

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Making Inclusive Education a Reality



An Evidence-based Document on the
Implementation Strategy of Inclusive Education Model

Promotion of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (PHRPBD) Project
Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)

Front cover Inner

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Inclusive Education is a mandate of Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) to mainstream children with disabilities in the education system of Bangladesh



Promotion of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (PHRPBD) Project

Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)

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Making Inclusive Education a Reality

A publication of Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)

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Inclusive Education combines

performance, quality and equity.

Abbreviations & Acronyms

CDD	Centre for Disability in Development
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
GO	Government Organization
IE	Inclusive Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PNGO	Partner Non-Governmental Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self-Help Group
UEO	Upazila Education Officer
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer

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Last but not the least, the continuous support and guidance that the community people, parents of the students with disabilities, and the students with disabilities themselves have given is highly regarded and recognized.

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The report also benefitted substantially from different reports found available online.

Accessible Schools in Pictures



**Towards
Inclusive Education**

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| Foreword

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in past few decades in improving the lives of persons with disabilities; to be more specific, learners with disabilities. The rate of access to education of learners with disabilities has increased exponentially. Government education institutes are positive towards the potentials of learners with disabilities than ever before.

But, the undeniable truth is, the hope of an all-encompassing Inclusive Education environment is still a far cry. They are often the last to benefit from the very programmes designed by the government and the non-government bodies to reduce their marginalization.

Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) takes into account the unique challenges and barriers faced by learners with disabilities and has been working to address the issues for last 25 years. With specific attention and solutions, CDD has been working for learners with disabilities who have been left behind by mainstream education as well as development programmes.

Through Promotion of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (PHRPBD) project, CDD aims to reach those who are most marginalized – by disability – and to ensure that they are included and benefit from development interventions across all sectors; government and non-government.

Inclusive Education: Making Inclusive Education a Reality is a process report on inclusive education interventions of the PHRPBD project. The report sheds light on the process that has been adopted by the project so as to include learners with disabilities in 12 selected (10 Primary schools and 02 Secondary schools) mainstream government Primary and Secondary schools in Kulaura Upazila of Moulvibazar district (one of the catchment areas of the PHRPBD project). The report showcases how the interventions of the PHRPBD project helped learners with disabilities come out of social prejudice and combat against social stigma as well as create inclusive educational environment through sensitizing community and other relevant stakeholders. I hope the readers of this report would be amazed at seeing the development and elevation of learners with disabilities.

Everyone – learners with disabilities, their peers and families, teachers, SMC members, government Education authorities, community people, and the PHRPBD project staff – has played their part in the achievements described here. But, I would like to take the privilege to extend my thanks to the fresh, energetic, prolific minds of the PHRPBD project who took the efforts to publish this report.

Finally, let me thank our development partner, CBM for they have helped us to achieve this success by their generous and continued support.

Any suggestion or constructive criticism about this report shall highly be appreciated.

A.H.M. Noman Khan
Executive Director
Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)

Introduction

Inclusive Education (IE) aims to promote inclusiveness and generates common values of rights, emancipation, and non-discrimination through education. IE open ups creative approaches and designs effective and equitable education systems for all learners; irrespective of their disabilities. It is mutually agreed that, to combat discrimination faced by learners with disabilities, Inclusive Education is of paramount important. There is currently no internationally agreed definition of Inclusive Education. IE generally speaks of an education system that includes all students, and welcomes and supports them to learn, whoever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements.

Globally, there are 150 million children living with disabilities. They are often denied an education because they are the most vulnerable and excluded people in their communities. Children with disabilities are 10 times less likely to attend school than those without. Even if they attend school, they are more likely to drop out early while the level of schooling they receive is frequently below that of their peers¹.

Many international declarations were made to ensure inclusive education in the educational context of the world i.e., UNESCO Declaration on Education for All (1990); the Dakar Framework (2000); and the Salamanca Declaration on Inclusive Education (1994). Yet, the actual implementation of IE still remains as a dream in many developed countries in the world.

Current Situation in Bangladesh

Different statistics illustrate that, in last few decades, the educational system of Bangladesh has gone through many changes. All the changes aimed to ensure better educational scenario in Bangladesh yet the issue is not satisfactory in certain case.

