



Education Support Programme



Centre for Development Innovation and Practices (CDIP)



VISION

To establish a poverty- and illiteracy-free Bangladesh.

MISSION

To provide various financial and social development services and promote socio-economic development of the poor through education.

Education Support Programme

Goal

To arrest drop-out from school through education support to first generation learners of backward family-background.

Objectives

- To provide education support to children of Class I and Class II from poor and unlettered families.
- To strengthen the education base of disadvantaged children in the beginning of their lives.
- To arrest drop-out from school and ensure quality education.
- To help develop primary-school-age children physically and mentally.
- To prepare para-teachers out of un- and semi-employed girls of communities.

Education Support Programme



Centre for Development Innovation and Practices (CDIP) runs an Education Support Programme under which disadvantaged children of pre-primary, Class I and Class II have their lessons prepared. School children learn their lessons given by class teachers so that they can be prepared for next day's classes in school. These are children from poor, unlettered and less-aware families. A local girl with at least high-school education who may be unemployed or a housewife or a student works as their teacher. Around 25 children sit on any space like a yard or a porch of a home available for their sitting and learning. They sit there everyday except holidays from 3 to 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The objective is to stop their drop-out from school.

One Field Officer takes care of 25 learning centres in an area. Most of the Field Officers are local women. She visits each learning centre at least once a month and helps the teacher with suggestions for effective teaching. There is a parents' committee for every learning centre. The parents' committee sits once a month. They discuss the problems faced by the learning centre and find solutions to these. At present 75 thousand children of poor family-background have been studying in 26 hundred centres in more than 16 hundred villages of the country.

CDIP's learning centres have given rise to keen interest and popularity among village people. They have been increasingly feeling for its necessity. As a result of this growing demand, an Intensive Education Support Programme

has been started since 2012. Under this, all children of disadvantaged families in a particular union, an administrative area, get enrolled in as many learning centres as required. That is, no one is left out. At present 375 such learning centres have been running through 11 branch offices of the organization.

CDIP's success of reducing drop-out through its education programme has prompted Palli Karam-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), the government-run provider of funds for microcredit activities, to set up similar learning centres through its partner NGOs. ASA (Association for Social Advancement), a leading NGO, has been following this model too.

There are many Special Needs Children in our country. They are not only handicapped, also discriminated and deprived of rights others enjoy like education, employment, etc. CDIP learning centres give emphasis on their education. Our Field Officers and Teachers both encourage parents to send their Special Needs Children to the learning centres and teachers take special care of them. Therefore, there are such children in many of our learning centres.

Reflection

Arresting drop-out of first-generation learners in Bangladesh





Muhammad Yahiya

Executive Director

CDIP

Knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic is a fundamental human right of a citizen in any modern state. Fortunately, the constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh pledges 'a uniform, mass oriented and universal system of education' to all its citizens. Unfortunately, nearly half our population is still unlettered even in so many years since our independence in 1971. This is a big obstacle because Bangladesh has no alternative to an educated human resource achieved through universal education for its development.

We know, Japan achieved hundred percent literacy a hundred years ago. This achievement was the result of a social movement, "no community, no family of the community and no member of the family will remain illiterate". This was made possible in just forty years with the support of the state. With few natural resources, this educated human resource became the key to its present amazing development.

In Bangladesh Compulsory Primary Education Act was enacted in 1990. An Education Policy was prepared and passed in 2010. People's awareness about education has increased to a very good extent. Literacy rate has been



increasing year by year. Enrolment in Class I has reached close to a hundred percent. But then, nearly half the students enrolled in Class I can finish Class V. Again, half of those who complete Class V can cross the door of Class X. This continuous drop-out through the school system is a matter of deep concern for the nation.

School drop-out is one of the major problems in our education system. This tarnishes many of our successes. In 2012 Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen lauded the successes Bangladesh achieved in education, especially that girls in Bangladesh have been ahead of those in India. But there is no place of complacency for us in this because we certainly could have made more progress if we had been able to tackle the problem of drop-out effectively. There are both



private and public initiatives addressing this hydra-headed problem of drop-out. Education Support Programme run by Centre for Development Innovation and Practices (CDIP) is one of these efforts.

Education Support Programme

In 2005, I went to a village on the occasion of a CDIP programme. There I found some children playing in an open space behind a primary school. On seeing me they tried to run away. I called them back and talked with them and realized that they were truant students. Apparently, all from poor families. I wanted to know the reason of their not staying at school.



