive practice in Bangladeshi primary school .....	14
7. Title: SDG 4: A Review of Challenges - Bangladesh Perspective.....	15



8. Title: e-Learning as a Double-Edged Sword for Academic Achievements of University Students in Developing Countries: Insights from Bangladesh? .....	15
9. Title: Digitalisation of Higher Education to Achieve Sustainability: Investigating Students' Attitudes Toward Digitalisation in Bangladesh .....	15
10. Title: Inclusive Higher Educational Opportunity and Environments to Achieve SDG4 in Bangladesh: Lessons from Japan .....	16
Recommendations .....	16
References .....	17

# Current State of Policies of Inclusion in Bangladesh Higher Education Institutions and their Impact

## Introduction

*"A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones."  
— Nelson Mandela*

The core education system of Bangladesh, evolving in the shadow of the 1971 Liberation War, faces its own unique challenges in fostering an inclusive environment. This period, marking the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation, has also set the stage for addressing issues of inclusion across various social dimensions. Unlike India's historic colonisation, Bangladesh's journey of inclusion is significantly influenced by its struggle for independence and the ensuing efforts to rebuild a war-torn society. This struggle has played a pivotal role in shaping policies geared towards inclusive education, particularly in recognising the diverse needs of its population.

Post-independence, the country has made considerable strides in addressing inclusion in education. The journey from the aftermath of the Liberation War to the current state reflects a gradual but steady progression towards a more inclusive educational landscape. However, the road has not been without obstacles.

One of the key challenges in Bangladesh has been the integration of marginalised communities, including people with disabilities and ethnic minorities, into the mainstream education system. The Bangladeshi government has taken notable steps in this regard, such as the enactment of the Disability Rights and Protection Act in 2013, which expanded the rights and protections for people with disabilities (SIDA, 2014).

The data indicates a gradual increase in educational inclusivity. For instance, the net enrolment rate in primary education has seen a significant rise, with concerted efforts to include children from all socio-economic backgrounds. However, the challenge remains in higher education and vocational training, where disparities are more pronounced.

The intersectionality of socio-economic factors such as poverty, gender, and location continue to impact the inclusivity of education in Bangladesh. For instance, while the gender gap in primary education enrolment has narrowed, challenges persist in keeping girls in secondary education, particularly in rural areas.

Bangladesh has recognised the importance of addressing inclusivity within its educational framework. Policies are increasingly acknowledging the need for a supportive environment that caters to the equal rights of every citizen, although implementation remains a work in progress.

This report systematically gathers and analyses the various constitutional provisions, laws, public policies, and programs in Bangladesh that significantly impact the realm of inclusive education. The emphasis is on ensuring equal opportunities for all children, particularly those with special needs, and facilitating their equal participation and learning within the educational system.

The analysis is organised into three distinct sections for clarity and depth. The first section delves into the policies developed by the government of Bangladesh. This includes a review of constitutional mandates, legislative acts, and governmental initiatives that underpin the framework for inclusive education. The second section shifts focus to the contributions of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in promoting inclusive education. This part of the report examines the various programs, initiatives, and advocacy efforts undertaken by NGOs to enhance inclusivity in the educational sector of Bangladesh. Finally, the third section presents a comprehensive review of the research on inclusive education in Bangladesh. This includes academic studies, field research, and policy analyses that offer insights into the effectiveness, challenges, and progress of inclusive education in the country. This section aims to provide a scholarly perspective, highlighting areas of success and those requiring further attention and improvement.

## National policies

The government of Bangladesh has developed a regulatory environment that encourages individuals with disabilities to engage fully in society. Existing legislation, regulations, and obligations to the CRPD and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensure that all children receive an equal education.

Bangladesh has been authorised through its 1972 Constitution to create a "uniform, mass-oriented, and universal system of education and extend free and compulsory education to all children" (Bangladesh Const. Act 367, art. 17) and protect its people against discrimination on the grounds of "religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth" in "admission to any educational institution" (Bangladesh Const. Act 367, art. 28). The National Action Plan on Disability and the Government's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy (Articles 7) have also adopted the case of accessibility for persons with disabilities, ensuring the protection of their rights across all government and non-government services (Bhattacharjee, 2023).