In Bangladesh, parents of children with disabilities are less likely to send their children to schools. There were very few educational institutes that have required mechanism in place to enroll children with disabilities in the mainstream classrooms. Different findings distinctly remark that, even the concept of Inclusive Education is not adequately understood by both the parents and the teachers in Bangladesh because there is an

Inclusive Education (IE)

An education system that includes all students, and welcomes and supports them to learn, whoever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements.

This means making sure that teaching and the curriculum, school buildings, classrooms, play areas, transport and toilets are appropriate for all children at all levels.

Inclusive Education (IE) means all children learn together in the same schools.

1. <https://plan-international.org/education/inclusive-education-children-disability>

insufficiency of necessary training and orientations on Inclusive Education. As a matter of fact, the majority of the children with disabilities remain out of education.

But the situation has changed to some extent in recent times. An insignificant number of mainstream schools are encouraging the admission of children with disabilities and are seem to adopt the idea of Inclusive Education. Aside them, different development organizations are making advocacy efforts for the needs of Inclusive education through their education programmes and projects. And these resulted in increased enrollment of children with disabilities.

The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities – 2013, of Bangladesh, clearly mentions that children with disabilities, in any circumstances, cannot be kept out of education because of because of their disabilities. And, according to Compulsory Primary Education Act – 1990, student should not be left out of the education due to the scarcity of teachers, place, gender, race, and religion etc.

“Recently some private schools and NGO based schools have taken attempt to introduce IE in their institutions. Similar to the most of teaching methods, inclusive practice is also divergent depending on the various contexts. Not only that but it “is closely linked to the possibilities and challenges within the education system and the community, and to the various barriers associated with the teaching and learning processes” (Ahuja & Ibrahim, 2006, p.6) also. In that case the teachers who are teaching in the inclusive schools may have some challenges to ensure education in the same level for both the normal and special need child².”

As a signatory country in the mentioned international declarations and agreements, Bangladesh is endeavoring to meet the needs of children with disabilities along with the children without disabilities and designing plans to place them on one teaching-learning platform. Yet, research findings shows that, the implementation of inclusive education is yet to be found as a common practice in Bangladesh.

“I feel really happy when I come to my school. I love roaming around the school premises. My teachers care for me so do my peers. I cherish to be a teacher of my school someday.”

Emon Ahmed (10),
a student with low-vision of Class V
at Protabi Government Primary School

2. <http://dspace.bracu.ac.bd/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10361/4012/12263004.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

CDD's Journey towards IE

Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) has been working in Bangladesh for two and half decades to promote the inclusion of person with disabilities in the mainstream development process. It has been working with different organizations to influence the government and the private sector to design policies and services, at the local, national, and international level, taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities and finally to institutionalize the disability-inclusive policies and services.

Inclusive Education for children with disabilities is one of the areas of work of CDD. It prioritizes on the inclusion of children with disabilities by promoting Inclusive Education through its development projects. CDD has been working to establish an inclusive environment for education of learners with disabilities by facilitating policy mandate in different national acts and policies.

At the outset, CDD developed its organizational capacity in terms of human resources, designing & developing training courses, and resources materials as the background work for implementing activities of Inclusive Education. Afterwards, CDD piloted the Inclusive Education model in two (02) non-formal schools. Finally, gleaning confidence from the experience of operating the non-formal schools, CDD initiated the implementation of the Inclusive Education model in several major projects covering primary and secondary schools. Through these initiatives, CDD was able to develop substantial amount of resources for Inclusive Education.

CDD provides support services to mainstream schools to include the children with disabilities in regular learning setup and organizes training for teachers on the teaching methods of Inclusive Education and the techniques of dealing with children with disabilities for maximizing inclusion in the classroom. Additionally, initiatives have been taken by CDD for the inclusion of disability-issues in regular Teacher's Training curriculum to enrich the skills of teachers as well as to develop support-materials required to have access to the learning process such as Braille books, large-print, sign-language booklet, and tactile pictures etc.



A student with disability is playing in the school-compound alongside the students without disabilities in one of the inclusive schools piloted under the PHRPBD project

Box 01

UNCRPD and Inclusive Education

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) clearly states that children with disabilities should not be discriminated in any manner and they are entitled to participate in the general education system of the country. It emphasizes on the inclusion of children with disabilities mainstream in schools and to be educated accordingly. The Article 24 of the UNCRPD resemblances with the right to education in international human rights law (Section 2).

