

Challenges



Insufficient communication among stakeholders, including parents, hinders effective adaptation to changes in the educational landscape.



The education system faces challenges in implementing the new curriculum due to a **lack of institutional capacity**.



Parents harbor uncertainties about the new curriculum, emphasizing the need for a transparent channel for information and addressing concerns.



Teachers in marginalized areas **lack need-based training**, demanding targeted efforts for their professional development.



Corruption, mismanagement, and low motivation among educators hinder the effective implementation of the new curriculum.

Solutions



Establish inclusive platforms for **policy dialogue** involving parents, teachers, and policymakers to foster effective communication.



Conduct **nationwide capacity assessments** and invest in institutional readiness to successfully implement the new curriculum.



Create a **dedicated communication channel** for parents to voice concerns, provide feedback, and access relevant information.



Identify and address the specific needs of teachers in marginalized areas through **tailored training sessions**.



Implement rigorous **monitoring mechanisms**, including the teacher recruitment process, and provide enhanced incentives.



Policy Breakfast

Is Bangladesh's Education Ready for Change?

23 November 2023



3

Agenda



41

Participants



5

Challenges Identified



5

Suggested Solutions

About Policy Breakfast

IID's Policy Breakfast series promotes evidence-informed and solution-driven debate among key influencers in the policy community under the Chatham House rule for candid discussion.



Key Features

Chatham House Rules
Pluralism in Participation
Policy Recommendations
Documentation and Follow-up



Format

Keynote
Peer-review
Debate/Discussion
Finding Solution



Participants

Policymakers
Experts/Academicians
Sector Leaders
Practitioners

Key Takeaways



Encourage **parental involvement** by incorporating regular training sessions into the curriculum change process.



Address the **lack of awareness among parents** regarding the new curriculum through targeted communication.



Allocate **additional budgetary resources** to ensure the education system is fully prepared for the implementation of the new curriculum.



Emphasize the integration of **experiential learning** methodologies, providing students with hands-on experiences.



Customize teacher training programs to address the specific needs and challenges faced by educators.



Promote coordination among **policymaking, practical implementation**, and research to facilitate evidence-based decision-making.



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The Event

The education system in Bangladesh introduced a new curriculum in 2023, with significant changes in the content of textbooks, teaching methods, and assessment methods for students. However, challenges persist in the successful implementation of the initiative. To discuss the challenges and way forward for the implementation of the new curriculum and to involve relevant stakeholders in an open dialogue, IID, with support from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), organized a Policy Breakfast on ‘Is Bangladesh’s Education Ready for Change?’. It was held on November 23, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Hotel Bengal Blueberry, Gulshan-2, Dhaka.



Key Discussion Points

Urgency of collaborative effort in curriculum reform for sustainability

A comprehensive collaborative effort is necessary for the successful reform of the curriculum. The participants underscored the need for a coordinated partnership between government and non-government entities in defining educational objectives. Notably, concerns have been raised about existing gaps and a lack of practical guidance for navigating curriculum transitions, coupled with a failure to align educational initiatives with the evolving demands of the job market. The speakers proposed the integration of soft skills into the curriculum, enhancements to school facilities, robust support systems for teachers, active engagement of parents, and regular curriculum assessments.

Need-based teacher training and trust building

In the context of curriculum changes, the training of teachers should be prioritized to get the best outcome. The attendees highlighted the anxiety among teachers in various regions regarding this transformation. Moreover, the speakers expressed reservations about the existing training not being customized to meet the specific needs of teachers. To address these concerns, they recommend finding a balance between global and local perspectives, enhancing system flexibility to cater to individual teacher needs, and fostering trust in relationships among key stakeholders.

Shifting from lecture-based learning to experiential learning in the new curriculum

One of the key features of the new curriculum is its strong focus on experiential learning. The effectiveness of this approach lies in its ability to empower students to independently generate concepts. Furthermore, the discussants highlighted a significant transformation in teaching methodology, wherein teachers are positioned as mentors rather than traditional lecturers within the new curriculum. This shift signifies a conscious move towards



fostering a more interactive and engaging learning environment.

The new curriculum is well-structured, but the implementation is challenging

The speakers underscored the positive aspects of the new curriculum, emphasizing its well-structured instructional support for teachers to enhance learning outcomes.

However, they acknowledged challenges, such as teachers lacking knowledge to effectively implement learning objectives and parental resistance rooted in traditional educational experiences, leading to reluctance among parents to embrace the new curriculum.

Emphasizing practical skills in assessment to enhance the applicability of the curriculum

The ongoing efforts to solidify the new curriculum’s foundation were also highlighted by the participants. Addressing challenges within the teaching-learning process and adapting to systemic changes, they emphasized the need for redefining the assessment mechanism. Rather than solely assessing students’ knowledge, the focus will now extend to evaluating their ability to apply learned concepts and develop practical skills.

Curriculum alone cannot address existing limitations

Several challenges persist in the educational landscape of Bangladesh, including a hierarchical culture with power dynamics, diminished trust in education system service providers, a lack of connection between policy, practice,

and research, and ambiguity regarding decision-making. In addition, the speakers highlighted the necessity of grassroots-focused, evidence-based initiatives. To address these challenges, a shift from monitoring to mentoring tools, emphasizing the use of a cascade model of teacher training, was proposed. The proposed adjustments emphasize that the curriculum alone cannot solve systemic problems.

Policymakers need training for improved and informed decision-making

The speakers raised concern that policymakers lack effective training for participation in discussions, proposing mandatory month-long training sessions. At the same time, corruption in the local-level education landscape remains one of the biggest challenges for development. The attendees also advocated for evidence-based policymaking.

Participants

Moderated by Syeed Ahamed, the CEO of IID, the event featured active participation from distinguished guests, including



Professor Mohammad Farhadul Islam, Chairman of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB); Manzoor Ahmed, Professor, BRAC University; Md. Mahmudul Amin, Associate Professor, National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB); Mahjabeen Khaled, Co-chair, Parliamentary Caucus on Social Justice; Dr. Sumera Ahsan, Associate Professor, Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka; Azwa Nayeem, Founder and Chairperson, Alokito Hridoy Foundation; Huhua Fan, Education Programme Specialist, UNESCO; Miriam Lindwer, Director and Senior Consultant, MDF Asia Myanmar; Alexander Tonwe, Education Consultant and Research Fellow, ACER UK; Marianne Olesen, Senior Programme Coordinator, OXFAM Denmark; Janak Raj Pant, Regional Education Advisor- Asia Pacific, EOL Programme, Oxfam IBIS and Mirza Mohammad Didarul Anam, Education Specialist, a2i.