



Working Paper

Government Policies and Practices on YOUTH

October 3, 2018

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A. Executive Summary

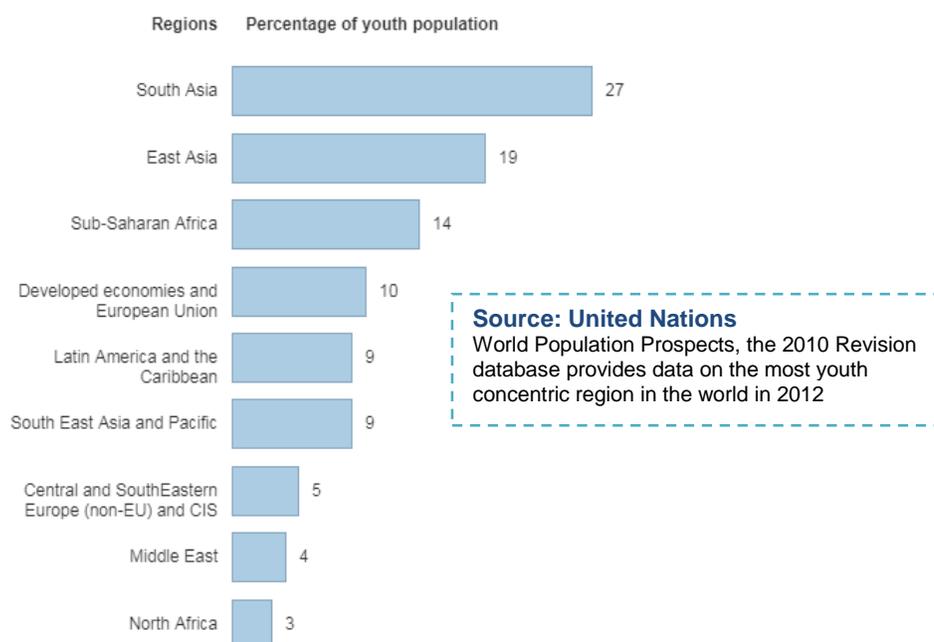
The world at the moment shelters 1.8 billion youths and almost 90% of them live in developing countries like Bangladesh. They are the force who has the potential to makes the changes we need to make this place the best it has seen. With expertise and adequate resources, the youth have the capability to refine the areas of concern and help the nation scale up. However, in reality the opportunities they have are dreadfully restricted. Even though the Government of Bangladesh has been taking initiatives through policies and programmes to address the issues such as quality of education, skills development, gender inequality, the youth continues to suffer at socio-economic and socio-cultural levels which lead them to be incapable of playing their significant roles to effectively contribute to the country's development.

The purpose of this working paper is to identify the steps the government has taken at all stages and the recognised problems they are addressing. That being said, the mentioned policies and projects here are merely the ones that currently exist in Bangladesh around youth. With the growing plans for their empowerment at the policy and practical levels the list will be updated with emerging strategies.

B. Introduction

The young population across the world has reached a remarkable 1.8 billion out of 7.3 billion, being the largest young generation in history (Youth 2030, UN, 2018). While they might be only 25% of the total population, they are in fact 100% of the future. Therefore, living in the 21st Century, these torchbearers of tomorrow should not have to struggle to merely survive but rather, be given the tools to lead today and thrive hereafter by having access to opportunities regardless of their background, life circumstances and above all, their gender.

Out of the 1.8 billion youths, majority of them live in lower-income countries like Bangladesh as shown by the chart below:



The United Nations classify youth as those between the ages of 15-24 years, while in Bangladesh, youth are defined as those between the ages of 18-35 years. Regardless of how they are categorised, what is important, is to acknowledge the youth as active agents of their own right and as a force, which both shapes and is shaped by the socio-cultural context and structures. Owing to the massive weight they carry for the future, if the youth can be ensured quality education, health services, and skills acquiring capacity in addition to widening their participation in civic activities, the country indeed has the potential to become a developed nation.

Unfortunately, the current circumstance in the nation is quite alarming. Tens of millions still do not attend school in Bangladesh, or if they do, they miss minimum benchmarks for learning. Employment prospects are often dismal, with jobs unavailable or poor in quality. To add to that predicament, the ones even with education commonly lack adequate skills, leading to worsening global youth unemployment crisis.

The country's rate of what is technically called NEET (not in education, employment or training) is the third-worst one in Asia Pacific region, as stated in ILO's statistical report, '*Decent Work Decade 2006-2015: Asia-Pacific and the Arab States*'. Correspondingly, United Nations

Population Fund (UNFPA) mentioned that, 'Up to 60% of young people in developing regions are not working or in school, or have only irregular jobs.'

As coping strategy with unemployment situation many youths migrate internally and externally. But for young women, migration can take dangerous forms because they often become victims of human trafficking, low wages and uncongenial working environment. Unluckily, The circumstances inside the country is not pleasant either - there are other forms of problems faced by young women in Bangladesh like gender based violence, socio-economic and cultural barriers that hinder women to complete higher levels of education. The reality for them is almost like going out of the fry pan into the fire.

According to the research, '*Health Profile of Adolescents and Youth in Bangladesh*' published by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), women aged 20-24 are more likely to have ever experienced physical violence than girls aged 15-19, indicating that women in the youth population are exposed to the risk of violence for a longer time than younger women in the country. While the general scenario for the youth – both men and women, in terms of their learning and employment opportunities may appear dire, it is worse for the ones in marginalised communities.

Taken as a whole, the lack of access to quality education, absence of decent work opportunities for youth, the unavailability of comprehensive health including sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, the exclusion and marginalisation from civic participation which act against the best interest of the youth are but a few challenges which they have to contend with on a regular basis. In a context like Bangladesh, where socio-cultural beliefs, patriarchal norms, economic deprivation and difficulties in receiving basic public services, directly affect the youth, it becomes the responsibility of the development sector to advocate for greater investment in young people and support the GoB in their efforts to address issues which affect this cohort of the population.

To address these gruelling issues, the GoB has assigned the responsibility to the Department of Youth Development, Ministry of Youth and Sports for connecting the country's youth population in enterprise development, training in awareness of youth potentials, management development and youth empowerment as means of reducing unemployment, poverty, illiteracy and thereby establishing a basis for stimulating development of the country. Along with that, the government has also formulated policies, plans and programmes for youth welfare. To support the GoB, BRAC has taken the stance to help ensure the adequate investments in programmes to empower the next generation of global leaders. While the organisation has been running youth focused programmes for some time, because of the increasing youth demographic and the mounting new challenges connected to them, BRAC's Advocacy for Social Change (ASC) department has initiated its work at the policy level.

C. Policy Prospect

There are various government policies and programmes that incorporate youth in their schema however, not all of them essentially make youth their prime focus. That being said, it must be highlighted that a wide range of public policies affects young people, not just those that explicitly address them. But successful youth policies are the ones that signify the country's commitment to its young generation by ensuring their visibility across policy domains, including health, education, employment, housing and transport. The valuable national plans are the ones that provide a framework for provision of resources, support and services while typically focusing on the youth empowerment through political, social and economic participation.

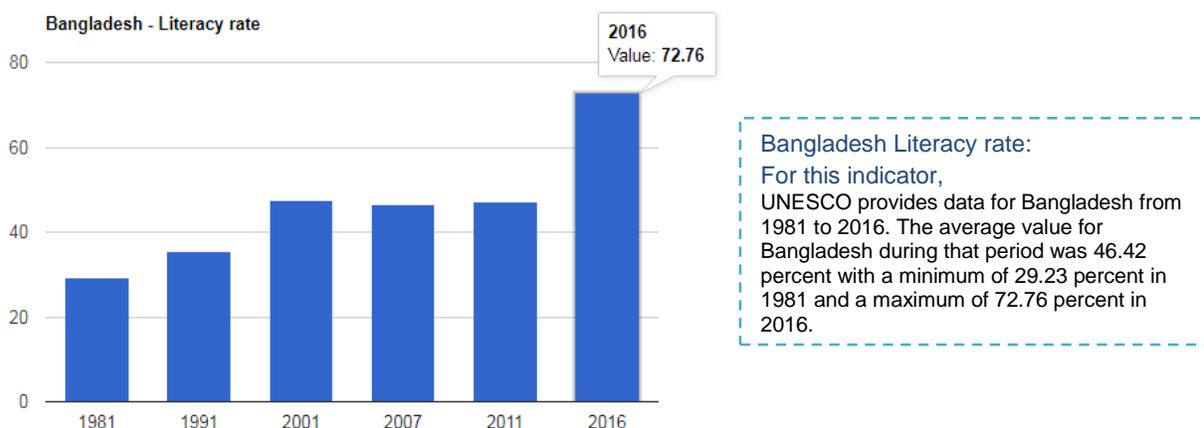
In the recent years, the policies initiated for particularly catering to the needs of youth include, the National Education Policy 2010, National Youth Policy 2017, National Skills Development Policy 2011, Seventh Five Year Plan (2016- 2020), and Youth award policy 2011. Some of the prominent programmes among others are Higher education quality enhancement project (HEQEP), Micro Credit Program of the Department of Youth Development and the establishment of National Youth Training Centres (NYTC) in Bangladesh.