The UNCRPD Framing of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is to be understood as:

- a fundamental human right of all learners. Notably, education is the right of the individual learner and not, in the case of children, the right of parents or caregivers. Parental responsibilities in this regard are subordinate to the rights of the child;
- a principle that values the wellbeing of all students, respects their inherent dignity and autonomy, and acknowledges individuals' requirements and their abilities to be effectively included in and contribute to society;
- a means of realising other human rights. It is the primary means by which persons with disabilities can lift themselves out of poverty, obtain the means to participate fully in their communities, and be safeguarded from exploitation.¹⁹ It is also the primary means of achieving inclusive societies; and
- the result of a process of continuing and proactive commitment to eliminating barriers impeding the right to education, together with changes to culture, policy, and practice of regular schools to accommodate and effectively include all students.

PHRPBD Project's Journey towards IE

The Promotion of Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh (PHRPBD) project holds CDD's values and in compliance with its mission and vision. This project has been working for nearly a decade since 2010 to contribute to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families through the effective use of local resources and empowering them. The project partnered with local NGOs to implement it at the grassroots level. CDD, through the PHRPBD project, extends technical support to these partner organizations to build strong and sustainable rapport with different government and non-government stakeholders for an ever-increasing impact.

The mechanisms and resources are central in the project's sustainability approach which involve strengthening Self-Help Groups (SHGs), local government bodies, and the development actors to mainstream disability issues into their existing programmes and projects. The project helps SHGs to

connect with other local actors to build wider linkage to maximize access to services. It enables persons with disabilities with the necessary skills and knowledge to claim their rights. The project has developed a tailored-package of long-term support for persons with disabilities so that they can access to the services and resources that are needed to make the change happen.

Inclusive Education is one of the areas of work of the PHRPBD project that is given utmost emphasis to increase awareness about Inclusive Education and to ensure access to education of all types of children with disabilities.

Accessibility

Accessibility means ensuring that people with disabilities are able to have access to the physical environment around them, to transportation, to information such as reading material, to communication technology and systems on an equal basis with others.

Accessibility requires forward thinking by those responsible for delivery of private and public services to ensure that people with disabilities can access services without barriers.

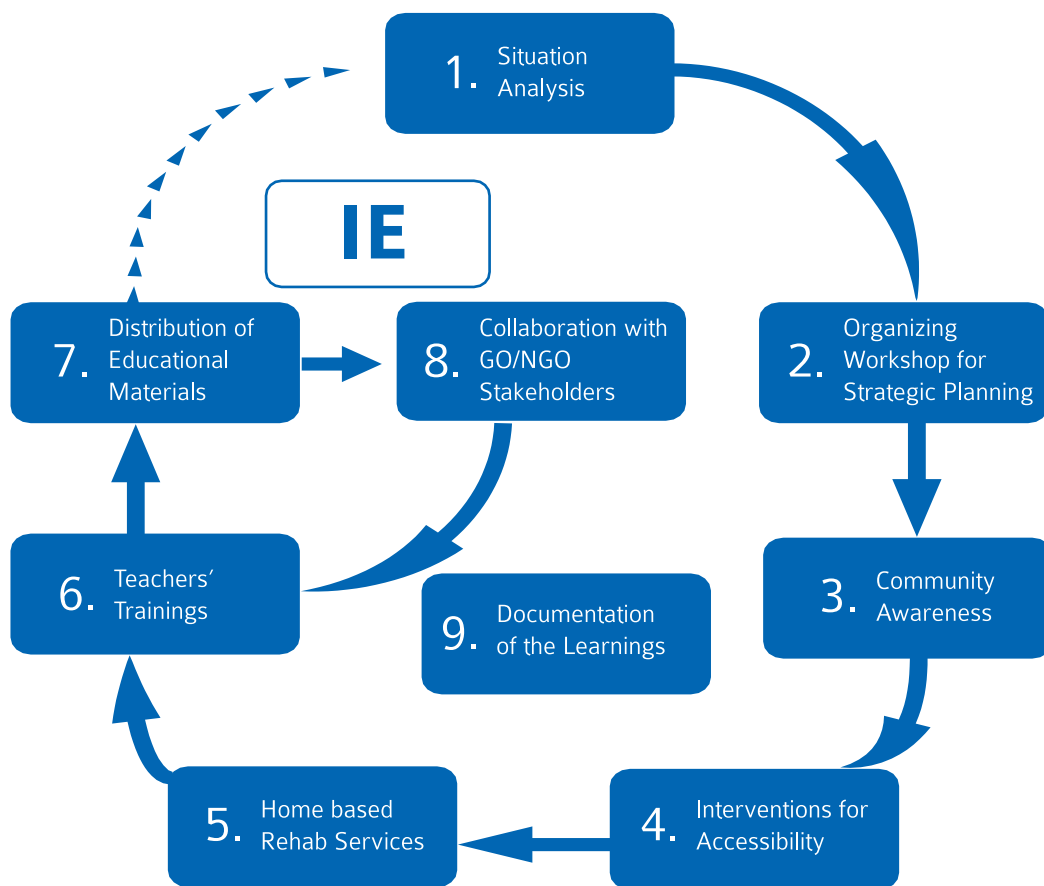
The PHRPBD project started implementing interventions on Inclusive Education on a pilot basis in five (05) primary schools in Kulaura, Moulvibazar in 2015. Later on, from 2018, it scaled up its interventions and incorporated additional five (05) primary schools and two (02) secondary schools in the same location, namely, Kulaura, Moulvibazar.

