

CHAPTER TWELVE

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The government has included HRD as one of the main goals of its development agenda along with the economic growth. To achieve this goal the government has allocated 23.75 percent of budget in FY 2020-21 to the HRD related sectors, such as-education and technology, health and family welfare, women and children, social welfare, youth and sports development, culture, labour and employment etc. Various programmes including the adoption of the 'National Education Policy-2010' have been undertaken to create skilled and competent Human Resources for the country by enhancing the quality of education and increasing accessibility to Secondary and Higher Secondary, Technical and all tiers of higher education. Due to the government's policy for recruiting 60 percent female teachers in the government primary schools, the number of female teachers has been increased from 21.09 percent in 1991 to 64.20 percent till 2021. Bangladesh has achieved Millennium Development Goal (MDG) related to health sector, prior to the stipulated time due to undertaking many priority based programmes in health, nutrition and population sector. In this regard, Bangladesh has won 'UN South-South Award' twice. Both fertility and mortality rates have come down. Remarkable progress has been made in reducing child and maternal mortality and in increasing average life expectancy. Malnutrition has also been reduced significantly. At Present, Bangladesh is working hard for achieving health sector related goal and targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Effort has been made to prevent and control the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) as well as to provide health care to infected people. In addition to preventing and controlling the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19), the country is vaccinating people aged 40 years and above under an expanded immunization program to protect lives from the COVID-19 epidemic. Up to 31 May 2021, 58,22,157 persons received vaccines, of which 36,10,635 are male and 22,11,522 are female. In order to ensure the desire development of women and to ensure their participation in the national development activities the government has legislated 'National Women Development Policy-2011'. Furthermore, 'Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act-2010' has been enacted to prevent violence against women and children. Apart from, the government has formulated 'National Child Policy-2011' and 'Child Marriage Prohibition Rules-2018'. Moreover, two national action plans have been prepared to implement National Women Development Policy and to protect violence against women and children. As a result of implementation of various development programmes, Bangladesh is gradually improving in the Human Development Index (HDI). According to the 'Human Development Report-2020' the position of Bangladesh has been improved to 133.

The government is implementing different types of development programmes to accumulate demographic dividend by utilising the huge number of working age people. Under this circumstance, the government has taken relentless efforts and various initiatives for human resource development of the country through improve the standard of living of the

under privileged and impoverished segments of the population. This has resulted in progress in the Human Development Index (HDI). According to the 'Human Development Report-2020' the position of Bangladesh has improved to 133. At present, Bangladesh is a middle ranking country in consideration of HDI. Among South Asian Association for Regional

Cooperation (SAARC) countries Sri Lanka (72), Maldives (95), India (131) and Bhutan (129) are ahead of Bangladesh (133) in respect of HDI. Other SAARC countries, such as Nepal (142), Pakistan (154) and Afghanistan (169) are below

the ranking of Bangladesh in HDI. Allocations of human development related sectors have been boosted up day by day. Position of Bangladesh in the HDI of recent few years have been presented to the Table 12.1.

Table 12.1: HDI Position of Bangladesh

Year	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Index value	0.468	0.545	0.592	0.597	0.608	0.614	0.614	0.632

Source: Human Development Report- 2020. UNDP

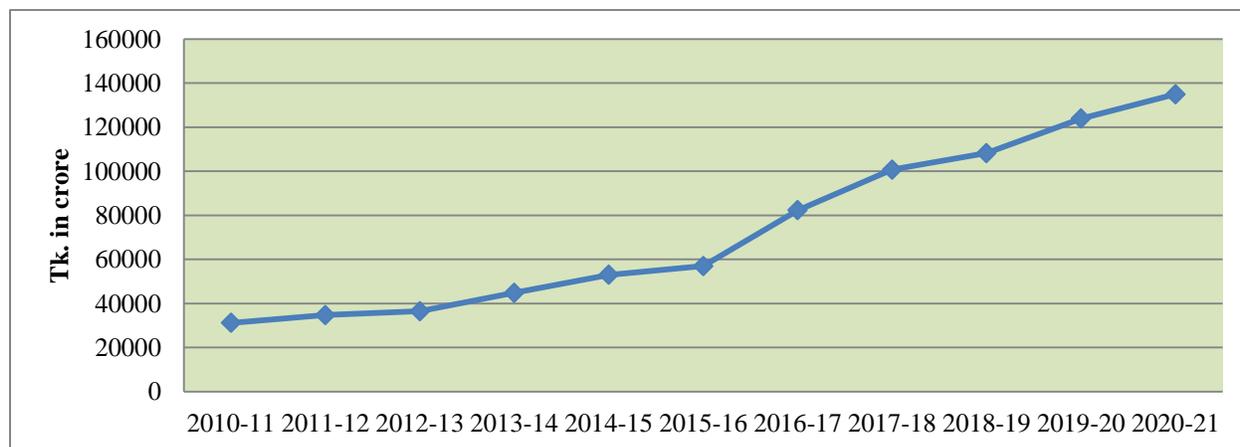
Public Expenditure for Human Resource Development

Adequate investment in social sectors including education and health is necessary for human resource development. Government is consistently enhancing the allocation in sectors that are related with human resource development like education and technology, health and family welfare, women and children, social welfare, youth and sports development, cultural affairs, labour and employment generation. 23.75 percent resource of the total budget has been allocated in these sectors related to human resource development in FY 2020-21. Education and health is considered as the base of human resource development. Government is allocating adequate resources for the development of education and health sectors. Tk. 95,648 crore has been allocated in these two sectors in the FY 2020-21, which is 16.83 percent

of the total budget allocation. Government could contribute positively by implementing realistic programmes in education and health sectors. As a consequence, gender balance has been achieved by elimination of discrimination in the primary and secondary education level. Human resource development process is going on through achieving significant progress in reduction in fertility rate, reduction of child and maternal mortality rate, prevention of spread of Tuberculosis and AIDS. Sports and youth development can also contribute in human resource development. For that reason, budget allocation is also increased in these sectors.

Figure 12.1 and Table 12.2 presents the total allocation in operating and development budget in the social sector during FY 2010-11 to FY 2020-21. Note that the allocation has been growing across the years in this sector.

Figure 12.1: Trend of Government Allocation in the Social Sector of Selected Ministries



Sources: Finance Division, Ministry of Finance*Information's are based on Budget

Table 12.2: Allocation (Operating and Development) of Selected Ministries

Sector	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	(In Crore Taka)					
						2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Education, Science & ICT	18575	20316	21561	28272	33499	34370	52914	65444	67935	79488	85762
Health and Family Welfare	7617	8869	9130	9955	11537	12695	17486	20652	23,383	25733	29247
Youth, Sports and Culture	911	924	976	1061	1068	1199	1343	1803	2008	2063	2057
Labour and Employment	67	82	134	192	226	302	308	262	227	313	350
Social Welfare, Women's Affairs and Liberation War Affairs	3499	3967	4091	4730	5962	7613	9433	11394	13343	15083	16285
Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs	549	560	583	633	684	779	840	1150	1309	1194	1235
Total Allocation (Operating and Development)	31218	34718	36475	44843	52976	56958	82324	100705	108205	123874	134936

Sources: Finance Division, Ministry of Finance. *Figures are based on budget

Education and Technology

To build an educated, confident and scientific-minded nation, who is capable of facing 21st century's challenges, government has undertaken lots of activities by giving the highest priority to education sector. The government has approved the 'National Education Policy-2010' as a step towards implementing a time befitting technical education system in the country which will help to establish digital Bangladesh where is the main goal set out in Vision 2021. The cardinal objective of policy is to foster humanity among the future citizens of the country and to grow them as creative, rational, tolerant to others opinion and liberal who will be able to lead the country towards inclusive development and progress.

Primary and Mass Education

The government has constitutional obligation to ensure education for all. In line with global initiative the government is committed to achieve inclusive and quality education for all. Therefore, allocation of education sector is increased step by step. In FY 2010-11, the government has made an allocation of Tk.24,937 crore for primary education development.