The major youth development activities undertaken by the mentioned policies and programmes include quality education service, skills training, support to the trained youth through the operation of credit programme, promotion of self-employment among unemployed youth, addressing gender issues and involvement of rural youths in participatory development. The specific objectives of these initiatives are to increase the involvement of youths, particularly females in youth development, equip them with skills in technical, vocational and professional fields, increase employment opportunities, organise youth groups and motivate them to assist in community development.

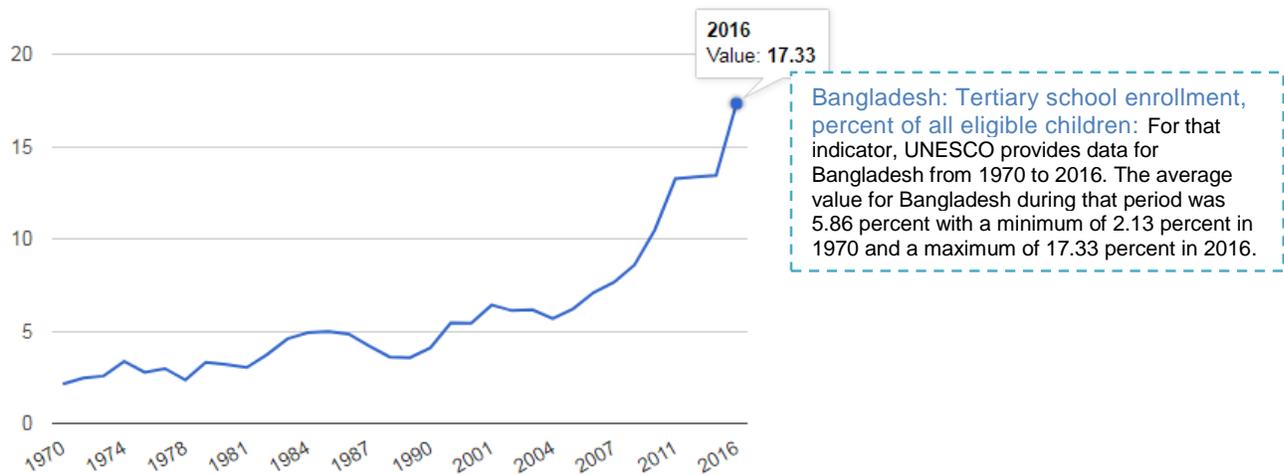
The mentioned policies and project here and in the annex are merely the ones that currently exist around youth. With the growing plans for their empowerment at the policy and practical levels the list will be updated with emerging strategies.

D. Description

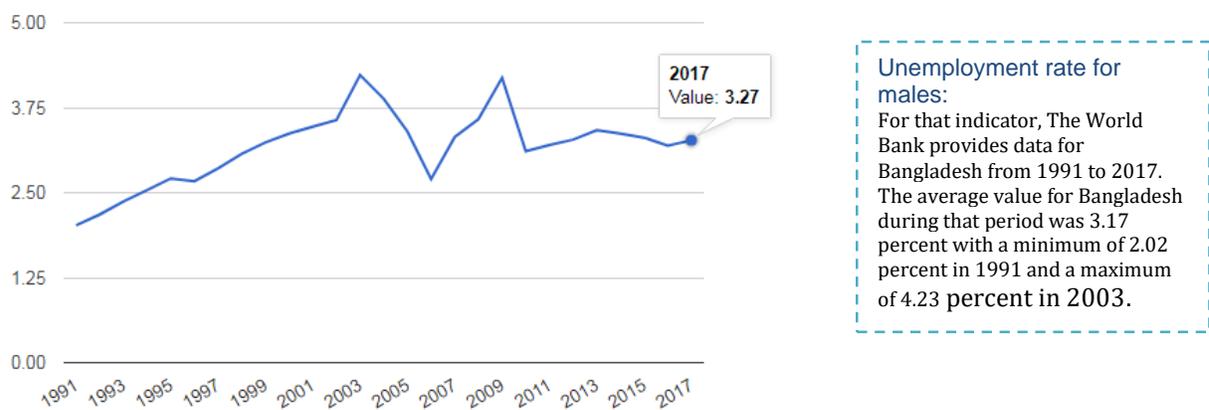
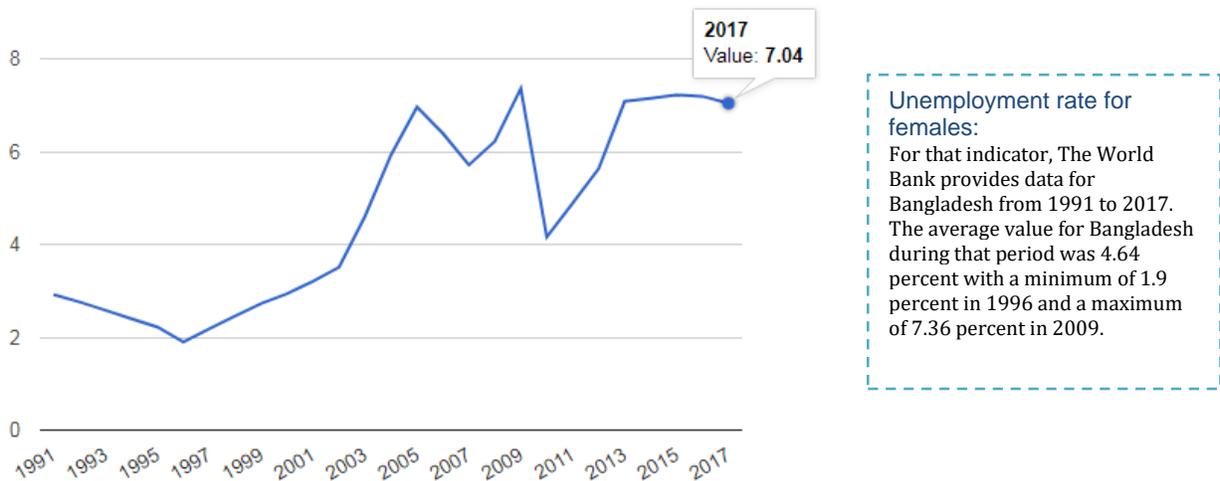
At present, youth unemployment and quality education has been one of the most burning topic of concern in Bangladesh. The country’s literacy rate reached an all-time high of 72.76% in 2016 as shown by the chart below:



Along with that, an exponential rise in student enrolment at the tertiary level is also eminent as indicated by UNESCO in the graph here:



However, there has been an acute shortage of skilled human resources contributing to the increasing unemployment rate. World Bank's data refers to the dissimilar impact of that on men and women – to nobody's surprise women's unemployment rate has been higher in 2017 than that of men's unemployment rate in the country as illustrated in the graph below:



The report '*Lack of expertise in Bangladesh's labourer market*' by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) highlighted by Dhaka Tribune portrays the skills condition in the country. It states that as of 2013, Bangladesh only had 10.4% trained labourers while the rest 89.6% workers were untrained. Along with that, the latest labour force survey (LFS) by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) states that the rate of unemployment among people with education up to the tertiary level increased to 11.2% in fiscal 2016-17 from 9% in the previous year.