| Initiatives for Making IE a Reality

In order to initiate the interventions for making inclusive the schools, the PHRPBD project-team made physical visit to the piloting areas. The project-team went to the schools, met with the teachers and the members of the School Management Committee (SMC). Afterwards, the project held consultation meeting with the representatives of the Union Parishad the Upazila Education officials. As a course of action, after a few days, the project-team went to the piloting schools in order to conduct an accessibility assessment and to finalize an activity-plan to make those schools inclusive in consultation with the teachers, SMC members, local government representatives, parents of the students with disabilities, and the community people. Meanwhile, a comprehensive activity-plan was also shared with the Upazila Education Officer (UEO) and was asked for inputs on behalf of the education authority to make that plan more holistic.

And according to the activity-plan, the project provided home-based rehabilitation services to the children with disabilities, raised awareness in the community, provided training on Inclusive Education to the teachers, distributed education materials, arranged reciprocal visits, and documented the learnings.

The following cycle gives a snapshot of the process that the PHRPBD project adopted for Inclusive Education interventions:



- The IE Process of the PHRPBD Project -

The entire process of Inclusive Education of the PHRPBD project is expounded in plenary underneath:

STEP 1 Situation Analysis

In order to understand the situation of education facilities for children with disabilities in the mentioned catchment area, the PHRPBD project carried out a baseline survey. For carrying out the baseline survey, numbers of interviews were conducted with different education authorities such as Upazila Primary Education Officer, Upazila Assistant Education Officer and other relevant officers-in-charge. Besides, Focused Group Discussions were arranged and conducted with the community people (including parents-group and persons with disabilities). And, assessments and interviews were arranged for the school-teachers for the survey.

The objectives of the survey were to make assessment to compare the perception of Disability and Inclusive Education of the community people, teachers, and the education authorities. The baseline survey also endeavored to identify existing attitudinal and infrastructural barriers prevailed in the piloting area. And, it aimed to draw the big-picture of the knowledge and skills of the related stakeholders of the education authorities, SMC, and the teachers.

STEP 2

Organizing Workshop for Strategic Planning

The main objective of organizing a workshop was to develop a strategic plan in consultation with the project's stakeholders. In the workshop, the project invited all its stakeholder i.e., government and non-government bodies to inform them about the object-purpose of the Inclusive Education model of the project and its planned interventions. The project enlightened its stakeholders on what the project is aiming to achieve, what are the issues that are hindering the participation of children with disabilities from the classrooms etc.

The members of the SHGs, Apex Bodies, teachers from the piloted schools, members of the school managing committees, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Upazila Education Officer (UEO), Upazila, Resource Centre Officer, Upazila, Assistant Thana Education Officer were present at the event. Headmasters, SMC members and Assistant teachers were present as participants.

