

remain to be implemented. Arguably, a concerted and systematic effort based on an operational plan and phasing of priorities was required to be mounted. However, Bangladesh, in its leading role in the SDG4 High Level Steering Committee has also expressed some key commitments with regards to the transformation of education in the global forums recently (National Statement of Commitment in Transforming Education Summit).

Zooming into sub sector specific policies, one finds a mixed and non-coordinated picture. Although there is no separate policy for primary education, the Compulsory Primary Education Act (1990) and the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2010 govern the primary education system. NEP serves as the primary policy document providing strategic guidance for development and strengthening of education in Bangladesh, and promotes an inclusive education agenda aiming at removing all disparities including gender in education. The 2006 Non-Formal Education Policy (NFE) encourages the provision of non-formal education through NGO. The NEP placed the goals and strategies under 18 components. Without an overall implementation effort, progress has been made in implementing parts of some components. It would be appropriate to look at the components, assess where progress has been made and where it lagged, and judge their relevance as the sector plan for the next phase of educational development is considered.

In the area of TVET, Bangladesh aims to establish a more market-oriented, competency-based technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system coordinated through the National Development Skills Authority (NSDA). The EUD is engaged in discussions related to this skills policy. This provides an enabling environment for the EUD to mainstream gender equality and intersectional inclusion in policy dialogues on TVET, labour supply and demand, including the youth and girls from intersectionally discriminated social groups.<sup>7</sup>

For TVET, the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) of 2011 placed emphasis on the development of a National Qualifications Framework, the promotion of private sector involvement, and the development of a TVET financing mechanism. The newly developed policy framework, NSDP 2022 aims at addressing the skills needs of the country and ensuring that the workforce has the skills necessary to meet the demands of the rapidly changing global economy. Also, put emphasis on quality training, the development of a robust system of certification, and the creation of partnerships between the public and private sectors to support skills development. A draft National Job Strategy (NJS) focuses on employment generation. One of its three-pronged approaches tackles youth employment through the promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment, matching of workers with jobs, wage employment programmes and training with attention to market demand. This strategy will provide a road map for the Ministry of Labour and Employment, including the setting-up of the Department of Employment Generation that would overtake the mandate of offering employment services.

In general, the current state of the TVET and skills development sector in Bangladesh is mixed. On one hand, there have been significant efforts to improve the quality and efficiency of the TVET system, including the establishment of private sector training institutes and the development of a National Qualifications Framework. On the other hand, the sector still faces major challenges, including a shortage of skilled workers, a mismatch between the skills taught in TVET institutes and the needs of the labour market, limited access to TVET for marginalized communities. What is more, there is overall limited coordination among different ministries (we can count till 23 involved in TVET) in the areas of education and skills poses a challenge in terms of efficient policy implementation

Recently, National Skills Development Authority through the NSDA Act 2018, was appointed as an autonomous apex body which is ideally and strategically positioned under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to lead the sectoral coordination and facilitate policy reforms, however the leadership of the NSDA has been weak. In parallel to NSDP formulation, the NSDA also prepared the Action Plan for Skills Development in Bangladesh 2020-21 to 2024-25. This Action Plan, in alignment with the NSDP 2022, is intended to be results-focused, inclusive, performance-based, and forward-looking.

In terms of employment generation, the situation in Bangladesh is also mixed. The country has seen significant economic growth in recent years, but this has not always translated into job creation. The informal sector remains the largest source of employment in Bangladesh, and the rate of unemployment remains relatively high, particularly among women and youth.

In terms of sectoral budget, out of the total budget of BDT 6780.64 billion for FY2022-23, the allocation for the education sector is BDT 814.49 billion (EUR 8.32 billion) or 12% percent of the total, compared to 11.9% in FY2021-22. In terms of GDP ratio, it is 1.83%, lower than the previous fiscal year's allocation. While the allocation is less

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<sup>7</sup> [Gender Country Profile \(GCP\) Bangladesh 2021](#)