They answered that they had not done the maths, not completed the handwritings and not learnt the lessons. They feared that teachers would beat them for not doing their home-tasks. I could see that these children would soon drop out from school even without the notice of their parents. I said, 'Why didn't you learn your lessons?' Some questioned back, who would teach them at their homes. It was obvious to me that it was beyond the capacity of their working class, unlettered parents to help them learn their



home-tasks given at school. The image of my mother helping me to learn to read and write letters in my childhood jumped to my mind. I had my mother to help me. Who are there to help these children at home?

I think every parent howsoever poor or illiterate wants his or her child to have education. Parents are aware of multiple benefits of education nowadays. So they send their children to school. Then what happens? Many of them drop out. Why?

There are many causes of drop-out from school, poverty being the prime cause. Besides poverty, lack of support that a child needs at home for his/her education can be a particular cause of drop-out. The poor, unlettered parents send their children to school. But the class is very large, often with one teacher for more or less than a hundred students. The teacher is unable to give proper attention to every child and therefore gives children lessons to learn and complete at home. The child comes home but without any support from anyone in the family fails to complete his/her home-tasks. When a



child of a poor family-background goes to school next day, he or she fails in the classroom. The teacher reprimands him or her. Facing such harassment in the classroom everyday, children of poor families begin to drop out from school.

I was thinking over how to help these poor children so that they enjoy staying in the classroom. I came back to our local office at noon and discussed it with my colleagues. I asked whether any educated woman would be available in the village who could teach these children for a couple of hours in the afternoon after their school time. She would help the children to learn their lessons given by their class teachers. My colleagues assured me of this. Five girls came to our office that day. We talked to them about the problem and how to solve it. We requested them to find 10 to 15 such children as need support, find a place for their sitting and start teaching them from 3pm to 5pm. For this service they would get an honourarium of only Tk. 500 (6.25 US\$) per month. They agreed at once and started 5 learning centres from next month.

They did it very well. As the news got around, many other girls came forward with their interest to start such a work. This programme began to be known as 'Education Support Program'. It is to arrest drop-out by supporting the mainstream primary schools, not anything parallel to it. It is to keep learners in classrooms by removing their fear of failure, shame and harassment.

Soon we were surprised to see more and more children coming to our learning centres. Parents felt relief that their children were staying close to home as well as learning their home-tasks given in school. The number of learning centres began to grow every year. In 2013, the number going beyond our estimate reached 2 thousand 6 hundred with 75 thousand children learning here. Now 2 thousand 6 hundred women in 16 hundred villages across the country have been working here as teachers.

Children like to come to these learning centres that usually sit in an open space. Many of them come before due time. Mothers get relief that their children are learning the lessons. Children not only read and write, they also sing songs,





recite poems, say jokes, etc. There's a parents' meeting every month. They discuss things necessary for running the learning centres in a better way as well as some social issues affecting their lives. They reach some solutions to the problems. Teachers get inspired from these meetings. Parents have only one request to teachers, 'We cannot teach our children at home, so we send them here to learn. Let not the centre ever be closed.'

Children are happy in these centres. Now they are not afraid of any harassment in the classroom. They do better in exams. Teachers of the primary schools where they are enrolled are happy for this as well. Their students are now better prepared for the school.

Now two thousand six hundred village women are working as teachers for these children. Some of them have completed only Class VIII, some passed Class X or XII, some completed graduation and some are still students. Any educated girl in the village who has the capacity to bring together 20-25 children of poor family-background can become a teacher for such a learning centre. She herself may have been a victim of poor family background, unemployment and a burden for her parents.

This girl becomes a teacher, a Ma'am, Apa in Bangladesh, and draws respect from people in society. This respect from society makes her a different person, one with responsibility to do something for betterment of the society. Her life begins to change. The learning centre becomes a dream-world for the newly-turned teacher.

We always say that this education support programme is an easy task; almost anyone can start it. One neither needs a lot of training nor a heap of money to be able to do this. And there are people in the village ready to welcome this initiative. Other organizations with wider network than ours across the country have become interested about such an education programme and have launched their own programmes modeled on this. One of these is Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), the government-run provider of funds for micro-credit activities in the country. Up to now, 70 officials from 35 of their partner organizations have received training from us and they have started about 2 thousand such learning centres in their respective localities. ASA (Association for Social Advancement), one of the largest NGOs, got interested in this programme and sent their people to our





work-areas to have practical knowledge about this. Two years ago, in only three months they started this activity in their areas. By 2013, they have set up about 2 thousand such learning centres across the country. With its country-wide network, ASA can easily make it more successful. As per my estimate about 2 hundred thousand village girls can be partially employed through this programme. It can speed up the nation's Education for All programme through arresting drop-out from primary schools and thus is likely to free the nation from the curse of illiteracy.

