Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Study on the Feasibility of Scale-up of the Two-year Pre-primary Education in Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh

Directorate of Primary Education 2025

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June 2025

Directorate of Primary Education
Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

In partnership with

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for every child

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Messages

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Foreword

It is with immense pleasure that I present the report on the Feasibility Study for Scaling-up of the Two-year Pre-primary Education (PPE) in Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh. The study report provides an overview of the two-year Pre-primary Education and an analysis of opportunities as well as the challenges of introducing the two-year PPE programme across Bangladesh.

The Government of Bangladesh introduced a pilot programme of the two-year Pre-primary Education on January 2023 in 3,214 selected Government Primary Schools to expand the PPE opportunities for 4 years old children and above. This opportunity will support the children to prepare better for the Primary schools by ensuring that children grow with full potential by accessing a play-based pre-primary education.

While the Government has taken all necessary actions to ensure a quality Pre-primary Education pilot programme, it is also important to appreciate the readiness and the requirements of the Government Primary Schools before scaling up of the two-year PPE in all the schools. This report provides and in-depth analysis of the on-going efforts of the Directorate of Primary education to Implement Pre-primary Education, and the perceptions of the community towards the two-year Pre-primary education, the existing challenges that may inhibit the effective implementation of a quality a two-year pre-primary education programme and recommends necessary actions to be implemented to enhance access and quality in PPE.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the stakeholders who contributed to this study and report, particularly the officials from the Training Division, all other divisions of DPE, and extend special thanks to UNICEF for their invaluable technical support and financial assistance. Together, we have taken a meaningful step toward fostering evidence based Pre-primary Education Programme for the young children in Bangladesh.

Abu Noor Md. Shamsuzzaman

Sayaka USUI, PhD

Chief of Education

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Bangladesh

I am delighted to congratulate the Ministry of Mass and Primary Education (MOPME) and the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) for initiating the two-year Pre-primary Education (PPE) pilot programme. This initiative marks a significant milestone in creating quality early learning opportunities and fostering holistic development of every child in Bangladesh.

The DPE, under overall direction of MOPME, has undertaken a range of critical actions to implement the two-year PPE. These include curriculum development, teacher capacity building, development of teaching and learning materials, and establishing monitoring and supervision mechanisms.

As per the joint commitment on the evidence-informed decision-making, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the DPE for conducting the Feasibility Study of Scale-up of the Two-year Pre-primary Education in Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh. This study marks an important step forward in the partnership between DPE and UNICEF, strengthening our strategic collaboration to promote holistic early childhood development and learning for young children in Bangladesh.

The study highlights notable progress achieved under the existing one-year PPE intervention, especially through infrastructure development and creation of dedicated classrooms which have resulted in an improved enrolment rate. However, the study identifies key challenges related to expanding the programme to two years. These include shortage of classrooms, lack of age-appropriate toilet, water and handwashing facilities, limited learning and play materials, and most of all, absolute shortage of qualified teachers - especially in the classrooms with children aged four and above. Additionally, limited community involvement and budgetary constraints were also noted as significant barriers against the scale-up of pre-primary education form one year to two-year model.

It is also crucial to understand the education system readiness and the perceptions of school and communities regarding the two-year PPE model to inform strategic discussions around scaling up of the pilot.

Recognizing the existing challenges, we must continue to strengthen our collaborative efforts to realize the commitment of the Government of Bangladesh towards ensuring quality and inclusive early learning opportunities for All children. Under the leadership of MOPME and DPE, along with an empowered PPE Cell within the Policy and Operations Divisions, UNICEF is committed to reinforce a resilient, inclusive, and quality pre-primary education architecture in Bangladesh. Our collective determination will ensure that every young child in Bangladesh has access to meaningful early learning opportunities – a critical building blocks that leads children to flourish and reach their full potential.

Sayaka USUI, PhD

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List of acronyms

AUEO	Assistant Upazilla Education Officer
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
CHTDB	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	Children with Disabilities
CwSN	Children with Special Needs
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DPEd	Diploma in Primary Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ELDS	Early Learning and Development Standards
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GPS	Government Primary School
HT	Head Teacher
IAMEBBC	Institutional Animal, Medical Ethics, Biosafety and Biosecurity Committee
KG	Kindergarten
KII	Key Informant Interview
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MIS	Management Information System
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NNPS	Newly Nationalized Primary School
PEDP -3	Third Primary Education Development Programme
PEDP- 4	Fourth Primary Education Development Programme
PPE	Pre-Primary Education
PTI	Primary Teachers' Training Institute
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMC	School Managing Committee
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SSS-CHT	Sustainable Social Service in Chittagong Hill Tracts
TG	Teachers' Guide
UEO	Upazilla Education Officer
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
URC	Upazilla Resource Center
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Summary

Bangladesh has made remarkable strides in Pre-primary Education (PPE), particularly expanding opportunities for 5-year-old children through a one classroom approach in the Government Primary Schools (GPS). Significant achievements include increased enrolment rates and the attainment of gender parity in PPE. However, substantial challenges persist in expanding early learning opportunities for children under 5. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) data indicates that, only 18.9 per cent of children between 3–5-year-olds are accessing early learning programmes in Bangladesh and 25.5 per cent of them are not developmentally on track.

Acknowledging the significance of early learning opportunities for children, the Government of Bangladesh has taken initiatives to expand the PPE for 4-year-old children in Bangladesh. In January 2023, the Government launched a two-year pre-primary education pilot programme in 3,214 schools across the country. The pilot programme was completed in 2024, and the effectiveness evaluation of the programme is near completion. In this context, the study on the 'Feasibility of Scale-up of the Two-year Pre-primary Education in Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh' was initiated to understand the readiness of the system and community, identify gaps and challenges of scaling up of the two-year PPE across the country.

The study examines the implementation of the one-year and two-year pre-primary education programme in selected primary schools in Bangladesh to understand system readiness for the expansion of two-year PPE across the country. Its primary objectives include evaluating existing infrastructure, analysing family/community perceptions, exploring service provisions, and reviewing potential challenges associated with introducing a two-year PPE structure.

The study is a sequentially explanatory mixed method study following key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions (FGD), and classroom observations to gather qualitative data from the field. Secondary data from different sources including government organisations, NGOs and international organisations was also reviewed.

Multiple sampling techniques and data collection approaches were employed to represent a holistic scenario of two years of PPE implementation in Bangladesh. The PPE expansion plan (2012) categorised Bangladesh's 546 upazilas (sub-districts) into seven categories. These were – i) rural low coverage, ii) rural others, iii) urban, iv) island, coastal and riverine upazilas with chars (lowlands), v) ethnic/indigenous children, vi) tea garden, and vii) haor. The pre-primary schools for the sample were also selected considering these seven categories, inclusive of the 10 poorest districts in Bangladesh[1].

The study focused on 41 pre-primary classrooms in 10 districts, encompassing diverse characteristics such as socio-economic status, geographical location, and ethnic minority representations. Sample classrooms were selected from GPS, NGO schools, kindergartens, Ebtedayee Madrasahs[2], and Para Kendra[3] situated both in urban and rural settings. Among the sample schools, 10 GPS were selected from the piloting schools of the two-year PPE. The study covered 10 districts and adopted a stratified cluster sampling design where the domains were considered strata and districts were considered clusters. In the first stage, 10 districts were selected from the three strata and institutions were selected from the clusters at the second stage. (See details in the methodology section, page

[1] Kishoreganj, Kurigram, Khagrachhari, Gaibandha, Chapai Nawabganj, Jamalpur, Dinajpur, Bandarban, Magura, and Rangpur.

[2] Ebtedayee madrasah refers to a primary-level madrasah or religious school governed by Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board.

[3] Para Kendra refers to the non-formal learning centers

3). The GPS having the two-year PPE pilot programme are referred to as the piloting schools or the intervention group. Similarly, the GPS who have only one year of the PPE are referred to as the GPS or the non-intervention group in this study.

Non-probability sampling techniques were employed for data collection only from the cluster-wise locations including observation checklists, key informant interviews (KII) with PPE teachers, head teachers, education officers and Upazilla Resource Center (URC) instructors, as well as focus group discussions (FGD) with school management committee (SMC) members, parents and caregivers. The interviews were conducted and recorded for further analysis. The secondary data sources were related project documents, policy documents, and relevant study reports. A sequentially explanatory mixed-method approach was adopted, employing statistical analysis for quantitative data and a data-driven thematic approach for qualitative insights. The study followed the benchmarks meticulously set by the PPE Expansion Plan 2012 during the design of data collection tools, data gathering, and analysis phases.

Key findings shed light on both achievements and challenges. Infrastructure progress was noted, with dedicated classrooms used for PPE students in both the over 4 and over 5 aged group, and compliance with PPE service delivery standards set in the PPE Expansion Plan 2012[4] in most schools. However, challenges persisted, including classroom shortages, unavailability of age-appropriate Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) blocks, and security concerns due to the absence of boundary walls. Teacher shortages, especially for the over 4 age group, demanded immediate attention. Scarcity, damage, and budgetary constraints were identified as significant challenges around learning materials. Community perceptions around PPE varied –some marked by parents with limited understanding and negative misconceptions such as “PPE offers no education”, impeding enrolment and parental engagement. However, a portion of well-informed parents had shown positive perceptions toward two-year PPE, emphasizing holistic child development, readiness for further education, and health consciousness.

Community issues were identified, with some urban parents preferring private kindergarten schools. They raised concerns about the timeliness and practicality of school schedules and academic learnings and questioned whether PPE prepared their children for real world experience and competition. Recommendations include addressing urgent infrastructure enhancements, classroom shortages, deficient WASH blocks, and inadequate seating arrangements. Immediate measures are needed to overcome teacher shortages, including extending training, periodic refresher courses, and exploring innovative approaches like involving parents. Efficient management of learning materials involves creating simpler versions, organising materials in multiple sets, and allocating budgets based on student numbers. Community engagement through awareness campaigns, orientations, and local initiatives is pivotal to overcoming misconceptions and fostering support. The study recognises the potential for parental and community engagement, stakeholder collaborations, and awareness, placing a whole-child approach at the centre of the programme.

In conclusion, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with the two-year PPE programme in Bangladesh. Strategic interventions, stakeholder collaborations, and a proactive approach are crucial to overcome identified obstacles enhancing a successful scale-up nationwide. By implementing the recommendations outlined above, there is a substantial opportunity to enhance the quality and access of the two-year PPE programme, ensuring a more inclusive and effective learning environment for young children in Bangladesh.

[4] Directorate of Pre-Primary, Pre-primary Education Expansion Plan, December 2012

Summary of the key findings

1. School location and premises

The location and physical state of schools were generally aligned with the benchmarks for pre-primary education (PPE) expansion, yet there are some critical areas for improvement. All piloting schools and 96 per cent of GPS schools visited[5] met the PPE benchmark of schools within 1 km of children's homes. Additionally, 80 per cent of piloting schools and 84 per cent of GPS are located at least 200 feet away from potentially hazardous sites such as highways, ponds, or chemical factories. However, only 70 per cent of piloting schools and 68.8 per cent of GPS have protective fences or walls around their premises, indicating a safety gap.

School premises generally meet standards for cleanliness and drainage, with 90 per cent of piloting schools and 81.3 per cent of GPS reporting clean, flat grounds. Outdoor play space–vital for young children's development–is present in 100 per cent of piloting schools and 92.2 per cent of GPS. However, only 60 per cent of piloting schools and 42.6 per cent of GPS are equipped with outdoor play equipment such as swings or slides, while access to shaded areas or gardens is available in 60 per cent of piloting schools and 56.3 per cent of GPS.

