Key Learnings

6 Challenges in the education sector

Primary school teachers in Char areas are often reluctant to attend their workplace and try to get transferred.

Centralized budget is insufficient for educational needs of rural areas.

Initiatives like **digital labs** in schools suffer greatly without quality teachers and instructors.

Working mothers do not have proper institutional facilities for their children's education.

The **salary structure and social status** of teachers are not enough to keep them motivated.

Most graduates do not have the skills required for **employment.**

6 Proposed solutions

Implementing a **school-specific teacher recruitment policy** in the primary schools of Char areas.

Constituency-focused budgets to fulfill the educational needs of rural people.

A **fair hiring process** in which qualified candidates for relevant subjects and labs will be appointed.

A **residential school system** can be introduced for the children of working mothers to reduce drop-out rates.

The **status of teaching profession** should be elevated to keep talented teachers motivated.

Technical education should be prioritized to reduce unemployment.

6 Key recommendations

To implement the existing policies and identify the gaps, **state-level monitoring** need to be ensured.

To address the learning loss due to COVID-19, **special educational program** should be introduced.

To ensure the quality of technical education, **public and private partnership** should be introduced.

To keep pace with the modern era, emphasis should be placed on the **futuristic learning** of children.

To ensure **country-wide skill development,** some large-scale initiatives need to be initiated.

To ensure the **educational rights** of the citizens a specific law should be formulated.

IID

PolicyConclave ❯
Educational Justice

The Conclave at a glance-

3 Days Event

26 Participants

4 Sessions

1 Agenda

6 Solutions

Key takeaways

School-specific **teacher recruitment** policy in primary education sector

Fair hiring process to ensure teaching quality

Promoting **technical education** to reduce unemployment

Public-private partnership to ensure quality technical education

National-level monitoring for overseeing the policy implementation

Special education program to address the learning loss

📅 The Conclave

The Institute of Informatics and Development (IID), in collaboration with the Parliamentarian Caucus on Social Justice and with support from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), organized a policy conclave on educational justice. This multi-day event brought together key policy stakeholders **to engage in a comprehensive discourse on the challenges of education sector in Bangladesh.** The primary aim was to identify and prioritize actionable solutions to address these challenges. The conclave took place from March 12 to 14, 2023, in Cox's Bazar, providing a residential setting for members of parliament, civil society leaders, civil servants, and education experts.

✏️ Session Highlights

Introductory session: educational justice is the way to social justice

The event commenced with an introductory session, emphasizing the paramount importance of educational justice in upholding the constitutional rights of individuals and promoting social justice. Syeed Ahamed, CEO of IID, highlighted this connection in his opening speech, stating, "**Access to education** is essential for social justice because it fosters awareness of one's constitutional rights."

Reflecting on 50 years of education in Bangladesh

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the education sector in Bangladesh, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Professor Emeritus at BRAC University, presented an insightful overview of the evolution of the country's education system over the past 50 years. Dr. Ahmed emphasized the need for

political leadership to shape the education landscape, stressing that education policies and administration should extend beyond bureaucracy. He advocated for a dedicated law that guarantees educational rights for all citizens.

Assessing the current state of education

After Dr. Ahmed set the tone of the discussion, the participants focused on the present situation of the education system, acknowledging the significant progress made over the past five decades. Notable advancements include the modernization of classrooms, the integration of digital technologies, the establishment of ICT labs in schools, and recent efforts to renew the curriculum and examination systems. However, participants also pointed out that segregations such as Bangla-English-Arabic mediums, public vs. private, or school vs. madrasah education systems have resulted in **unequal access** to quality education for all.

Prioritizing steps froward

During the subsequent phase of the discussion, participants presented their observations and recommendations regarding the challenges faced by the education sector. Key suggestions included:

School-specific recruitment in _Char_ areas: Tanvir Shakil Joy, MP, shed light on the deprivation faced by marginalized communities living in the _Char_ areas. To ensure adequate teaching staff in the primary schools in the _Char_ areas, he emphasized the importance of a school-specific recruitment process in such regions, in which local candidates may be prioritized who will have the motivation to stay in the school.

Constituency-specific budget allocation: Shameem Haider Patwary, MP, emphasized the importance of decentralization in budgeting to effectively address the difficulties faced in different constituencies. In this context, constituency-specific budget allocation can be helpful for ensuring access to education for marginalized communities.

Ensuring discipline and qualified teachers: Ahsan Adelur Rahman, MP, underscored the significance of discipline in schools and highlighted issues such as teachers' tardiness and deviation from the prescribed curriculum. He proposed the implementation of a fingerprint attendance system to address these concerns.

Anwarul Abedin Khan, MP, highlighted the pressing issue of underutilized science and computer labs in schools due to teachers lacking the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively utilize the equipment. He emphasized the importance of a fair hiring process that prioritizes the appointment of qualified teachers, ensuring optimal use of these valuable educational resources.

Holistic development and extracurricular activities: Advocate Adiba Anjum Mita, MP, emphasized the value of extracurricular activities alongside formal education, promoting the proper development of children's talents. She stressed the importance of physical activities for intellectual growth.

Foundational learning and monitoring: Barrister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, MP, Deputy Minister of Education, stressed the significance of foundational learning and monitoring learning outcomes in the education sector.

Enhanced monitoring and state-level accountability: Md. Nazrul Islam Babu, MP, highlighted the need for monitoring to take precedence over assessment, with a specific focus on state-level monitoring. He pledged to bring the outcomes of the conclave to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education.

The Consensus

The participants unanimously agreed that to address educational inequality, subjects like science, math, and language should be taught in all institutions, including madrasahs. While appreciating recent government initiatives to reduce public examinations, they stressed the importance of strengthening formative assessments and enhancing monitoring of the education system. On the final day of the event, three youths from IID's Youth for Policy network presented the 'Youth Manifesto' to Members of Parliament and political leaders.

Among others, the conclave was attended by Nadira Yeasmin Jolly MP, Kaniz Fatema Ahmed MP, former MP Mahjabeen Khaled, Noor-E-Alam, Deputy Secretary of SHED, Mohammad Ashraful Alam Khan, Deputy Secretary of the MoPME, Ranajit Bhattacharyya, General Manager of ASER India, Md. Tohirul Islam Milon, Chief Executive of MSEDA, Md. Shahadat Hossain Mondol, ED of USS and Policy Champions Aninda Sundar Basak, Deen Islam (Oikko), and Shirin Akhter Asa.