

Guideline on GO-NGO collaboration for universal Pre-Primary Education (PPE) in Bangladesh

I. Background/Rationale

The Government of Bangladesh has made national and international commitment to achieve Education for All. Global and national experiences indicate that PPE contributes significantly towards increasing net enrollment ratio (NER) in primary education, and reducing dropouts and grade repetitions.

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) has approved an Operational Framework for universal Pre-Primary Education in March 2008. Accordingly, each Government run primary school will have a pre-primary class by 2012 and a national pre-primary curriculum is expected to be approved by the end of 2012. However, many challenges remain in achieving universal access to quality pre-primary education and professional capacity development, including training of teachers, for this purpose.

According to Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) 2009, less than 24 per cent of children aged 3-5 years are attending a preschool of any kind, the majority of which are run by NGOs and the private sector. Even if all Government supported primary schools (GPS/RNGPS/Community/ Experimental) successfully establish a pre-primary class as per Operational Framework, it is estimated that about 40% of the eligible children for pre-school will remain without access, if the criterion of the minimum teacher student ratio of 1:30 is applied. In any case, resource constraints hinder establishment of adequate numbers of primary schools and pre-schools in disadvantaged locations, such as, indigenous communities, urban slums, char, haor etc.

Existing government training facilities are over-burdened by the job of training primary school teachers. They will not be able to meet the needs for training a huge number of pre-school teachers expected to be recruited soon. Considering this situation, the operational framework provides the scope that MoPME will move towards universal PPE in partnership with NGOs and civil society organizations.

NGOs active in the field of early childhood development run about 30,000 preschools with the aim of preparing children for formal primary education. They, therefore, are in a position to be involved in supporting the expansion of preschool services and improving and maintaining their quality.

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) is a forum of GO-NGO collaboration and academic institution active in ECD including preschool services. A representative of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is a member of the Executive Committee of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN). The Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) is a well-established forum of NGOs active in basic education, including primary and preschool education and is an active member of BEN. BEN and CAMPE can play a facilitative and supportive role in promoting different aspects of GO-NGO cooperation as necessary and when asked by the government. This guideline is intended to indicate operational steps and actions to promote GO-NGO cooperation to achieve universal coverage of pre-primary education.

II. Purpose of the Guideline

Mobilizing and making best use of all available and potential resources for a combined/united effort towards fulfillment of short and long term vision and goals of ECD as mentioned in the PPE operational framework approved by MoPME in March 2008.

III. Basis for GO-NGO Cooperation

PPE operational framework specified that *"The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, on behalf of the government, has the responsibility of developing policy framework, facilitating coordination among all stakeholders and service-providers, setting standards for child friendly facilities and teaching-learning, helping mobilize necessary resources, and ensuring that the children's rights, wellbeing and interests are protected."*

"The non-government organizations, including education and development NGOs, community organizations and the private sector are the principal providers of services and mobilizers of resources for this purpose; their participation and effective involvement in policy-making, planning, monitoring and assessment and all other significant decision-making at national and local levels, therefore, are essential."

--, "Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education", MoPME, March 2008, p. 26.

Referring to the Operational Framework, , various areas of cooperation have been identified for GO - NGO Collaboration in Pre-Primary Education in Bangladesh, as stated below.

IV. Areas of Cooperation

1. Policy, planning and coordination

NGOs will continue to contribute, with appropriate facilitating role of the Bangladesh ECD Network and CAMPE, in -

- ☐ Policy formulation and policy revision process of Government as they contributed in designing PPE Operational Framework.
- ☐ Program planning and designing as they are contributing in PROG3 designing process
- ☐ Creating policy evidences through research program which may influence in designing further strategy of PPE
- ☐ Providing inputs through various committees such as PPE national coordination committee, PPE technical committee, PPE curriculum and Material development committee.

2. Achieving Universal coverage/access

- ☐ NGOs will play a complementary role in universalizing PPE. NGOs will continue to operate community based ECE on the basis of demand even after PPE is introduced in all Primary schools. NGO will submit proposals to DPE to implement community based PPE through a pre-designed format mentioning the demand and gap on the basis of the information from integrated database. DPE will verify the proposal and come to an agreement with the NGO with a valid proposal through signing a MOU to implement community based PPE in a particular area.