2. Designated PPE classrooms

Most GPS have designated classrooms for one-year pre-primary education, a significant step toward a standardised PPE infrastructure. In piloting schools, 90 per cent have separate classrooms specifically for pre-primary students, while in GPS, 96.9 per cent meet this criterion. However, fewer schools (30 per cent of piloting schools and 9.4 per cent of GPS) allocate separate spaces for younger children aged 4 and up. This disparity, particularly evident across geographical regions, highlights an area for improvement in age-specific considerations for classroom designation.

Urban areas are better equipped with separate rooms for PPE (100 per cent), while rural (92.6 per cent) and hill tract regions (60 per cent) have lower percentages. Coastal areas and river islands exhibit 100 per cent compliance in this regard. Nonetheless, the two-year PPE expansion faces a significant challenge due to limited classroom space. Observations show that only 10 per cent of piloting schools and 34.4 per cent of GPS have room to expand. Teachers and education officers report that classroom shortages will be a major obstacle for scaling up to two-year PPE.

3. Classroom size

Classroom size remains a challenge in both piloting schools and non-piloting GPS. While most GPS have one pre-primary classroom for older children, many classrooms are insufficient in size for a smooth learning experience. Around 28.1 per cent of GPS have PPE classrooms smaller than the recommended 250 square feet, affecting the space available for children's movement and storage of educational materials. Piloting schools show better results, with 90 per cent meeting the recommended 250 square feet size, while only 71.9 per cent of GPS meet this standard.

To accommodate the total enrolled children, a minimum of 510 square feet is required per 30 children (or 17 square feet per child). This standard is unmet across all observed classrooms, highlighting an urgent need for uniform spatial standards. Geographic disparities persist, with rural (77.8 per cent), hill tracts (80 per cent), and coastal regions (75 per cent) showing better compliance than urban areas (50 per cent) for minimum space requirements.

[5] This is not a representative sample, and the sample size was determined and selected by DPE and UNICEF.

4. Availability of physical facilities

Both piloting schools and GPS exhibit commendable results in providing child-friendly physical facilities, though piloting schools consistently show higher compliance. Essential classroom features, such as sufficient lighting and ventilation, smooth flooring, seating arrangements, and black/whiteboards, are available in 90 per cent of piloting schools. However, around one-third of GPS classrooms have damaged seating arrangements and lack child-accessible black/whiteboards. All piloting schools and 92 percent of GPS schools have outdoor play space while outdoor play equipment is available in 60 per cent of piloting schools and 42 per cent of GPS.

Geographically, rural areas show higher compliance in physical facility availability than urban areas, where seating, suitable classroom materials, and accessible boards are comparatively lacking. Schools in coastal areas and river islands show better adherence to physical facility standards, while char and haor areas reveal poorer conditions in these categories.

5. WASH facilities

Although most GPS have WASH blocks, they are often unsuitable for younger children in PPE. Water taps and basins are often placed too high, making them inaccessible for young children, and WASH blocks are located far from classrooms. In rainy seasons, children face additional challenges in using these facilities. In piloting schools, 60 per cent have accessible toilets for younger children, while only 56.3 per cent of GPS meet this benchmark.

Classroom sanitation facilities are also limited, with only half of the piloting schools and 46.9 per cent of GPS providing designated handwashing areas with soap and water. Geographically, urban areas consistently show lower percentages of availability in water and sanitation facilities compared to rural areas, which exhibit higher compliance. Coastal and river island schools perform better on WASH indicators, whereas char and haor regions lag.

6. Safety and security

The overall safety of school premises remains a key concern, with significant variability in safety measures across locations. Most piloting schools have safety measures such as boundary walls (90 per cent) and security guards (63 per cent), but only 53 per cent of GPS have boundary walls. Safety hazards in and around classrooms, such as broken toys and furniture, are prevalent in around one-third of GPS, particularly near unsafe walkways and ponds.

Safety standards for materials and electrical equipment are generally well-observed in urban and hill tract areas, though rural schools exhibit a higher standard in other regions. First-aid boxes are available in most schools, but 34.4 per cent of schools contain expired items. Additionally, urban and rural schools show a need for improved security measures near highways, and lack of boundary walls poses a serious threat in these areas.

7. Enrolment

Enrolment in PPE is significantly lower than the total number of eligible children in school catchment areas. Field data shows that in piloting school catchment areas, only 16.6 per cent of children aged 4 and over and 27.6 per cent of children aged 5 and over were enrolled in PPE. In GPS, 41.7 per cent of children aged 5 and over were enrolled. There were no records of children aged 4 years and over in government schools, as PPE was not piloted for them. Additionally, schools did not keep track of children attending other PPE programme, despite official guidelines. These findings raise concerns about the future expansion of PPE in the country.

8. Classroom design

Classroom decoration, a crucial factor for engaging young learners, is inconsistent across the country. Only 60 per cent of piloting schools and 34.4 per cent of non-piloting schools comply with the 2014 guidelines set by the Directorate of Primary Education. This disparity is often linked to geographical factors, with schools in remote regions facing more challenges in creating conducive learning environments.

9. Learning and play materials

The availability of learning and play materials further highlights regional disparities. Specific learning tools such as flashcards, play materials, and books show lower availability. Around 40 per cent of piloting schools have adequate instructional materials compared to only 34.4 per cent of GPS. Both school types reported only around a third of teachers using instructional materials as directed by the teaching guide (30 per cent in piloting schools and 34.4 per cent in GPS). Similar trends are observed in the use of play materials according to the instruction of the teaching guide. Teachers reported that limited resources, and wear and tear on materials, pose additional challenges. The current budget allocation is insufficient, and schools often lack funds to replace damaged items.

10. Classroom schedules

While classroom schedules generally follow a two-hour model for 4+ year-olds, teachers have suggested flexible scheduling to accommodate local conditions, recommending variations in timing and session length. This flexibility is observed as essential for addressing the unique challenges of different regions, especially during winter, heat weaves etc. Tiffin breaks and extended time for exposure to literacy and numeracy are also recommended by teachers and parents to better support young learners' developmental needs.

11. Staffing and human resources

Both piloting schools and GPS showed full compliance against the one teacher per class benchmark. The qualification benchmark for a teacher of a PPE class is a Diploma in Education. Most teachers in both piloting schools (90 per cent) and GPS (72 per cent) hold a Diploma in Primary Education (Doped). The provision of teacher assistance (another benchmark requirement) was not found in any schools. Most teachers (100 per cent in piloting schools and 81.3 per cent in GPS), completed the required one-time 15-day training to build teacher capacity in PPE.

12. Monitoring and Supervision

Monitoring and supervision show key disparities between piloting and non-piloting Government Primary Schools (GPS), which warrants the need for consistent supervisory practices and professional development. While piloting schools met a 70 percent compliance rate for monthly four-hour supervision benchmarks, only 34.4 percent of non-piloting GPS met this standard. Similarly, 80 percent of piloting schools received full class supervision monthly, compared to 37.5 percent in non-piloting GPS since the pilot programme gets more attention from administration. Additionally, there is limited training for head teachers, who expressed a need for comprehensive orientation on the two-year PPE model to support effective supervision.

13. Capacity strengthening

Although the PPE expansion plan recommended head teachers to have four days of training and two days of refresher courses annually, no training has been provided until recently. Additionally, Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs), responsible for PPE monitoring, were meant to receive five days of monitoring training and quarterly reflections that has not materialised. Community

involvement in PPE monitoring remains minimal, as parents, caregivers, and governing bodies have received no orientation on PPE.

14. IPEMIS and e-Monitoring

The integration of the PPE module data into the Integrated Primary Education Management Information System (IPEMIS) and e-Monitoring app marks a significant advancement, the use of these governance systems remains low at all levels.

15. Perception and demand of community

Community members expressed a positive perception towards the two-year PPE and showed a reasonable understanding of the developmental advantages and social skills an additional year can provide. Mixed results were observed regarding the demand for two-year PPE, with urban parents preferring private kindergarten schools and the more traditional learning and assessment that they follow.

16. Orientation of parents/caregivers and SMC

Regular meetings were held in most schools, focusing on administrative matters rather than orientation for two-year PPE. Parents expressed the need for short-term training to support their children's learning and most did not participate in any orientation or discussion on two-year PPE. Regular parent sessions in school can help support awareness and engagement among parents and this needs to be prioritised by schools to ensure PPE is successfully implemented.

17. Accessibility and safety

Many classrooms and schools are reported to be structurally safe and risk-free for children with schools in urban areas (71 per cent) and char locations (100 per cent) demonstrating a commitment to creating secure and positive learning environments. Urban and river island areas generally exhibited better infrastructure accessibility with proper ramps in the entrance, spacious walkways and doors free of blockades. Safety concerns were identified, including a lack of school boundaries in half of the schools and inadequate water facilities. First aid provisions were more prevalent in urban and river island areas (78.6 per cent and 100 per cent, respectively). 80 per cent of piloting schools and 84 per cent of GPS met the benchmark of being at least 200ft away from sites that could be dangerous for children. Most schools (around 70 per cent) are protected by a fence or wall.

Key Recommendations

Based on the findings, there are several recommendations that emerged from the study that point to measures to enhance the access, quality, inclusivity, and governance of the pre-primary education (PPE) programme across Government Primary Schools (GPS) to support the scale-up of the two-year PPE:

1. Improve Accessibility and Safety
Schools should ensure all facilities remain within accessible distance from children's homes. Strategic efforts must focus on maintaining and expanding accessibility standards. Immediate action is required to install protective fencing and boundary walls, especially near high-risk areas such as highways and water bodies.

2. Enhance Outdoor Learning Environments
Outdoor play spaces should be expanded with age-appropriate and innovative equipment—such as swings, slides, and climbing nets—to foster children's gross motor development and support holistic growth across all developmental domains.

3. Prioritize Dedicated PPE Classrooms
Schools must designate separate, age-appropriate classrooms for PPE, especially for children aged 4 and older. Future infrastructure planning should incorporate the requirement for additional rooms to support the two-year PPE rollout. Budget allocations must prioritize spatial expansion using child-friendly classroom designs.

4. Address Classroom Size and Space Standards
Urgent attention is needed to meet the recommended classroom space of 17 square feet per child. Schools should review current space provisions and prioritize the expansion or construction of new classrooms, particularly in high-enrolment or non-compliant areas such as coastal regions.

5. Maintain and Monitor Physical Infrastructure
Regular assessments and maintenance of classroom facilities—including seating, blackboards, and ventilation—should be institutionalized to ensure a child-friendly learning environment and address any damage that may hinder effective teaching and learning.

6. Strengthen Age-Appropriate WASH Facilities
WASH facilities should be improved by installing child-height toilets, water taps, and basins located close to classrooms. Maintenance protocols, particularly during the rainy season, must be enforced to ensure safety and hygiene.

7. Establish Comprehensive Safety Measures
Schools must implement robust safety protocols, especially in high-risk locations. This includes maintaining first-aid boxes, regularly checking for expired supplies, and engaging school management in identifying and mitigating environmental hazards around the school premises.

8. Ensure Adequate Learning and Play Materials
Efforts should focus on ensuring consistent availability of quality learning and play materials. Schools should organize materials in multiple sets, produce simplified versions, and budget according to student enrolment. Utilizing low-cost, locally available resources can offer sustainable solutions.