To tackle this crisis where the so-called skills gap is in reality a gap in education, the government has taken initiatives to expand its technical and vocational education capacity along with improving the education facility to better guide the large youth population of Bangladesh through policies like, National Education Policy 2010, National Skills Development Policy 2011, National Youth Policy 2017 and Perspective Plan (2011-2021) among others.

National Education Policy (NEP), 2010

The primary objective of the NEP, 2010 is to groom the youth generation to become leaders who are not only intellectually accomplished but also moral beings who care about their motherland. Through this education policy, the government plans to refurbish the existing system to make available an education which is pro-people, easily available, uniform, universal, well planned, science oriented and of high standard. It aims to expand the technical and vocational education to ensure that the youth population of Bangladesh is moulded into professionals and skilled human resources. To attain the goal, this NEP intends to:

- Reflect the Constitutional guarantee at all levels of education and make learners aware of the freedom, sovereignty and integrity of Bangladesh.
- Inspire the students with the spirit of the liberation war and develop qualities of good citizens (i.e., help grow a sense of justice, non-communalism, dutifulness, awareness of human rights, cultivation of free thinking and discipline, love for honest living, the tolerance of corporate life, friendliness and perseverance)
- Foster creative and thinking faculties among the learners through a system of education that contains indigenous spirit leading to life-oriented developments
- Evolve an education process that is oriented to creativity, practicability and productivity to achieve advancement in the country's economic and social fields along with constructing a scientific mindset of the students
- Remove socio-economic discrimination irrespective of race, religion and creed and to eradicate gender disparity
- Create unhindered equal opportunities of education for all, as per learners' talents and aptitudes, irrespective of geographical, social and economic situations to establish a society that is discrimination-free and resist the use of education as a commodity to reap profits
- Show tolerance for different ideologies for the development of a democratic culture and to help develop a realistic and positive outlook
- Ensure the marginal competencies of learners at each level so that they are discouraged from rote learning, rather use their own thoughtfulness, imagination and urge for curiosity;
- Ensure skills of high standard at different areas and levels of education so that learners can successfully compete at the global context
- Attach substantial importance to information and communication technology (ICT) along with math, science and English in order to build up a digital Bangladesh based on knowledge-orientation and cultivation of ICT

- Extend the use of information and communication technology (ICT) instrumental in educational process at every level
- Motivate students to show dignity of labor and enable students to acquire skills in vocational education to facilitate self-employment, irrespective of levels of education
- Help students grow up with sound moral character through lessons from their respective religious teachings and moral sciences
- Ensure proper quality of education at each level and to correlate the competencies learnt at the earlier level (as per the aims and objectives of education) with the next one to consolidate the formations of knowledge and skills
- Build students as skilled human resources to fight the challenges of the world threatened by climate change and other natural disasters and to create in them a social awareness about environment
- Ensure quality of the higher education in all disciplines and motivate students in research and to create a congenial and necessary environment of research within the country through the cultivation of knowledge and sciences
- Ensure the proper context and situations in the education system at the higher level that facilitates ideal cultivation of learning
- Take special measures for the development of education of the backward classes of the country including the street-children
- Promote and develop the languages and cultures of the indigenous and small ethnic groups
- Ensure the education of the physically and mentally challenged learners
- Initiate special measures to promote education in the areas identified as backward in education along with ensuring efficient and correct teaching of Bangla language
- Create facilities of playground, sports, games and physical exercises in all educational institutions for the healthy growth of the physical and mental qualities of the learners;
- Foster hygienic awareness of the students
- Caution the students and aware them of the dangers of taking drugs
- Emphasize on women's education to ensure their comprehensive development, empowerment and participation
- Specially allocate for women's education in the budget to promote their education at all levels.
- Minimize the dropout rate of girl students and to find ways to get them back in mainstream education. Those who cannot be put back within the system will be accommodated within the vocational programmes as discussed in greater details in the section under National Skills Development Policy
- Give special stipends for the poor and meritorious girl students to pursue higher education and undertake research. Provision will be made for interest free/ low-interest bank loans at soft terms for women's education.
- Ensure women's participation at all levels of policy and decision-making, namely, in matters of primary, secondary and higher education.
- Create opportunities for women for education of part-time, vocational, non-formal and technical nature.
- Include more girls in institutional education and motivate them to pursue higher/professional education. In view of this, positive opportunities for women's education will be created in various educational institutions.
- Take steps to ensure safe commuting to schools for girls so that they do not encounter any difficulty. Necessary transport will be arranged and where necessary, safe girls' hostel will be established
- Take proper steps to raise awareness among people irrespective of sex.
- Regulate the punishment system relating to sexual harassment and repression on women to ensure it is followed strictly in the educational institutions.
- Establish more polytechnics to include more girls within the technical or vocational education

In the past decades Bangladesh has recorded impressive progress in poverty reduction and a number of human development outcomes which include the rapid growth in the gross primary enrolment rate, the secondary enrolment doubling since independence, achieving the gender parity target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) both at primary and secondary education levels.

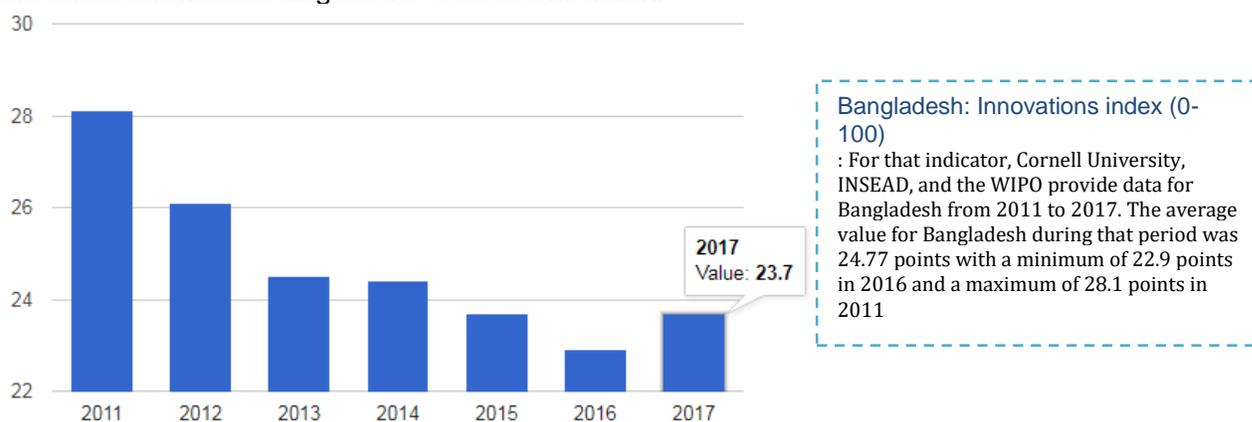
However, the higher education scenario is different. Until now, no major external funding has been received in this education sub sector. The higher education sub-sector currently faces many deeply rooted and intertwined challenges which include not only low quality of education but also limited access to tertiary level institutions, poor research facility, weak governance and management practices, weak sector planning and monitoring capacity, inadequate funding level and mechanisms.

To meet the globalization challenges raising higher education quality to the world standard is essential. Owing to that, GoB has taken the initiative to develop the quality of tertiary education and prepare university graduates in such way that they can successfully compete in the context of international knowledge society by undertaking the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP) with the assistance of the World Bank.

Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP), 2010

HEQEP comprises of four components that involves the:

1. Promotion of academic innovation in teaching-learning and research through an Academic Innovation Fun (AIF) allocating funds on a competitive basis to public and private universities. Since 2016, on the whole, innovation appears to have increased in the country as shown by the chart below according to the ¹innovations index.



2. Institutional capacity building at the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the universities
3. Connectivity capacity building for universities and research centres through the development of the Bangladesh Research and Education Network (BdREN) ; and

¹ The Innovations Index captures elements of the national economy that enable innovative activities: (1) Institutions, (2) Human capital and research, (3) Infrastructure, (4) Market sophistication, and (5) Business sophistication. Two output pillars capture actual evidence of innovation outputs: (6) Knowledge and technology outputs and (7) Creative outputs. The Global Innovation Index includes two sub-indices: the Innovation Input Sub-Index and the Innovation Output Sub-Index. The first sub-index is based on five pillars: Institutions, Human capital and research, Infrastructure, Market sophistication, and Business sophistication. The second sub-index is based on two pillars: Knowledge and technology outputs and Creative outputs. Each pillar is divided into sub-pillars and each sub-pillar is composed of individual indicators.