The participants gave inputs from their end in the workshop. Aside that, they also talked about the importance of Inclusive Education. The most important thing was, a few children with disabilities and their families were also participated in the workshop. They shared their real-life experiences and how they were dealing with those. The government official also gave their feedback

regarding the proposed piloting interventions on Inclusive Education of the PHRPBD project. They highly appreciated this initiative and promised to cooperate for the maximum benefit of children with disabilities and the establishment of Inclusive Education.



Strategic planning workshop

STEP 3

Community Awareness

For the effective implementation of the Inclusive Education model in its catchment areas, the project ran activities in order to raise community awareness about the potential of children with disabilities and the importance of Inclusive Education.

The project shared its plan for the implementation of the activities of the Inclusive Education model with all the stakeholders (including the Upazila Education Officer, Union Parishad authority, Upazila Resource Center Instructor, community people, School Management Committee (SMCs), SHGs, Apex Bodies and the teachers) pertaining the project's objectives and the role of the concerned stakeholders. Thus all the stakeholders could closely be involved during the assessment process, designing accessibility plan, and preparation of the budget for the selected schools.

The project also ensured that, all the stakeholders were also directly involved during the implementation process through monitoring each activity, following up with the teachers, SMCs, education officers, and supervising the renovation work. Additionally, the concerned stakeholders discussed the Inclusive Education related issues among them.



The SHGs and the Apex Bodies played the most significant roles by making physical visits to the schools, education authorities, and in the community at regular intervals to oversee the project-activities. The main reason of these visits was to sensitize the stakeholders on Inclusive Education issues. Aside that, the members of the SHGs and Apex Bodies communicated with the teachers and education officers for the enrollment of children with disabilities in the mainstream schools. In order to prevent the dropout rate, the members of the SHGs and Apex Bodies followed up with the school authority and the families.

“I love reading books specially the books with big-colorful pictures. I want to study more. I cherish to be a writer one day. Because, I like writing story.”

Munika Malakar
Age 12, Physical disability
Class VIII, Korergam

STEP 4

Interventions for Accessibility

Accessibility is the centerpiece of the CRPD, which enshrines the rights of persons with disabilities to have full access and fully enjoy and participate in social, economic, cultural, civil and political life, on an equal basis with others. This is a common knowledge that, accessibility is indispensable for the full realization of the rights and inclusion of students with disabilities in the mainstream education system. The PHRPBD project realized that, to ensure Inclusive Education, accessible infrastructure has to be in place maximizing the outcomes of the project's interventions.

Following bullet-points highlights the areas where the interventions for ensuring infrastructural accessibility took place;

- entrance at school building;
- entrance of the school compound;
- entrance of the classroom/ office- room/ library;
- toilet/wash room;
- water sources (tube-well/faucet);
- signage; and
- class room environment (switch-board, black-board, lighting, sitting arrangements etc.)



An accessible connecting road in an inclusive school

As outcomes, having the infrastructural accessibility in place, the schools attracted students with disabilities and their parents as well as the community people. It bore testimony that, coloring the school compound, making connecting-roads, creating accessible sanitary and water supply system, setting new book-shelf, allotting extra-corner for pre-primary students had tremendously impacted to make the Inclusive Education model a success.

STEP 5

Community-based Rehabilitation Services

While implementing its IE interventions, the PHRPBD project realized that, community-based rehabilitation (CBR) is an effective strategy that works for the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream education. Accordingly, the project started to provide home-based rehab services to the children with disabilities in its catchment areas to prepare them for going to school and attending class physically. The rehab services were mainly provided by the trained field-staff of the PHRPBD project. Before providing the services, the project conducted several assessment to understand the individual needs of each child with disability.

The field-staff involved in working closely with children with disabilities and their families to overcome the physical and sociological barriers within their communities. The SHGs and the Apex

Bodies also played a proactive part in awareness creation and advocacy at the community level.

The PHRPBD project firmly believes that, CBR supports the inclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream education system of Bangladesh and in community.