9. Introduce Flexible Scheduling
To accommodate climatic and geographic challenges, such as flooding, schools should adopt flexible scheduling, including double shifts or adjusted hours. Stakeholders must be engaged to increase acceptance and support for these adaptive measures

10. Address Teacher Shortages and Enhance Training
Immediate recruitment of additional PPE teachers and support staff (e.g., caregivers) is critical. Training programmes should be extended in both duration and content, incorporating modern pedagogical techniques. Refresher training through blended or online methods should be institutionalized. Involving parents and community volunteers in learning activities may help mitigate human resource constraints.

11. Expand Capacity Building Across All Levels
Structured professional development programmes should be introduced not only for teachers but also for supervisors, monitors, and education managers. These programmes should include refresher training, peer cross-visits, and mentorship to maintain consistent quality across all schools.

12. Raise Community Awareness and Engagement
To address misconceptions about PPE, targeted awareness campaigns and parental orientations should be launched. Community engagement activities and collaboration with local stakeholders can play a vital role in building broader support for PPE initiatives.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Pre-primary education (PPE) has the most significant impact on children's lifelong development and learning. Quality PPE equips children with essential school readiness skills significantly influencing their learning outcomes. PPE also fosters children's holistic growth in physical, intellectual, linguistic, and social development. Recognising its importance, the global frameworks like the Education for All Jomtien and Dakar declarations 5-9 March 1990, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 have emphasised the importance of PPE for young children.

Bangladesh has made remarkable strides in Early Childhood Education, particularly for 5-year-old children. Significant achievements include increased enrolment rates and the attainment of gender parity. A major milestone was the development of a PPE operational framework in 2008, following a comprehensive process to introduce PPE for children aged 3–5 years. Building on this framework, in 2011, PPE was introduced in primary schools nationwide for children aged 5 years and older through an interim package. In 2014, a formal curriculum was developed and introduced to streamline the teaching-learning of pre-primary classes all over the country. The National Education Policy 2010 laid out the provision for PPE for children 5 years and over with plans to expand gradually to include 4-year-olds, effectively establishing a two-year PPE system.

However, significant challenges persist in expanding early learning opportunities for children under 5. An estimated 11.3 million children aged 3–5-resides in Bangladesh[6] yet only 3.5 million children receive early learning opportunities[7] in all kinds of schools including Government Primary Schools, kindergartens, Madrasah, private schools, NGO schools etc. MICS data shows that, only 18.9 per cent of children between 3-5 years are attending Early Childhood Education (ECE) programmes in Bangladesh and 25.5 per cent are not developmentally on track[8]. World Bank also underscores the lack of opportunity of human capital development in Bangladesh resulting from deficiency in early learning that affects students' future academic potential and skills development which markedly affects their performance later in their job-life[9].

In this context, the Government approved the PPE summary report on 23 June 2020 to introduce the PPE for children aged 4 years and over. In line with the approval, the Government identified the following steps in the first stage of introducing the two-year PPE:

- Finalise the plan to introduce a two-year PPE in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.
- Conduct a study for introducing two-year pre-primary.
- Develop teaching-learning materials and curriculum for children 4 years and over through the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).
- Formulate an inter-ministerial committee for developing the early childhood development and care policy, planning, and implementation.
- Introducing two-year pre-primary in the 3214 primary schools in each cluster using the existing infrastructure and facilities.
- Recruit and train the required number of teachers.

[6] Estimated breakdown from National Census 2022

[7] Annual Primary School Census (APSC) 2023

[8] Ibid., p. 14

[9] World Bank. 2020. The Landscape of Early Childhood Education in Bangladesh, World Bank

- Ensure regular health check-ups for the children through community health clinics.

Following the recommended actions, DPE undertook several initiatives to introduce the two years of PPE in the Government Primary Schools. These initiatives undertaken include:

a) Planning for a pilot of PPE for children aged 4 and over from January 2023.
b) Developing the two-year PPE curriculum, including learning competencies for children aged 4 and over by NCTB. The new competencies were developed based on the existing curriculum of the children aged 5 years and over and considered the four domains of child development and eight areas of learning and Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS).
c) Piloting the two-year PPE, by developing an interim curriculum along with teaching learning materials and a teacher's guide for children 4 years and over were developed in June 2020. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) formed and approved a committee to spearhead the interim package development process, and the committee conducted a comparative analysis and synthesis of the existing teaching-learning materials from different organisations and organised six workshops with stakeholders. The interim package was approved in November 2020 by the MoPME.
d) Selecting 3,214 GPS for the pilot based on the following criteria:
    i. One school from each cluster (total clusters 2,601)
    ii. 1,000 schools from the 10 poorest districts: Kishoreganj, Kurram, Khagrachhari, Gaibandha, Chapai Nawabganj, Jamalpur, Dinajpur, Bandarban, Magura, and Rangpur.

    (Note: to avoid duplication, cluster-specific schools were not selected for the 10 poorest districts.)
e) Developing the comprehensive two-year pre-primary curriculum following the new curriculum framework. On 22 June 2022, the final curriculum for two-year PPE was approved by the MoPME. The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is now developing relevant teaching and learning materials supporting the new two-year pre-primary curriculum.

In this context, the Feasibility Study for Scaling Up the Two-Year Pre-primary Education (PPE) in Government Primary Schools was initiated to assess the system's readiness to introduce the two-year PPE model, understand community perception, and identify gaps and challenges associated with the scaling up across the country.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the feasibility study were to explore the following areas to inform the scaling up the two-year pilot programme across Government Primary Schools in the country:

- Assessment of the Government's existing facilities and resources (infrastructure, human resources, capacity building provisions, and teaching learning materials) already available for pre-primary education.
- Analysis of family/community perceptions for school-based education for children aged 4 years and over.
- Explore existing service provisions for children aged 4 years and over and 5 years and over offered by the Government and non-government (including private) service providers.
- Assessment of the challenges and risks of introducing two years of PPE in the existing situation and structure.

Specific research questions for the study were:

1. What are the existing facilities in PPE governance pertaining to infrastructure, teachers, and teacher training?
2. How can these existing facilities, i.e., infrastructure, trained teachers, play and other teaching learning materials be used for scaling up pre-primary for children aged 4 years and over?
3. What are the existing service provisions for children aged 4 years and over and 5 years and over in Government, non-government and private sectors on: infrastructure, teaching and learning materials, learning hours and time duration for classes, teacher training, and coverage by the proportion of children?
4. What minimum facilities are needed in the primary schools to introduce two-year pre-primary?
5. What are the challenges and risks of scaling up the two years of PPE in the existing Government's structures and facilities?

Methodology

Research design

This study is a sequentially explanatory mixed method study, where a pre-existing quantitative data set was used following key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions (FGD), and classroom observations to gather qualitative data from the field. Secondary data from different sources including Government organisations, NGOs and international organisations was also reviewed. These resources helped in the triangulation of data to ensure the quality and reliability of the results (Robson, 2011; Cohen, et al., 2011).

Population, sample, and sampling strategy

Different sampling techniques and data collection approaches were used to represent a holistic scenario of two years of PPE implementation in Bangladesh. The PPE expansion plan (2012) categorised Bangladesh's 546 upazilas (sub-districts) into seven categories. These were – i) rural low coverage, ii) rural others, iii) urban (city corporations), iv) island, coastal and riverine upazilas with chars, v) ethnic/indigenous children, vi) tea garden, and vii) haor. The pre-primary schools were sampled according to these seven categories. However, the selection criteria for piloting of children aged 4 years and over in the 3214 pilot GPS from January 2023 was completed based on the following criteria:

- One school from each cluster, from a total of 2601 clusters.
- 1000 schools from the 10 poorest districts: Kishoreganj, Kurigram, Khagrachhari, Gaibandha, Chapai Nawabganj, Jamalpur, Dinajpur, Bandarban, Magura, and Rangpur.

To avoid duplication, cluster-specific schools[10] were not selected for the 10 poorest districts.

While examining the feasibility of scaling up, this study covered all the considerations like the different geographic locations, types of GPS (grade a, b, and c), types of institutions (GPS, NNPS, private, ebtedayee, mosque/temple-based PPE interventions, project-based interventions, etc.), types of interventions (children aged 4 years old and over and children aged 5 years and over). To do this, the study provided the main indicator value in the following three main areas:

[10] A cluster comprises 20-30 schools and one AUEO oversees each cluster. Each cluster consists of 4-5 sub-clusters with 25-30 teachers in each sub-cluster.

Table 1: Sampling cluster

1. Intervention schools from vulnerable areas	2. Intervention schools from urban and sub-urban areas	3. Non-intervention schools from vulnerable, urban, and suburban areas
▪ **10 poorest districts** ▪ **Hill Tracts** ▪ **Island, coastal, and riverine Upazilas with chars** ▪ **Rural ethnic minority community** ▪ **Tea garden** ▪ **Chars** **Note: duplication was avoided among the poorest districts and the other vulnerable categories**	▪ Urban city ▪ Upazila town	▪ GPS and NNPS that implement 5+ curriculum only (grade b and grade c schools) ▪ Madrasahs (ebtedayee level) ▪ Private kindergartens ▪ Mosque and temple-based PPE ▪ NGO or project run schools

The study covered 10 districts and adopted a stratified cluster sampling design where the domains were considered, strata and districts were considered, clusters. In the first stage, 10 districts were selected from the three strata and institutions (one GPS from the intervention group, two from the non-intervention group, and one kindergarten/ madrasah/NGO-run school) from the selected clusters at the second stage. The tentative samples were:

Table 2: Sample of the study

Method	Sample size	Respondent
School observation	(10*4=40)	1 GPS from the intervention group, 2 GPS from the non-intervention group, and 1 kindergarten/ madrasah/NGO-run school from each of the 10 districts
Key informant interview (KII) of PPE teachers	(10*4=40)	PPE or class teacher from each sample school
Key informant interview (KII) of Head Teachers (HTs)	(10*4=40)	Head teachers from each sample school
Focus group discussion (FGD) of SMC	10	1 FGD from each district from SMC members. Diverse contexts were considered in the selection of SMC for FGD
Focus group discussion (FGD) from the community and parents/ caregivers.	10	1 FGD from each district from parents, caregivers, and community stakeholders. Diverse contexts were considered in the case of the selection of community members and parents/caregivers for FGD
Key informant interview with government officials	20	1 UEO/AUEO and 1 URC/PTI instructor from each district=
Key informant interview with PPE experts	3	1 specialist from NCTB, 1 specialist from DPE, 1 national-level PPE expert

Background information of the respondents

The study encompassed a range of school types, including Government Primary Schools (GPS), Non-Government Schools, kindergartens, ebtedayee madrasahs, and para kendras. Among these, GPS are the principal providers of pre-primary and primary education, funded and managed by the Government of Bangladesh under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME). Nationwide 65,452 GPS offer one year of pre-primary education (PPE) for children aged 5 years and over[11]. Additionally, 3,214 GPS piloted an additional year of the PPE programme for 4-year-old children since January 2023, enrolling 31,821 children across the country[12].

NGO-operated preschools in Bangladesh play a vital role in providing early childhood education to underserved populations, largely supported by developmental organizations. These programmes emphasise quality education, creativity, and essential social skills in young learners, striving to bridge educational gaps through community partnerships.