4. Support the operation of the project implementation unit along with covering investments in scientific equipment needed at university level and in library improvements/automation and online journal subscription. It will also allow rewarding initiatives aiming to set up partnerships amongst departments and/or universities.

HEQEP aims to improve the quality of teaching-learning and research capabilities of the tertiary education institutions through encouraging both innovation and accountability and by enhancing the technical and institutional capacity of the higher education sector. Alongside that, the programme intends to generate new knowledge, explore research works on different social and development issues and anticipate the needs of the economy, prepare highly skilled. Through this initiative the government will make certain the youth receive higher education that is standard, welfare and sustainable development oriented.

Sheikh Hasina National Youth Development Institute Act, 2017

With a similar purpose, the government also established the Sheikh Hasina National Youth Development Institute Act, 2017 which acknowledges the need to focus on higher education and plans to establish a central modern standard institute for empowering potential youths through training and motivation. It aims to conduct research on them alongside training and facilitating constructive activities contributing to their overall development.

Quite parallel to NEP, 2010, through the establishment of National Youth Policy (NYP), 2017 (demonstrated in details below), the government aims to promote youth engagement from all directions including environmental education and protection, ICT development, gender equality good governance and sustainable development.

National Youth Policy, 2017

- Empower youth and create appropriate opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship development through proper practical education and skill developing training
- Encourage youths especially the unemployed ones towards self-employment through proper utilization of local resources and by providing credit and creating favorable situation with a view to bringing out all the dormant potentialities of the youth.
- Build the youths so that they can effectively involve themselves in the main stream of national development.
- Motivate and encourage the youths for voluntary and national service oriented activities such as vaccination, tree plantation, preventive campaigns against AIDS and drug abuse, rehabilitation activities etc.
- Create facilities and opportunities for participation of the youth and their contribution in literature, culture, sound recreations including sports and games and patronized these aspects from all corners
- Facilitate expansion of all sorts of IT facilities with a view to involving youths effectively
- Introduce IT projects to create skilled manpower in the fields of computer and acceptable technology enriching the youth through science based thoughts and knowledge.
- Ensure uninterrupted flow of information on youth through information and research centre for the youth.

- Establish an information and research centre under the Department of Youth Development for collection of correct statistics, information and data and for analysis and research with a view to preparing right plan for the youth
- Extended appropriate technology based training programme with the cooperation of related Department/ Organisations for creating scientific mentality and environment amongst the youth.
- Implement appropriate and productive scheme with eligibility and efficiency of the youth creating modern facilities in rural areas.
- Create opportunity for participation of male youth and female youth equally in every step of development and decision making process with a view to promoting national development activities.
- Impart training on youth health, social right of handicapped youths including their human rights and introduce special programme on developing leadership qualities among youths so that they can undertake political, social and economic leadership of the country in the future.

National Skills Development Policy (NSDP), 2011

Even though NES and NYP mentioned above predominantly highlight the edification segment of government's initiatives, equal emphasize is placed on skills development² by means of policies like National Skills Development Policy (NSDP), 2011 to not only create a holistic learning structure but also to leave no one behind in this race called survival of the best.

Through the institution of NSDP, 2011 the government plans to promote training and learning of youth, women, low-skilled people, and people with disabilities, migrants and internally displaced people, ethnic minority groups, those who are socially excluded, workers in small and medium-sized enterprises, the one in the rural sector and the people who are self-employed. The major objectives of the policy are to:

- Improve the quality and relevance of skills development in Bangladesh along with provide a clear statement of the reform agenda and strategy for skills development in Bangladesh
- Improve access to skills development for disadvantaged groups of citizens and encourage active participation of industry organisations, employers and workers in skills development;
- Enable more effective planning, coordination and monitoring of skill development activities by different ministries, donors, industry, and public and private providers.
- Prioritize female trainers to ensure equal access to professional development opportunities in training places in the new system
- Increase enrolment rates for females across all skills development programmes;
- Provide a gender friendly environment for female students, build separate wash rooms for male & female students and employ female instructors
- Provide nationally recognised qualifications under the NTVQF to apprentices. Although incentives may initially be limited to those occupations identified as a priority by industry, the government will explore the potential of making apprenticeships available at all levels of the

² Skills development is defined as the full range of formal and non-formal vocational, technical and skills based education and training for employment and or self-employment. In keeping with international trends, skills development thus includes:
a. Pre-employment and livelihood skills training, including TVET, apprenticeships and school based TVET;
b. Education and training for employed workers, including workplace training; and
c. Employment oriented and job-related short courses not currently affiliated with BTEB servicing both domestic and international markets.

NTVQF in all industry sectors and will find out links between apprenticeships and the new system of National Service for the youth of Bangladesh.

- Membership of the National Skills Development Council (NSDC) will be reviewed to ensure regional and national industry representation alongside representatives of national youth organisations and other elements of civil society, including disability groups, to ensure that direct beneficiaries are included at the highest level.
- Establish more flexible and responsive delivery mechanisms together with improving the coordination and delivery of skills in Bangladesh.

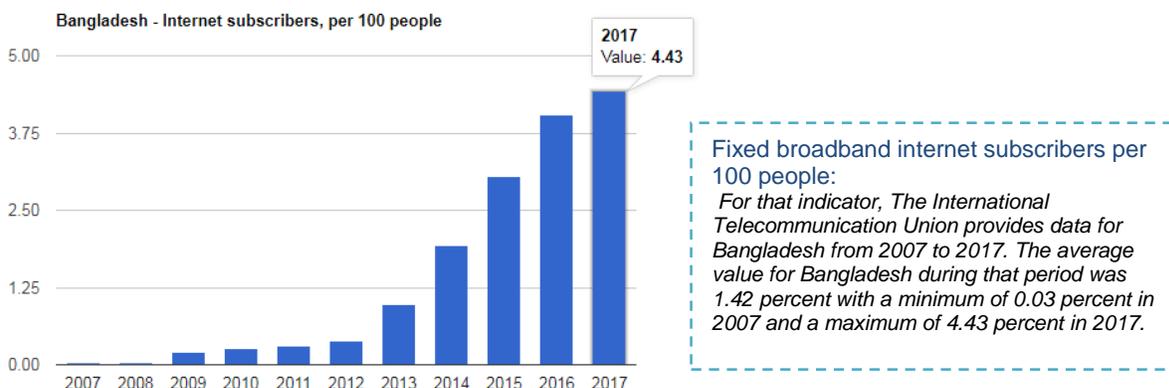
National Telecommunications Policy (NTP), 2013

In this digital age, access to appropriate technologies, like basic Internet or mobile devices, opens up a world of opportunities including delivery of training mentioned above and education services in remote areas. Owing to that, the Government of Bangladesh has initiated supportive policies like the National Telecommunications Policy, 2013 to facilitate socioeconomic changes in the society by introducing new technologies to generate an environment that can connect the unconnected to the global network for their economic and social benefits.

The National Telecommunications Policy (NTP), 2013 aims to:

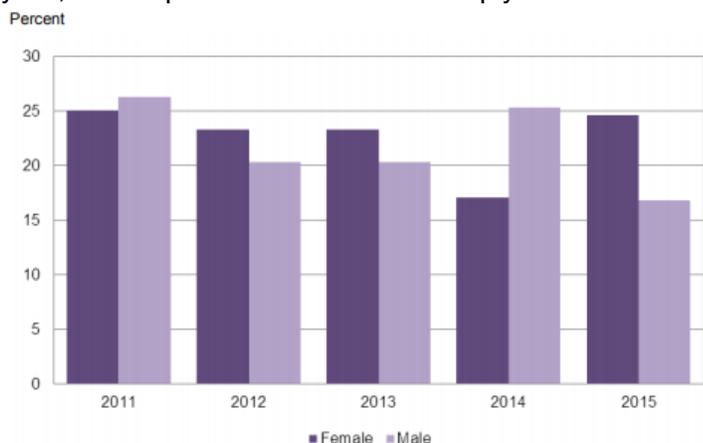
- Establish ‘telecommunications training academy’ that will be a private public partnership created as a successor organisation to the present Staff Training Academy at Ghazipur/Joydebpur. Its primary function shall be to serve as the hub of an extensive human resource development network that will ensure that the youth of Bangladesh are equipped to find employment in the burgeoning ICT infrastructure sector in the country and abroad
- Increase the tele-penetration from about 80% (including fixed and mobile) to 90%; Increase the internet penetration from about 27% to 35%.
- Increase mobile or fixed broadband penetration to 12% which is about 7% at present along with ensuring availability of high speed wireless broadband service up-to all Upazila headquarters.
- Build human capacity in all aspects of telecommunications, including lower level skills that may be used by expatriate workers.

