

## Chapter-2

### Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

#### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Bangladesh has achieved significant advancement in Human Development Indices during the last two decades. It has been mentioned in the report “The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World” published by UNDP that Bangladesh has performed better than expectation with regard to her achievement in HDI. Creating skilled human resources is the most important element of human development. Thus primary education, the foundation of all education, is the first step to human development. Education not only changes skill and thinking of a person but also influences the comprehensive development of the country. Hence primary education is considered as top priority everywhere in the world. Education has been considered as one of the significant sectors with a view to creating an educated and skilled nation by achieving specific target and implementing the work plan drawn in Vision-2021. In the Millennium Development Goals, emphases were put on the entry to the education level and on maintaining gender parity. To this end, the government of Bangladesh took targeted activities which resulted in significant development in HDI. This achievement has received significant global recognition. In order to reinforce that success, focus has been placed on improvement of the quality of education. The Article 17 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh has declared the primary education as compulsory and universal. Therefore, in the context of the constitutional obligation and government’s priority, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education is working to ensure quality primary and mass education for all. In addition, gender parity issues are duly reflected in the strategic documents of the Ministry.

1.2 The major functions of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) are to formulate and implement policies concerning primary and mass education, implement and monitor the compulsory primary education program and mass education program through non-formal education. It also developed the curriculum for primary and mass education, prepare, print and distribute the textbook, undertake training and research activities related to primary and mass education and coordinate the activities of other Ministries, Government agencies and NGOs in the field of mass literacy and adult education.

#### 2.0 Relevant Policies of the Ministry

The Ministry is engaged in formulating policy regarding School Management Committee (SMC), teacher's recruitment, transfer of teachers, non-formal education

policy and the stipend policy with a view to ensuring universal primary education and participation of local community particularly women in different levels of primary & mass education. These policies have provided scope for active participation of women in teacher's recruitment and transfer along with primary education management. Recruitment of 60 percent female teachers has been made mandatory and in case of placement and transfers, due attention is being paid to the convenience of female teachers (e.g. working place of husband/dwelling place of parents/education of children). In addition, female teachers have been given priority in teacher's training that ensures their professional efficiency.

School Management Committee (SMC) has been made effective in every school to ensure decentralization of school management at the field level. Provision of two female guardians in the committee has been made to ensure effective participation of women in school management. In addition to this provision, a written instruction has also been issued to adopt female teachers as teacher representative in the committee of respective educational institutions and the nearest secondary educational institution.

### **3.0 Ministry-Specific National Policy directives in relation to women's advancement**

3.1 Women Development Policy, 2011 has been prepared in light of the Constitution of Bangladesh and CEDAW. National and internal policy strategies have also been reflected in the Policy to ensure women's advancement. The National Plan of Action (NPA) has been formulated to implement this policy. The obligations of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, as mentioned in this policy and NPA, are as follows:

- ❖ Elimination of all forms of discrimination against girls and ensuring gender equality in all areas including equality within families;
- ❖ Ensuring regular attendance of female students in educational institutions;
- ❖ Ensuring necessary measures so that female students do not become victims of any sexual harassment, pornography, physical and mental abuse at any place including educational institutions and streets;
- ❖ Ensuring opportunity for the girl students for safe and quality recreation, sports and cultural activities;
- ❖ Eliminating discrimination against disabled female students and ensuring their security in all areas;
- ❖ Eliminating discrimination in educational opportunities between men and women and mainstreaming women in the development process;

- ❖ Removing any discriminatory issues against women from the educational curriculum and books and upholding positive image of women;
- ❖ Education and training on nutrition for women;
- ❖ Taking initiatives for the development of women from ethnic groups maintaining their own heritage and culture;
- ❖ Considering special education only for those who are not able to participate in the mainstream education process for inevitable reasons;
- ❖ Taking appropriate measures to get disabled women involved in all areas of life including education.