- ☐ Support from government includes supply of teaching learning materials produced by NCTB, access to government facilities (RNGPS, community school etc) to run PPE centers if available, access to training facilities of government to train PPE teachers of NGO, access to government PPE database and many other facilities mentioned in the MOU case by case. NGO will mobilize fund for teacher's salary, supplementary learning materials, rent of center if necessary, other monitoring and management cost.
- ☐ Government will provide partial support to NGOs to run PPE for children who will not be covered by the government programme as mentioned above as well as other forms of support according to signed MOU and availability of resources.
- ☐ PPE centers run by NGOs will follow the management structure mentioned in the PPE operational framework.
- ☐ Until development of national PPE curriculum and materials, NGOs will use their own PPE package and government will not provide any fund for this package.
- ☐ Guidelines for transition from Pre School to primary school will be developed as per the procedure mentioned in the PPE operational framework. NGO school opened under signed MOU with government, will be covered under this transition guideline and receive services as mentioned in the guideline.

3. Capacity development of PPE personnel

- ☐ District-wise trainer's pool consisting of GO-NGO trainers will be formed for providing PPE training to various personnel such as head teachers, teachers, supervisors and managers in coordination with PTIs. Training strategy and implementation plan will be designed for all PPE schools covered under government program and MOU. NGO's resource, capacity and facilities will be taken in to account while developing the joint strategy and plan for capacity development of PPE professional including teachers. Government will provide fund for implementing the plan according to availability of resources.
- ☐ Government will gradually develop a permanent system of professional development to increase the quality of services and institutionalized it. It may include different need-based training as well as certificate, diploma and masters course. NGOs will cooperate with regard to develop course and course materials, facilitating courses for developing and conducting these accredited courses on pre-primary education in collaboration with NAPE and other institutions offering teacher education, especially for preschool teachers. A joint plan will be developed considering expertise and resources of NGOs to develop the system and government will implement this plan with their own fund.

- ☐ For development of PPE professionals, government will initiate partnership with appropriate institutions including non-government ones for developing and operating certificate, diploma and masters course in early childhood education (ECE). The terms and conditions and funding modalities of partnership will be defined case by case considering the capacity of both government and institutions and taking into account the rules and regulations of the government.
- ☐ Government will take initiative for strengthening capacity of existing government technical organizations like NCTB, NAPE, PTI, and URC in the area of PPE. NGOs and other academic institutions with appropriate experience and technical capacity will be part of this initiative. Separate agreement will be signed with appropriate NGOs, institutes by clarifying role and responsibilities including fund involvement.
- ☐ Government may appoint NGOs with an appropriate experience on the field of PPE as a service provider to assist a school in setting up sound PPE.

4. Curriculum and materials development

- ☐ NGOs and academics will contribute in national PPE curriculum development, which will be led by NCTB as mentioned in the PPE operational framework. Government will provide fund for this initiative.

5. Community mobilization

- ☐ A strategy will jointly be developed with all concerned stakeholders based on mapping survey and integrated database to implement need based community mobilization activities on PPE. A resource mapping will be done considering strength, resource and technical expertise of all stakeholders. All relevant GO-NGOs will be on board to implement the strategy based on their capacity and location. An integrated implementation plan will be developed and implemented in coordination and leadership of DPE. NGOs will facilitate and implement the plan for different stakeholders like parents, teachers, CMC/SMC members and local people's representatives based on integrated plan. Government will mobilize fund for the implementation.
- ☐ NGOs will mobilize communities for ensuring their greater participation and engagement in PPE in providing financial and in kind contribution, such as teaching learning and play materials, and infrastructure development including donation of land.
- ☐ Government will create provision for parenting education defining outline and content. NGOs will provide parental education on ECE along with their roles and responsibilities in managing PPE centers as per approved outline of government.

- ☐ In respect of the above activities for community mobilization, the Bangladesh ECD Network and CAMPE will play a facilitative role.

6. Supervision, monitoring & reporting

Government will establish supervision and monitoring mechanism, involving NGOs to ensure minimum standard of PPE service delivery. All PPE centers of the government and the programme under MOU with NGOs will be monitored and supervised through a common mechanism. Roles and responsibilities of GO and NGOs will be clearly defined. Government will fund the common mechanism of supervision and monitoring while NGOs strength will also be used. The whole process will be led by PPE unit, DPE as mentioned in the PPE operational framework

7. Resource mobilization

- ☐ Government will provide fund for PPE centers under the government program and MOU as mentioned in the program document or MOU to implement PPE. NGOs will also mobilize fund for their component mentioned in the MOU. Government will fund for some common activities while NGOs will support government in implementing the activities.
- ☐ Government will create an enabling environment for NGOs to access various government funding mechanisms as per government rules and regulations to run PPE centers.
- ☐ NGOs will provide evidence based research findings for promoting PPE on the basis of their work and experience.

8. New Areas

New areas of collaboration may evolve in future, in light of experience in applying the present guideline, which will be taken into consideration through consultation mechanisms for GO-NGO Cooperation in pre-primary education.

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