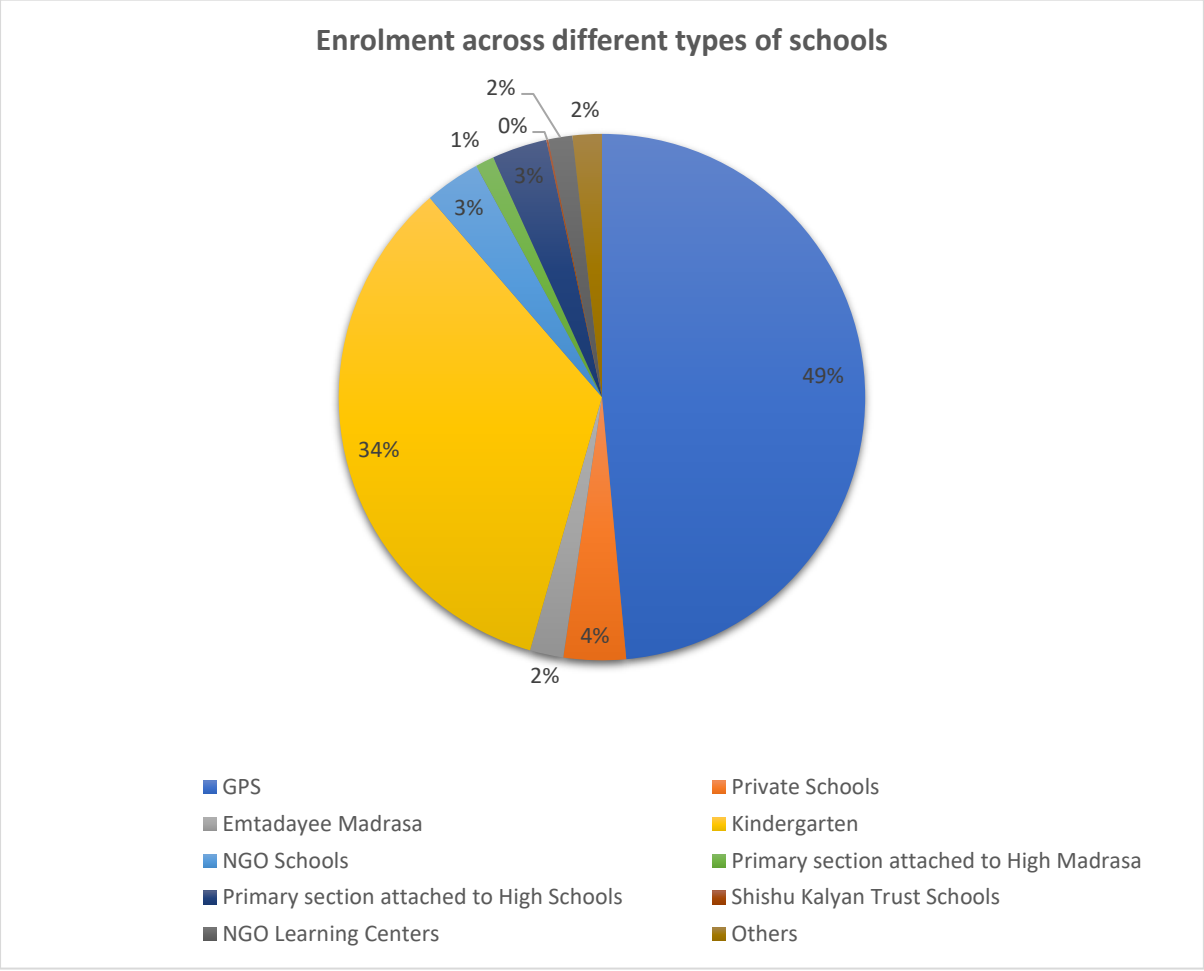


Figure 10: Status of Enrolment across different type of school, APSC 2023

[11] Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Directorate of Primary Education, Monitoring & Evaluation Division, Annual Primary School Census, APSC 2023.
[12] Ibid., APSC p. 26.

Privately-owned kindergartens are also a foundational element in early childhood education across Bangladesh. These institutions promote basic literacy, numeracy, and social skills, preparing children for academic success. According to APSC 2023, there are approximately 26,461 kindergartens, and they are the second largest provider of ECE opportunities in the country.

Ebtedayee madrasahs provide primary education with a focus on Islamic studies for children in grades one through five, including a pre-ebtedayee section to prepare students for their formal education. These madrasahs integrate religious studies, such as Arabic and Quranic instruction, with the standard primary curriculum.

Para kendras operate as part of the Sustainable Social Service in Chittagong Hill Tracts (SSS-CHT) project under the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB). Approximately 4,800 para centres across three districts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts provide a two-year preschool programme, as well as parenting and community development services, including health, nutrition, and educational resources (CHTDB, 2024).

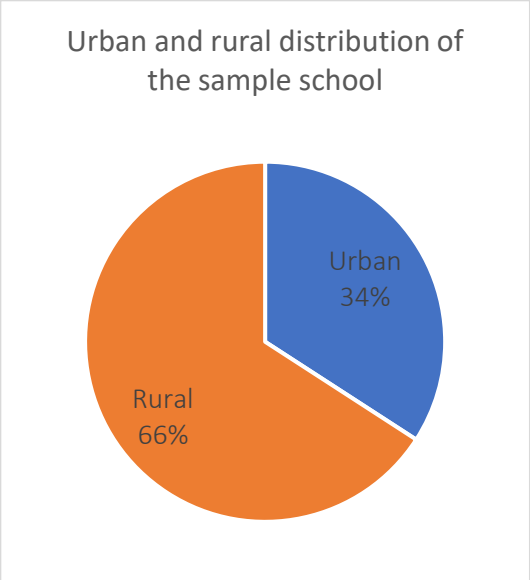
The study included 41 schools from these diverse categories across 10 districts. This sample comprised 32 GPS, three NGO-run schools, three kindergartens, two ebtedayee madrasahs, and one para kendra, with 27 schools in rural and 14 in urban settings (refer to Table 24). Of these, 10 GPS offering the two-year PPE pilot programme are designated as "piloting schools," while the others, without the two-year PPE, are labelled as "non-piloting schools" in this report. For a detailed breakdown of school types by district, see Table 3 below:

Table 3: Types of schools covered in the study by districts

Districts	Type of school					Total
	GPS	NGO	Kindergarten	Ebtedayee	Other (para kendra)	
Dhaka	3	1	1	0	0	5
Chapainawabganj	3	1	0	0	0	4
Kishoreganj	3	0	0	1	0	4
Netrakona	3	1	0	1	0	5
Chittagong	3	0	0	0	0	3
Bandarban	3	0	0	0	1	4
Moulvibazar	4	0	0	0	0	4
Kurram	3	0	1	0	0	4
Satkhira	4	0	0	0	0	4
Patuakhali	3	0	1	0	0	4
Total	**32**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**41**

The sample also included geographic diversity, with five schools from Chittagong Hill Tract areas, four from coastal regions, three from river islands, two from char areas, and four from haor areas (see Table 24). Among the two-year interventions, 10 schools were piloting two-year PPE for children aged 4 years and over, and 31 were non-piloting schools, which offered PPE to children aged 5 years and over. All piloting schools were GPS, as the two-year PPE is exclusively piloted within GPS, while other types of schools were non-piloting.

Figure 11: Rural-Urban distribution of schools



In terms of pre-primary enrolment age, 16 schools enrolled children in PPE starting at four years, while 25 children began enrolment at five years (**See** Table 4). Of the schools enrolling children aged 4 years and over, 10 were piloting schools, and six were non-piloting. Among non-government schools, 66 per cent of NGO-operated schools (2 out of 3) provided PPE for children aged 4 years and older, as did all kindergarten schools (3 out of 3). Additionally, para kendras offered two-year PPE for children aged 4 years and older. However, no ebtedayee madrasah was found to offer PPE for children under five years (***see:*** Table 25 in Appendix 2).

Table 4: PPE enrolment age by piloting status

Pre-primary enrolment age	Piloting status		Total
	Non-piloting	Piloting	
4+	6	10	16
5+	25	0	25
Total	**31**	**10**	**41**

Data collection strategy and tools

Non-probability sampling techniques were employed for the collection of qualitative data only from the cluster-wise locations. Key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions were used for the qualitative data. The interviews were conducted and recorded for further analysis. The secondary data sources were related to project documents, policy documents, and relevant study reports.

All data collection tools were designed through a peer review process: tools were developed collaboratively between UNICEF and the consultant and finalised in consultation with all relevant stakeholders from the Directorate of Primary Education and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board. A team of enumerators (10 persons) were employed to assist with primary data collection and transcription of the field data. Triangulation of data for this study was done to reduce biases and to increase the reliability and validity of the study.

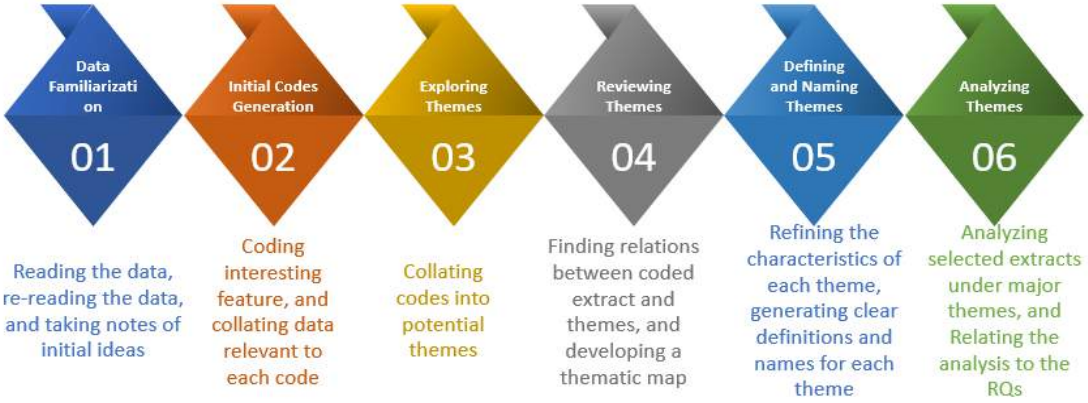
Data analysis

The research methodology employed a primarily qualitative approach, complemented by quantitative analysis based on data from secondary sources and statistical evaluation to validate the data and validate the hypotheses. Braun and Clarke (2006) underline the advantages of data-driven thematic analyses in qualitative research, and this study adopted this approach, and examined qualitative data collected from various stakeholders, including PPE teachers, head teachers, community members, parents/caregivers, education officers, and experts. This thematic approach involved repeated reading of the data to identify terms, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs that could

be coded to generate themes or concepts summarising similar content within the data (Thomas, 2009; Braun and Clarke, 2006).

This method enabled the organisation of raw data into conceptual categories, the construction of candidate themes or concepts, and the creation of a thematic chart (Neuman, 2006; Cohen, Mannion, and Morrison, 2011; Braun and Clarke, 2006). The main themes derived from respondents' answers to the research questions were further refined into specific sub-themes, where data triangulation helped integrate insights from multiple approaches. Ideas emerging from interviews and focus group discussions were explored under relevant themes, providing a coherent understanding of participants' perspectives. This thematic approach emphasizes identifying recurring themes and trends that reflect shared views among respondents (Aronson, 1994). Consequently, Braun and Clarke's (2006, p. 87) data-driven thematic analysis method was applied to conduct the qualitative analysis (see Figure 3). The data was analysed systematically, with quantitative findings enriching the qualitative insights to clarify underlying reasons for the quantitative results, leading to robust study conclusions.

Figure 12: Data-driven thematic analysis cycle (adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006)



Ethical consideration and child safeguarding policy

Ethical approval of the research methodology was obtained from the Institutional Animal, Medical Ethics, Biosafety and Biosecurity Committee (IAMEBBC) of the Institute of Biological Sciences, University of Rajshahi before the data collection.