The Primary Education Act of 1990 granted all children access to compulsory primary education (Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, Act 27, 1990). In 1995, the first National Disability Policy was enacted, establishing standards to guarantee that disabled people obtain accurate diagnosis, education, treatment, and employment, along with several other basic rights (SIDA, 2014). In 1996, a framework to implement this policy was adopted. Bangladesh established a novel educational policy in the year 2000 that recognised the principle of incorporating children with special-needs into conventional education (NFD, 2000). The Bangladesh Parliament passed "The Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act (2001)," which is a substantial disability regulation (Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act, 2001). A National Coordination Committee on the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities (charged with organising all government of Bangladesh impairment efforts) then established the National Disability Initiative on Disability in 2006 (CRPD, 2018). The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was enacted by Bangladesh on November 30, 2007, and the objective of that report was to analyse the facts and circumstances of disabled people in Bangladesh to address the

aforementioned civil rights issues, as well as provide recommendations to the Bangladeshi government on how to ensure that initiatives to strengthen the rights of disabled people are successful (Rowshan et al., 2019). Under the National Education Policy 2010, equitable prospects were provided for all forms of disabled and impoverished students and decreased distinctions among diverse socio-economic, ethnic, and socially disadvantaged children (Malak et al., 2013). The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2013 guaranteed equality and the right to education for people with impairments, however it established a relatively restricted concept of inclusive education as schooling offered solely to children with special needs (ILO, 2013). To cater to the needs of the most vulnerable citizens with neurodevelopmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorders, the Persons with Neuro-Developmental Disability Trust Act 2013 was instituted (Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, Law 52, 2013). The prospective National Education Act of 2016 is intended to include regulations aimed at improving educational standards by ensuring that all children attend school (MoEdu, 2016). Despite the existence of key legal provisions that favour inclusion, there are requirements that directly or indirectly promote segregation. In the year 2019, an integrated special education policy including neuro-developmental disabilities came into place, and disability-inclusive education reached a number of significant breakthroughs (NDDTrust, 2022).

According to the Seventh Five-Year Plan (FY2016–FY2020), students with impairments and specific needs received insufficient assistance. Inclusionary education initiatives are confined to children with moderate physical impairments, excluding those with more severe physical disabilities from school. Because of this, the government of Bangladesh enhanced funding for inclusive education (GED, 2015).

Afterwards, key developments included the implementation of inclusive teacher education programs, highlighted by a 2020 study that emphasised the need for comprehensive training for government primary school teachers in inclusive education practices (Siddik et al., 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus shifted to disability-inclusive digital learning, with initiatives like the the Accessible Reading Materials (ARM) program ensuring continued learning for students with disabilities (UNESCO IIEP, 2021). The National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2021 provided crucial data for refining these policies, highlighting the need for more inclusive infrastructure and educational policies (BBS, 2022). In 2022, discussions led by the Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO and the Ministry of Education focused on transforming education through initiatives like the national competency-based curriculum framework and the blended education initiative, aiming to create a resilient and inclusive education system (UNESCO, 2022). One of the goals of the 8th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025), which provides incentives to improve access to the educational system and other activities for disabled children, is to increase the number of "primary schools with accessible architecture and materials" for disabled children from 34% to 80% by 2025 (GED, 2022).

## References:

1. SIDA. (2014). Disability Rights in Bangladesh. Retrieved Jan 4, 2024 from <https://cdn.sida.se/app/uploads/2021/05/10142908/rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-bangladesh.pdf>.
2. Bhattacharjee, V. (2023, September). *To be Digital is to be inclusive*. a2i. Retrieved Jan 4, 2024 from <https://a2i.gov.bd/to-be-digital-is-to-be-inclusive/>.

3. Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, Law 52 (November, 2013). Law 52 of 2013 - Protection of persons with neuro-developmental disability trust act. (Shuchona Foundation Trans.) Retrieved Jan 4, 2024 from <https://www.shuchona.org/storage/app/media/Neuro-Trust-Act-2013-20-Jan-1.pdf>.
4. Bangladesh Const. Act 367, art 17. Free and compulsory education. Retrieved Jan 4, 2024 from <http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-367/section-24565.html>.
5. Bangladesh Const. Act 367, art 28. Discrimination on grounds of religion, etc.. Retrieved Jan 4, 2024 from <http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-367/section-24576.html>.
6. Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, Act 27 (1990). Primary Education (Compulsory) Act, 1990.
7. Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act-2001 (Law 12 of year 2001). Retrieved January 5, 2024 from <http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-print-854.html>.
8. United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2018). Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Initial report submitted by Bangladesh under article 35 of the Convention.
9. R. Rowshan, Z. Hossain, M. Islam, J. Hossain (2019). Alternative Report- Bangladesh for the adoption of the list of issues by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) *Situation of Persons with Disabilities Belonging to Minorities*.
10. International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2013) GUIDE FOR BUSINESS ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. Retrieved January 4, 2024 from [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---ifp\\_skills/documents/publication/wcms\\_633424.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_633424.pdf).
11. Malak, M. S., Begum, H. A., Habib, M. A., Shaila, M., & Roshid, M. M. (2013). Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Practice.
12. Ministry of Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (MoEdu) (2016). National Education Act. Retrieved on January 4, 2024 from <https://almamunmunna.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/sikkha-ayin-2016.pdf>.
13. Neuro-Development Disability Protection Trust (NDDTrust), Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2022). Terms of Reference (ToR) of Special Education Curriculum Development for Persons with Neuro-Developmental Disorders in Bangladesh.
14. General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2015). Seventh Five Year Plan FY2016-FY2020 Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens.
15. Siddik, M. A. B., & Kawai, N. (2020). Government Primary School Teacher Training Needs for Inclusive Education in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Whole Schooling*, 16(2), 35-69.
16. UNESCO IIEP; UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (2021). COVID 19, technology-based education and disability: the case of Bangladesh, emerging practices in inclusive digital learning for students with disabilities.
17. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Statistics and Informatics Division (SID), Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2022). National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2019 Project.
18. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2022). Changing course, transforming education in Bangladesh on International Day of Education 2022. UNESCO.org. Retrieved on Jan 5, 2022 from <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/changing-course-transforming-education-bangladesh-international-day-education-2022>.

19. General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2022). A Training Handbook on Implementation of the 8th Five Year Plan.
20. NFD. (2000). *National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons*.  
<http://www.jpuf.gov.bd/site/page/3dba2906-c3e1-4c76-a973-d2d03840e9e6/Introduction-of-Foundation>.

## Policies and Initiatives Incorporated by NGOs

The initial years post-independence were focused on rebuilding the nation and establishing basic educational frameworks. Over the decades, the focus gradually shifted towards inclusive education, with NGOs playing a pivotal role in advocating for the rights of disabled students. In the 21st century, various initiatives, often supported by international collaborations, were launched to address the specific needs of these students. This included the development of infrastructure, specialised training for educators, and the integration of inclusive policies into the mainstream education system. The government's commitment, alongside NGO efforts, has been crucial in enhancing the inclusivity of the education system, despite ongoing challenges such as infrastructure limitations and societal attitudes.

### **BRAC Education Program (1970s-onwards)**

Since the 1970s, BRAC has been providing inclusive education in Bangladesh. Their initiatives focus on community engagement, training teachers in inclusive education methods, and developing accessible learning materials. BRAC's programs often include support for children with disabilities, ensuring they have equal opportunities to learn and grow. They have also been instrumental in policy advocacy, working towards systemic changes to embed inclusivity in the national education framework. BRAC's holistic approach combines education with health and social services, recognising the needs of disabled children (Ahmed et al., 1993).