The Goal 4 of the 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' declares to ensure 'inclusive and

equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all'. The government has targeted to achieve SDG 4 by ensuring quality education for all children by 2030. Target has been set to provide quality primary education for all children by 2030 who are ready to go to school. Government is implementing Stipend project, 4th Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-4), Reaching Out of School (ROSC) project, School Feeding programme for poor areas, need based government and newly nationalised primary school development project (1st phase), Basic Literacy project (64 district) and some other projects for attaining the goals of SDG.

Number of primary schools in the country was 49,539 in 1991. The number has increased to 1,33,002 (25 types of schools including BRAC centre, ROSC centre, different NGO schools, child welfare and *Madrassa*/Mosque based centre/*Qawmi madrassa*) in 2020. Number of enrolment and ratio of female students is increasing consistently. Rate of enrolment of female students is more than the male students. In 1991, the male-female students ratio was 55:45. Currently, the ratio is about 49:51. Table 12.3 shows students' enrolment rate and percentage of male-female students at primary levels from 2010 to 2020.

Table 12.3: Boys- Girls Enrolment at Primary Level

(In lakh)

Year	Total	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Net Enrollment rate (%)
2010	169.58	83.95 (49.50)	85.63 (50.50)	94.8
2011	184.32	91.39 (49.60)	92.93 (50.40)	94.9
2012	190.03	94.63 (49.80)	95.40 (50.20)	96.7
2013	195.85	97.81 (49.94)	98.04 (50.06)	97.3
2014	195.53	96.39 (49.30)	99.14 (50.70)	97.7
2015	190.68	93.69 (49.14)	96.99 (50.86)	97.9
2016	186.03	92.28 (49.60)	93.75 (50.40)	97.9
2017	172.55	85.08 (49.32)	87.47 (50.68)	97.97
2018	173.38	85.39 (49.25)	87.99 (50.75)	97.85
2019*	201.22	99.69 (49.55)	101.53 (50.45)	97.34
2020*	215.51	105.60 (49.00)	109.91 (51.00)	97.81

Source: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education * With pre-primary

Some students are compelled to leave the school before completion of primary education for various reasons. Rate of drop out is consistently decreasing as the government has taken several

realistic steps. Table 12.4 shows remarkable changes of drop-out scenario of students at primary level during the period 2010 to 2020.

Table 12.4: Year wise Drop-out Rate at Primary Level

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Dropout rate (%)	39.8	29.7	26.2	21.4	20.9	20.4	19.2	18.8	18.6	17.9	17.2

Source: Annual Primary School Census, 2020, Directorate of Primary Education.

Important Activities in Primary Education

- As many as 1,495 new government primary schools have been set up under the project named 'Establishment of 1,500 Schools in Areas where there are Currently no schools'.
- '4th Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-4)' has been implemented to develop the quality of primary education. Through various activities under this programme, priorities have been given to increase enrolment and attendance of school-going children, reduce drop-out and enhance school contact hour.
- Under the present policy of recruitment of teachers, 60:40 ratio of female to male has

been followed. The current ratio of female and male teachers is 64.20:35.80 in government primary schools.

- Decentralisation of administrative and financial power in primary education has been implemented. As a step towards decentralisation, 'School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP)' and 'Upazila Primary Education Plan (UPEP)' have been implemented phase wise.
- Non-formal Education Bureau has been established to carry out non-formal education along with formal education. 'Non-formal Education Act-2014' has been promulgated in order to make non-formal education more

dynamic, effective and job oriented. The government has also enacted 'Non-formal Education Policy' and Non-formal Education Board in 2017.

- Amount of stipend has been significantly increased. At the same time the number of beneficiaries has also been increased. At present, 1.4 crore students are being provided with stipend.
- To increase enrolment rate and to retain student at school, school feeding programme has been introduced. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government is continuing the activities under the 'School Feeding Program in Poverty Stricken Areas' in 104 poverty stricken *Upazilas* of the country. Despite the closure of all primary schools in the country during the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020, high-quality biscuits, rich in various vitamins and minerals, are being delivered to the home of every child maintaining social distance and following proper health safety protocol. This helps meet children's nutritional needs. To introduce this support in all government primary schools of all *Upazilas/Thanas* of the country in phases will be implemented a new 'Primary School Mill Project' for the period from July 2021 to June 2026 in accordance with the National School Mill Policy.
- Under PEDP-4, 'Second Chance Education Programme' is being implemented to offer the primary education to out-of-school and dropped out 8-14 year aged 10 lakh deprived children.
- A number of 26,193 registered non-government primary schools have been nationalised and teachers employed in these schools have been brought under Monthly Payment Order (MPO).
- The Basic Literacy (64 Districts) project is under implementation to bring all the *Upazilas* of the country under the basic education programme.

Physical Infrastructure Facilities at Primary School Level

Infrastructure development activities have been undertaken for increasing the quality of primary education. Infrastructure development scenario is as follow in FY 2020-21, till Feb 2021:

- During the tenure of the present government, a total of 80,638 classrooms have been constructed in 21,556 schools.
- Under Need-based Infrastructure Development of Government Primary School (1st phase), 8,682 schools have been selected for development up to 2020-21. Tender of 6,966 schools has been floated, work order of 6,615 schools has been issued and construction of 3,780 schools has been completed. Furthermore, construction of 536 wash blocks and establishment of 1,567 tube-wells have been completed.
- Under PEDP-4, constructions of 40,000 additional classrooms and 10,500 teachers' rooms will be constructed within the programme period. Furthermore, 29,000 wash blocks for male students and 29,000 wash blocks for female students will be constructed and pure drinking water supply system will be installed in 15,000 schools.

Terminal Examination and Scholarship

Since 2009, terminal examination in Grade-5 and *Ebtedayee madrasas* is being held based on unique questionnaires throughout the country. Total candidates in Grade-5 examination in 2019 were about 24.54 lakh, among them 95.50 percent examines were passed. On the contrary, 3.04 lakh *Ebtedayee madrasa* students took part in terminal examination and 95.96 percent students passed the examination. The final examination was not held in 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Scholarships are being awarded on the basis of final examination instead of separately conducting scholarship tests. Number of

scholarships is also being increased every year. 82,500 students were awarded scholarships in 2019. Number of students who were awarded scholarship in talent pool category is 33,000 and general category is 49,500. Scholarships have not been awarded in 2020 since terminal examination of grade-5 was not held due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Stipend Project for Primary School Students

“Primary Education Stipend Project (3rd Phase)” has been implemented for the period July 2015 to June 2021 at an estimated cost of Tk. 13,766.34 crore. The targeted number of beneficiaries will be approximately 1.40 crore. It will cover almost 100 percent of the enrolled students of Government primary schools. According to the guidelines of the phase, a poor family receives a stipend of TK. 75 for pre-primary class and Tk. 150 for class I-V for sending one child to school, Tk. 300 for sending two children, Tk. 400 for sending three children and Tk. 500 for sending four children. For class VI-VIII, they receive Tk. 200, Tk.400, Tk.500 and Tk.600 for sending one, two, three and four children respectively. At present stipend money is transferred through mobile banking system to beneficiaries' mothers' account. In addition to that, on the occasion of Mujib's birth centenary, all the students who received stipend in the FY 2010-11 will be given a one-time kit's allowance of Tk. 1,000.

Distribution of Books at Government Cost

Government is distributing free textbooks for primary students every year. Students are getting free textbooks on the first day of the academic session. Since 2010, 100 percent new books have been distributed free of costs to the students country-wide. 9.85 crore and 9.56 crore books were distributed in the academic year 2020 and 2021 respectively. For pre-primary students in the academic year 2021, 33.39 lakh books and 33.37 lakh copies of reading materials have been distributed. This system of distribution of new books will be continued in order to ensure quality

education. 2.13 lakh reading materials/books have been distributed among the students belonging to five minority groups (*Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo and Sadri*) for pre-primary class and for the students of Class I, II & III in 2021.

Increase of Contact Hours

In the past, the annual contact period for classes one and two students was 595 hours and 833 hours for the students of classes three to five under the double shift system. It has now revised to 844 hours and 1473 hours respectively for single shift schools as a result of transforming about four thousand schools from double shifts system to single shift system. In two shift schools, the contact hours for 1st-2nd class and 3rd-5th class are 602 hours and 782 hours respectively.