The research team strictly adhered to the ethical guidelines on the protection of, and respect for, human and child rights within all research, evaluation and data collection processes undertaken or commissioned by UNICEF[13]. There were no elements in the study that posed any legal or medical risks to participants. Participation was entirely voluntary, with no coercion involved in gathering information. The study's objectives were clearly communicated to all respondents before data collection, and evaluators refrained from gathering data from individuals who declined or expressed any disinterest in participating.

Verbal or written consent was obtained from all respondents before conducting any data collection or interactions contributing to the study's deliverables. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, with no respondent names disclosed in the report. The objectivity of the data and analysis was ensured, and any secondary data used was referenced appropriately to uphold ethical standards. A child safeguarding policy was also applied at every stage of the research, and team members fully complied with standard child protection policies.

[13] UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis (2021)

Benchmarks of the study

The DPE Pre-Primary Education Expansion Plan (DPE, 2012) established a set of PPE service delivery standards to ensure quality services adequately meet the holistic early learning needs of 5 to 6-year-old children. The plan identified the following eight key areas to promote the quality implementation of the national PPE programme including: (1) physical environment (2) learning environment (3) staffing (4) monitoring and supervision (5) parent and community involvement (6) training and professional development (7) management, and (8) administrative.

Each key area consists of several elements based on identified parameters for standards which have been set with gradation as shown in the matrix "Areas and elements with gradation of PPE service delivery standards" (See: Appendix 4). The standards were graded into three levels: Level 1 minimum/basic; Level 2 desired/medium; and Level 3 preferred/exemplary. In the context of 2012, it was expected that the PPE would achieve the minimum level at the beginning of the programme and gradually achieve the exemplary level within 4-5 years as the level 3 targets were realistically set, based on the context and status of PPE in 2012. After more than a decade of implementation of the plan, and when one year of PPE has been scaled up across all the GPS in the country, level 3 is the minimum standard/benchmark for the feasibility study of the two years PPE scale-up.

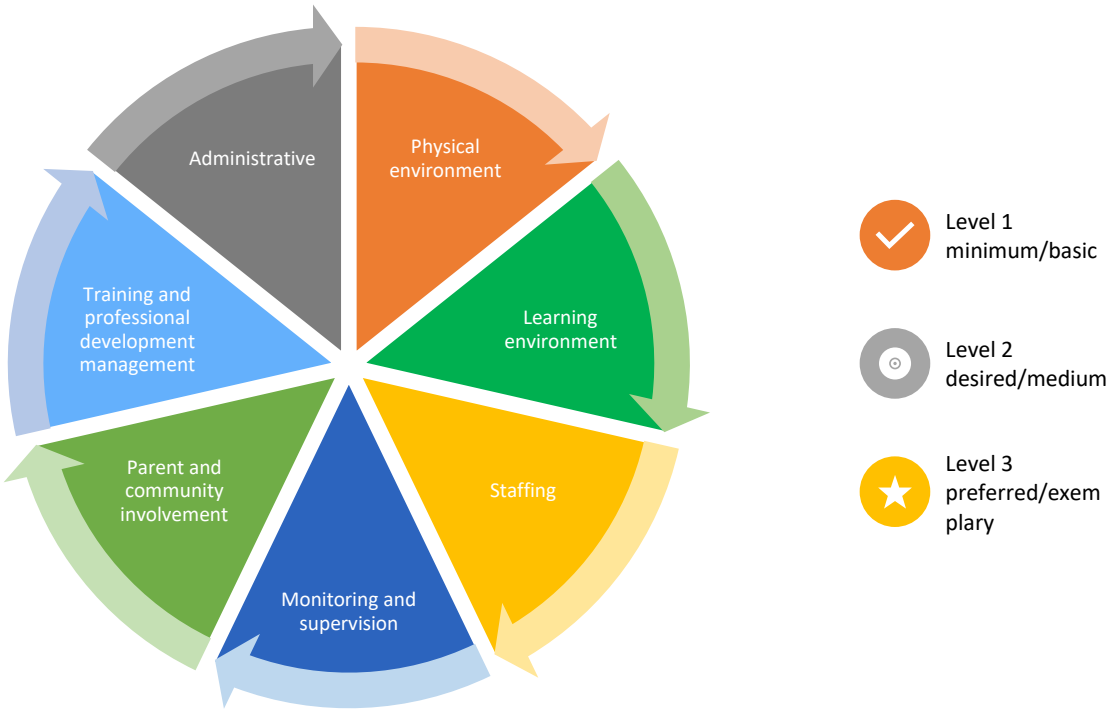


Figure 13: The eight key areas to support quality implementation of PPE

Table 5: Benchmark of the study for PPE service delivery standard

Areas of standards	Level 3 standards
Physical environment	
School location	▪ The school is within 1 km of reach. ▪ The school is at least 200 ft away from sites that could be dangerous for children (ponds, hazardous slopes, rivers, highways, tannery, chemical factories, noisy places, bus stands, electric transformers etc.)
School premises	▪ There is a protective fence/wall around the premises. ▪ The premises are clean, flat and not waterlogged. ▪ The school has space for outdoor play (at least 35 sq. ft per child). ▪ The school has outdoor play equipment on the premises like swings, seesaws, climbing frames, slides etc. ▪ School premises have shady trees and a garden. ▪ School is accessible by children with disabilities (flat approach road, ramp, wide door etc.).
Classroom environment	▪ 17 square ft space per child (30 children per class) is available in the classroom. ▪ The classroom floor is flat, dry, clean and covered by a mat. ▪ The classroom has adequate light, fresh air ventilation and protection for children during heavy wind and rain. ▪ The doors and windows are covering at least 1/7th of the total wall area. ▪ The classroom has adequate wall space for displaying children's work.
Furniture and supplies	▪ Colourful floor mat available. ▪ Wall mounted chalk board accessible to children for free work. ▪ Chair/tool/mora for teacher. ▪ Display board for children's work. ▪ Racks and cupboards to store materials at eye level of children within their reach. ▪ Waste bin basket and broom. ▪ Special sitting arrangement for children with disabilities.
Water and sanitation facilities	▪ School has safe drinking water source. ▪ Classroom has adequate safe drinking water with necessary devices (jug, glass, filter etc.). ▪ Toilet facilities that suit pre-school age children with running water. ▪ Soap to wash hands in toilets. ▪ Hand washing facilities in a common space with soap and water. ▪ Toilet cleaner, detergent and brush.

Safety and security	▪ The classroom is free of health and safety hazards (e.g. Broken toys, unmasked spills, unsanitary toilet facilities, uncovered electrical outlets etc.). ▪ First aid kit box is available and easily accessible in the classroom. ▪ Clear evacuation plans are visibly displayed. ▪ Children's route to school is safe and secured (speed breaker, adult's support during road crossing etc.).
Learning environment	
Classroom arrangement	▪ Classrooms are colourfully decorated with painting and materials to make them visually and intellectually attractive. considering children's interest, local culture and heritage. ▪ Children's work/products are displayed in the classroom. ▪ Items displayed in the walls are at children's eye level. ▪ There are at least four clearly marked and organised activity areas/corners for distinct kinds of play e.g. Book and art, block, imagination and sand & water. ▪ Sitting arrangements is gender friendly and inclusive (mixed sitting, need based sitting etc.).
Teaching learning materials	▪ All core[14] and adequate supplementary[15] materials as per national curriculum are available in the classroom. ▪ Materials are child friendly, non-toxic, safe (no sharp edge), colourful, with hard and soft texture and light. ▪ A mix of locally made and procured materials. ▪ Children have easy access to all those materials. ▪ Materials are displayed at appropriate places and not locked in the racks. ▪ Materials are stored properly and well maintained/preserved. ▪ Adequate number of playing materials for children.
Teacher-student ratio	▪ 1:25 (maximum).
Duration and daily routine	▪ 2.30 hours (minimum). ▪ Class followed a daily routine as per curriculum. ▪ Daily routine is consistent yet flexible around children's interest and responsive to learning needs of individual children. ▪ Transition time from one activity to another is smooth. ▪ Responsive to learning needs of all children including those with disabilities.

[14] Curriculum, Teacher's guide, Children workbook, Exercise khata, Bangla alphabet chart, Flip chart (health &environment +++), Flash cards (number, alphabet, objects), Story books (10), Blocks and Play materials set (as per list in TG), Student attendance register as per format given in Teacher's Guide.

[15] Additional pictorial story books, additional blocks and play materials, story cards, more variety of flash cards, number chart, puzzle, board game (ludo++), pictorial books on early literacy & numeracy, big book (story, promote concepts of literacy/numeracy/science etc.), audio visual materials, toolbox containing hammer, screw etc.

	▪ Daily routine is displayed in the classroom in a child friendly way (pictures, posters, symbol)
Teaching learning process / pedagogical standards	
Communication with children	▪ Teacher communicating with children clearly maintaining eye level contact, using soft voice, slow pace and pleasant gesture in an understandable way showing respect to them.
Greetings and encouragement	▪ Greeting is a regular practice maintaining norms. ▪ Teachers are frequently encouraging, appreciating and praising children during interaction/involvement for a specific task, behaviour or achievement.
Relationship with teacher	▪ Children are frequently sharing their problems, challenges and personal feelings, learning and other needs with the teacher.
Types of activities	▪ Individual, pair, small group and large group activities are properly blended in a balanced way as per curriculum and annual work plan with clear understanding and involvement of the teacher.
Types of play	▪ Different types of play such as physical including gross and fine motor, cognitive, imaginative, creative and free play are blended in daily routine in a balanced way as per curriculum and annual work plan. ▪ Teachers are facilitating play with clear understanding and involving all children in a balanced way.
Using nature and outdoor areas or premises	▪ Teachers are frequently taking advantages of nature and using outdoor premises around the classroom aligning with curriculum and work plan.
Maximizing use of teaching learning materials/aids	▪ Children and teachers are frequently using materials and aids available in the classroom and around the classroom as and when necessary, aligning with curriculum and work plan.
Individualized teaching and support	▪ Children who need special attention and support are frequently receiving this from teachers on a regular basis.
Interaction with others	▪ Children have opportunities to interact with other teachers and children of school and community members in a structured way as part of teaching learning process.
Interaction among children	▪ Children have enough opportunity to interact among themselves, and this type of interaction is highly encouraged and appreciated by teachers.
Use of local materials	▪ Adequate number and types of local materials available in the classroom. ▪ Teachers are frequently using local materials during teaching learning process in accordance with curriculum and teacher's guide.
Physical exercise and rest and smooth transition from one physical exercise to another	▪ Children are spontaneously and equally engaging themselves in physical exercise and have warm up and rest facilities available after and before activities. ▪ Children know what activity is coming next.
Leadership development and teamwork	▪ All children are given equal opportunities to nurture their leadership skill as well as sense of responsibility for teamwork.