After telcos launched 3G services in 2013, internet penetration in Bangladesh grew by 22 % by the end of 2014 and it continued to rise as shown by the chart below.



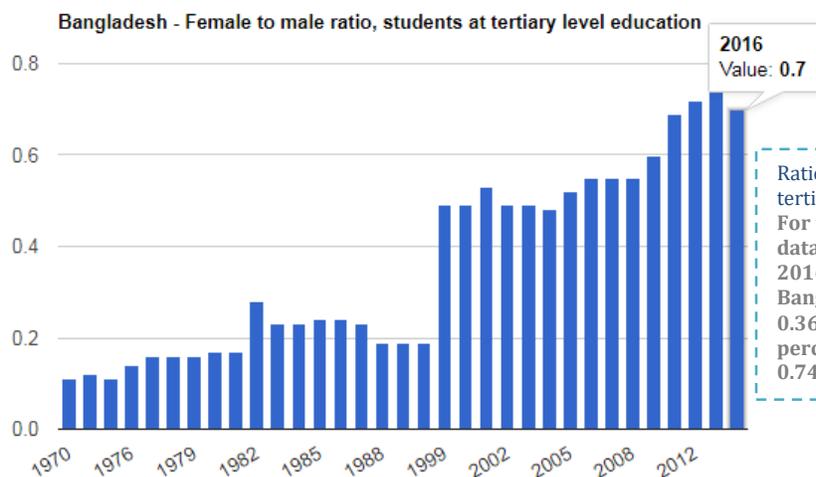
That being said, according to United Nation's 2017 Human Development Report, the proportion of schools with access to the Internet (%) is only 5% in Bangladesh.

With the support of new strategies and visions to digitalize the nation, old issues like gender disparity in the education sectors have not been overlooked. Female literacy rate has been lower than the males since the last forty years (BBS, 2017). The dropout rate of female had decreased considerably from year 2011 to 2014 from 25.07% to 17.05%. However, compared to the previous year, the dropout rate increased sharply to 24.6% from 17.05%.



Dropout rate from upper secondary education 2011 - 2015:
 For this indicator, Bangladesh Education Statistics, BANBEIS provides data for Bangladesh from 2011 to 2015. During that period, the female drop out percentage was minimum in 2014 at 17.05% and a maximum in 2011 at 25.07%.

Currently, in higher education, just 40% of the enrolled students are female. The condition is even poorer at public and private universities, where only 26% of students are female. The gender disparity is shown by male to female student ratio at the tertiary level by the chart below:



Ratio of female to male students in tertiary level education:
 For this indicator, UNESCO provides data for Bangladesh from 1970 to 2016. The average value for Bangladesh during that period was 0.36 percent with a minimum of 0.11 percent in 1970 and a maximum of 0.74 percent in 2014.

Seventh Five Years Plan (7th FYP), 2016-2020

To cater to such concerns, similar to NES, NYP and NSDP elaborated in the earlier parts of this writing, the Seventh Five Years Plan (7th FYP), 2016-2020 embraces action steps to enhance gender equality besides recognizing several other critical problems.

The 7th FYP addresses gender gaps and challenges that remain in crucial areas, including higher rates and severity of poverty among women relative to men, lower access to economic resources and assets, high rates of early marriage, dowry demands, and gender based violence and

persistent wage discrimination. All these lead to not only the low female access to tertiary education as mentioned above, but also the lack of adequate reproductive health and nutrition services, a high maternal mortality rate, remunerative employment, and the public safety of women and girls. These gaps and differences are evidence of the continuing low value placed on girls and women in our male-dominated patriarchal country, Bangladesh.

Owing to the unbreakable glass ceiling, this plan highlights the importance of fighting gender inequality along with providing a well-rounded education with an emphasis being placed on vocational and technical education, skill development training for employment and life skills training programme to uphold the rights of the marginalised community.

Some of the projects under the 7th FYP and their aims include:

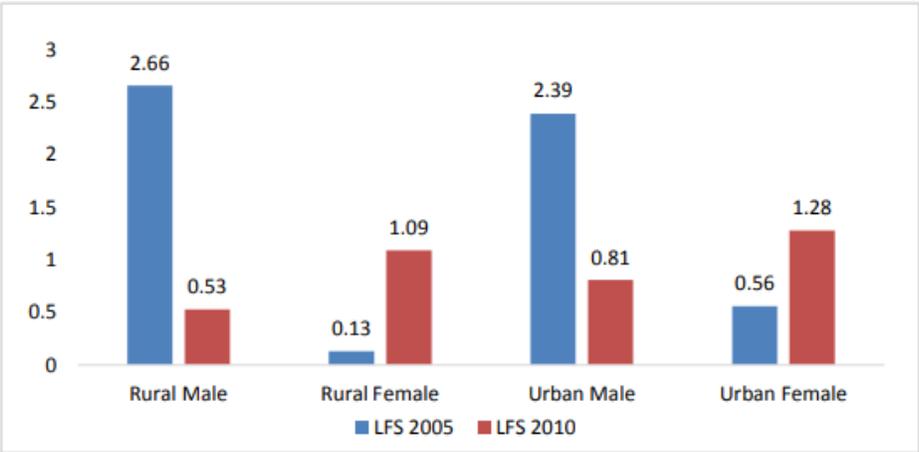
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| Quantitative increment of students and equity at Secondary and Higher levels. | Increasing the rate of enrolment | Secondary Education Stipend Project (SESP) Higher Secondary Female Stipend Project (Phase-4) |
| | Reducing the rate of dropout | Female Stipend Project for Degree (Pass) and Equivalent Level (FSPD) |
| | Encouraging female enrolment | Higher Secondary Female Stipend Project (Phase-4) Female Stipend Project for Degree (Pass) and Equivalent Level (FSPD) |
| | Inclusion | Establishment of Autistic Academy |

Its goals are as demonstrated below:

- Ensure equal benefit from quality formal education, marketable skills to maximize productivity and facilitate complete use of women's potential and consequently, narrow down the wage gap between similarly qualified male and female workers and eliminate all types of biases against female staff at the work place.
- Establish good monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism since it is critical to have a list of agreed gender equality indicators at the national level for measuring the progress of gender equality. These may include employment in formal sector, tertiary education, reduction of violence against women and child marriage, reduction of maternal mortality and malnutrition, reduction of poverty of female headed households and such other key areas
- Provide nutrition and lifelong health care, infrastructure that facilitates women's human development, mobility and economic gains; and actions that enhance positive social norms and reduces harmful practice.
- Accelerate economic growth and create productive employment opportunities through transforming youth into human resources.
- Organise the youth through voluntary youth organisations and motivate them to take part in community development for revitalizing the rural economy.
- Involve the youth in socio-economic activities like disaster management, primary health care, environmental improvement, resource conservation and awareness building against anti-social activities, drug abuse, AIDS/STDs etc.
- Take necessary steps for empowering the youth by providing life skill and skill development training to ensure their participation in decision making process. (19, 25,150 youths will be trained up and out of them 5, 96,000 youths will be involved in self-employment activities. 75,000 youths will be trained up for temporary employment under National Service Programme)
- Strengthen education and training programmes to motivate the youth to complete education and enable the working youth and the older workforce to acquire required skills.
- Establish seven divisional offices along with infrastructures for Youth Training Centres which is further illustrated in the later section.