STEP 6

Teachers' Training

In order to implement the IE interventions, the PHRPBD project organized tailored teachers' training programmes in the selected schools (10 primary schools and 02 secondary schools) in its catchment areas. First of all, the project worked to bring about attitudinal changes of the teachers so they have positive attitudes towards children with disabilities. The project wanted to make it confirmed that, the teachers work as long-term resources for the schools. It was also made certain that, the teachers demonstrate good collaboration and communication skills along with having good skills as a trainer and facilitator. To ensure an inclusive classroom setting, the teachers gave attention in detail to each student's needs irrespective of their disability e.g. for the absolute comprehension of the meaning of the word Apple, the teachers not only wrote the meaning of the definition of the word Apple but brought with them an apple to the class for demonstration thus students with visual impairment can have the tactile experience of the object that is being talked about in the class.

Following are key areas the teachers were provided with the trainings and refreshers of different lengths on:

1. Motivation on Inclusive Education,
2. Sign language,
3. Pedagogy,
4. Braille slate,
5. Eye and hearing screening, and
6. Child safeguarding.

Afterwards, the project assisted the teachers in the development of annual plans for Inclusive Education implementation at school and provided guidance to the teachers a on the implementation of Inclusive Education plans.

As part of tracking the progress of the IE interventions, the project's field-staff conducted field-visits to monitor the implementation of inclusive education at the school level, including tracking the

progress of students with disabilities, observing lessons and providing feedback to teachers. The project also created opportunities for the teachers to share their experiences in teaching in an Inclusive setting with others. Additionally, the project provided counseling and advice to the teachers on the progress of children with disabilities in their classes when required and at the same time, provided counseling and advice to the parents of children with disabilities.



Teachers' Training session

STEP 7 Distribution of Education Materials

As a part of making the education process inclusive, the PHRPBD project has distributed education materials in the classrooms of the schools that came under the remit of the project's piloting intervention.

A few instances of the education materials provided in the classroom; replica of different shapes of flowers, fruits, fishes etc.; posters containing pictures of different famous persons and places of the world; puzzle game; different shapes of the geometry-box; different types of colors;



BEKAS (Basic Education Kits for Access to School) Box

magnifying glass; binocular; sticks for counting numbers; Braille slates; stylus; maps; world atlas globe and so forth. Aside that, the project provided CDD-produced BEKAS Box (a box containing different types of education material for effective conduction in the classroom) to the schools. The project helped setup a mini-library of children-books in each school to broader the reading experience of the students with disabilities out of their academic tests.

STEP 8

Collaboration with GO/NGOs

According to the plan of the PHRPBD project, it organized exposure and cross-learning visits on Inclusive Education for its stakeholders for a better understanding of the model. The invited different top-notch government-officials of education administration of the Government i.e., Department of Primary Education to have hands-on experience of the interventions of inclusive education. In the exposure and cross-learning visit, other non-government stakeholders of the project were also invited.



Meeting with the Education authority at CDD headquarters

The stakeholders made physical visits to the schools in Kulaura, Moulvibazar. The project organized meetings for the stakeholders with the Upazila Education Officer, teachers, students with disabilities, parents of the students with disabilities, SHGs, Apex Bodies, and the community people thus they could exchange their views and clarify their perceptions about the mechanism of Inclusive Education.

Two of the important facets of the exposure and cross-learning visit were to share the project's good practices/best learnings and also to take into recommendations from the project's stakeholders working in other areas of the project thus they could replicate those in their interventions.

STEP 9

Documentation and Dissemination of the Learnings

Documentation is one of the strengths of the PHRPBD project. In terms of Inclusive Education, the project has been documenting all IE-related activities and the results generated from those activities. The project documented its field level activities on good practices/best examples along with different steps of the IE interventions e.g. conducting baseline surveys, organizing workshops. Reports on the finding of these interventions were also published as a part of the documentation on IE.

The PHRPBD project disseminated its IE-related documents to all the relevant stakeholders for the wider replication of the IE model.

Box 02

SDG, Inclusive Education, and the PHRPBD Project

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations demands that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, to eliminate gender disparities, and achieve universal access to a quality higher education. Goal 4 of the SDG focuses on inclusive, equitable, and quality education and the promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all concentrating on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities.