3.2 Issues that have been emphasized regarding women's advancement and rights in the Education Policy, 2010 are as follows:

- ❖ Special fund should be created to increase the rate of female education at every level and private initiatives will be encouraged for this purpose;
- ❖ Measures will be taken to reduce female student dropouts and bring them back to the mainstream education system;
- ❖ Increase number of girls enrolling for formal education. In order to inspire them for higher/professional education, various facilities will be created for females at different tiers of educational institutes;
- ❖ Positive and progressive image of women and the concept of equal rights for women will be reflected in the reading materials of primary education;
- ❖ More life stories on inspirational and influential women and essays written by women will be included in the reading materials at the primary level;
- ❖ Taking measures to prevent dropout of girl students and protect them from any means of harassment during school time;
- ❖ Establish a conducive environment in schools, and ensure separate hygiene wash-blocks for the boys and girls;
- ❖ Giving priority to women for the recruitment of teachers at the primary level.

#### 4.0 Strategic objectives and Activities of the Ministry in relation to Women's Advancement

Serial No.	Medium Term Strategic Objectives	Activities
1	2	3
1.	Extend universal access to primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Establishment of new primary schools in the villages without school;</li> <li>❖ Construction, reconstruction and extension of classrooms and routine repair and maintenance of schools</li> <li>❖ Construction of wash-block and installation of tube wells</li> <li>❖ Stipend program for poor students</li> <li>❖ School feeding program in poverty stricken areas</li> <li>❖ Education allowances and stipends for disadvantaged students to prevent drop-out rates</li> <li>❖ Supplying free textbooks for all in due time</li> <li>❖ Introduction of pre-primary classes in all primary schools of the country</li> </ul>
2.	Improve quality of primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Conducting Grade-5 completion examination</li> <li>❖ Introducing ICT-based education at primary level</li> <li>❖ Implementation of School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP)</li> <li>❖ Extension of primary education up to class eight</li> <li>❖ Development of training infrastructure to enhance the quality of Primary Education</li> <li>❖ Conducting C-in-Ed and Dip-in-Ed training for teachers</li> <li>❖ Training of teachers and officers associated with primary education</li> <li>❖ Introduction of competency-based question papers in the Primary Education Completion Examinations</li> <li>❖ Inspection of Government Primary School</li> </ul>
3.	Increase literacy rate and create opportunity for continuing and lifelong education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Implementation of basic literacy program for 11-45 years age group in 64 districts</li> </ul>

## **5.0 Identifying Gender Gaps in the Activities of the Ministry and Addressing the Issues**

- 5.1 To ensure the implementation of the Women Development Policy, 2011 all activities of all Ministries should be in line with the National Action Plan, 2013. For this reason, initiatives should also be taken to formulate the development projects and programmes of the Ministry in line with ADP and revise existing projects and programmes.
- 5.2 It is found that the development of women has drawn focus almost in all activities and programmes of the Ministry. Women are already more successful than their male counterparts in the case of teacher's recruitment along with the enrollment at primary level and completion of primary school education. However, in order to reach the goal of quality primary education, few activities of the Ministry must be made more women-friendly. Some new initiatives should also be taken. In both cases the NWDP, 2011 and the Education Policy, 2010 are the yardsticks in designing new activities and programmes.
- 5.3 Some ongoing activities of the Ministry can be made gender focused in following manner:
- ❖ In case of distribution of education allowance and grants girl with special needs should be given priority;
  - ❖ To improve the quality of primary education establishment of a conducive environment in school for the girl students should be considered;
  - ❖ In case of infrastructure development, priority should be given to ensure separate wash blocks for boys and girls including facilities for disabled children;
  - ❖ Positive and progressive image and concept of equal rights for women should be reflected in the reading materials of primary education;
  - ❖ More life stories on inspirational and influential women and essays written by women to be included in the reading material at the primary level;
  - ❖ Undertake initiatives to disseminate human rights issues and women development strategies among the teachers and officers in the area of primary education;
  - ❖ To use, if necessary, separate class rooms for women for post literacy and lifelong education;
  - ❖ Training for the personnel related to school management should include issues like regular attendance of the female students in educational institutions and taking necessary measures so that girl children do not become victims of any

sexual harassment, pornography, physical and mental abuse at any places including educational institutions and streets.