### **Handicap International in Bangladesh (Now Humanity & Inclusion) (1997-onwards)**

Humanity & Inclusion's work in Bangladesh involves support for people with disabilities. Their approach includes creating accessible environments, providing physical rehabilitation services, and promoting social inclusion. They work closely with local communities to raise awareness about the rights and capabilities of people with disabilities. Their educational initiatives often involve training teachers, adapting curriculums, and ensuring schools are physically accessible. Humanity and inclusion also play a crucial role in emergency response, ensuring the needs of disabled individuals are considered in disaster-prone areas (HI, 2024).

### **The Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (1998-onwards)**

The inclusivity of the Bangladeshi education landscape has been improved by the Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF). Their commitment to inclusive education in a variety of schools

has improved lives, giving opportunities where every child, regardless of ability, can thrive (BPF, 2024).

### **Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) Reports (2022)**

The CSID's comprehensive studies highlighted critical areas in the lives of disabled individuals in Bangladesh, including the challenges faced by women with disabilities. These reports provided valuable insights into the intersectionality of gender and disability, emphasising the need for tailored educational approaches. The findings have been pivotal in informing NGO initiatives and government policies aimed at enhancing inclusivity in educational settings. CSID's work also extends to advocacy and capacity-building, aiming to create a more inclusive society that recognises the potential and rights of all individuals (CSID, 2024).

### **Educating Children in Difficult Circumstances: Children with Disabilities (2002)**

The collaborative project between the Directorate of Primary Education and CSID in 2002 focused on one of the most vulnerable groups in the education sector – children with disabilities in challenging circumstances. This initiative sought to create learning environments that accommodate the diverse needs of these children. It involved developing inclusive education models, training teachers, and enhancing school infrastructure to be disability friendly. The project also worked on community awareness programs to change perceptions about disabilities and promote the inclusion of all children in mainstream education (Islam, Salahuddin, & Mahmud, 2016).

### **Save the Children's Inclusive Education Projects (Early 2000s-onwards)**

Since the early 2000s, Save the Children has been at the forefront of promoting inclusive education in Bangladesh. Their projects focus on various aspects, including teacher training, curriculum development, and creating inclusive classroom environments. Save the Children's initiatives also address broader societal attitudes towards disability, working towards building a more inclusive society. They collaborate with local communities, governments, and other stakeholders to ensure that educational interventions are sustainable and impactful. Their work is a testament to the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration in achieving inclusive education (UNESCO, 2014).

### **UNICEF initiatives: (2020-onwards)**

UNICEF's work in Bangladesh for inclusive education, particularly since 2020, has been focused on ensuring that children with disabilities have equal access to education. Key areas of their work include advocacy, awareness-raising, capacity-building of educational systems, and implementation support to close the gap between policy and practice. This approach aligns with global commitments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals, emphasising the right to education for all children (Grimes et al., 2021).

## **World Learning and Sightsavers Collaboration (2020)**

In 2020, World Learning and Sightsavers embarked on a significant collaboration to enhance inclusive education in Bangladesh. Utilising the TAAP toolkit's Social Inclusion Analysis, this partnership focused on identifying and addressing barriers within the education system for children with disabilities. The collaboration involved comprehensive fieldwork, including gathering input from families, children with disabilities, and disability organisations. This initiative underscores the importance of data-driven approaches and stakeholder involvement in developing effective inclusive education strategies (Sightsavers, 2021).

## **National Survey on Persons with Disabilities: (2021)**

This survey, conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics with support from UNICEF, revealed that 60% of children with disabilities aged 5–17 are not in education. The survey is instrumental in shaping policies and initiatives to ensure the rights of people with disabilities in Bangladesh. It found that only 65% of children with disabilities are enrolled in primary school and just 35% in secondary school (BBS, 2022).

## **ActionAid Bangladesh's Initiatives (1983–onwards)**

ActionAid Bangladesh has been involved in various projects to enhance the education of children with disabilities. Their efforts include policy advocacy, training educators, and providing direct support to children with disabilities to access education. ActionAid's work in Bangladesh demonstrates a commitment to systemic change and capacity building in the field of inclusive education (Kalim, 2008).