The PHRPBD project's objectives also align with the mandate of the SDG. The following box explains how the PHRPBD project is aligned with Goal 4 of the SDG;



Goal 4 (of SDG) and the PHRPBD Project

SDG 4 defines targets to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all which the PHRPBD project agrees with:

By 2030, ensure that all children complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes; The PHRPBD project is also advocating for quality education for children with disabilities;

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education; The PHRPBD project has been working for equal education facilities for both boy and girls with disabilities;

By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university; The PHRPBD project has been running advocacy efforts for making technical and vocational education affordable for men and women;

By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; The PHRPBD project has plan for the employment opportunities for youths with disabilities;

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations; The PHRPBD project has been working to eradicate gender disparity that hinders equal access to education; and

By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States; The PHRPBD project has been providing training on Inclusive Education to teachers of primary and secondary level provider schools.

Major Challenges

The PHRPBD project has faced severe challenges while implementing its interventions on Inclusive Education. The project overcame the challenges utilizing its strategic barrier mitigation plans.

Following bullet-points highlight the major challenges in implementation of Inclusive Education:

- Lack of comprehensive teachers-training courses of appropriate duration and sufficient coverage of relevant topics;
- Inadequate government budget allocation;
- Disproportionate student-teacher ratio;
- Inaccessible road-condition hampers the regular student-attendance in the school; in some cases, it results in dropout;
- Higher secondary schools are yet to be ready to accept children with disabilities as students who have completed primary education; and
- Most of the schools are not ready to address the needs of children with severe disabilities, intellectual disability, autism, and psycho-social disability.

Innovation



The PHRPBD project's work has created huge vibration in terms of disability inclusion in its catchment areas. The foremost innovation of this project in Inclusive Education is **Community Engagement**. The project successfully involved the wider community in the development of students with disabilities and the spread of Inclusive Education.

Now, the schools have opened up to welcome children with disabilities, the government officials are treating them with respect and are eager to help them with their problems relating to government service, the community people nurturing positive notion about their potential and highlighting the achievements of children with disabilities through inspiring individual stories thus the parents of children with disabilities feel motivated to send their children to schools.

Community engagement has paved the way for the widespread replication of the model of Inclusive Education beyond the project's working areas.

These good examples of innovation of the project have influenced the think-pattern of stakeholders of the project and as a result, a sense of ownership has been created among the stakeholders of their own accord for the replication and sustainability of Inclusive Education.

TESTIMONIALS

The stakeholders speak for the PHRPBD Project...

Mohammad Iftekher Bhuyan

Upazila Primary Education Officer, Kulaura, Moulvibazar

"I believe whole-heartedly in inclusion in education. And my message is, every child is same inside, with both challenges and talents. We really appreciate the interventions, of the PHRPBD project, for its strong focus on engaging the community in making the education system inclusive".

Sayed Begum

Principal, Korergam Government Primary School

"We are very proud and fortunate to be a part of the total process. We had an outstanding learning experiences that helped us develop a better understanding of and empathy for children with disabilities. We look forward to continuing this work with the PHRPBD project."

Happy Begum

Mother of a student with disability, Kulaura, Moulvibazar

"My joy knows no bound when I see my child attending class and playing in the school with other students (with disabilities). This alleviated all my pain. Now, I can hope for a better future for my child."

Nasir Zaman Zaki

SMC Member, Korergam Government Primary School

"The PHRPBD project allowed us the opportunity to be involved in the Inclusive Education process. Being part of the process, gave us information and experience about making the Inclusive Education possible. It allowed us to understand perspectives from another point of view".

Results Generated

All the piloted schools of the project (10 Primary schools & 02 Secondary schools) are accessible and practicing Inclusive Education model for ensuring inclusion in the classrooms:

Teachers are more motivated and eager to generate more innovation and application of multiple methods to suit the individual needs of students with disabilities in the same classroom;

The rate of enrolment and turn-out of children with disabilities in the classroom have been increased to a significant extent. Children with disabilities are more encouraged to go the school and mingling with their peers. They are now more relaxed in the school environment and comfortable while interacting with the teachers;

A significant change in the mindset of the community people about the potential of children with disabilities took place. Now, being self-initiated, they advocate for the possibility of children with disabilities and run advocacy meeting with the schools for the enrollment of children with disabilities;

All the stakeholders of the project have involved proactively in the monitoring process of the Inclusive Education interventions;

A total of 99 children with disabilities have been enrolled so far through the motivation of the teachers and the parents;

Approximately BDT 27,75,000 has been contributed by the community-run the interventions successfully;

A remarkable rate of interaction between students with disabilities and students without disabilities has been increased;

The enrollment of children without disabilities has been (even from private-owned schools) increased in the accessible schools; and

The Government has adopted the Inclusive Education model and implementing the different government schools in the sub-district level. Currently, they are working to implement the Inclusive Education model in 193 government primary schools.