Recruitment of Teachers

To keep the education programme up-to-date and enhance the quality of education, the government has taken steps such as bringing 1.05 lakh teachers within the government payroll by Hon'ble Prime Minister, recruitment of 1,97,864 teachers including head teachers and assistant teachers in government primary schools since 2009. To increase the participation of women in primary education, 60 percent of the posts of teachers are kept reserved for female candidates. As a result, the percentage of female teachers in the government primary schools has reached approximately 64.20 percent. Furthermore, post of 26,366 assistant teachers for pre-primary class of newly nationalised govt. primary schools has been created. Recruitment of 32,577 assistant teachers including the aforesaid created posts is ongoing.

Programme for Out-of-School and Working Children

Government has taken multi-faceted programmes in order to provide primary education to out of school, drop outs and urban working children.

These programmes are-Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) 2nd Phase Project, Basic Literacy Project (64 districts) and Second Chance Education programme.

Educational activities during Covid-19 pandemic

To make sure that the students stay focused on lessons and remain attentive in their study during the COVID-19 pandemic, the primary level lessons broadcasting programme titled 'Learning at Home' is being implemented through broadcast by *Sangsad* Bangladesh Television. This has made possible to keep about 14 million primary students engaged in their study.

Secondary Education

The government has been attaching the highest importance to the expansion of sustainable and quality secondary and higher secondary education. In the meantime, to sustain the success achieved in the rate of secondary education together with the gender parity, emphasis is being placed on the implementation of various programmes like general, science and technology based education and training, provision of financial assistance for students and teachers, various talent development activities, providing supportive policies and environment, and building capacity and constructing and developing the infrastructure of government secondary schools. Activities, such as providing financial benefits to teachers of MPO-enlisted private educational institutions, distributing free textbooks, introducing e-books, and setting up of *Upazila* ICT training and resource centers are underway. In addition, 3 projects are being implemented to develop physical infrastructure of 1,610 private colleges and 6,250 private schools at the secondary and higher secondary levels, and new buildings for 3,000 private schools are under construction. To enhance awareness about gender sensitive issues among adolescents, implementation of the 2nd phase of the 'Generation Breakthrough Project', and the

project for development of educational institutions in *haor* areas to reduce regional disparities in education has started in the FY 2020-21. These projects will continue in the next fiscal year.

Bearing in mind the importance of science and technology based education, especially the Fourth Industrial Revolution, a number of initiatives have been taken to leverage ICT and digital technology in education management and education programme. ICT related training of 80,800 teachers and training of 50,000 secondary school teachers are underway in the current fiscal year. In the next fiscal year, around 2.10 lakh teachers and 2.75 lakh ICT teachers will be trained. Online MPO-enlisting of private institutions have been already completed by demonstrating ingenuity and formulating specific policies. To improve the quality of education through information technology, ICT Training and Resource Centers have been established in 125 *Upazilas*. Programmes for the development of selected private colleges, establishment of ICT training and resource centers in another 160 *Upazilas*, and establishment of integrated education information management system will be implemented. Implementation of the projects for the expansion of the scope of science based education in government colleges, and activities for enhancing the capacity of 323 government secondary schools across the country and improving the quality of education are underway. This will create opportunities for enrolment of an additional 2 lakh students at the college level and 3.29 lakh students at the secondary level.

As part of necessary steps to eliminate inequality and improve quality in education, the 'Integrated Stipend Program (HSP)' scheme is being implemented by the Prime Minister's Education Aid Trust under the Secondary Education Development Programme to provide assistance to the poor meritorious students to given opportunity for receiving education. Under this

programme, stipends and tuition facilities are being provided to the students from poor families of 6th to 12th grades/classes at the secondary, higher secondary and equivalent level educational institutions in 517 *Upazila/Thana* of Bangladesh including the municipal areas of divisional metropolitan and district headquarters. Under the scheme, students selected by the educational institutions are being paid Tk. 1,200 in 6th-7th grades, Tk. 1,500 in 8th grade, Tk. 1,600 in 9th-10th grades and Tk. 2,400 in 11th-12th grades. In addition, subsidies at the rate of Tk. 201, Tk. 300, Tk. 480 and Tk. 390 respectively for tuition fees are being provided to the students of these grades. It is to be noted that tuition fees were waived for the students of grade 6 in 2020. Tuition fees for the students of other grade will be waived in phases.

Free text books are distributed among students for ensuring the opportunity of education for both rich and poor, preventing drop outs and making education standard, comprehensive and effective. First day of the year is celebrated as the 'Textbook day'. Free textbooks are distributed among primary and secondary students on this day across the country at the same time. A number of 34,36,62,412 textbooks were distributed in academic year 2021 under this programme. Brail textbooks were distributed for the first time in 2017. 9,196 Brail textbooks were distributed in academic year 2021 among 1,187 students under this programme. Other than that, 2,13,288 textbooks were distributed for pre-primary students of 5 minority ethnic groups (*Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo and Sadri*) in academic year 2021.

Educational Activities during Covid-19 Pandemic

During the closure of educational institutions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, distance education for the students of secondary level through *Sangsad* Bangladesh Television titled '*Amar Ghore Amar School*' has been started. Major

subjects of class VI to X have been being broadcast since March 29, 2020. Students from remote areas can also participate online classes. These virtual classes remove the monotony of the students and can also be re-watched later through YouTube/Facebook. Educational Institutions are arranging online classes. Students have the opportunity to participate in these online classes. Out of the conventional examination system, the students have passed the next class in 2020 by evaluating the assignments of the secondary level students. Initiatives have been taken for the teachers' training to enable them for taking online classes. To continue with the teaching programme during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many as 29,09,844 online classes have been organised at the secondary and higher secondary level. Online classes have been introduced in 15,676 out of 20,499 secondary schools and 700 out of 4,238 colleges.

Technical Education

The government has placed emphasis on technical and vocational education in almost every scheme aimed at transforming the people into manpower to meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

For this reason, the vocational courses have been introduced in secondary and higher secondary level education including madrasas. Unprecedented advancement has been achieved in technical education in the last ten years. Last year 2020 the enrolment rate in technical education was 17.14 percent. In continuation to the advancement, several projects/programmes have been taken in order to increase the enrolment rate of technical education up to 25 percent by 2025. Again, necessary steps have been taken to implement National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF) at all levels. An 'Integrated TVET Development Action Plan' has been developed aligning it with SDGs and 8th Five Year Plan. Time-befitting trade and technologies have been included in

technical education to make the youths of the country able to be self-employed and competent enough to meet the challenges of the job market in the local and global market. Currently, in total 10,452 TVET institutions are in operational mode. Out of these, 119 institutions operate through government.

To eliminate inequality in technical and vocational education, stipends are being provided to the students, free textbooks are being distributed, and one-time grants are being provided to the poor and meritorious students and teachers. Several programmes, such as setting up of 1 technical school and college (TSC) in each of 100 *Upazilas*, establishment of 1 women's polytechnic institute in 4 divisional cities (*Sylhet, Barisal, Mymensingh, Rangpur*), establishment of Polytechnic Institutes in 23 districts, and establishment of 1 Engineering College in each of 4 divisions (*Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur*), are underway in the current fiscal year, and will continue in the next fiscal year.

To improve the quality of technical education, a MoU has been signed with 581 institutions for strong Industry-Institute Linkage. With the collaboration of Chinese embassy-Dhaka and DTE, since 2017 to 2020, a total of 832 students with scholarship have gone for higher education in China and still this scholarship opportunity is available for TVET students and graduates.

Madrasah Education

Directorate of Madrasah Education is a newly created organisation as an apex body for ensuring proper management and administration in the field of *Madrasah* education. Presently there are 7,954 madrasahs (MPO enlisted) in the country. In order to make *madrasah* education time-befitting, the curriculum has been improved alongside the teaching of religious subjects such as Quran, *Aqaid* and *Fiqh*, Arabic and *Hadith* from Class One to Twelve.