- Improve the link between training and job markets by strengthening the institutional capacity and infrastructures
- Allocate sufficient resource for human resource development and strengthen the public-private partnership programme.
- Create employment and self-employment opportunities
- Serve the minority community by forming human resource development programmes: (Existing human resource development programmes will be augmented to address the special needs of ethnic people and strengthen their vocational and social skills. Necessary training and support will be provided to the youth. Monitoring and supervision will be strengthened so that education, health and maternal child health services, social safety nets, and nutrition and housing facilities reach the ethnic people. The Government also plans to make special arrangements targeting ethnic communities to prepare them to take up the opportunities provided by national and global labour markets, including overseas employment, and thus enable them to increase their income. Appropriate skill development training and support will be provided to the youth of CHT, to provide vocational and social skills and networks.)
- Provide effective internet facilities throughout the CHT region and will arrange ICT training for the youth of CHT to prepare them for better education and employment.
- Uphold the right to education for children from dalit communities with the expectation to ensure schools becomes non-discriminatory and inclusive spaces for all children. This recognises the increased interest and conviction among the marginalised that education holds the key for socioeconomic mobility. In this regard, a special quota for dalit and other excluded students will be created in government schools and colleges, and access of dalit adolescents and youth to all government owned skill training institutions will be ensured.
- Extend the existing training of domestic workers and train about 50,000 potential female migrant workers per year. This is because according to the information provided by the LFS 2005 and 2010 below, the returns to vocational/technical education has decreased for males, while the returns to female students has substantially risen in both urban and rural areas, underlying the need to encourage more females to pursue this field.

Figure : Returns to Vocational/Technical Education by Gender, Location



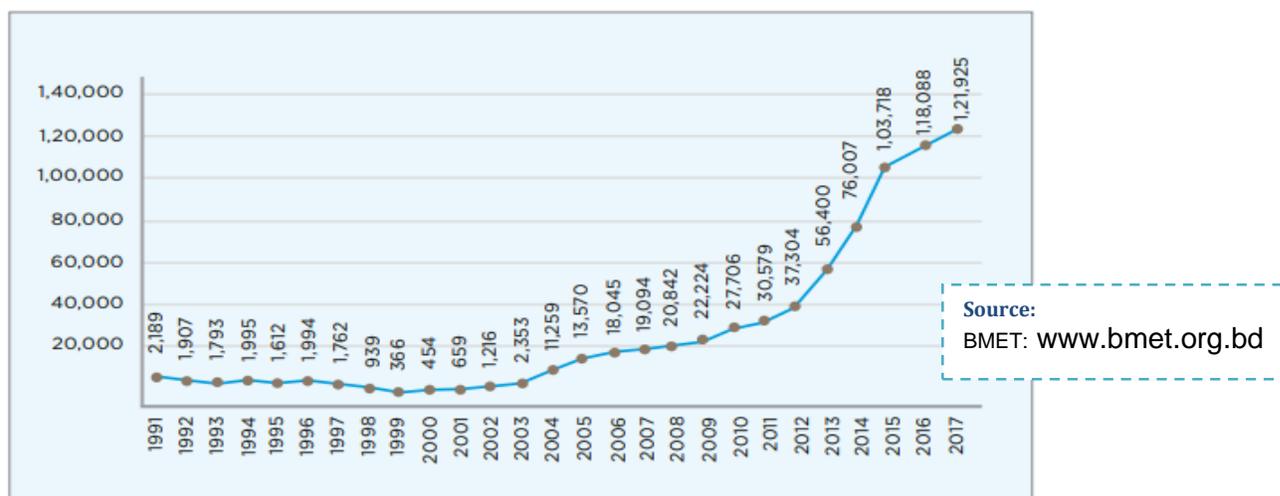
Source: LFS 2005 and 2010

The FYP 2016 - 2020 also recommends measures for international migrant workers to:

- Ensure they have access to legal and social protection
- Strictly monitor their employment contracts, and
- Provide adequate outreach, follow-up and support, such as legal and psychosocial counseling.

The FYP envisions that women will make up 30% of the total number of outbound migrant workers by 2020. Female migration has already increased from 7.09% (2010) to 17.86% (2014). The increasing number of female migrants departing Bangladesh over the years is shown below.

Number of female migrant workers departing Bangladesh by year, 1991-2017



According to the government, overseas employment is the country’s second-largest source of income, with overall remittances amounting to \$12 billion in 2016. Along with the remittances, migration also comes with enhanced socio-economic development.

Although women generally earn less than men and so may send home smaller amounts of money at a time, they tend to remit a higher proportion of their earnings and do so more frequently. Unfortunately, the data available on remitters is not sex-disaggregated. However, according to 2018 UN Women’s report on *Women and Migration in Bangladesh*, findings reveal that even low-skilled female workers remit between 70 to 80% of their income to their families which is much more than men do. It writes a Bangladeshi woman working in the Middle East who on average sends 77% of her income back home. A 2013 study by UN Women says these remittances are only part of what the female migrants contribute to their homelands. The social capital of female migrants - their ideas, skills, attitudes, knowledge, contacts and networks -- further contribute to socioeconomic development, human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment in their countries of origin (UN Women, 2013). These remittances allow families not only to buy more, but also to do and achieve more. The improved education and health of the migrants’ children can lead to greater opportunities for the next generation. It concludes stating that ‘social remittances may be seen as more sustainable than economic remittances’. What is true in ASEAN countries can certainly also be true in Bangladesh.

The figure below highlights the major destination countries of the Middle East and Asia where most female migrants go for different types of employment.

Major destination countries of female migrant workers from Bangladesh, 1991-2017



According to Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), there were overall 368,411 Bangladeshi migrants working abroad till April 2017. To stipulate safeguards for these workers both at home and abroad, Bangladesh has established number of laws, policies and plans as elaborated below. Since a major portion of the migrant fall in the youth group, the four policies here are relevant to our youth focused discussion.

The Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2016

Formulated in line with international laws on migration, this policy amends the short policy framed in 2006 and links to the National Skills Development Policy 2011 and the Government's Seventh Five-year Plan. It aims to:

- Provide six policy directions that: ensure safe migration; protect migrant workers and their family members; ensure the welfare of migrant workers and their access to facilities; regulate the migration of female workers; associate migration with national development and establish proper planning for labour migration
- Provide specific directions for ministries including the Ministries of Finance, Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, Commerce, and Civil aviation and Tourism, to ensure proper welfare, facilities and safety for female migrant workers
- Provide a separate chapter on female workers who migrate for specific types of work and recommends that the Government establish a special unit for female migrants; promotes skills development
- Appoint trained female officials in embassies to provide health, economic and legal advice to female migrants; ensures the safety and empowerment of female migrants by establishing a database of these migrants at embassies; establishes a secure banking system for sending remittances; and allocates a budget for gender-responsive training for female migrants (Shareweb website).

The Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013

- Require registration of migrant workers, including female domestic workers, and protection of their interests
- Require recruitment agents to provide an employment contract between the worker and the employer, stipulating wages, accommodation facilities, duration of employment, compensation amount in the event of death or Injury, and costs of emigrating to and returning from abroad
- Stipulate the right to information, the right to file a civil suit, and the right to return home, and
- Provide penalties for sending migrant workers overseas in an unlawful manner; charging unlawful amounts of fees; using unfair means of collecting demand notes, visas or work permits or trading in such documents (Bangladesh Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare, 2015).

Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy, 2015

- Relate to domestic workers in Bangladesh, not to migrant workers
- Recognize domestic work as a profession and entitles domestic workers to the benefits available under the labour law
- Entitle workers to a healthy and safe space to sleep while they are off-duty and stipulates four months of maternity leave for female domestic workers
- Plan to establish a “helpline” for workers and awareness-raising campaigns
- Require employers to ensure full-time workers’ salaries and other allowances and to distribute working hours, allowing time for proper rest, sleep, entertainment and leave, and
- Require employers to pay for necessary medical expenses and compensation for any accidents (IDWFED website).

Recruiting Agents Conduct and Licence Rules, 2002

- Stipulate that recruiting agents should not receive or claim any fees other than the service fee determined by the Government
- Require agents to give various kinds of assistance to migrants during their stay abroad, and
- Requires agents to meet all valid claims of the migrants (Bangladesh Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare, 2015).

While migration, has been taking place more and more both outside the country and inside, it does not stop female labour migration from being stigmatised. Now, that is not migration problem but rather a fundamental issue, deep-seated in the roots of the traditions.