## **Liliane Foundation's "Breaking Down Barriers" Study: (2015-onwards)**

The Liliane Foundation's "Breaking Down Barriers" study represents a significant contribution to understanding inclusive education needs in Bangladesh. The study focuses on transitioning from specialised and integrated education to more inclusive systems, emphasising the role of school leaders and community engagement (Barriers Free, 2023).

## **UNESCO IIEP and Technology-Based Education (2014-onwards)**

UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) has focused on overcoming barriers to technology in education, which is crucial for inclusive education. This includes addressing the learning gap for persons with disabilities through technology, a need that became even more evident during the COVID-19 crisis (UNESCO IIEP, 2021).

## **UNESCO's Accessible Reading Materials (ARM) Initiative:**

Launched in 2014, the ARM initiative, led by the government of Bangladesh, focuses on ensuring virtual and regular reading access for all students, including those with disabilities. It was a response to the educational needs of students with print and learning disabilities, becoming particularly effective during the pandemic (UNESCO, 2021).

## **SAJIDA Foundation's Response Framework (2021):**

The SAJIDA Foundation formulated a response to the pandemic through a '4C framework', which included capability assessment, collaboration with stakeholders, compassionate leadership, and effective communication. This approach was aimed at managing the pandemic's impact in low- and middle-income countries like Bangladesh, emphasising the well-being of the population, including children with disabilities (Ahmed, Musarrat, & Kabir, 2023).

## **The Disability Alliance on SDG Implementation (2017-onwards)**

Formed in 2017, the Disability Alliance on SDG Implementation has been crucial in advocating for policy influence and mainstreaming disability in development conversations, including education. Their work underscores the importance of aligning national policies with global development goals to ensure inclusive education for all (Sightsavers, 2017).

## **16. Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Involvement (Early 2000s-onwards)**

Since the early 2000s, the GPE has supported countries like Bangladesh in creating inclusive education systems. Their focus on children with disabilities forms a key part of their strategy to ensure no child is left behind in the pursuit of education (GPE, 2024).

## **17. USAID's Shobai Miley Shikhi Project (Early 2022-onwards)**

Launched in 2022, the "Shobai Miley Shikhi" project by USAID is a groundbreaking initiative in Bangladesh's educational landscape. This five-year, \$18 million project aims to improve educational opportunities for primary school children in hard-to-reach areas, with a special focus on those with disabilities or special needs. The project encompasses training teachers, providing specialised learning materials, and engaging communities and advocacy organisations, highlighting a comprehensive approach to inclusive education (USAID Shobai Miley Shikhi, 2021).

Throughout recent times, the role of national and international NGOs has been crucial in advocating for and implementing inclusive education for disabled students in Bangladesh. These organisations have worked in various capacities, from grassroots mobilisation and community education to policy advocacy and capacity-building initiatives.

### **References:**

1. Ahmed, Manzoor; Chabbott, Colette; Joshi, Arun; Pandi, Rohini; Prather, Cynthia J., Ed. (1993) Primary education for all: learning from the BRAC experience, a case study.
2. Humanity and Inclusion (HI). Retrieved on January 4, 2024 from <https://www.hi.org/en/our-organisation>.
3. Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF). Retrieved on January 4, 2024 from <https://www.bpfbd.org/>.