I think this type of support is necessary for first generation learners of our country. It is similar to the traditional practice of an educated mother teaching her child in the evening. This programme has no contradiction with the mainstream education system. It is rather a mainstream primary school strengthening programme. It is a first generation education support programme. It has to be turned into a social movement in order to remove darkness of illiteracy from our society.

Teachers' Conference 2013

The key force of CDIP learning centres is the 26 hundred girls working as teachers across the country. CDIP organizes a Teachers' Conference usually every year. Teachers' Conference 2013 was held on 7 September in Dhaka. About 1000 teachers from five nearby districts got together in Dhaka for this conference.

Out of 1,000 teachers, 6 girls shared their experiences with the audience. They described their teaching experiences at CDIP learning centres. They feel happy about the contribution they can make to improving life of disadvantaged children.





Awlia Akter



Kohinur Akter



Rasida Jaman



Sonia Akter



Rokea Akter



Rasida Jaman



Distinguished Guests at the programme discussed as follows



Mr Md. Fazlul Kader

*Deputy Managing Director
PKSF*

When CDIP started this programme in 2005, it was a small initiative. Now it has turned into a social campaign. The innovative side of this programme is poor people themselves bear most of its expenses of extra tuition for their own children. Therefore, it is not solely dependent on external funds. It costs only 6 dollars a year for every child. At present there are 6 thousand and a half such schools and more than 2 hundred thousand children have been studying here. The credit goes to teachers because you are the pioneer. We had a study done by ERG, a research organization, which found a positive correlation between this programme and reduction of drop-out from school.

Community participation in this programme is very successful. Teachers who work here do it due to some social commitment. They do not do it only for money, which is very small. Teachers receive respect from society for this programme and they are happy because it is bigger than money. This is a genuinely sustainable

programme. It is not non-formal type of school with its own curriculum. It is complimentary to mainstream primary schools. Children are given homework in school. Many cannot complete these for lack of support at home. Teachers at CDIP learning centres help children learn these lessons given for home. Therefore children become confident in classrooms. The programme has many other positive sides. PKSF in future will spread this programme across the country through its partner organizations.



Ms. Mahera Khatun

*Former Official
UNICEF*

Today with this number of female teachers gathering before us, no one can say that Bangladesh and especially her women have not made any progress. Since the compulsory primary education act, enrollment has increased. Therefore schools are struggling to accommodate all these children. Teachers cannot give proper attention to every child in the overcrowded classroom. So there is the risk of his/her dropping out of the classroom without anyone's notice. CDIP initiative is to address this problem.

We have seen with our own eyes as well as heard that they are learning better than before and achieving better results in exams. CDIP's initiative is for first generation learners. If this whole generation can be educated, the process of education for next generations will move on smoothly. Today we see that moral values have declined to a dangerous extent in Bangladesh. Cable TV culture is polluting our cultural environment. Drug abuse is becoming a big problem in our society. If CDIP learning centres can make their learners aware of the harmful sides of these things especially of drug abuse, these children can be saved from such dangers in life. This will be a contribution to our new generation.



Mr. AMR Chowdhury Ph.D

Vice Chairman

BRAC

We have made progress in the last 30 years. During the year following Bangladesh's independence, net enrollment rate was 45 percent. Now it has increased to more than ninety percent. Of the children who go to school, 10 percent of them go to NGO-run schools. Despite much progress in the education sector, the problems of drop-out and quality education still exist. As per the

government estimate, 30 percent children drop out before completing Class V. CDIP learning centres contribute to solving these problems. Moral values are in decline in our society. Teachers of CDIP can play an effective role to prevent this.

Early marriage is a big problem in our society. The legal marriage age for girls in Bangladesh is 18 years. But 70 percent girls get married off before they reach the age of 17. CDIP teachers can play an effective role in stopping this ill practice in society.