In the context of Bangladesh, women’s liberty and mobility is more often than not restricted by structural factors, informed by socioeconomic and cultural conditions and reinforced by discriminatory practices and legal instruments affecting their progress. Considering the fact that women constitute a great majority of the population, women’s development is the pre-condition to national development. Hence, the establishment of policies like the National Women Development aims to eliminate all forms of discriminations to women in recognition of the fact that man and woman are all equal in all the areas of human rights and fundamental freedom, such as, socio-political, economic and cultural freedoms. It aspires to address the issues and facilitate mitigate the crisis – thereby ensuring Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom of Women.

National Women Development Policy (NWDP), 2011

In Bangladesh, our womenfolk has continued to be exploited and neglected in addition to being suppressed under religious bigotry, social stigma, narrow-mindedness and discrimination in a male dominated society which make women the most vulnerable group. To change that reality, NWDP highlights the need to educate women and build them to be skilled human resources and ensure their full participation in the mainstream socioeconomic development. The objectives of NWDP are as follows:

- Involve male and youths in building up mass awareness in prevention of abuse of women and work to eliminate all forms of abuse of women and female children.
- Establish gender equality in politics, administration, and other areas of activity, socio-economic activity, education, culture, sports and in all areas of family life.
- Innovate and import technology favouring the interest of women and prohibit anti-women technologies.
- Ensure security and safety of women in all areas of state, social and family life in addition to socio-economic, political, administrative and legal empowerment to establish human rights of women.
- Give appropriate recognition to women's contribution in socio-economic areas.
- Ensure taking appropriate steps to ensure sound health and nutrition of the women and ensure priority of women in provision for proper shelter and housing
- Extend assistance to ensure rights of the disabled women and women belonging to the smaller ethnic groups.
- Arrange safety of the widow, guardian-less, husband abandoned, unmarried and childless women.
- Provide necessary support services for development of women and facilitate ensuring the growth of women entrepreneurs.
- Abolish all discriminatory laws and ensure participation of women legal experts in the commission or committee formed with the objective of making legislation and reforms.
- Not legislating any discriminatory law or not allowing growth of any discriminatory social custom.
- Ensure equal rights in all the levels of quality education, employment, technical training, equal emoluments, workplace health and safety, social security and health care.

Along with all the policies, the government has also formed specific programmes for youth development which include:

National Youth Training Centres (NYTC)

NYTC is a human resource development, information & research centre which conduct training courses to develop human qualities amongst the youth. This centre also arranges national & international conferences, seminars, workshop, research works, publications& different types of training with a view to solving youth problems and creating awareness about their responsibilities for building the ideal society.

Some programmes of NYTC are:

- Foundation Training course for Officers and Staff of the Department of Youth Development
- Training of Trainers.
- Functional English Courses.
- Entrepreneurship Development Programme.

- Project Management Courses.
- Youth Work Management Course for the Members of various Youth Organisations.
- Youth Leadership Training Courses.
- Family Welfare, Human Resource Development, Environment and Social Development Management Courses.
- Social and Community Development Courses.
- Computer Training Courses.
- Others

Micro Credit Program, 1987 - 2003

It is one of the major programmes of the Department of Youth Development for establishment of small and medium enterprises by the youths so as to eradicate rural poverty in Bangladesh. Under this programme, since its inception (1987) and until Dec, 2003, an amount of 91.92 million US dollar was distributed to the youth poor and the women against small enterprises that helps to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural people in Bangladesh. Besides, many other private organisations are operating such micro-credit programmes in the rural and urban areas

Youth Action in Reproductive Health and Safe Motherhood

The Department of Youth Development undertook programmes on 'Youth Action in Reproductive Health and Safe Motherhood' and HIV/AIDS with the financial assistance from United Nations. Until 2004 a total number of 22, 41,114 youths were trained on different trades and out of them 12, 30,366 youths were self-employed. The monthly income of a self-employed youth ranges from \$200 to \$1000. The awareness-training programme on Reproductive and Safe mother hood and HIV/AIDS, STDS are being imparted to the youths through UN Assisted Projects. Until March 04 a total number of 1, 95,892 youths were imparted training about actions on HIV/AIDS, STDs and Reproductive Health and Safe Motherhood with moral and religious education to the people.

The Department of Youth Development has also been assigned with the responsibility of involving youth organisations in community development programmes. To encourage club-- based activities, government has created a welfare fund in the name of "Youth Welfare Fund".

Youth Welfare Fund Act, 2016

The new law allows direct donation of funds to youth organisations involved in promotion of sports, arts, culture, conventional and technical education along with implementation of various youth development activities for education in science, arts and culture, and sports.

According to BSS, it will support the comprehensive integration of youths into the mainstream of the country's overall development through providing necessary patronization and support to the youth organisations. The bill proposed necessary amendments and modifications of the Youth Welfare Fund Ordinance 1985 and introduction of the law in Bengali afresh.

Youth Award Policy 2011

National Youth Award Policy was adopted to recognize young achievers and motivate them to work for personal and collective development. Up to June 2016, 345 successful youths and youth organisers received National Youth Award.

E. Conclusion

As mentioned in the Policy Prospect section, the list of relevant policies for youth development is not final. It will be updated with future youth focused policies, linking them to the issues that are being addressed and the ones that are not. This will eventually enable us to track and examine more closely not just what has been achieved, but also what has been excluded and how we can address them at the policy level effectively to help perform better in the future.

F. Annex: Table of policies/practices

| Programmes | Years | Description |
|--|-----------|---|
| Sheikh Hasina National Youth Development Institute Act | 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a central and modern standard institute for empowering potential youths through training and motivation. - To conduct research, higher education, training and constructive activities for the youths in their overall development |
| Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP) | 2010 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aims to improve the quality and relevance of the teaching and research environment in higher education institutions through encouraging both innovation and accountability within universities and by enhancing the technical and institutional capacity of the higher education sector |
| Seventh Five Year National Development Plan | 2016-2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote inclusive development with a special attention given to the disadvantaged groups, women, children and persons with disabilities. - Increase higher education rate from 12% to 20% alongside enhancing the quality and encompassing digital facility |
| National Education Policy | 2010 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expand technical and vocational education to turn the large youth population, including the ones in disadvantaged community and small ethnic groups and disabled learners of Bangladesh into professional and skilled human resource by sincerely responding to their special needs -Address the issue of increasing drug addiction among youth |
| National Youth Policy | 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aims to <u>promote youth engagement</u> in environmental education and protection, ICT development, green technology, good governance, sustainable development, volunteerism, youth work, gender equality and empowerment irrespective of their sex, race, class, caste, etc. |
| National Skills Development Policy | 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improve the quality and relevance of skill development and access to skills development for various groups of citizens including the most disenfranchised groups, women and people with disabilities in Bangladesh. -The main features include demand-driven, flexible responsive and competency based training, flexible institutional management for human skill management; and skills development for overseas employment and industry training |

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| Non-formal Education Act | 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create an alternative to education opportunities for the deprived sections of the people, creating livelihood opportunities through technical and vocational training, making skilled human resources, creating self-employment capabilities, and teaching children out of school - It does not particularly mention anything about the youth |
| Permanent Non-Formal Education Project | 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assist the government in achieving "Education for All" (EFA) by improving and expanding non-formal education (NFE) to reach illiterate young adults, between 15 and 24 years of age, covering at least 50% of women learners -While this act slightly touches on the higher education sub-sector, it does not particularly elaborate on it. |
| Project Introduction (CapEFA) | 2006-2008 2009-2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strengthen administrative structure of Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) from national to the grassroots levels -Establish equivalency education mechanism and provide opportunity of skill training and education for vulnerable youths and adults -253 trainers, government officials and NGO staff received training in the areas such as planning and management of literacy programmes, post-literacy planning and management, , the roles of teachers and facilitators, research findings for planning, Advance monitoring for non-formal education and literacy. -While this act slightly touches on the higher education sub-sector, it does not particularly elaborate on it. |
| Persons with Disability Welfare Act | 2001 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Encourage establishment of Specialised Education Institutions to cater to the needs of the children with disabilities, introduce Special Examination System and arrange trainings for the teachers and other employees working with the disabled -Create opportunities for free education to all children with disabilities below 18 years of age and provide those books and equipments free of cost or at low-cost. -Incorporate appropriate articles in the introductory social science subjects aiming to create public awareness about the lifestyle |