5.4 Following activities can be initiated including ongoing ones to ensure primary education system more women friendly in line with the NWDP, 2011 and the Education Policy, 2010:

- ❖ Ensuring opportunity for the girl students for safe and quality recreation, sports and cultural activities;
- ❖ Eliminating all forms of violence against disabled girl students and ensure their security in all areas;
- ❖ Eliminating all form of violence against working women including physical, mental and sexual harassment;
- ❖ Eliminating discrimination in educational opportunities between men and women and mainstreaming women in the development process;
- ❖ Education and train on nutritional aspects for women;
- ❖ Taking initiatives for the development of women from the ethnic groups maintaining their own heritage and culture;
- ❖ Taking measures to reduce school dropouts among girls and bring them back to mainstream education system;
- ❖ To increase the female officers/staffs in the Ministry/Directorate level to increase their scope to take part in the policy level decision making process.

## **6.0 Women's Participation in the Ministry's Activities and their Share in Total Expenditure**

6.1 The participation of women in the decision making of the MoPME:

The following issues have been considered to assess how successfully the activities of the Ministry address women's advancement and rights:

- ❖ Women as service providers;
- ❖ Male-female beneficiaries of the activities of the MoPME;
- ❖ Gender based distribution of allocation and expenditure of the MoPME.

6.2 Table-1 exhibits the male-female employment structure to better illustrate women's participation in decision making process in the MoPME and across its various departments and agencies. In spite of the pro-women policies in teacher and other recruitments, women's participation in decision making in the Ministry is not so

remarkable. In 2016 only 17 percent of total officials employed in the primary education sector were women, as compared to 83 percent male officials. The number of women officers is the highest in Government primary schools and the lowest in the Bureau of Non-formal Education.

### Male and Female Employment structure by Department/Agencies

	Officers				Staff			
	2016-17		2015-16		2016-17		2015-16	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Administration</b>								
Secretariat	85	15	82	18	88	12	88	12
Department of Primary Education	84.2	16.8	81	19	81	19	80	20
Government Primary Schools	37.4	62.6	48	52	46	54	48	52
Primary Training Institutes	79	21	81	19	88	12	90	10
Upazila Education Offices	78	22	79	21	83	17	83	17
Bureau of non-formal Education	92	8	93	7	85	15	87	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.98</b>	<b>24.02</b>	<b>77.33</b>	<b>22.66</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>79.3</b>	<b>20.7</b>

Source: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

**6.3 Women as Service Providers (Teachers):** Table-2 illustrates the role of female teachers at the primary education level in terms of male-female teachers' ratio. It is notable that 37.4 percent and 62.6 percent of total teachers are male and female respectively which means that more than half of the total teachers are female in primary education. The percentage of female teachers among total teachers in experimental, BRAC and ROSC schools is 89 percent, 97.3 percent and 84.3 percent respectively. In madrasa education, the number of female teachers as compared to their male counterparts is noticeably low.

### Male and Female Teachers (2016)

Type of institutes	No. of schools	No. of total teachers	No. of female teachers	No. of male teachers	percent of female teachers
Government Primary	38406	244309	163350	78218	66.9
New Nationalized Gov. Primary	25716	98757	51645	47112	52.3
Registered non-gov.	124	408	267	141	65.4
Non-registered non-gov.	2294	7156	4704	2452	65.7
Experimental	55	283	252	31	89
Ebtedaye Madrasa	3202	11709	2377	9332	20.3
Kindergarten	20601	118415	70948	47467	59.9
Non-Government Organization	3438	6170	4669	1501	75.7
Community	123	300	228	72	76

Type of institutes	No. of schools	No. of total teachers	No. of female teachers	No. of male teachers	percent of female teachers
Primary section of Madrasa	6070	23098	3446	19652	14.9
Primary section of high schools	1627	10573	5525	5048	52.3
BRAC Centre	12767	13381	13017	364	97.3
ROSC	6493	6217	5242	975	84.3
Children Welfare	185	425	297	128	69.9
Others	3402	4304	2128	2176	49.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>124503</b>	<b>545505</b>	<b>328095</b>	<b>217410</b>	<b>62.6</b>

Source: APSC 2016 (Provisional)

- 6.4 **Male-female beneficiaries involved in the activities of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education:** Three variables namely enrolment rate, completion rate and drop-out rates are considered to identify the beneficiaries of primary education programme, it can be claimed that significant gender parity has been attained at the primary level. According to the primary census report, 2016, 49.6 percent of the total students are girls, which is consistent with the Millennium Development Goals.