The Global Burden of Disease (2008) estimates the number of children and young people aged 0–14 years experiencing ‘moderate or severe disability’ to be 93 million (5.1%), with 13 million (0.7%) children experiencing severe difficulties (2008).

- World Report on Disability, 2011

“It was a learning visit for me. In this visit, I understood very well how wonderfully AustralianAid funds are changing the lives of students with disabilities, especially in the Inclusive Education context.”

– **Fredrick JeanJean**

Second Secretary

Australian High Commission,
Bangladesh.

“Even though children with disabilities might not look, talk, and walk the same as children without disabilities, they are all the same inside.

Working for making the education system inclusive for children with disabilities is a life-altering experience for me.”

– **Mukta Rani Deb**

Project Contact Person
PHRPBD Project
Kulaura, Moulvibazar

| Key Learnings

The PHRPBD has gleaned significant learnings from its interventions on Inclusive Education. Following are a few key learnings of the project;

- Community participation and ownership are of paramount importance for the sustainability of the project’s achievements;
- For common understanding and effective implementations of the project’s activities, coordination among the stakeholders is crucial;
- Sign Language training is essential for both the teachers and the students for effective inclusion of children with hearing & speech impairments in the classroom and beyond;
- Specific resource allocation and intervention are essential for the inclusion of children with severe disabilities; and
- Support from the government authority is very important for community mobilization.

Conclusion

Bangladesh has gained tremendous success in terms of enrolling children in Primary Education yet the issue of students with disabilities remained a far cry. Measures should be taken to ensure that every child with disability gets access to basic & quality education and infrastructure & transportation system should be made accessible to them.

Establishing the Inclusive Education model was a piloting initiative of CDD and CBM (the donor organization of the PHRPBD project). Both CDD and CBM, through the PHRPBD project, have been working to ensure full participation of children with disabilities in mainstream schools.

The education authority of the Government, teachers and the members of the SMC (of other areas) are working dedicatedly to make their schools a model of Inclusive Education.

It is proven that, that Inclusive Education is no longer a dream. The PHRPBD project has made Inclusive Education a reality through its interventions in the 12 piloting schools in Kulaura, Moulvibazar.

The PHRPBD project visions that, like other development issues, the Inclusive Education model would also be recognized as a crosscutting mainstream development agenda for all.



Inclusive
Education is a
Priority

Annex 1: Name of the inclusive schools and its locations

SL No.	Name of the Schools	Name of the School-Locations
.01.	Panchpir Government Primary School	Protabi, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
02.	Protabi Government Primary School	Protabi, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
03.	Korergram Government Primary School	Korergram, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
04.	Mirzapur Government Primary School	Mirzapur, Bhramongbazar, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
05.	Hingajia Government Primary School	Hingajia, Bhramongbazar, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
06.	Hosania Government Primary School	Hassonpur, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
07.	Shahgazi Government Primary School	Laxmipur, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
08.	Alauddin Government Primary School	Gazipur, Kulaura
09.	Guravui Government Primary School	Gazipur, Bhramongbazar, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
10.	Hingajia Gazipur Government Primary School	Gazipur, Bhramongbazar, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
11.	Agrani High School	Protabi, Kulaura, Moulvibazar
12.	Hingajia High School	Hingajia, Bhramongbazar, Kulaura, Moulvibazar

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The **Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)** is a not for profit organization established in 1996 to develop a more inclusive society for persons with a disability. CDD's mission is simultaneously educating the community in how to be more inclusive whilst also enabling persons with a disability to participate in society by providing them with essential supports. In this way persons with disabilities can be given the same rights, freedoms, dignity and quality of life as everyone else.

CBM International is an international Christian development organization, committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in the poorest communities of the world. Based on its values and over 100 years of professional expertise, CBM addresses poverty as a cause and a consequence of disability, and works in partnership to create an inclusive society for all. CBM is implementing both development and emergency programs supporting its local partners in the most disadvantaged communities. www.cbm.org

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