Professor Ahmed Kamal

*Department of History
University of Dhaka*

CDIP's education programme is a successful initiative. It is encouraging that PKSF now wants to support this programme through its partner organizations. Again, if big NGOs like BRAC and ASA come forward with such a programme, it will not take long to spread it across the country. The political parties have student organizations and young people with them. If they take up such a programme, hundred percent people of the country will be educated in a very short time.

We are going through a lot of difficulties and are faced with more dangers to come. Climate

change through global warming is a grave danger that we must learn how to tackle. Knowledge of how to face this challenge should be part of our education. CDIP learning centres have no separate curriculum. Here teachers only help children learn their homework. But this must not be done in a mechanical way. CDIP teachers may think over the curriculum followed in primary education, whether it is appropriate or not and, if not, what should be included and what to be excluded. They can sit once or twice a year to discuss such things.



Mr. Mahbub Jamil

Former Advisor

*Caretaker Government of
Bangladesh*

Actual learning is to develop one's mind and CDIP teachers should put their efforts into this. For this, teachers have to continue studying. They should read whatever books are available to them. First, teachers have to enlighten themselves and then students who come into their contact will be enlightened too. We are going downwards in terms of moral values. Teachers can stop this slipping down. For this they have to study, learn about their own society and then teach children in order to make better human beings out of them.



Ms. Khilkhil Kazi

*Granddaughter of
National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam*

More than half the population of Bangladesh lives in villages. If they cannot be educated, half the country is harmed. CDIP learning centres give support to children in villages. Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam used to teach literature and music to children. He never rebuked or used any harsh words against them. In schools in Bangladesh we have heard that beating, punishment and harassment go on, therefore backward children are afraid of going into classrooms. This should not be the case. Teachers have to love the children they teach. We need ideal teachers in Bangladesh. CDIP can find out best teachers from among you and initiate a process of best teacher award. It will go a long way in encouraging teachers to be better in their profession.



Mr Md. Abdul Karim

*Managing Director
PKSF*

Chief Guest of the
Teachers' Conference 2013

I am most impressed with this large and disciplined gathering of teachers. It is a matter of pride for us that literacy rate has gone up in

Bangladesh, women empowerment has come about and many positive things have happened. In many schools the number of girls is more than the number of boys. The countries that have made most progress in the world have made largest investment in education.

Disadvantaged children do not get any help from his/her parents for learning at home. CDIP learning centres try to address this problem. Many organizations including PKSF are now following CDIP's education model. We have initiated this in many villages and we are having good results. Bangladesh has many big MFI (Micro-finance institution) NGOs and they earn good surplus every year. I will request our partner organizations to keep aside 2-3 percent of their surplus for taking up and running such a programme.



Mr Mohammad Abdullah

Chairman

CDIP

Chair of the

Discussion Programme

All teachers of CDIP learning centres present here today deserve our heartfelt thanks for their punctuality and discipline. Distinguished Guests have discussed and raised many important issues related to our education and CDIP's initiative. We must stop degeneration of values in society through mass education. Thanks to all discussants for their valuable opinions regarding our small efforts to stop primary school drop-out.

Education Support Programme At a Glance



Education in Bangladesh

- Constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh pledges 'a uniform, mass oriented and universal system of education' to all its citizens.
- Yet nearly half our population is still unlettered.
- Compulsory Primary Education Act was enacted in 1990.
- An Education Policy was prepared and passed in 2010.
- People's awareness about education has increased to a very good extent.
- Enrolment in Class I has reached close to a hundred percent.
- But then, nearly half the students enrolled in Class I can finish Class V.
- Half of those who complete Class V can cross the door of Class X.
- School drop-out is one of the major problems in our education system.
- There are many causes of drop-out from school, poverty being the prime cause.
- Besides poverty, lack of support that a child needs at home for his/her education can be a particular cause of drop-out.
- The child comes home but without any support from anyone in the family fails to complete his/her home-tasks. When a child

of a poor family-background goes to school next day, he or she fails in the classroom. The teacher reprimands him or her.

- Facing such harassment in the classroom everyday, children of poor families begin to drop out from school.
- CDIP's programme is to address particularly this problem.

How Education Support Programme Runs

- Under this programme, disadvantaged children of pre-primary, Class I and Class II have their lessons prepared.
- These are children from poor, unlettered and less-aware families.
- A local girl with at least high-school education who may be unemployed or a housewife or a student works as their teacher.
- Around 25 children sit on any space like a yard or a porch of a home available for their sitting and learning. They sit there everyday except holidays from 3 to 5 o'clock in the afternoon.
- One Field Officer takes care of 25 learning centres in an area. Most of the Field Officers are local women. She visits each learning centre at least once a month and helps the teacher with suggestions for effective teaching.