#### Enrolment of Girls in Primary Education

Type of Institutes	2015			2016		
	Total	Girls	Percent of Girl	Total	Girls	Percent of Girl
Gov. Primary	9578688	4970976	52	9325505	4850873	52.0
New Nationalized Gov. Primary	4214965	2157077	51	4063547	1976661	48.6
Registered non-gov.	21432	11177	52	18889	9727	51.6
Non-registered non-gov.	272097	135574	50	277810	135094	48.6
Experimental	10789	5259	49	11102	5455	49.1
Community	14842	7705	52	14266	7480	52.4
Kindergarten	22779872	1054427	46	2237767	1053722	47.1
N.G.O.	219968	114683	52	221849	113576	51.2
Ebtedaye Madrasa	390948	190070	49	354235	168880	47.7
Primary section of Madrasa	830733	400781	48	802859	383838	47.8
Primary section of high schools	560521	291720	52	538443	276547	51.4
BRAC Centre	332695	189585	57	393948	218748	56
ROSC	184163	91419	50	181742	91919	50.6
Children Welfare	153305	8130	53	18395	9972	54.2
Others	82980	44032	53	57668	27417	35.5
<b>Total:</b>	<b>19009998</b>	<b>9672615</b>	<b>50.88</b>	<b>18518014</b>	<b>9329909</b>	<b>49.6</b>

Source: APSC 2016 (Provisional)

- 6.5 It is observed in 2016 that the rate of girls' primary level completion is higher than that of boys.

#### Girls' Primary level Completion rate

Year	Primary level completion rate	
	Boys	Girls
2005-06	51.7	56.7
2006-07	47.1	53.3
2007-08	48.9	54.9
2008-09	52.9	57.0
2009-10	57.1	62.2
2010-11	59.7	60.2
2011-12	67.6	73.0
2012-13	73.5	77.0
2013-14	97.88	97.97
2014-15	97.9	98
2015-16	98.44	98.56

Source: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

#### 6.6 Women's Share in Ministry's Total Expenditure

(Taka in Crore)

Description	Budget 2017-18			Revised 2016-17			Budget 2016-17		
	Budget	Women Share		Revised	Women Share		Budget	Women Share	
		Women	percent		Women	percent		Women	percent
Total Budget	400266	112019	27.99	317174	86586	27.3	340605	92781	27.24
Ministry Budget	22023	10393	47.19	17798	8657	48.64	22163	10938	49.35
Development	8752	4547	51.95	6263	3507	56	7710	5655	73.35
Non-Development	13271	5846	44.05	11536	5150	44.64	14453	5283	36.55

Source: RCGP database

#### 7.0 Achievement of Key Performance Indicators in relation to Women's Advancement in the last three Years

Indicator	Unit	Actual		
		2014	2015	2016
1	2	3	4	5
Female teachers in primary education (GPS)	percent	64.9	61.8	62.6
Rate of completion of primary education of female students	percent	97.97	98	98.56