4. Centre for Service and Information on Disability (CSID). Retrieved on January 4, 2024 from <https://www.csid-bd.com/>.
5. Islam, S., Salahuddin, M., & Mahmud, A. (2016). Primary teachers' understanding about inclusive education. *Primary Education Journal*, 8(1), 61.
6. UNESCO (2014). Save the Children Stands for Inclusive Education. Retrieved on January 4, 2024 from <https://www.savethechildren.org/content/dam/global/reports/education-and-child-protection/incl-ed-pos-ppr.pdf>.
7. Grimes, P., et al. (2021), Disability-Inclusive Education Practices in Bangladesh, United Nations Children's Fund Regional Office for South Asia, Kathmandu.
8. Sightsavers (2021). Sightsavers Global Annual Report 2020.
9. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) (2022). Report on National Survey on Persons with Disabilities (NSPD) 2021.
10. Tamanna Kalim (2008). Educational efforts of ActionAid. Retrieved January 4, 2024 from <https://bdeduarticle.com/educational-efforts-of-actionaid/>.
11. Barriers Free. (2023). Homepage - breaking down barriers. Retrieved January 4, 2024 from <https://www.barriersfree.org/>.
12. UNESCO IIEP; UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (2021). COVID 19, technology-based education and disability: the case of Bangladesh, emerging practices in inclusive digital learning for students with disabilities.
13. UNESCO. (2021). COVID 19, technology-based education and disability: The case of Bangladesh, Emerging practices in inclusive digital learning for students with disabilities. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377665>.
14. Ahmed, T., Musarrat, P., & Kabir, Z. N. (2023). Lessons learned from pandemic response to COVID-19 in Bangladesh: NGO-based emergency response framework for low- and middle-income countries. *BMC health services research*, 23(1), 656. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09643-w>.
15. Sightsavers (2017). The Disability Alliance on the SDG Implementation in Bangladesh. Retrieved January 4, 2024 from <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/disability-alliance-sdg-implementation-bangladesh>.
16. Global Partnership for Education (GPE). Retrieved January 4, 2024 from <https://www.globalpartnership.org/>.
17. USAID's Shobai Miley Shikhi (Everyone Learns Together) Activity | Research Funding. (2021, April 15). Retrieved January 4, 2024 from <https://researchfunding.duke.edu/usaide2%80%99s-shobai-miley-shikhi-everyone-learns-together-activity>.

# Review of Policies of Inclusive Education by Researchers

## 1. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh

Ahsan and Burnip (2007) present an in-depth examination of inclusive education in Bangladesh, especially for children with special needs. They highlight the contrast between Bangladeshi policies supporting inclusive education and the ground reality hindered by resource limitations. Their analysis compares Bangladesh's situation with that of developed countries, emphasising the wide gap in educational integration for children with disabilities. The authors propose collaborative initiatives between regular and special schools and advocate for the creation of special units in regular schools to foster inclusivity. Emphasising the need for inter-ministerial and inter-agency collaboration, they argue for improved implementation of inclusive education policies. This paper underscores the urgent need for effective execution of these policies in Bangladesh.

## **2. Title: Variables affecting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Bangladesh**

Ahmed et. al. (2012) discuss a study conducted in Bangladesh to examine the variables influencing teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education for students with disabilities in regular classrooms. The study collected data from 738 teachers in 293 government primary schools. The results indicated that perceived school support for inclusive teaching practices, previous success in teaching students with disabilities, contact with a student with a disability, gender, and educational qualification were significant predictors of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education.

The study highlights the significance of school support for inclusive teaching practices and the impact of teachers' previous success in teaching students with disabilities on their positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Additionally, the study found that teachers who had contact with a student with a disability in the classroom expressed more positive attitudes towards inclusion. The research also revealed that male teachers and those with lower educational qualifications had slightly more positive attitudes towards inclusion. The study emphasised the importance of providing adequate support to teachers and promoting successful experiences in teaching students with disabilities to enhance their attitudes towards inclusive education.

Furthermore, it discussed the context of inclusive education in Bangladesh, highlighting the country's policies and initiatives for ensuring education for all students, including those with disabilities. It emphasised the need for teacher training and the challenges of meeting the learning needs of children with disabilities in regular classrooms. The study recommended that educational administrators and teacher training providers consider these findings to promote inclusive education in primary schools in Bangladesh. The document concluded that improving school support, promoting successful experiences in teaching students with disabilities, and addressing demographic variables are crucial in fostering positive attitudes towards inclusive education among teachers.

The study contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of inclusive classrooms and provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and international organisations working on the implementation of inclusive education. The findings have implications for improving teacher attitudes and promoting inclusive practices in the context of Bangladesh and other developing countries facing similar challenges.

### **3. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Practice**

Malak et al. (2013) provide a comprehensive analysis of Bangladesh's inclusive education (IE) policies and their implementation. The study assesses the alignment of national IE policies with actual classroom practices, highlighting the gap between policy intentions and practical applications. It critically examines two major educational programs: the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) and the Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP), investigating their effectiveness in promoting inclusive education over several years. The study identifies challenges such as educators' limited understanding and attitudes towards inclusive education and the need for focused teacher training to enhance the practicality and effectiveness of IE policies in Bangladesh.