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| | | <p>and problems associated faced by the persons with disabilities</p> <p>- It does not particularly mention anything about the youth</p> |
| Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act | 2013 | <p>-Government will introduce combined special education and vocational training in the existing technical-vocational education system, and provide accessible training programmes for persons with disabilities</p> <p>-Facilitate accessibility for persons with disabilities in reading books of the National Curriculum and Text Board (NCTB) and other libraries through the installation of an acceptable and proper technology that supports an e-learning platform.</p> <p>- Ensure education is inclusive and provides reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities in educational institutions.</p> <p>- It does not particularly mention anything about the youth</p> |
| Education Act | 2016 | <p>- Ensure access of autistic and disabled children to all types of educational institutions. It will definitely increase the enrolment of disabled children to regular schools</p> <p>-However, the law did not say anything about how these children will be evaluated and assessed</p> <p>-This law also promises a strong <u>Higher Education Council to improve the quality of higher education</u></p> <p>- While this act slightly touches on the higher education sub-sector, it does not particularly elaborate on it.</p> |
| Bangladesh Health Policy | 2011 | <p>-No specific written policy exists for youth health in Bangladesh, although the country has a legislative framework for health information that covers vital registration and diseases reporting</p> |
| National AIDS/STD Program (NASP) | | <p>Implementing HIV/AIDS prevention activities in Bangladesh through a coalition of 3 functionaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National AIDS Committee (NAC) - MOHFW - Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) <p>-No specific written policy exists for youth</p> |
| National HIV Strategic Plan | 2011 - 2015 | <p>- Efforts to mainstream HIV/AIDS in public sectors outside the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare were initiated through</p> |

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| | | <p>designation and training of focal points on HIV/AIDS in 16 government ministries.</p> <p>-No specific written policy exists for youth</p> |
| National Policy on HIV/AIDS | 1996 | <p>-Action has been taken to develop a multi-sector response to HIV/AIDS. Strategic action plans for NASP set forth fundamental principles, with specific guidelines on a range of HIV issues including testing, treatment, safe blood supply, and prevention among youth, women, migrant workers, sex workers, and STIs. But earlier commitment was limited and implementation of HIV control activities was slow.</p> |
| Bangladesh Population Policy | 2012 | -No specific written policy exists for youth |
| Health care Financing Strategy | 2012-2032 | -No specific provisions are mentioned to generate resources for youth health sector financing |
| National Nutrition Policy | 2015 | -No specific written policy exists for youth |
| Meeting the under nutrition challenge (MUCH) | | <p>-“MUCH is a policy advisory project to strengthen the enabling environment for eradicating food insecurity and malnutrition in Bangladesh. Working together with the ministry of food, it has been implemented with technical support from FAO and with financial support from USAID and the EU</p> <p>-No specific written policy exists for youth.</p> |
| The Narcotics Control Act | 1990 (amended in 2000,2002, and 2004) | -Overlooks issues like raising awareness among youth on the impact of narcotics. |
| Smoking and tobacco Products Usage (Control) Rule | 2015 | Overlooks issues like raising awareness among youth on the impact of narcotics. |
| ICT Fellowship and Donation Policy | 2013 | <p>-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 ICT training facilities for the youth/adult</p> <p>-While this act slightly touches on the youth aspect,</p> |
| Bangabandhu Science and Technology Fellowship Trust Act | 2016 | <p>-Create opportunities for students to receive higher education in the field of science and technology in Bangladesh at home or abroad.</p> <p>-Develop qualified scientists, technologist and researchers in the country to building a science-friendly digital society and development of scientific research in the country.</p> |

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| | | -While this act slightly touches on the youth aspect, it does not particularly elaborate on it. |
| National Telecommunications Policy | 2010 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish telecommunications training academy that will be a private public partnership created as a successor organisation to the present Staff Training Academy at Ghazipur/Joydebpur - Enhance tele density and availability of internet which will help deliver education and training in remote areas |
| International Long Distance Telecommunications Services Policy | 2010 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Help young entrepreneurs sustain and encourage other entrepreneurs in the rural areas thereby facilitating increased employment for Bangladeshi youth -Allow country's youth to explore state-of-the art technology for their betterment as well as to offer affordable international voice services to the country people. -Encourage local businesses and enterprises in telecommunication sector -Ensure people to have easy access to information and technology one of the means to achieve economic emancipation. |
| Bangladesh National Scientific and Technical Documentation Center (BANSDOC) Act, | 2010 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aimed at establishing BANSDOC, a national science and technical information collection and distribution centre -It is the national apex body in the field of ICT based scientific & technological information and documentation services of the country. This organisation provides up-to-date information to the scientists, researchers, technologists, industrialists, planners, policy-makers and relevant people for socio-economic development of the country -It does not particularly elaborate its contribution to youth. |
| National Science and Technology Policy | 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Seek out and recognize high talents particularly amongst the younger generation in various areas of science and technology -Provide guidelines for institutional arrangements or rearrangements in the R&D structure including capacity building in education and training -Enhance employment opportunities of science graduates |

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| National Biotechnology Policy | 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aimed at improving and implementing biotechnology at the national level, including the creation of skilled manpower and research in the fields of biotechnology, research and development activities. -Young graduates will be encouraged for undertaking higher academic studies in advanced Universities abroad. -Local universities will be encouraged to develop sandwich programme with advanced laboratories abroad so that research work can be concentrated in areas of our national problem. |
| Overseas Employment and Migration Act | 2013 | -Create opportunity for foreign employment of workers, and ensure safe and just migration governance system |
| Technology Empowerment Centre on Wheels for Under-privileged Rural Young People of Bangladesh | | -Skills for Employability |
| Strengthening of Training at upazila Level for Creation of Employment and Self-employment' | | |
| Promoting Decent work through Improved Migration and its application in Bangladesh | 2012 - 2015 | -The project outcomes were based on the recommendations made at the "Regional Symposium on Deployment of Workers Overseas, A Shared Responsibility" held in Dhaka in 2008, and designed in close consultation with all stakeholders and partners. |
| Youth Award Policy | 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -National Youth Award Policy was adopted to recognize young achievers and motive them to work for personal and collective development. -Up to June 2016, 345 successful youths and youth organisers received National Youth Award. |
| Youth Welfare Fund Act | 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide funds for youth organisations involved in promotion of sports, arts, culture, conventional and technical education along with implementation of various youth development activities for education in science, arts and culture, and sports. -Support the comprehensive integration of youths into the mainstream of the country's overall development through providing necessary patronization and support to the youth organisations. |

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| Youth Action in Reproductive Health and Safe Motherhood | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The awareness-training programme is aimed at the youths - Until 2004 a total number of 22, 41,114 youths were trained on different trades and out of them 12, 30,366 youths were self-employed - The monthly income of a self-employed youth ranges from \$200 to \$1000 |
| Micro Credit Program | 1987 - 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of small and medium enterprises by the youths so as to eradicate rural poverty in Bangladesh. - Under this programme, an amount of 91.92 million US dollar was distributed to the youth poor and the women against small enterprises that helps to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural people in Bangladesh. |
| National Youth Training Centres (NYTC) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct training courses to develop human qualities amongst the youth - Arranges national & international conferences, seminars, workshop, research works, publications & different types of training with a view to solving youth problems and creating awareness about their responsibilities for building the ideal society. |
| National Women Development Policy | 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the struggles of women living in a male dominated patriarchal society - Highlights the need to educate women and build them to be skilled human resources - Ensure their full participation in the mainstream socioeconomic development. |
| Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy | 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formulated in line with international laws on migration - Associates migration with national development - Ensures safe migration; protect migrant workers and their family members - Ensures the welfare of migrant workers and their access to facilities - Regulate the migration of female workers |
| Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy | 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relate to domestic workers in Bangladesh, not to migrant workers - Recognize domestic work as a profession and entitles domestic workers to the benefits available under the labour law - establish a “helpline” for workers and awareness-raising campaigns |
| Recruiting Agents Conduct and Licence Rules | 2002 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stipulate that recruiting agents should not receive or claim any fees other than the service fee determined by the Government |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Require agents to give various kinds of assistance to migrants during their stay abroad, and- Requires agents to meet all valid claims of the migrants |
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