## **8.0 Success in Promoting Women's Advancement:**

- 8.1 Thanks to the various development activities undertaken by government, the MDG goals relevant to female education have been achieved. A number of targets for women development have been fixed in the Vision-2021, 7<sup>th</sup> five year plan and Sustainable development Goals. To this end, the MOPME has undertaken specific activities in order to expand the access and to improve the quality of primary education. Notable among those are, improvement of the curriculum of primary and mass education keeping in pace with the changing needs, research in the field of education and training for the teachers. The Ministry has taken steps to improve the infrastructural amenities in urban areas along with those in rural areas. As a result, enrollment at the primary level has increased significantly. Simultaneously there is significant decline in the drop-out rate.
- 8.2 MoPME is responsible for operating more than 59.10 percent of the total primary educational institutes around the country. Around 75.10 percent of total children at primary level are enrolled in these schools. Around 49.6 percent of the students at the primary level are girls who contribute to building a prosperous future for all. The policy for recruiting 60 percent female teachers has been maintained. The significant number of recruitment of female teachers in primary schools broadens the scope of employment and enhances the social dignity of women.
- 8.3 The Ministry also renders adults' literacy and non-formal educational opportunities for men and women who were deprived of fundamental education at their early life and who dropped out of primary or secondary education. These activities provide basic education to adult women who were deprived of formal education and help them attain self-sufficiency.
- 8.4 The participation of women in implementing the Universal Primary Education Programme, hundred percent enrollment and completion of the primary education cycle has given due priority. To reach this goal and to create public awareness, Mother's Day is being celebrated in schools and the opinions of mothers are being used to implement the activities. Besides this, female guardians are actively involved in the School Feeding Programme. The Stipend Policy has been formulated having the provision of sending stipend to the mother of the students.
- 8.5 The main objective of the MoPME is to ensure quality primary and basic education for all through expansion of facilities and improvement of quality. The medium-term strategic objectives in achieving these are - to extend universal access to primary education, to improve quality of primary education, increase literacy rate and create opportunity for continuing and lifelong education. Following initiatives have been taken to implement the strategic objectives:
- ❖ The coverage of the stipend program has been extended to bring the female students under the compulsory primary education for all program of the

Ministry. About 49.6 percent of total students of primary level are female. The rate of non-admission and drop-out are much higher for girls coming from poor families in comparison to boys from similar families. To minimize the number of non-admission and drop-outs, stipends (100 taka for a student and 200 taka for students having siblings) are given to more than 13 million students of disadvantaged families. The number of scholarships (talent pool) has been increased from 22,000 to 33,000 and the number of common scholarship has been increased to 49,500 from 33,000. Moreover, a school meal programme for more than 3.4 million children has been undertaken. All these activities are expected to contribute towards increasing enrolment of students, especially girls' enrolment.

- ❖ The total number of teachers at primary level is about 545,505 of which about 328,095 (62.6 percent) are female. In government primary schools, 244,309 teachers are employed, of which 163,350 (66.9 percent) are women. According to the above statistics of 2016, it is found that the number of female teachers in primary schools is satisfactory.
- ❖ Infrastructure development is necessary for women friendly environment. Targeted activities towards this end have been taken by MoPME. Pure drinking water supply and establishing wash block in all primary school have been initiated under the ongoing PEDP-3 project. As a direct result of these facilities, growing number of girls are encouraged to go to school and facilitate the expansion of female education in the country.
- ❖ In order to ensure quality primary education, teacher's training on basic and specific subjects is fundamental. Training for officials related to primary education and School Management Committee members are also being imparted. In addition, 1 year long Certificate-in-Education has been converted into Diploma-in-Primary Education having duration of one and half year. These trainings are expected to increase skill and efficiency of teachers and other relevant personnel in primary education system. It is also expected that women will be benefited directly from these programs.
- ❖ 60 percent female quota in the teachers' recruitment of primary education is being ensured.

- 8.6 The children learn to speak and write from their mother. The contribution of a mother to her child for their primary education along with bringing up them is not valued in monetary terms. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education will take initiatives to sensitize public about this sacrifice of women to create awareness in the society.

## 9.0 Obstacles to achieve targets related to Women's Advancement:

9.1 Several initiatives have been taken to ensure the participation of women in the primary education management along with primary education in spite of limited resources. Women at the field level do not have access to all benefits of these facilities yet. The following obstacles still persist which hamper participation of girls in primary education:

- ❖ As the communication system is not proper in remote areas (especially hilly areas), female students of primary schools are not interested in going to school;
- ❖ As the benefits and facilities provided by the government do not have much publicity, expected outcome is not achieved yet;
- ❖ Girls in many non-government primary schools are not interested to come to school as there are no separate toilets for them;
- ❖ Many female students do not enroll because of the prevailing superstition in the society.