Similar to general education system, madrasah education system is also following the NCTB developed syllabus and curriculum for general core subjects and elective subjects except for the Arabic subjects for madrasah education. Text books for all subjects except Arabic and Islamic subjects have been printed and distributed from NCTB. Initiatives have been taken to conduct all madrasah examinations except the Arabic and Islamic subjects with the same syllabus up to the secondary level since 2014. Competitive, modern and life skill oriented subjects like Agriculture, ICT and career related education have been included in the syllabus of Madrasah education. In ensuring more transparency and accountability of the activities under Madrasah Education Board, filling up of forms and students' registration are being done online using ICT.

The government has undertaken extensive activities for the development and modernisation of madrasahs. To enhance the quality of madrasah education, construction of new buildings for 1,800 madrasahs, setting up of multimedia rooms for existing 653 madrasahs and capacity building of madrasah teachers will continue through the 'Development of Scheduled Madrasahs' project. Islamic Arabic University has been established in 2013 with the aim of accelerating higher education in madrasah sector. Vocational courses have been introduced in 88 madrasahs. Model madrasahs have been set up in 2013 under SESDP project. Honours courses have been introduced in 77 senior madrasahs. In addition, the MEMIS (Madrasha Education Management Information System) cell has been established to make Madrasah education management and administration fast, dynamic and timely.

Educational activities during Covid-19 pandemic

In Covid-19 situation, online education activities are going on on *Sangsad* Bangladesh Television in the name of '*Amar Ghare Amar Madrasah*' (My Madrasah in My Home). Assignment work

is underway to keep students involved in the education system in the Covid-19 situation.

Higher Education

During last decade radical change has been accomplished in higher education sector in Bangladesh. Government has taken manifold steps under Bangladesh University Grants Commission (BUGC) in order to expand opportunity and increase quality of higher education. A public university has been established in almost every old district of the country. At present, number of public universities stands to 49; 46 of which started academic programme and out of 107 private universities, 98 already started academic activities.

For improvement of higher education and research activity, 'Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Bangladesh: 2018-2030' has been formulated as well as initiatives to implement it by UGC. To make *madrasha* base education dynamic, Islamic Arabic university has been established in *Keragniganj*, Dhaka. Besides, a bill has been passed to make certificate of *Dawra-e-Hadith* issued by *Madrasha* equivalent to master's degree.

According to Private University Act -2010, International Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) has been formed to ensure quality of higher education in private universities. Besides these, 34 public universities, 8 private universities, 2 international universities, 12 medical colleges, 10 research organizations and 3 government organizations have been connected to global research network through BDren Asi@connect. ICT cell has been established in every public university to run ICT activities in the university.

Educational activities during Covid-19 pandemic

Online classes are being organised at the university level. Such classes have commenced in 42 government and 92 private universities. A total of 4,97,200 online classes were organised

where 2,76,91,407 students participated in those online classes. Online examinations are being organised in private universities. To ensure participation of students in online classes at the university level, soft loans have been provided to 41,501 financially insolvent students to purchase smart phones.

ICT in Education

In order to establish ICT enabled efficient and modern education system, ICT in Education Master Plan has been formulated accommodating every phase of education. Computer education has been made compulsory for every student in secondary level. 33,265 multimedia classrooms have been set up in selected educational institutions. Another 47,340 multimedia classrooms will be set up. 2,306 computer labs have been set up. 3 lakh 22 thousand 230 teachers have been provided training on ICT. Another 350,000 teachers will be trained in ICT. 255 posts of ICT teachers have been created in government colleges with the aim of building a society rich in ICT knowledge. Dash Board has been introduced on-line for multimedia class monitoring in educational institutions. Online admission process is underway in government schools. ICT cell has been established in every public university to run ICT activities in the university.

Development of Health and Family Welfare Sector

During the critical period of the pandemic, the government has strengthened its efforts to ensure affordable health services for all citizens through the development of the health, nutrition and population sector. As a result, it has become easier for the government to achieve its aim of building a healthy, strong and active society.

The government has been implementing different programmes in health sector to improve life standard of all citizen of the country. Due to adoption of different activities, remarkable

progress has been made in health sector. Because of the government's timely interventions, the fertility rate as well as death rate has decreased, average life expectancy has increased and neonatal and maternal death rate has decreased notably. The health and social safety programme of the government has contributed to the expansion of health service as well as to improve

the quality of the service. In addition, it helps to control the infectious diseases. Also, the improvement in food security system, expansion of women education and other fruitful interventions enhance living standard of people and life expectancy has also increased consequently. Table 12.5 shows the trend of health indicators from 2013 to 2020.

Table 12.5: Recent Trends in Health Indicators

Indicator	Level	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Crude Birth Rate (per 1000 population)	National	19.0	18.9	18.8	18.7	18.5	18.3	18.1	18.1
	Urban	18.2	17.2	16.5	16.1	16.1	16.1	15.9	15.3
	Rural	19.3	19.4	20.3	20.9	20.4	20.1	20.0	20.4
Crude Death Rate (per 1000 population)	National	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.1
	Urban	4.6	4.1	4.6	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.9
	Rural	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.7	5.7	5.4	5.4	5.2
Average Age at Marriage	Male	24.3	24.9	25.3	25.2	25.1	25.5	25.3	25.2
	Female	18.4	18.3	18.4	18.4	18.4	18.9	18.9	19.1
Life Expectancy at Birth (year)	Both	70.4	70.7	70.9	71.6	72	72.3	72.6	72.8
	Male	68.8	69.1	69.4	70.3	70.6	70.8	71.1	71.2
	Female	71.2	71.6	72.0	72.9	73.3	73.8	74.2	74.5
Infant Mortality Rate (<1 year) (per 1000 live births)	National	31	30	29	28	24	22	21	21
	Urban	26	26	28	28	22	21	20	20
	Rural	34	31	29	28	25	22	22	21
Under 5 Mortality Rate (per 1000 live births)	National	41	38	36	35	31	29	28	28
	Urban	35	30	32	32	27	27	26	26
	Rural	43	40	39	36	33	31	29	28
Maternal mortality Ratio (per 1000 live births)	National	1.97	1.93	1.81	1.78	1.72	1.69	1.65	1.63
	Urban	1.46	1.82	1.62	1.60	1.57	1.32	1.23	1.38
	Rural	2.11	1.96	1.91	1.90	1.82	1.93	1.91	1.78
Contraceptive users rate (%)		62.4	62.2	62.1	62.3	62.5	63.1	63.4	63.9
Total Fertility Rate (per women, 15-49 years of age)		2.11	2.11	2.10	2.10	2.05	2.05	2.04	2.04

Source: Report on Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics-2020.

Community Clinic (CC) based Primary Health Care Services

Community Clinic (CC) is the first tier public health facility to provide primary health care services to the people at periphery, especially in remote and very hard to reach areas. The initiative for establishment of CC was taken in 1998 to extend coordinated health and family planning services to the door steps of rural population. At present 13,881 CCs are functional

all over the country at the union level, each for about 6,000-8,000 population.

It is estimated that an average of 40 patients per day receive service from each CC and 95 percent of them are women and children. Beneficiaries from the CCs from 2009 to February 2021 are the rural people getting services through around 96.86 crore visits. During the same period, more than 7.62 crore emergency and complicated patients were referred to centres with higher facility for better management and about 97,882

normal deliveries were conducted in 4,000 CCs. Recruitment of the Community Health Care Providers (CHCPs) with proper skill development training and distribution of adequate medicines and contraceptives have made the CCs fully functional. Apart from outdoor services, Community Clinics provide health education, nutritional services, micronutrient supplementation and referral to higher facilities.

Extended Programme on Immunisation (EPI)

Government is continuing vaccination programme against vaccine preventable diseases (VPD) through the expanded programme of immunization (EPI) to protect the children against those diseases. EPI is providing vaccines against 10 vaccine preventable diseases named:

Tuberculosis, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Hepatitis-B, Haemophyllus influenza-type-B, Pneumococcal Pneumonia and Measles and Rubella. Currently, fully vaccinated EPI coverage is around 86 percent nationwide. Bangladesh is a polio free country since 2006 and that status has continuously been maintained. MOHFW responded effectively to the outbreak of measles and diphtheria among the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals (FDMN) population in *Ukhiya* and *Teknaf Upazilas* of *Cox's Bazar* district. A total of 48,14,528 doses of different vaccines/antigens (MR, bOPV, OCV, Penta, PCV, Td and vitamin A) were given through vaccination campaign among the FDMNs during September 2017 – December 2018. Table 12.6 shows the yearly EPI coverage.