### **4. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Are the Guiding Principles Aligned with Successful Practices?**

Malak et al. (2014) critically examine the alignment of inclusive education (IE) policies with successful practices in Bangladesh. They assess how IE has been incorporated into the Bangladeshi education system since the international endorsement of IE in the 1994 Salamanca Statement. The study again reviews the two major projects, the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) and the Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP), evaluating their alignment with IE policies. The authors identify gaps in understanding and implementing IE among practitioners, noting that borrowed IE policies are often poorly contextualised. They highlight challenges like teachers' attitudes and lack of professional development, suggesting further research to better understand IE practices at the classroom level.

### **5. Title: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Digging Deeper into Educational Prospects of Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh**

Zulfiqar et al. (2018) explored the educational prospects of children with disabilities in targeted schools in Bangladesh. The study used quantitative and qualitative analysis, including community resource mapping, interviews, field observations, a quality assessment framework, and a literature review. It found that the enrolment rate of children with disabilities gradually decreased in the upper classes, with a significant decline observed from grade 1 to grade 4. Teachers in the targeted schools perceived the enthusiasm and responsiveness of children with disabilities positively. The research was conducted as part of the "Holistic Approach to Promotion of Inclusive Education (HOPE)" project by Save the Children in Bangladesh. The study also included a Quality Learning Environment (QLE) assessment in 45 government primary schools, identifying guiding principles for QLE, such as meeting emotional and psychological needs, active engagement, child-centred teaching, and involving parents and local communities.

### **6. Title: Opportunities and barriers to the implementation of effective inclusive practice in Bangladeshi primary school**

Uddin et al. (2022) discussed the opportunities and barriers to the implementation of effective inclusive practice in Bangladeshi primary schools. It highlighted the government's commitment to ensuring education for all, including children with disabilities, in line with the National Education Policy. The study aimed to explore the challenges and opportunities for effective inclusive practice in Bangladeshi primary schools through qualitative research involving teachers and administrative officers. The study identified various opportunities, such as national policies, financial support, and infrastructural development, aimed at promoting inclusive education. However, it also revealed significant barriers, including a lack of proper training for educators, insufficient teaching and learning materials, negative social attitudes, and rigidity of the curriculum. The participants emphasised the need for increasing social awareness, providing proper training, reforming the curriculum, and developing infrastructure to minimise the barriers and maximise opportunities for inclusive practice. The findings of the study provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers to understand the challenges and opportunities of implementing inclusive education in Bangladesh. The study recommended the provision of comprehensive training for educators, inter-agency collaboration, and improvements in school infrastructure to support effective inclusive practice. In conclusion, the study highlighted the complexities and nuances of implementing inclusive education in Bangladeshi primary schools and emphasised the importance of addressing the identified barriers to create a more inclusive learning environment for all students.

## **7. Title: SDG 4: A Review of Challenges - Bangladesh Perspective**

Akther et al. (2022), presented an extensive study on the challenges hindering Bangladesh from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which focuses on inclusive and quality education. The paper identified critical barriers such as poverty, educational quality issues, insufficient infrastructure, and systemic discrimination. It argued for significant policy reforms and enhanced collaborative efforts among stakeholders to address these challenges effectively. The study underscored the importance of targeted interventions and strategic planning to ensure the fulfilment of SDG 4 in the unique socio-economic context of Bangladesh.

## **8. Title: e-Learning as a Double-Edged Sword for Academic Achievements of University Students in Developing Countries: Insights from Bangladesh?**

Alam et al. (2022), provided a nuanced analysis of e-learning's impact on university education in Bangladesh. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews, to gauge the effectiveness of e-learning. It revealed how socio-economic disparities and the digital divide significantly affect students' access to and benefits from e-learning. The research highlighted the contrast between the potential benefits of digital learning and the challenges posed by limited access to technology and a lack of digital literacy among students. The findings underlined the need for policy interventions to bridge the gaps. The study was a call to action for both the government and educational institutions to re-evaluate and adapt their approach to digital learning.