	▪ Teacher with clear understanding facilitating the process of leadership development and teamwork.
Flexibility in the teaching learning process`	▪ Teachers are flexible enough to accommodate children's interest but also have skills to link those to planned activities. ▪ Teachers demonstrate flexibility and understanding in their support for children with disabilities as per their needs.
Addressing diversity/ inclusiveness	▪ Teachers are frequently using multiple methods of teaching-learning process including materials and aids with appropriate tone and pace considering the diverse needs of children inside the classroom. ▪ Teachers are adequately using mother tongue or local dialect (colloquial Bangla/mother tongue) as a medium of instruction consciously with a gradual plan to introduce new words and sentences. ▪ Teachers and children are always respecting and fairly treating all irrespective of ability, gender, religion, cultural entities and practices by giving equal importance.
Children's participation	▪ Children are engaging themselves in activities and talking (asking questions, clarification, discussing issues etc.) for more than 70 per cent of the total classroom time.
Positive disciplining	▪ Children are spontaneously participating in different activities with joy and without fear and teachers are managing children positively with a clear understanding and positive disciplining.
Children assessment	▪ Children are assessed comprehensively on different domains through a continuous process by maintaining detail individual portfolio. ▪ Teachers are assessing children by recording continuous progress individually.
Staffing	
Teacher	▪ One teacher per class ▪ Graduate with Diploma in Education (for government school as per new recruitment rule).
Assistant	▪ One volunteer or community teacher or para teacher/assistant to support the main teacher in the teaching learning process and classroom management. ▪ Minimum SSC pass. ▪ Same as Level 1 for school where more than one linguistic community children are enrolled.
Supervisor	▪ Each school receiving four working hours supervisory support each month. ▪ Supervising at least one full class (2.30 hours) and providing on spot academic and other types of technical support to teacher. ▪ A master's preferably in education with relevant training and experience. ▪ For government schools, supervision will be conducted through the existing supervisory system. Trained head teacher will act as main supervisor.
Monitor	▪ Each school receiving three working hours monitoring support every two months. ▪ Master's degree preferably in education/with relevant training. ▪ For government schools, monitoring will be done by Assistant Upazilla Education Officers (AUEOs) using the existing monitoring system. The number of AUEOs could be increased to reduce workload.

	▪ ICT based monitoring system in place.
Manager	▪ 1 manager for a maximum of 200 schools (for government schools, the UEO will act as the manager).
Monitoring and supervision	
Frequency	▪ Each school is receiving at least one structured supervisory visit per month by an assigned and trained supervisor. ▪ Each school is receiving at least one structured monitoring visit once every two months by a dedicated monitor.
Process	▪ Structured supervision and monitoring by dedicated staffs. ▪ Guideline and tools for supervision and monitoring are available. ▪ 80 per cent of total supervision is on pedagogical (quality/learning) issues. ▪ Comprehensive quality monitoring. ▪ On spot academic and other technical support to teacher by supervisor. ▪ Maintaining detailed records of supervision and monitoring. ▪ Structured follow up mechanism is in place and functional to see the expected change.
Tool	▪ Tools and guideline for in-depth supervision. ▪ Checklist and format for monitoring covering details of all areas of quality with necessary guideline. ▪ Tool capturing all qualitative issues through observation and reflection of children, teachers and parents. ▪ Tool provoking for observation, discussion, and reflection in a balanced way.
Reporting	▪ Two-way reporting; report to teacher and report to manager. ▪ Specific format for reporting. ▪ Record keeping at classroom for follow up. ▪ Report to manager with action points and linking with follow up mechanism.
Follow up action	▪ Mechanism for quarterly follow up.
Parents and community involvement	
Parent's meeting	▪ Monthly parents meeting. ▪ Duration: 2 hours. ▪ At least 90 per cent parents are present. ▪ 25 per cent of them are father/male guardian. ▪ Reflective meeting with necessary guideline. ▪ Follow up issues discussed.
Role of parent teacher association (PTA)	▪ Parent –teacher association active. ▪ At least 4 meetings of PTA per year. ▪ At least two organised visits by PTA/yr.

	▪ Actions taken by PTA (volunteer teacher managing/recruiting, support from parents, collecting/arranging local play materials, transportation for children etc.).
Role of education standing committee (ESC) of union parishad	▪ Functional relation linkage with SMC on pre-primary. ▪ At least two visits per year and one action by ESC.
Training and professional development	
Training of teacher	▪ At least 12 days basic training in first year and 6 days from 2nd year. ▪ At least two times refreshers training in a year with minimum 3 days duration. ▪ Minimum two guided cross visit with nearest schools in a year. ▪ Diploma in education started.
Training of assistant	▪ At least three days orientation on pre-primary for community/para/ volunteer teachers or adolescent in a year.
Training of supervisor	▪ Minimum 4 days training on pre-primary supervision in a year. ▪ 2 days refreshers training in a year. ▪ Quarterly reflection and academic support by trainers.
Training of monitor	▪ Minimum 5 days training on pre-primary monitoring in a year. ▪ 2 days refreshers training in a year. ▪ Quarterly reflection and professional support from trainers.
Training of manager	▪ Minimum 3 days orientation on pre-primary management in a year. ▪ Half yearly reflection and management support at district level.
Management	▪ NA
Material distribution	▪ All core and supplementary materials are in school by 31 December.
Replenishment of materials (teaching learning materials and stationeries)	▪ All replenish able materials (attendance register, chalk, duster, toys, play materials etc.) reach at school by 31 December.
Teacher deployment	▪ All school have trained and dedicated teacher. ▪ Teacher deployment and transfer policy developed and maintained.
Management at district, division and central level	▪ Progress reviewed in district, divisional and central coordination meeting as regular basis with action points and follow up. ▪ Structured format for progress review with necessary content. ▪ Addressing issues from monitoring findings.

	▪ At least 2 monthly visits from district management, 1 monthly visit from divisional management and 1 quarterly visit from central management.
Professional development	▪ Long term professional development plan for all level staffs developed and execution started.
Local level management	▪ Progress review through a format is a regular agenda for SMC meeting. ▪ Monthly visit by SMC from management perspective. ▪ Regular progress review using a format at upazila education coordination committee. ▪ At least two visits from upazila management. ▪ Progress review at sub-cluster level.
Curriculum review	▪ Curriculum, teaching learning materials and children assessment process reviewed based on findings from research, monitoring and supervision by NCTB.
Administrative	▪ NA
Attendance register	▪ Attendance register is available and updated.
Children assessment register	▪ Independent children's assessment register including portfolio available with continuous assessment tools and record for each child.
Parent's meeting register	▪ Independent parent's meeting registers available with updated information.
Annual plan and class routine	▪ Annual work plan and class routine is available in a visible place.
Children's health record	▪ Children's health care available and maintained with updated information.
Stock register	▪ Stock register available with updated information.
Emergency contact register	▪ Emergency contact for each child available in separate register.
Disaster preparedness	▪ Contingency plan with necessary logistics available for disaster preparedness.
Administrative focal person	▪ Dedicated administrative focal person at district and upazila level with specific responsibilities.
Central administration	▪ Separate cell/unit for pre-primary with dedicated human resources and logistics. ▪ Timely disbursement of budget and resources. ▪ Quarterly progress review based on monitoring and supervision findings and action taken accordingly. ▪ Administrative data collection and update regularly through EMIS. ▪ 1 detail progress report in a year with qualitative information.
Data base	▪ Web based PPE data base developed with quantitative and qualitative information and updated regularly by all upazilas.

The standard is used as a benchmark/minimum service delivery standard of PPE and an analysis of this feasibility study is presented in comparison with the above benchmark.

Chapter Two

Findings

This section provides an in-depth analysis of key factors essential for effectively implementing and scaling up the two-year PPE programme. While the national data provides the overall picture on PPE enrolment, the status of classrooms and teachers, the school level investigation during the field work brought insights with various dimensions crucial for understanding the overall situation of the existing facilities, the communities' perceptions, the challenges, opportunities, and inclusiveness of the delivery of PPE in GPS. The analysis of the data from the 41-sample school was guided by the PPE service delivery standards developed in 2013.

Enrolment within the catchment area

The number of children aged 4 years and over and children aged 5 years and over in the catchment areas of piloting and GPS schools was concerning with regards to the future expansion of PPE throughout the country (***see:*** Table 9). Field data revealed that in the selected piloting school's catchment area, the total number of children aged 4 years and over is 952 with an average of 95 children in each catchment area, where only 158 are enrolled in PPE with an average of 16 children per school. For children aged 5 years and over in the same catchment area, the total number of children is 1052 with an average of 105 children per catchment area where only 290 enrolled in PPE with an average of 30 children per school. The percentages of enrolment were 16.6 per cent for children aged 4 years and over and 27.6 per cent for children aged 5 years and over against the number of children living in the catchment area of the sample schools for the study. According to the administrative direction of DPE, schools should keep a record of children attending any other PPE classes other than the GPS during the child survey, however no such record was found during the data collection.

In Government Primary School catchment areas, the total number of children aged 5 years and over was 2,207 with an average of 69 children per catchment area, where only 921 enrolled in PPE with an average of 29 children per school. The mean percentages suggest that, on average, 41.7 per cent of the children aged 5 years and over were enrolled in PPE. In the case of children aged 4 years and over, 2,052 children were found in 32 schools with an average of 64 children in each catchment area. Data regarding enrolment of children aged 4 years and over was not applicable here as all GPS did not pilot PPE for the specific age group.

However, the average number of children aged 4 years and over and the average enrolment was significantly lower— only 16.6 per cent of children living in the catchment area. In the case of children aged 5 years and over, the percentage of enrolment was 27.7 per cent in piloting schools and 41.7 per cent in GPS of the total children of that age group in the catchment area.

Table 6: Children in piloting school and GPS

School type	Measure	Total 4+aged children	Total 4+ aged children enrolled	Percentage of children of the age enrolled in PPE	Total 5+ aged children	Total 5+ aged children enrolled	Percentage of children of the 5+ aged enrolled in PPE
Piloting (n=10)	Total	952	158	16.6	1052	290	27.6
	Mean	95	16		105	30	
GPS (n=32)	Total	2052	Na*	Na	2207	921	41.7
	Mean	64	Na		69	29	

Note: 4+ aged children are not enrolled in all the GPS.

Physical environment

This section explores the status of existing facilities and materials available in GPS for implementing and scaling up the two-year pre-primary education (PPE). It highlights infrastructure availability, and use of teaching-learning materials, underpinning the gaps compared with the suggested benchmark.

School location

According to the benchmark of PPE expansion plan, the school should be located within 1 km of the children. This was found to be the reality of most children in the schools visited, more specifically 100 per cent of the piloting schools and 96 per cent in GPS (***See:*** table 7). The study found that 80 per cent of the piloting schools and 84 per cent of the GPS met the benchmark of being at least 200 ft away from sites that could be dangerous for children. The findings also show that around 70 per cent of schools had protective fences or walls around the premises in both piloting schools and GPS.

School premises

School premises were reported to be clean, flat and with a proper drainage system in 90 per cent of cases of piloting schools and 81 per cent of GPS. The study found that 100 per cent of the pilot schools have outdoor play space while in GPS it was 92 per cent. However, outdoor play equipment was available in 60 per cent of piloting schools and 42 per cent of GPS. In the case of shade trees and gardens in the school premises, 60 per cent of piloting schools and 56 per cent of the GPS meet the benchmark.

Table 7: Status of facilities regarding school location and premises

Sub-area	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
School location	The school is within 1 km of reach	100.0	96.3
	The school is at least 200 ft away from sites that could be dangerous for children (ponds, hazardous slopes, rivers, highways, tannery, chemical factories, noisy places, bus stands, electric transformers etc.)	80.0	84.4
School premises	There is a protective fence/wall around the premises	70.0	68.8
	Premises are clean, flat, and not waterlogged.	90.0	81.3
	The school has space for outdoor play (at least 35 square feet per child).	100.0	92.2

Sub-area	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
	The school has outdoor play equipment on the premises such as swings, seesaws, climbing frames, slides.	60.0	42.6
	School premises have shady trees and a garden	60.0	56.3

Designated PPE classrooms

The Government has made satisfactory progress in terms of infrastructure to implement one-year pre-primary education across the country. Most GPSs have dedicated classrooms as part of the PPE programme. The findings based on observations revealed that 90 per cent of piloting classrooms and 96.9 per cent of GPS classrooms have separate or designated rooms for PPE (***See:*** Table 8). Moreover, 30 per cent of piloting schools and 9.4 per cent of GPS specifically allocate separate spaces for children aged 4 years and over, emphasizing a potential variation in age group considerations between the two types of schools.