Table 12.6: Vaccination under EPI Programme

Year	BCG (%)	OPV-1 (%)	OPV-2 (%)	OPV-3 (%)	Penta-1 (%)	Penta-2 (%)	Penta-3 (%)	Measles (%)	Total Vaccination (%)
2011	99.0	98.9	97.6	94.5	98.9	97.4	89.6	85.5	80.2
2012	99.0	99.0	97.7	95.1	99.0	97.6	90.0	88.5	80.6
2013	99.3	95.1	94.1	91.6	90.9	92.6	92.1	85.5	80.7
2014	99.2	95.8	95.1	92.7	92.6	93.3	93.0	86.6	81.6
2015	99.2	93.4	94.5	93.9	93.9	94.5	93.6	87.4	82.5
2016	99.5	97.8	97.0	90.1	97.8	97.0	90.1	87.5	82.3
2017	101.3	100.1	99.3	97.9	100.1	99.9	98.5	98.8	98.8
2018	100.6	99.3	98.2	97.7	98.7	97.3	96.6	97.6	97.6

Source: *Bangladesh EPI Census 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, DHIS2 2017, 2018

COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy, Management and Steps

‘The National Deployment and Vaccination Plan’ has been prepared under the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) to protect the lives of people from the COVID-19. The government procured 3 crore doses Covishield vaccine of Oxford-AstraZeneca from the Serum Institute of India. In addition, 6.80 crore doses of coronavirus vaccine will be available from the Covax facility under the World Health Organisation for 20 percent of our population, that is, for 3.40 crore people. Out of this 1.06

lakh doses have already been received. There are plans to buy vaccines from the Governments of China and Russia, Pfizer Co. from the USA and Sanofi/GSK from France/Belgium. Negotiations are at the final stage for procuring Sinopharm vaccine from China and Sputnik-V vaccine from Russia, and, if necessary, manufacturing the same in Bangladesh. Meanwhile, 70 lakh doses of Oxford/AstraZeneca Covishield vaccine reached Bangladesh, and the Governments of India and China gave 32 lakh doses and 5 lakh doses respectively of coronavirus vaccine as gifts. The World Bank provided US\$ 500 million for procuring COVID vaccines and US\$ 14.87

million for logistics support. Loan Agreement for US\$ 940 million with the ADB to procure COVID vaccine is at the final stage. Alongside, there is a good possibility to receive support for vaccine procurement from the European Investment Bank and AIIB.

Plans have been devised to vaccinate 80 percent of the people in phases. In the first phase, people with risks will be vaccinated, and 25 lakh vaccines will be given each month. The vaccination program is being implemented at the field level through coordination between the EPI and the Communication Disease Control (CDC). The first dose of vaccination began on February 7 while that of the second dose began on 8 April. Registration for vaccination and distribution of vaccine certificates and vaccine cards are being done digitally through the *surokkha.gov.bd* web portal using National ID cards. Following the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) of the WHO and the National Immunisation Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) of Bangladesh and considering the reality of our country, people aged 40 or above are given priority in the COVID-19 vaccination program, who constitute 20 percent of total population. The vaccination programme is conducted in 1,005 hospital-based vaccination centres across the country. Up to 31 May 2021, 58,22,157 persons received vaccines, of which 36,10,635 are male and 22,11,522 are female. Out of them 41,73,930 have completed their second doses.

Maternal and Neonatal Health Services

As special priority to the improvement of Maternal and Child Health, many activities have been undertaken at the national level. Among these, Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) training for the doctors', Community based Skilled Birth Attendant (CSBA) training for the field staff are most notable. In addition, scaling up of family planning services, safe MR services, encouraging private sectors expansion, advocacy for

increasing facility delivery services have been carried out by the government. Various kinds of training activities are running on for developing skill of the doctors, Family Welfare Visitors (FWV) and all field level workers who are involved in providing for maternal and child health care.

The government has been implementing Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) activities all over the country with technical and financial support of the Development Partners (DPs). Now, Comprehensive EmOC services are available in all the medical college hospitals, 59 district hospitals, 132 *Upazila* Health Complexes and 63 maternal and child welfare centres. Rest of the *Upazila* Health Complexes is providing Basic EmOC (BEmOC) services. Due to EMONC services MMR falls to 0.17 percent and NMR 2.8 percent. The government has provided short-term training for community based skilled birth attendant (CSBA) and midwives and deployed them to the remote and rural areas. Till to date 11,544 CSBAs have been trained to provide maternal health care services at the rural level. 3 years midwifery training course is going on and 3,000 posts have been created for midwives and 1,200 Midwives are posted in different Health facilities.

Nutrition

To expand the nutrition service throughout the whole country, the Operational Plan (OP) 'National Nutrition Services (NNS)' has been taken up under 4th HPNSP. It's being implanted by the Directorate of Health for a period of 2017 to 2022. The main purpose of the programme are provide up to date and scientific nutrition service to the vulnerable population, awareness building for the food habit changing and nutrition induced life style and reducing maternal and child mortality by prevention of malnutrition. The nutrition improvement activities relate to control of nutritional deficiencies, provision of nutrient supplements and strengthening of the Severe

Acute Malnutrition (SAM) treatment in primary, secondary and tertiary level health facilities. 365 SAM facilities have been created at District and *Upazila* hospitals. 395 Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) Programmes and Nutrition Corners have been established at District and *Upazila* hospitals. In order to provide nutrition services to the people in slums, remote areas of villages especially in *char*, *haor* area,

NNS is conducting nutrition services activities in coordination with various Ministries / Divisions/ Departments and local and foreign private aid agencies.

In 2017, a survey conducted by NNS on low birth weight of newborns showed that the rate of low birth weight is currently 22.6 percent. Table 12.7 shows a whole picture of nutrition status of Bangladesh

Table 12.7: Nutrition Status of Bangladesh

Index	2011 %	2014 %	2018 %	(Target %) 2022	Remark
Underweight child (0-59 month's)	36.4	32.6	22	25	On Track
Stunted child (0-59 month's)	-	36.1	31	25	On Track
Wasting (0-59 month's)	-	14.3	8	<10	On Track
Low birth weight	-	22.6	-	<18	On Track
Exclusive breast feeding	47.1	50.8	69	60	On Track
Rate of Anemic pregnant women's	-	-	-	Less than one-third decrease	On Track
Rate of Anemic adolescence girl's	-	-	-		On Track
Rate of Anemic child	-	-	-		On Track
Night blindness	-	0.2	-	<1	On Track
Usage rate of Iodine salt at household level	82	-	-	Less than one-third decrease	On Track
Rate of breast feeding child	64	55.3	65	65	On Track
Rate of Vitamin-A capsule intake (6-59 month's)	60	92	79	>90	On Track

Source: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Health Information System and E-health

MOHFW has drawn global attention for the successful utilisation of IT in the health sector. Laptops and Android Tablets have been provided at the community clinics and other grass root level workers. Programmes are active for enrolling information related to each pregnant mother and under-5 children. A uniform 'Health identifier Code' is being provided to every citizen which will be used in making the permanent health record software design linking with the national ID card database. A draft of national E-

Health Policy and Strategy has been finalised. Programmes regarding admission in medical and dental colleges, human resources management in the health sector, leave and deputation of the doctors, every type of training and higher study management have been digitalised.

The digital office management has been introduced along with ensuring attendance through finger print on the machine. Health services are being provided through mobile phones from every district and *Upazila* level government hospitals of the country. The clients

can submit complains or receive health services through SMS at about 800 government hospitals. Advanced telemedicine services are being provided from 82 hospitals. A full-fledged call center named ‘*Sasthyo Batayan*’ has been functioning. ‘Skype Based Tele-consultation’ has been introduced alongside the telemedicine service.