- There is a parents' committee for every learning centre. The parents' committee sits once a month. They discuss the problems faced by the learning centre and find solutions to these.
- At present 75 thousand children of poor family-background have been studying in 26 hundred centres in more than 16 hundred villages of the country.

Expansion of the Programme

- As a result of growing demand for such learning centres, an Intensive Education Support Programme has been started since 2012.
- Under this, all children of disadvantaged families in a particular union, an administrative area, get enrolled in as many learning centres as required. That is, no one is left out.
- At present 375 such learning centres have been running through 11 branch offices of the organization.

Other Participants

- 70 officials from 35 of its partner organizations of PKSf (Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation) have received training from CDIP and they have started about 2 thousand such learning centres in their respective localities.
- ASA (Association for Social Advancement) sent their people to our work-areas to have practical knowledge about this. By 2013,

they have set up about 2 thousand such learning centres across the country.

Conclusion

- It is a mainstream primary school strengthening programme.
- It is a first generation education support programme.
- It has to be turned into a social movement in order to remove darkness of illiteracy from our society



স্কুল থেকে শিশুদের
ঝরে পড়া রোধ করো



সেন্টার ফর ডেভেলপমেন্ট ইনোভেশন এন্ড প্র্যাকটিসেস (সিঙ্গাপুর)

Poster

Let's reduce
school
dropout



কোন গাঁয়ে কোন ঘর
কেউ রবে না নিরক্ষর

Poster

No person
shall remain
illiterate



সেন্টার ফর ডেভেলপমেন্ট ইনোভেশন এন্ড প্র্যাকটিসেস (সিঙ্গাপুর)



An alternative approach

A social movement to
stop school drop-out

- Saleha Begum

This is a research-based publication. It is written by Ms Saleha Begum. Researcher Saleha Begum talked with a large number of learners, parents, people's representatives and local people about the impact of CDIP's Education Support Programme. She has found a positive relation between CDIP's informal teaching and reduction of drop-out. She has also found improvement in the quality of education. This study finds that there has been an improvement in the lives of village women many of whom were once fully unemployed. Especially their recognition as teachers has boosted their self-dignity in society to a good extent. Many of them have been able to continue their own study and now nurture a dream of being full-time teachers in the future.

Excerpts from 'An alternative approach'

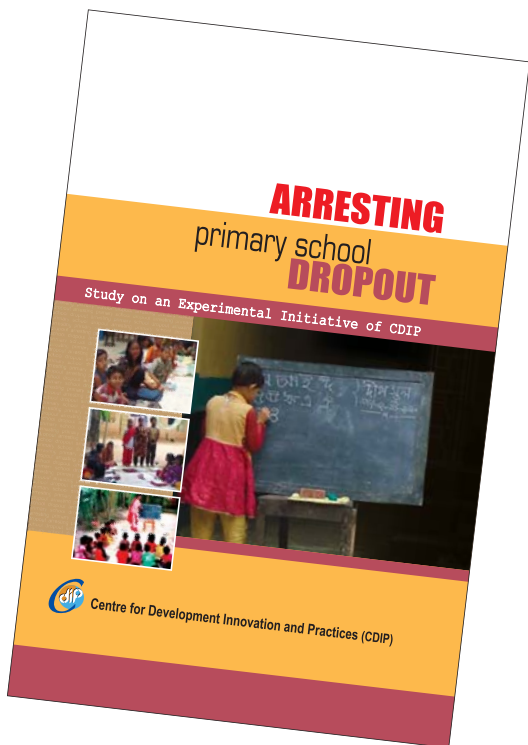
Aklima has learned how to teach children. Children have learned to make words, sentences, say rhymes and sing songs. It helps them to grow strongly and confidently. Aklima has been studying along with teaching these children and wants to be a full-time teacher in future.

Shahanara said, this is a very important task for eradicating illiteracy from society. Here children learn singing, recitation, drawing, etc. and thus their mental health is developing properly. She is pleased that this teaching at learning centres has given her respect and recognition in society.

Jahanara Begum, a local village leader, noticed that children at CDIP learning centres could learn to read, write and count before others could. They also have good knowledge about hygiene and health rules.

Teacher **Shahin Sultana** feels happy that she is able to give some support to children of backward families.

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