Table 8: Status of PPE classroom in piloting school and GPS

Status of PPE classroom (based on observation)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Separate/designated rooms for pre-primary education	90.0	96.9
Separate/designated rooms for pre-primary education of children aged 4+	30.0	9.4

In the case of geographical location-based analysis of PPE classrooms, urban areas exhibit a 100 per cent prevalence of separate or designated rooms for PPE, while the percentage decreases in rural areas (92.6 per cent) and Hill Tracts (60 per cent). However, in coastal areas, river islands, chars, and haors, a separate classroom was found in all cases (see Table 24 in Appendix 2). This discrepancy indicates potential disparities in the availability of dedicated spaces for PPE across diverse geographical regions. Regarding separate or designated rooms for children aged 4 years and over, urban areas exhibit a higher prevalence (28.6 per cent) compared to rural areas (7.4 per cent). Notably, hill tracts and coastal areas have no observed instances, suggesting potential variations in age-specific considerations in different regions.

However, most teachers and upazila education officers expressed concerns about the shortage of adequate classroom space for implementing the two-year PPE programme. They stated that many schools lack enough classrooms for One -year PPE. In this case, providing the necessary facilities for two-year PPE in these schools will be almost impossible and this was also evident in the observation data shown below in Table 8. Among the visited GPS, only two schools had an extra classroom for children 4 years and over. The following statement reflects the shortage of spaces:

> *"All our schools do not have enough infrastructure to implement two years of pre-primary education. Out of my total 20 schools, 16 schools have infrastructural problems. If all the children of our catchment area are included in the school, we cannot provide adequate facilities to them."* - Anonymous AUEO.

The field observations show similar findings, revealing that only 10 per cent of piloting schools have room for expansion, while 34.4 per cent of GPS classrooms provide such flexibility (***see:*** Table 9). Table 33 (in the Appendix 2) shows that the scope for expansion was found in 35.7 per cent of

schools in urban areas, 37 per cent in rural areas, 50 per cent in chars, and there was no scope for expansion in Hill Tracts areas, coastal areas, river islands and haors. This suggests a need for purposeful planning to ensure the future scalability of PPE infrastructure, particularly in areas lacking expansion opportunities.

Similarly, the findings in this study revealed that most GPS have a minimum of one pre-primary classroom. There is a shortage of adequate classrooms in most GPS as the existing school structures do not have accommodation for extra classrooms. Moreover, the number of children in most catchment areas is more than the number enrolled in the school.

Classroom size

According to teachers, while most GPS have one pre-primary classroom for children aged 5 and over, the physical condition of some classrooms is unsatisfactory. Some classrooms are too small, with insufficient movement space for enrolled children. Among the 32 GPSs visited, 9 schools (28.1%) had classrooms smaller than 250 square feet– the minimum area for a PPE classroom. In relation to enrolment numbers, 12 out of 32 schools (37.5 per cent) had classrooms considered insufficient in size. Many PPE classrooms lacked adequate spaces for shelves, storage boxes/trunks, learning materials for the four learning corners, and space for conducting teaching activities effectively. In some cases, the most congested classrooms were dedicated PPE classes restricting children's ability to move smoothly (see the image on the left side in Figure 5).

Figure 14: Photos of two different PPE classrooms: one is congested and the other has sufficient space

According to one head teacher interviewed in the study, the lack of adequate spaces for placing relevant play materials in the classroom is presenting serious bottlenecks, for conducting effective play-based PPE classes.

> *"My school continues as one shift, and it has six classrooms. I am conducting pre-primary activities in a dilapidated room. Our biggest challenge is the lack of classrooms. I don't have the space for the four corners required for pre-primary children."* – a head teacher from Chittagong.

The Directorate of Primary Education specifications for an adequately sized classroom is 250 square feet. The study found that 90 per cent of the piloting schools and 71.9 per cent of the GPS meet this standard. Interestingly, all piloting schools have sufficient room size for the total admitted children, whereas only 62.5 per cent of GPS classrooms meet this criterion (***see:*** Table 9). The findings related to the adequacy of the classroom sizes also vary across locations (***see:*** Table 27 in Appendix 2). Urban areas have a 50 per cent compliance, while rural areas (77.8 per cent), Hill Tracts (80 per cent),

coastal areas (75 per cent), river islands (67 per cent), chars (50 per cent), and haors (75 per cent) show differing levels of conformity. However, if we consider the benchmark of 17 square feet of space per child, then 510 square feet of space is needed for 30 children in PPE classrooms which is missing in all the PPE classrooms. This finding underscores the importance of uniform spatial standards for accommodating the total student population.

Table 9: Status of PPE classroom in piloting school and GPS

Status of PPE classroom (based on observation)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Have room to expand PPE classrooms	10.0	34.4
250 square feet in size of the assigned room	90.0	71.9
Room size sufficient for the total admitted children	100.0	62.5

Availability of physical facilities

Findings on the suitability of PPE physical facilities indicate that most schools – both piloting and GPS_ across various geographical locations have a basic level of appropriate physical facilities. Data shows that both types of schools score high percentages in child-friendly materials (100 per cent), sufficient light and air in the classrooms (90 per cent) along with smooth floors (90 per cent), seating arrangements (90 per cent), and black/whiteboard (90 per cent) (See Table 29. However, piloting schools consistently exhibit higher percentages in these categories compared to non-piloting GPS. Seating arrangements of the PPE classrooms were also found to be unsuitable for children in around a third of the visited GPS due to damage to the classrooms. The mats/desks and placed as u-shape seating arrangements were also lacking, and the placement of black/white boards was not within the reach of the children in 25 per cent of schools as well.

When looking at the appropriateness of physical facilities by location, the data shows that urban areas tend to have lower percentages in categories like suitable classroom seating, suitable materials for children to sit on, and chalkboard/whiteboard accessibility (***See:*** Table 29 in Appendix 2). In contrast, rural areas consistently demonstrate higher percentages across various aspects of physical facilities. Notably, rural areas report superior conditions in categories such as child-friendly materials (93%), classroom lighting and ventilation (93%), classroom seating arrangements (70.4%), and chalkboard/whiteboard accessibility (77.8%) (see Table 29 in Appendix 2). . In the case of geographical location, schools in coastal areas and river islands showed better status while char and haor showed worse status around the appropriateness of physical facilities in most categories.

It is noted that in most schools, the pre-primary classrooms have shelves to store various materials, however, the coverage is not across all schools as there is still a shortage of shelves in the pre-primary classrooms in the GPS schools. Schools use a box/steel trunk for keeping the play materials where there is a lack of shelves and sufficient spaces in t the classrooms.

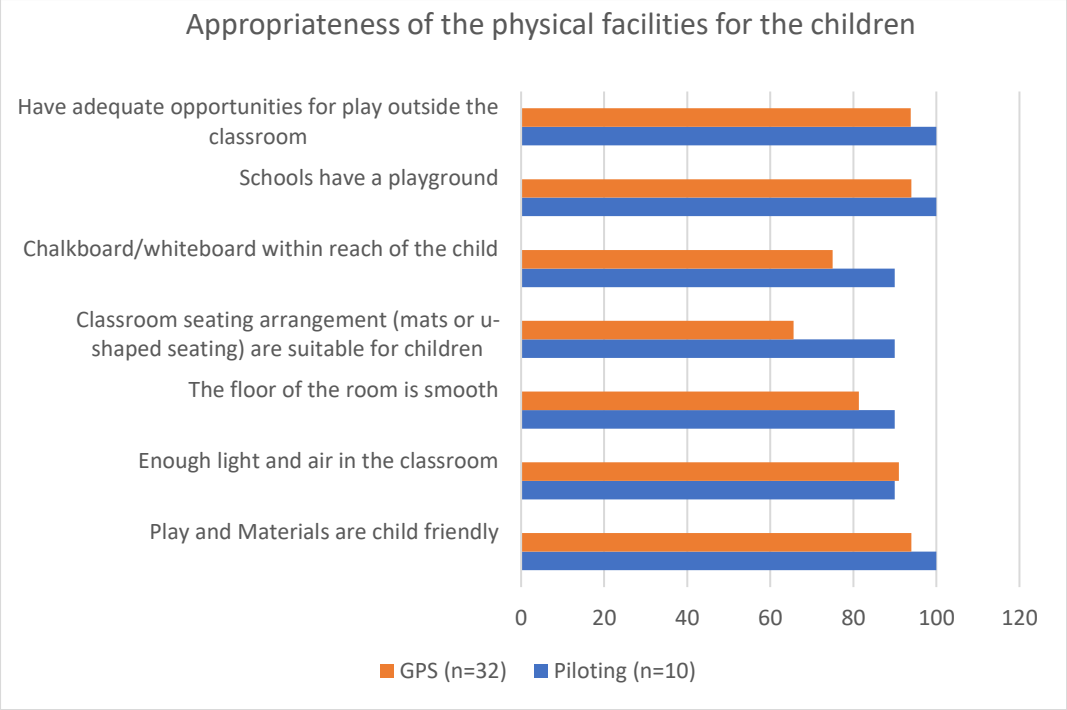


Figure 6: Appropriateness of the physical facilities GPS

WASH Facilities

The APSC 2023 reports that around 46.3 per cent of the GPS have WASH blocks, however they are not suitable for children in the pre-primary age group with regards to their height and vulnerability. It was found that almost everywhere water taps and basins were out of their reach, WASH blocks are located far from the classroom, making it difficult for young children, children with disabilities, and those with special needs to reach when needed. Sometimes, a thick wall in the handwash block/basin poses a challenge for young children/children with disabilities to reach (***see:*** figure 7) which represents an inaccessible design of the hand-washing facilities. It is also challenging for children to use the WASH block and toilet facilities in the rainy season. According to one pre-primary teacher,

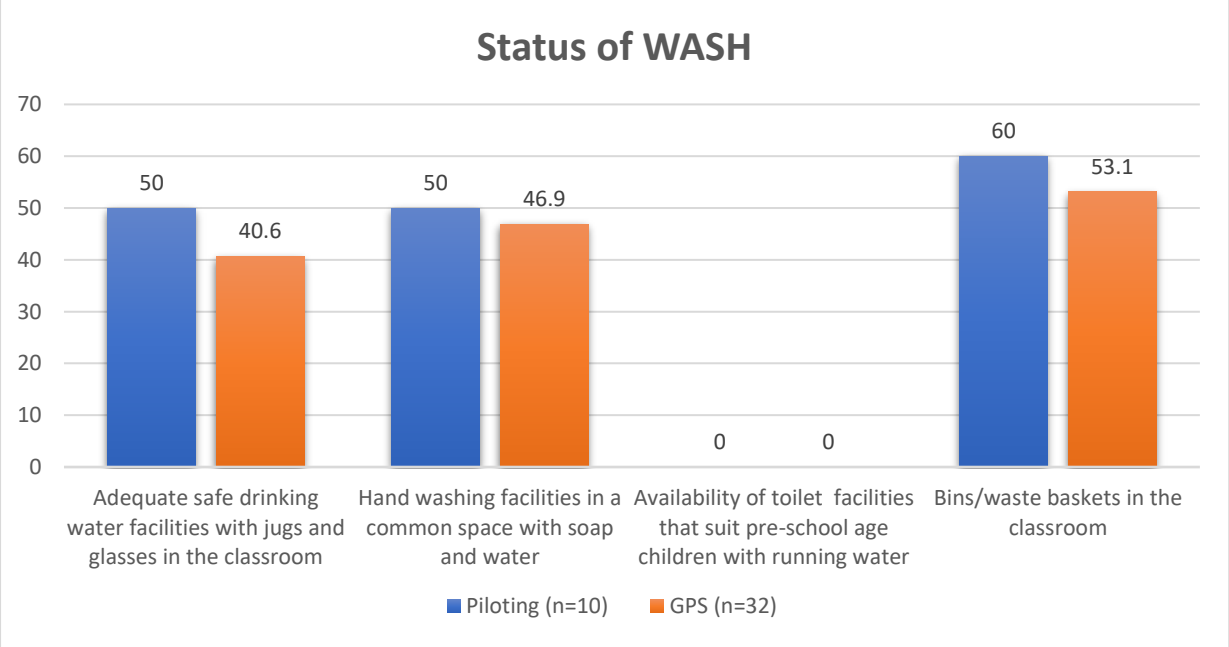
"The washroom is far for children aged 4 years and over. It is challenging for them. Small children often leave the room and openly defecate outside the classroom."