Shashtho Shurokkha Karmashuchi

Keeping the goal of achieving universal health care in the country by 2030 in view, the government has formulated the ‘Strategy for Finance in the Health Sector: 2012-2032’. In line with the strategy, the ‘*Shashtho Shurokkha Karmashuchi* (SSK)’ has been formulated to finance healthcare services for people living below the poverty line. The pilot programme under the SSK has been initiated to reduce the out-of-pocket expenses of the poor population and protect them from the catastrophic health expenditure in receiving hospital-based services. While receiving inter-departmental services from hospitals, every family holding a card gets free treatment including costs of diagnosis and medicines. As on April 30, 2021, a total of 20,931 members of 81,619 enlisted families have received services under this programme, and it will gradually be expanded across the country.

Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and protecting public life

When the coronavirus infection was first detected in Bangladesh in March 2020, the National Preparedness and Response Plan was prepared to combat and control the virus. Later on, with some minor revisions, the Bangladesh Preparedness and Response Plan was finalised, and activities are currently being carried out in accordance with the Plan. During the second wave of the pandemic, medical treatment services have been continued in specialised isolation units in district and *upazilla* levels, 14 COVID-19 dedicated hospitals in the capital city, and 67 COVID-19 dedicated hospitals in the district hospitals which

were established during the first wave of the pandemic last year. Alongside, 55 laboratories established in the last fiscal year and improved government healthcare institutions are providing COVID-19 services. Nine new COVID-19 dedicated hospitals have been established. As a result, a total of 89 COVID-19 dedicated hospitals are now in operation. Dhaka North City Corporation Specialised Hospital and Isolation Centre has been opened to provide quick treatment to patients who got infected during the second wave of the pandemic. This hospital has 200 ICU beds, 250 high dependency units (HDUs) beds, an emergency ward with 56 beds, and 395 isolated general beds.

All incoming passengers are being scanned at the points of entry, such as airports, land ports and sea ports. Till date, 22.22 lakh international passengers who arrived through the country’s 3 international airports, 2 seaports, 2 railway stations, and 23 land ports have been screened. Samples for detection of COVID infection are being tested in a total of 121 public laboratories, of which 72 are located in Dhaka and 49 outside Dhaka. Isolation beds, 5 in each *upazilla*, have been set up in all *Upazilla* Health Complexes. Around 10-12 isolation beds have been kept ready in District *Sadar* Hospitals where there is no Medical College. As a result, COVID infected patients from remote areas are getting proper treatment. Distribution of Tk. 850 crore allocated in the current fiscal year for payment of compensation to the doctors, nurses and other officials who have died on duty and payment as honorarium to the doctors, nurses and health workers are underway. Two institutional quarantine centres have been kept operational. In addition, a total of 629 quarantine centres are prepared in different districts and *upazillas*. 10 guidelines on COVID-19 matters, 28 instructions, 4 SOPs and 13 public awareness building leaflets have been prepared. Due to the setting up of real time hospital dashboards in the hospitals across the country, all information on general and ICU

beds in COVID hospitals are now instantly available. Moreover, the online verified test report system has been established during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A number plans have been undertaken to develop the health sector to address the impact of COVID-19. The implementation of some of these projects has begun in the current fiscal year and will continue in the next financial year. Different projects are being implemented with the funding of US\$ 600 million from the World Bank, US\$ 100 million from the Asian Development Bank and US\$ 100 million from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The 'COVID-19 Emergency Response and Pandemic Preparedness' project, supported by the World Bank and AIIB, is in progress. Purchase of vaccines, installation of oxygen lines, setting up of ICUs/CCUs and other activities are being taken up under the project. To enhance the country's capacity to tackle the pandemic, improve the system of prevention, control and treatment of infectious diseases and strengthen the emergency preparedness capacity, the 'COVID-19 Response Emergency Assistance' project is being implemented with support from ADB. Purchase of ICU beds, ventilators and PCR machines and expansion of modern microbiology laboratories in 19 institutions and activities are being taken up under the project. Steps have been taken to enhance capacity of private medical college hospitals, including the Department of Nursing and Midwifery, to deal with the pandemic. The process of urgently recruiting necessary manpower and hiring consultants on a contract basis is underway to ensure proper case management including expanding laboratory facilities and enhancing the skills of concerned health workers, doctors, nurses and technologists.

In the last 2020-21 budget, a lump sum of Tk. 10,000 crore was allocated to meet any urgent need to address Covid-19. In the next FY 2021-22 too, a lump sum of Tk. 10,000 crore has been

allocated again to meet the urgent demand to address Covid-19.

Family Planning Services and Reproductive Health

As a result of taking various effective initiatives by the government, Bangladesh could achieve commendable progress in the family planning programmes. In 2001, Bangladesh's population growth rate was 1.57 percent, which is now 1.37 percent. So far, the greatest achievement of the government is to ensure availability of modern and active contraceptive methods. At present, 63.9 percent of couples are using birth control methods, but in 2001 it was 53.8 percent.

According to BDHS report in 2020, Total Fertility Rates (TFR) has been declined sharply from 3.0 in 2011 births to 2.04 in 2020. The government has identified achieving the replacement level population growth from present rate of 2.04 to 2.0 as one of its main target and has taken many programmes in that direction. In line with this target activities are being implemented for increasing net reproductive rate at 75 percent.

Besides, maternal and child mortality rates have decreased due to providing mother and child health services and providing full-time child care services at the union level. At present maternal mortality rate has decreased from 1.72 to 1.63 (per thousand live births) and infant mortality rate decreased from 31 to 28 (per thousand living births).

To ensure smooth implementation of programmes on family planning, maternal and child health services, *Upazila* Family Planning Offices, including 10 District Offices and 145 Family Planning Stores have been established. To expand services at the grassroot level, 89 new 10-beds MCWCs (Maternal and Children Welfare Centers) have been constructed at the union level. Family planning services are being provided through Web-Logistic Management Information System. At the same time, e-health programs are

being conducted as part of widening the use of information technology in medical services. To ensure safe maternity services, safe delivery services for 24 hours a day 7 days a week have been introduced in Health and Family Welfare Centers in 2,854 Unions. The National Newborn Health Program (NNHP) is being implemented in order to protect the health of newborns and children as part of health management. In addition, Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) services are being provided in 192 facilities.

The government is laying emphasis on ensuring provision of health services to adolescents. A total of 603 Adolescent Friendly Health Corners have been opened at Union Health and Family Welfare Centers and Maternal and Child Welfare Centers for the physical and mental development of adolescents, through which services and information are being provided to them. Under the ongoing sector program, a total of 979 adolescent-friendly corner will be established by 2022. Adolescent website (www.adoinfobd.com) has been developed to provide adolescent healthcare.

Health in Private Sector

Providing demand base health service for all people by government alone is not possible although various effective step taken. For this, to flourish private health sector, government is providing monetary and other support. In private sector through registered hospital, clinic and diagnostic centres health service delivery is carried out. NGO's are playing significant role on health service like sanitation, supply of pure drinking water and elimination of contagious diseases like diarrhea. Besides, lots of NGO's are working actively in HIV/AIDS, nutrition and other programmes under health, population and nutrition sector development programme. Scope for investment in the projects run by Public Private Partnership (PPP) has been created. Under the Public Private Partnership strategy

government has taken initiative to establish 7 hospitals.

Medical Education

The government not only pays attention at health service but also health education. In addition to various specialized institutions, postgraduate courses have been started in medical colleges. There are 36 government Medical Colleges (4,350 seats in the government level), one Government Armed Forces Medical College (125 seats) and 5 Army Medical Colleges (250 seats), 9 Government Dental College (545 seats), 28 post-graduate Medical Institutions (1,541), 11 Medical assistant training institutions (922 seats), 15 Institute of Health Technology (IHT) (3,100), 14 nursing colleges and 70 Non-government Medical Colleges (6,348 seats), 26 Dental College (1,405 seats), 200 Medical Assistant Training Institutions (13,642 seats), 97 Institute of Health Technology (8,940 seats) are working to create skilled manpower. Besides, administrative approval has been given to establish an Institute of Health Technology in *Gopalganj* and *Gazipur* districts. Apart from this to encourage alternative medical service, 7 alternative medical care colleges are functioning.

