

Education

Non Formal Primary Schools Programme in Bangladesh

Learning centres reach out to the poor

Jannatul hopes to find a well paid job after she finishes school. She smiles as she remembers the moment she was allowed to go to school: "Before, the shop owner did not let me go - but then madam came and talked to him and even Ma told him, you cannot stop her."

Jannatul Akter (12), pupil at the Dhaka Ahsania Mission school



EC Partners

BRAC (with 62 partner NGOs)

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (with 5 partner NGOs)

Save the Children USA (with 4 partner NGOs)

Facts and Figures

- EC contribution: €27.3 million (96.5% of total)
- Duration: 2006-2010
- €105 million also goes to the reform programme led by the government
- The cost of providing full primary education is €120 per child

Context

About 19 million children in Bangladesh are at primary school age, with around 3 million children unable to attend state schools. The Bangladeshi government is running an ambitious reform programme on primary education for all children – substantial increases in the enrolment rate since the 1990s are a sign of success, but the high number of children still excluded, the low quality of education and high drop-out rates remain a concern. To address these issues, the European Union has provided support to schools run by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), which target specifically those children, often from ethnic minorities and living in urban slums or remote rural and coastal areas, who are not reached by state schools.

Objective

- Assist Bangladesh in achieving its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of Universal Primary Education by 2015

Impact

- 10 000 NGO learning centres throughout the country, providing education to 270 000 primary and 50 000 pre-primary children, 60% of whom are girls
- Around 10 000 teachers trained by the NGOs
- An estimated 90 per cent of the children from the EU funded schools go on to secondary school



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Poppy loves her school

Poppy, 7, lives on a boat in the Gypsy community of Muladi in southern Bangladesh. She had had little chance to play and to be with other children and no opportunity to receive an education until an NGO school was opened close to her home, funded by the European Union. "I played alone before, but now I have lots of friends in my school. I love my school. I enjoy learning, and I never miss a lesson."

Poppy's community is isolated from land-based settlements and is extremely vulnerable to food shortages, natural disasters and diseases. When her mother Shongho heard that a school was being established for the children, she was eager to enrol her daughter: "People of other communities do not accept us, so I could not send her to a school before".



Poppy with her books on the way to school