## 10.0 Progress on Recommended Activities in the Previous Year

Seria I No.	The Recommendations of 2014-15 Gender Report for the Ministry	Progress of Recommended Activities
1.	Increase the Scholarship for girl students in PEC exam.	In 2015, scholarship in PEC exam for the girl students has been increased from 27,500 to 41,250 for encouraging the women's participation in education.
2.	Stop the physical torcher of Students	To create happier educational environment in schools especially for girl students, physical torture of students has been stopped by issuing a circular and it has been monitored strictly.
3.	Increase the participation of girl students in different sports like male student	Considering sports as an important part of learning, participation of girl student in sports like are being ensured. The female students can participate in the Bongomata Fazilatunnesa Football Gold Cup tournament that is being arranged every year.
4.	There must be provisions for separate toilet (wash blocks) for female teachers and students in every primary school	Under PEDP-3 project, separate wash block having three toilets with running water is under the process of construction. Already 12,750 wash blocks have been constructed.
5.	Along with the stipend programme for female students, proper publicity should be undertaken with parents of female students so that they do	Stipend program has been initiated to increase female student enrollment and to prevent their dropout. The total beneficiary of stipend programme is 13 million. The stipend is given to the student's mothers through mobile banking, so that the mothers are encouraged to send

Seria I No.	The Recommendations of 2014-15 Gender Report for the Ministry	Progress of Recommended Activities
	not face gender discrimination at home;	their daughters to school.
6.	It should be ensured that the recruitment of female teachers and selection of female chairperson of school governing body is increased in backward community and small ethnic groups of the country;	Like the system prevailing in the plain land, two female guardians from the backward community, have been selected in School Management Committees while females belonging to small ethnic groups of the country have been given priority to become the representative of the local people in the committee. It is mandatory that 60 percent of the teachers who are recruited must be women. Besides that, the educational qualification that is required for recruitment has been reduced for women candidates. Female teachers are given more facilities In the case of teacher's transfer and their placement and posting. In the Hill Tract areas these activities are implemented and monitored by Hill Tracts Zilla Parishad.
7.	Necessary action should be taken to prevent drop-out and increase the admission of female students in pre-primary education;	Instructions have been given at the school level to increase the enrollment rate of female students in pre-primary schools. Importance has been given to Mother's Day celebrations at school level and parents are being informed about the facilities provided by the Government.
8.	In the primary curriculum the women's positive and progressive image should be highlighted;	The women's positive and progressive image and equal rights have been reflected in the primary curriculum. As an example both male and female names are used in the curriculum to prevent gender bias.
9.	Emphasis should be given to nutritional needs of the female students;	With the assistance of the Government and Development partners, the poor female students belonging to 93 poverty stricken Upazillas are given highly nutritious biscuits every day. Besides, nutritious Mid-Day Meal is given to different schools of the country through private initiatives. The National School Feeding Policy is being formulated to encourage private sector to take these kinds of initiatives.
10.	It is very necessary to ensure the security of the student in school compound from any	SMC take social awareness program to ensure the security of the student in school compound from any harassment. If any case of harassment is found, the

Seria I No.	The Recommendations of 2014-15 Gender Report for the Ministry	Progress of Recommended Activities
	harassment.	culprits are being handed over to the law enforcement authorities.
11.	Mobile school in haor and flooded area where is not possible to continue school activities for 5 or 6 months in a year should be established.	The possibility of establishing mobile school in haor and flooded area is being examined.

#### 11.0 Recommendation for future:

- ❖ If proper counseling about the physical and mental change for girls at their adolescence is not provided, risks of drop-outs and poor performance will persist. Due to the extension of primary level up to class eight, adolescent girls will be included in the primary level. Therefore, regular counseling session should be arranged for student reaching their puberty in association with the local community Clinics.
- ❖ Police petrol camp should be established near schools so that there is no eve teasing or harassment for the school-going girls.
- ❖ Residential facilities for girls coming from remote areas or under any kind of constraint in selected areas should be created.