Nursing Services

Nursing directorate has been upgraded to Nursing and Midwifery Directorate on 16 November 2016 in order to strengthen nursing education and services. The main objective of this directorate is to frame policy for improvement in the health services, produce adequate number of nurse/midwife/nurse graduates and send proposal to the government for establishing nursing institutes besides assisting the government in implementing development and welfare activities. At this moment, 38,000 nurses are serving in government health service and nursing institutes.

In order to improve the quality of nursing and midwifery education and services, Bachelor of

Science in Nursing (4 Years' Course) has been started in 13 government nursing colleges where 1,200 seats exist. Diploma in Nursing Science and Midwifery (3 years' course) is being conducted in 47 government nursing institutes where 2,630 seats exist. Diploma in Midwifery (3 years' course) is being conducted in 41 government nursing institutes where 1,050 seats exist. The administrative approval has been given to 10 nursing colleges to start masters courses in nursing and midwifery subjects. Along with existing post basic nursing colleges, 5 nursing colleges have been given administrative approval to start the post basic B.Sc. in Nursing course. 5,045 senior staff nurses have been recruited to address global corona pandemic and more 4,000 senior staff nurses are in the process of being recruited. A proposal to create 6,000 nurse posts has been accepted. Another proposal to send 500 ICU nurses to Kuwait and 60 ICU nurses to Maldives has been accepted.

Programmes for Women and Child Development

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is working for total socio-economic development of women. Important activities of the ministry include women empowerment, taking steps for self-employment of women through bringing the products of the grass root level women entrepreneurs in the business, stop women abuse, stop women trafficking, facilitate safety of women in work place and ensure women's participation in the mainstream economic activities etc. 'Domestic violence (prevention and security) Act-2010' has been enacted as well as rules have been framed under this Act for establishing equal rights and elimination of discrimination against women at all levels of state and public life. 'National Women Development Policy-2011', 'National Child Policy-2011' and 'Comprehensive policy on Initial Care and Development of Child- 2013', 'Dowry Prevention Act-2018', 'Child marriage

Prevention Rules-2018', 'Shishu Academy Act-2018' and 'Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Act-2014' and Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Rules-2018', 'Women and Child Abuse Suppression (Amendment) Act-2020', Women and Child Abuse Suppression (Amendment) Ordinance-2020' and 'Sewing Machine Purchase, Allocation and Management Policy -2021' has been enacted. Two national action plans have been formulated for the implementation of the National Women's Development Policy and the prevention of violence against women and children.

An incentive package has been implemented for women to enable them to address the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and facilitate economic recovery. Maternity allowances and working and lactating mother allowances have been provided to meet the health and nutritional needs of poor pregnant women in rural and urban areas and ensure complete development of the child, and micro-credit activities have been running to ensure self-employment of women. The government has been implementing activities under the Multi-sectoral Program for Prevention of Violence against Women. In addition, One-Stop Crisis Centers for women and children victims of violence in divisional districts and medical college hospitals in 6 districts have been set up. A total of 67 One-Stop Crisis Cells including 47 in district *sadar* hospitals and 20 in *Upazila* health complexes has been established. Besides, instant support is being provided through the mobile app 'Joy'.

The government is running a total of 9 working women's hostels (*kormojibi Mohila* Hostel) for working women. Construction of working women's hostels is underway in Dhaka's *Nilkhet* and *Kaliganj*, *Araihazar*, *Sonaimuri* and *Mathbaria Upazilas*. The Child Daycare Act 2021 has been drafted and awaits enactment. A total of 120 child day care centers are being run under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, including 64 in the Department of

Women's Affairs, 16 in the *Jatiyo Mohila Songstha* and 40 in the Bangladesh *shishu* Academy. Working mothers are being assisted by providing day care to 5,730 children through 120 child daycare centers for children aged 1-6 years.

Government is conducting various activities for psychological and cultural development as well as flourishing the latent genius of the children with an objective to developing them as competent citizens of the country. There are six *Shishu Bikash Kendro* (child development centre) in the country including one for female children in *Azimpur* and two for male children in *Keraniganj* and *Gazipur* and also three in *Rajshahi*, *Khulna* and *Chattogram* divisions. One *Shishu Bikash Kendro* and one pre-primary education centre has been established in 71 offices including 64 districts and 6 *Upazilas*. Children of 4-5 years of age are being developed for admission to primary schools through these centres. More than 900 books for children have been published by *Shishu* Academy for developing reading habit in children.

Significant activities have been undertaken for ending child labour and child abuse, providing education to children with health, education, nutrition and vocational training include implementation of social awareness and parenting activities for development. Among them- safety and social security of child from embryo to 8 years of age, Establishment and operation of *Shishu Bikash Kendro* for children of 4 years of age, Expansion of activities of *Shishu Bikash Kendro* for the ultra-poor and separated children, vocational training for student of qawmi madrassas in the rural areas, establishment of day care centres for female workers of tea garden and garments, safe internet, safe children etc. are significant.

Social Welfare

The Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW) is working for poverty reduction, human resource development and other activities for

rehabilitation of the neglected segment of population along with the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), orphans, destitute, poor and helpless.

The Social Security Programme is a successful programme of the ministry. Currently, different types of allowances and food assistance activities are running under social security programmes of the MoSW. Old age allowance, destitute women allowance, widow and husband deserted women allowance, insolvent disability allowance, education stipend for students with disabilities, development projects of the marginalized people, financial support programmes for patient with cancer, kidney and liver cirrhosis, stroke paralysis, congenital heart diseases and thalassemia, Rehabilitation of Beggars and Alternative Employment Program etc. programmes are the most notable social security programmes of MoSW.

The Department of Social Services is conducting various activities for the mental development, nurturing, education, training and rehabilitation of orphans, risky and abandoned children. 85 *Sarkari Shishu Paribar* are being run in the country for the upbringing of the non-parental children, creating a sense of responsibility and discipline among them, rehabilitation through training and education. Of these, there are 43 institution for boys, 41 for girls and 1 is mixed. The total number of seats in these establishments is 10,300 and the total number of rehabilitations is 59,990. There are 6 institutions in 6 districts of the country (*Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Khulna and Barisal*) for nurturing, maintenance, sports and general education of the abandoned children from 0-7 year old without parent. The total number of seats in these institutions is 600 and the number of beneficiaries is 1 thousand 500 baby who are transferred to *Sarkari Sishu Paribar* as a part of rehabilitation program. Three institutions are being run for the purpose of rehabilitating

distressed children aged 6-18 years through general education, religious education and vocational training.

Activities are being conducted in 3 centers to correct the disobedient children of parents due to various problems including family unrest, strict discipline, neglect, mal-administration, lack of recreation and modern education and availability of firearms and drugs, as well as social deterioration. There are one Child Development Centers in *Tongi, Gazipur*, one in *Pulherhat, Jessore* and one in *Konaabari, Gazipur*. 6 Government shelter Homes are being operated to provide food, clothing, medical, education and vocational training to those who are vagrant and homeless. 6 Training and rehabilitation centers in 6 division are being operated to provide for the maintenance, education, training and rehabilitation of girls with disabilities, immoral and non-social professions. Safe home operations are being conducted in *Barisal, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Bagerhat* and *Faridpur* districts for the nurturing, training, treatment, recreation and rehabilitation of women and children detained in the police station / jail.

Hospital Social Services, Integrated Blind Education Programs, Schools for Visually Challenged and Speech Challenged Children are other notable welfare and services activity of MoSW. Apart from these, Destitute Children Training and Rehabilitation Centers, Stipend Program for the Persons with Disable Students and Vocational Training Centers and Rehabilitation for Physically Persons with Disability programs are being run through this Ministry. Integrated blind education program being conducted over 64 districts Headquarters in order to disburse education among visually impaired children in their own environment. In addition of the above programs the Social security services are being provided to the street children through 'Drop in center' under project of Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh.

Persons with disabilities are an integral part of society. The government is committed to improving their quality of life. The Department of Social Services is conducting various programmes to protect the welfare, development and rights of persons with various types of disabilities and to rehabilitate them. The important programmes are- integrated visionary education programme, schools for the visually impaired, institution for children with mental disabilities, vocational training, employment and rehabilitation center for physically handicapped and so on.