## **9. Title: Digitalisation of Higher Education to Achieve Sustainability: Investigating Students' Attitudes Toward Digitalisation in Bangladesh**



Alam et al. (2023) investigated the attitudes of university students towards the digitalisation of higher education in Bangladesh. Their study, published in the *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, used a qualitative approach, including interviews with students from different socio-economic backgrounds. The research revealed varied perspectives on digitalisation, influenced by factors like access to technology, digital literacy, and socio-economic status. The findings suggest that while most students hold positive attitudes towards digital education, challenges like the digital divide and infrastructure inadequacies significantly impact these attitudes. The study highlights the need for comprehensive strategies to address these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of digital education in developing countries like Bangladesh.

### **10. Title: Inclusive Higher Educational Opportunity and Environments to Achieve SDG4 in Bangladesh: Lessons from Japan**

Islam et al. (2023), in their study, focussed on evaluating the inclusivity of higher education in Bangladesh and they draw lessons from Japan's approach. They apply justice theory and thematic analysis to understand barriers to inclusive education. The research identifies several obstacles, including economic constraints, institutional limitations, social biases, and educational disparities. Gender inequality and the lack of adequate facilities for students with special needs are also highlighted as significant issues. The study suggests that adopting strategies from Japan could aid in overcoming these challenges and help Bangladesh achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4. The authors emphasise the importance of policy reforms and institutional changes to create a more inclusive higher education environment in Bangladesh.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Laws:**

Enact laws that prohibit discrimination and require equal opportunities for all students.

### **2. Accessibility and Accommodations Regulations:**

Implement standards for accessibility and accommodations for students with disabilities, with monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

### **3. Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies:**

Develop policies to promote diversity, including affirmative action measures to increase the representation of underrepresented groups in higher education.

# References

1. Ahsan, M. T., & Burnip, L. (2007). Inclusive education in Bangladesh. *Australasian Journal of Special Education*, 31(1), 61-71.
2. Ahmmed, M., Sharma, U., & Deppeler, J. (2012). Variables affecting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Bangladesh. *Journal of research in special educational needs*, 12(3), 132-140.
3. Malak, M. S., Begum, H. A., Habib, M. A., Shaila, M., & Roshid, M. M. (2013). Inclusive education in Bangladesh: policy and practice. Australian Association for Research in Education.
4. Malak, M. S., Begum, H. A., Habib, M. A., Banu, M. S., & Roshid, M. M. (2014). Inclusive education in Bangladesh: are the guiding principles aligned with successful practices?. In *Equality in Education* (pp. 107-124). Brill.
5. Zulfiqar, B., Shahinujjaman, M., & Hossain, N. (2018). Inclusive education in Bangladesh: digging deeper into educational prospects of children with disabilities in Bangladesh. *European Journal of Education*, 1(1), 36-48.
6. Uddin, M. M., Rahman, M. M., Runa, F. H., Mizan, M. M. I., & Meeto, M. J. (2022). Opportunities and barriers to the implementation of effective inclusive practice in Bangladeshi Primary School. *IJARIE*, 8(2), 1465. ISSN(O)-2395-4396.
7. Akther, W. (2022). SDG 4: A review of challenges-Bangladesh perspective. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Informative Research and Review*, 2(1), 11-19.
8. Alam, M. J., Ogawa, K., & Islam, S. R. B. (2023). e-Learning as a doubled-edge sword for academic achievements of university students in developing countries: insights from Bangladesh. *Sustainability*, 15(9), 7282.
9. Alam, M. J., Hassan, R., & Ogawa, K. (2023). Digitalisation of higher education to achieve sustainability: Investigating students' attitudes toward digitalisation in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 5, 100273.
10. Islam, K. T., & Alam, M. J. (2024). Inclusive higher educational opportunity and environments to achieve SDG4 in Bangladesh: lessons from Japan. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 6, 100317.