Poverty is a major obstacle to the social and economic development of Bangladesh. The Department of Social Services is implementing the five poverty reduction programmes for the purpose of socio-economic development through providing micro credit to the poor, helpless, neglected, backward and backward people living in rural / urban areas of the country. These are- rural social services, rural mothers center, urban community programme, rehabilitation programme for the burnt and people with disabilities and loan programme in asrayan project.

Activities taken during Covid-19

In Covid-19 situation, the collection of installments of interest free micro-credit program conducted under Rural Social Services Program (RSS) was carry over for 3 months. This facility has been provided to 9,68,276 borrowers. In addition, in order to revive the stagnant rural economy due to COVID-19, an additional Tk. 100 crore has been Keep resources for interest free micro-credit in FY 2020-21. Already, Tk 25 crore has been allocated for interest free micro credit Programs.

During Covid-19, hospital social services programs distribute nutritious food, masks and hand sanitizers of Tk. 8,96,24,254 along with regular medical assistance to 2,65,471 helpless patients. The Head Office of Department of

Social Services, District, *Upazila* and Urban Social Services Office in collaboration with the National Social Welfare Council provided emergency food and financial assistance of Tk. 9,31,47,990 to 2,80,343 poor and unemployed persons.

Youth Development

Youth Directorate is implementing various programmes for converting youth force to skilled human resource through training, technology and technical knowledge. 'National Service' programme is being implemented through youth directorate for creating job opportunities for the educated and unemployed youth. Young male and females having secondary and upper level of education are being given the chance to contribute in nation building activities following the policy of the programme.

Youth directorate is working for the development and expansion of information technology. Educated but unemployed youths are being trained through 77 centres in 64 districts in internet, networking, computer basic course, graphic design and video editing course. 63.62 lakh male and female youths were trained skill development in different trades till February 2021 for providing them the chance for employment and self-employment. Among them, 22.68 lakh male and female youths became self-reliant through self-employment. 17.31 beneficiaries were given loan facility worth Tk.2,066.38 crore from principal and revolving loan fund for taking up and extension of projects.

Furthermore, to implement National Youth Policy 2017, Youth Action Plan has been prepared and preparation of Youth Development Index is in final stage.

Sports Development

Directorate of Sports is playing an effective role in motivating the children, juvenile and youth towards sports at grass root level. Comprehensive training is being imparted to both male and

female participants in various disciplines in educational institutions, sports club and sports institutions. Directorate of Sports is also arranging different competitions for assessing the capability in sports and also to develop that capability. Directorate of Sports is also contributing in raising national and international level players, extension of social security in sports arena, prevention of abuse of drugs, health consciousness, environment consciousness, empowerment of women and increase the social status of the sportsmen. Awareness is being raised through annual sports competition for people with autism and other disorders related to neuro-development. Sports items are being supplied for free to educational and sports institutions for arranging sports events. Bachelor of Physical Education (BPED) programme is being conducted through 6 government physical training institutes.

Cultural Affairs

17 organisations under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs is conducting various activities for the development, preservation, expansion and extension of Bangladeshi culture and provides necessary patronage to Bangla language and literature, music, fine art, drama, film and creative publication.

Renovation, preservation, survey and excavation of the archaeological sites of the country is going on in order to properly preserve the archaeological resources and artifacts of the country. In 2008, the number of antiquities preserved in the country was 391. At present, it has increased to 521. Under the South Asian Tourism in Structure Development project at a cost of Tk. 101.23 crore, cultural monuments have been developed in *Paharpur* Buddhist Monastery area of *Naogaon*, *Mohasthanagarh* area of *Bogura*, *Kantjiu* Temple of *Dinajpur* and sixty dome mosques of *Bagerhat* and adjoining area. Renovation of *Lalbagh* fort and light and sound show have been started at a cost of Tk.

13.32 crore. *Baliati* Palace in *Manikganj* has been converted into a museum and opened to the public. Memorial centers / collections of three eminent personalities have been set up in 3 districts at a cost of Tk.8.93 crore.

Bangla Academy is working for cultural enlightenment and conducts important activities including compilation of dictionary, research and publication in different areas as well as arranges book fair in the month of February and celebrates different significant days every year. Bangladesh *Shilpakala* Academy works for the development, preservation, expansion and patronization of fine art, dramatic art, music etc. Syllabus-based training workshops on vocal music, dance, dramatic art, fine art and rhythm instruments is being conducted in *Shilpakala* Academy of 64 districts.

Bangladesh National Museum is devoted to archaeological, classical, decorative and contemporary art, history, natural history, ethnography and world civilization. It has continued to collect different kinds of important archaeological artifacts from the remote areas of the country for the purpose of exhibiting hundreds of thousands of visitors to the museum. A project titled '1971: Construction of Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum Building' is running at an estimated cost of TK.2,783.28 lakh.

Nazrul Institute is working on art and literature of National Poet *Kazi Nazrul islam*. *Nazrul* Institute published 37 books till now.

The main function of the Copyright Office is to preserve, prevent piracy and resolve copyright disputes created by creative individuals in the country and internationally. The copyright registration process has been automated.

The Department of Public Libraries is the highest body for controlling government public libraries. The main goal and objective of this department is to build a knowledge based society. One of the major functions of the Department of Public

Libraries is to collect, organize, arrange and supply books and textbooks as per the demand of the readers, and to provide e-books, periodicals and other textbooks to the readers. 7 mobile libraries are providing mobile library services at the doorsteps of readers across the country.

To commemorate, congratulate and inspire those who are fighting from the front against covid-19 in the country at the initiative of the Ministry of Cultural affairs, there is a TVC titled '*hobe Joy, Hey Nirbhay*' in collaboration with Channel I and a TVC titled '*Ke Acho Joan*' has been built by Bangladesh *Shilpakala* Academy under this ministry. Arrangements have been made to create and disseminate corona virus warning videos of 14 prominent artists and drama personalities at the initiative of the Ministry of Cultural affairs for awareness campaign.

Religion

Hajj pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia will be kept on hold this year like last year due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Hajj management is being ensured through information technology including the introduction of e-Hajj system to complete all the functions of Hajj in the coming years. Upward expansion and renovation of the Hajj Camp building are progressing fast to accommodate all service providers. 1,000 Imams have been provided interest-free loans and 4,000 distressed imams have got financial assistance in FY 2020-21 under the Imam and *Muazzin* Welfare Trust. Welfare activities are being carried out in a coordinated manner through Hindu, Buddhist and Christian Welfare Trusts for the people of respective religions to ensure communal harmony and peaceful social order. A grant of Tk. 3.66 crore from the profits of the endowment fund has been provided to 747 churches/cemeteries/places of worship and religious institutions since the establishment of the trust.

Development of *Chattogram Hill Tracts*

The *Chattogram Hill Tracts* is an integral part of our culture and heritage. The government is working heartily for the development of the marginal people of the hill tracts. In FY 2010-11, a total of 2,011 projects/ schemes have been taken in the three hill districts at a cost of Tk. 700.67 crore. The government arranges different types of development and technical projects for the betterment of hilly people and their glorious culture.

Broadcast

Ministry of Information is one of the most important publicity coordination departments of the government. Information on all the development activities of the government is being sent to the top level of the government including different print and electronic media from this ministry. The government is taking various projects/activities for the modernisation and development of the media. In the last 10

years, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has implemented 21 projects at a cost of Tk. 81,073.60 lakh. The number of ongoing projects of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in the FY 2010-11 is 12. All these activities were aimed of bringing about the 'unprecedented development of communication networking, including global media, in keeping with the technological advancement and excellence in the context of globalisation and that Bangladesh is going ahead in this development. *Sangsad* Bangladesh Television started broadcasting on March 29, 2020 under the headline '*Amar ghore amar school*' and '*Amar ghore amar madrasa*' with the aim of continuing the educational activities of secondary level students in covid situation. In addition, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting broadcasts various awareness TVC / advertisements in various media on the Covid situation.