Figure 7: Photos of wash blocks that are not accessible for young children and children with disabilities

Data indicates that nearly half of the schools visited lack WASH blocks or access to safe water facilities. However, observations show piloting schools generally perform slightly better than non-piloting GPS in terms of cleanliness and hygiene. Notably, 60 per cent of piloting schools had classroom bins or wastebaskets, compared to 53.1 per cent of non-piloting GPS. Despite this, safe water and hand washing facilities– with essential items like jug-glass, soap, and water within children's reach—were present in only half or fewer of the schools, in both piloting and non-piloting GPS.

Findings by location show that urban areas generally reveal lower percentages in various categories of physical facilities, including adequate safe water facilities, designated places for handwashing, and bins/waste baskets in the classroom (See Table 30 in Appendix 2). Rural areas consistently exhibit higher percentages that range from 40-60 per cent depending on the indicators. In other geographical locations, facilities were better in river islands and coastal areas while the situation was worse in char and haor areas.

Figure 15: status of WASH facilities in piloting school and GPS



Overall, the infrastructural readiness of GPS in Bangladesh to introduce two-year PPE is notably inadequate. Maximizing and improving the use of existing facilities will broaden the potential for two-year PPE. In this regard, the provision of the required number of classrooms, sanitary WASH blocks suitable for young children, and sufficient toilets with proper maintenance and cleanliness should be ensured urgently.

Safety and security

Findings highlight key aspects related to physical infrastructure, safety protocols, and the overall well-being of children in different school settings and geographical locations. Across the visited GPS, the presence of boundary walls and security guards is evident as critical safety measures. While piloting schools show a high prevalence of both features (90 per cent), the GPS (53 per cent) exhibits varied percentages, emphasizing the need for more uniform safety standards across school types (see table 34). A noteworthy majority of classrooms and schools are reported to be safe and risk-free for children. Urban areas (71 per cent) and char locations (100 per cent) stand out for their

commitment to creating secure and positive learning environments (***See:*** Table 34 in Appendix 2). The assessment of risk-free conditions, encompassing aspects such as roofs, walls, doors, and windows, reveals that most schools maintain high standards across these safety parameters. Urban and rural areas consistently exhibit strong adherence to safety precautions.

The study highlights the importance of using safe materials and equipment in classrooms. In this context, safety refers to materials that are not broken or sharp or not made from materials that can be swallowed. Urban areas report an impressive 93 per cent adherence to safety standards for materials used in classrooms, ensuring the wellbeing of children during their learning activities.

The study also highlights the importance of electrical safety measures, including keeping cords, switches, and equipment out of children's reach. Urban and hill tract areas exhibit stronger adherence to electrical safety standards. The availability of first-aid boxes is a crucial component of ensuring immediate medical attention in case of emergencies. Urban areas (78.6 per cent) and river islands (100 per cent) demonstrate commitment to first-aid provisions, ensuring a rapid response to health-related incidents. Although most schools have first aid boxes, 11 out of 32 (34.4 per cent) schools contain expired items or are inaccessible in emergencies (when most needed). However, in the hill tracts area no first aid box was found in PPE.

Location-wise analysis shows that urban areas consistently demonstrate robust safety measures across various parameters. Rural areas, while generally maintaining high standards, exhibit some variability, suggesting the need for more standardised safety practices. Specialised regions, such as char and river islands, show a commitment to safety standards. However, the hill tracts region shows some variability, indicating potential areas for improvement in safety protocols.

Table 10: Status of Safety and Security

Status of safety and security (observation)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Schools that have boundary walls	90	53
Materials used in the classroom are safe for children	100	91
Classroom roofs are risk-free (sturdy, plaster does not fall off if the roof is paved, no holes if it is tin).	90	91
Classroom walls are risk-free (not leaning, not cracked, not wobbly).	90	91
Doors and windows are sturdy and risk-free (not broken, windowpanes or sheets not broken or placed in such a way that children could be injured).	90	91
No broken toys, dangerous items (blades, knives, scissors etc.) In the classroom	90	75
Keep electrical cords, switches and equipment out of reach of children	80	75
Have first-aid box	70.0	75.0

To expand the two-year PPE, the lack of school boundaries in and around half of the total school is a major concern expressed by pre-primary teachers, head teachers, parents, and school management committees (SMCs). The absence of boundary walls in urban and rural schools remains a significant issue, with bamboo fences or trees used as makeshift boundaries. However, these alternatives prove insufficient and short-lived. The absence of proper boundaries poses safety threats, notably in schools near rivers, hills, or highways. Parents are hesitant to enrol children due to safety concerns, urging the construction of boundary walls. The absence of caretakers or facilitators further complicates the childcare provision in the classes for children 4 and over. Moreover, concerns about

classroom conditions, especially thin and torn carpets, are raised for the children's health and comfort.

Safety measures for the two-year pre-primary programme have been discussed among head teachers, parents, and education officials. A lack of security guards near highways means that teachers assist children in road crossings, however more staff are needed for this task. Around one-third of the visited schools were found to have risk and safety issues that must be addressed when scaling up two-year PPE. These issues included the presence of broken and sharp toys, playing materials and furniture in walkways and classrooms as well as ponds situated near schools without adequate fences.

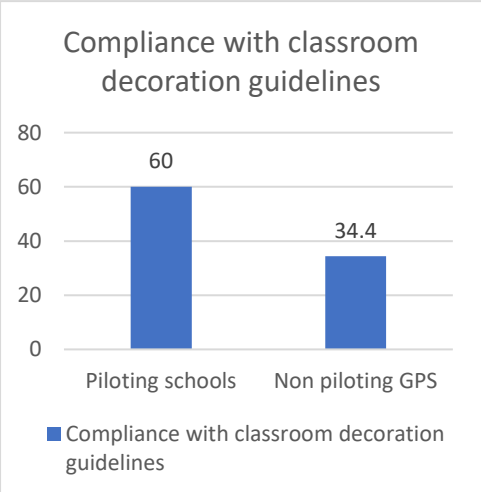
Learning Environment

This section analyses the current state of the learning environment in pre-primary education in Bangladesh. It examines schools' adherence to established guidelines and identifies key challenges affecting the implementation of an ideal learning environment. By understanding these factors, this study aims to provide insights that can guide improvements in pre-primary education across Bangladesh, ensuring that all young learners have access to supportive and enriching classroom settings.

The PPE expansion plan 2012 provides guidelines to create a learning environment that respects each child's individual abilities. It provides careful guidance, that aims to foster a healthy sense of autonomy, self-confidence, and initiative for children. During this stage, children make significant progress in cognitive, motor, language, and other skills, while also developing social behaviours, and personality traits. This section outlines standards for classroom setup, teaching and learning materials, teacher-student ratios, daily routines, and instructional practices, all aligned with the competency-based national curriculum.

Classroom decoration

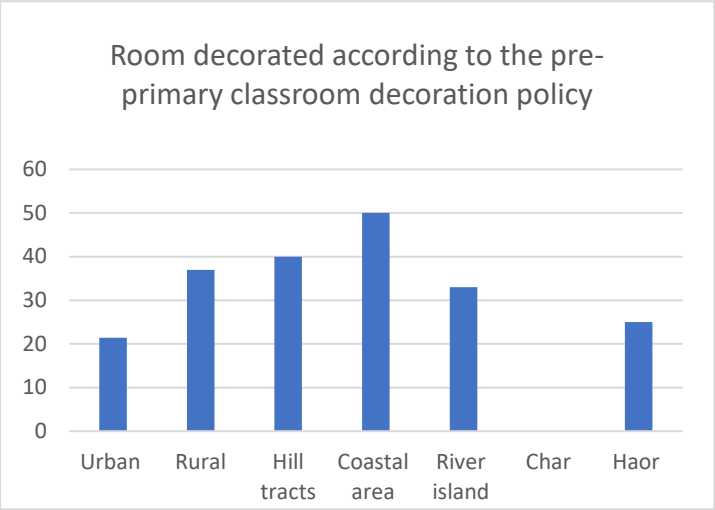
Classroom decoration is a critical factor impacting young children's engagement, emotional comfort, and cognitive development. To foster an optimal learning environment, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) developed a classroom decoration and materials management guideline in 2014.



Data indicates that adherence to these guidelines in designing pre-primary education (PPE) classrooms has been somewhat inconsistent. The findings from the study show that approximately 60 per cent of piloting schools and 34.4 per cent of non-piloting government schools followed the PPE classroom decoration guidelines. Additionally, schools in different geographical locations were observed to have lower compliance with these standards.

Figure 9: Compliance with classroom decoration guidelines.

Figure 10: PPE classroom decoration across different geo-locations



Learning and play materials

The pre-primary curriculum and teacher guide has recommended a variety of learning and play materials to implement the two-years pre-primary education for children aged 4 years and over and 5 years and over. However, the availability of these materials in different institutions does not present a similar status. While some schools reported having almost all the required materials according to guidelines, others highlighted shortages and challenges in acquiring certain items.

The findings from field observation provided insights into the availability of different types of teaching-learning materials in pre-primary education classrooms, comparing piloting schools and Government Primary Schools (GPS) as well as different geographical locations in Bangladesh. It shows that the teacher guide was available in 80 per cent of piloting schools, while in GPS, it was slightly lower at 75 per cent (***See:*** Figure 11). This suggests a relatively high availability of instructional guidance materials in both types of schools. In the case of other materials, such as Amar Boi, Esho likhte shikhi Khata, Chorai Chonde Swarborna, Chorai Chonde Byanjonborno, Swarborno and Byanjonborno Chart, Flip Charts, Flash Cards, Story Books, play materials, drawing materials etc., piloting schools generally show equal or higher availability compared to GPS. Notably, Flashcards, Games Materials, and Chorai Chonde Swarborna have higher availability (70 per cent) in piloting schools. Chorai Chonde Byanjonborno, Flip Charts, and Story Books were found lowest in both piloting schools and GPS which indicates these materials are less used in PPE classrooms.

Analysis by location shows that the availability of these materials varies by location and rural areas generally have higher availability across most materials compared to the urban areas (***See:*** Table 31 in Appendix 2). Notably, river island areas report 100 per cent availability for most of the materials while no materials were found in two schools visited in the char area, emphasizing potential geographical disparities in the availability of the relevant resource.

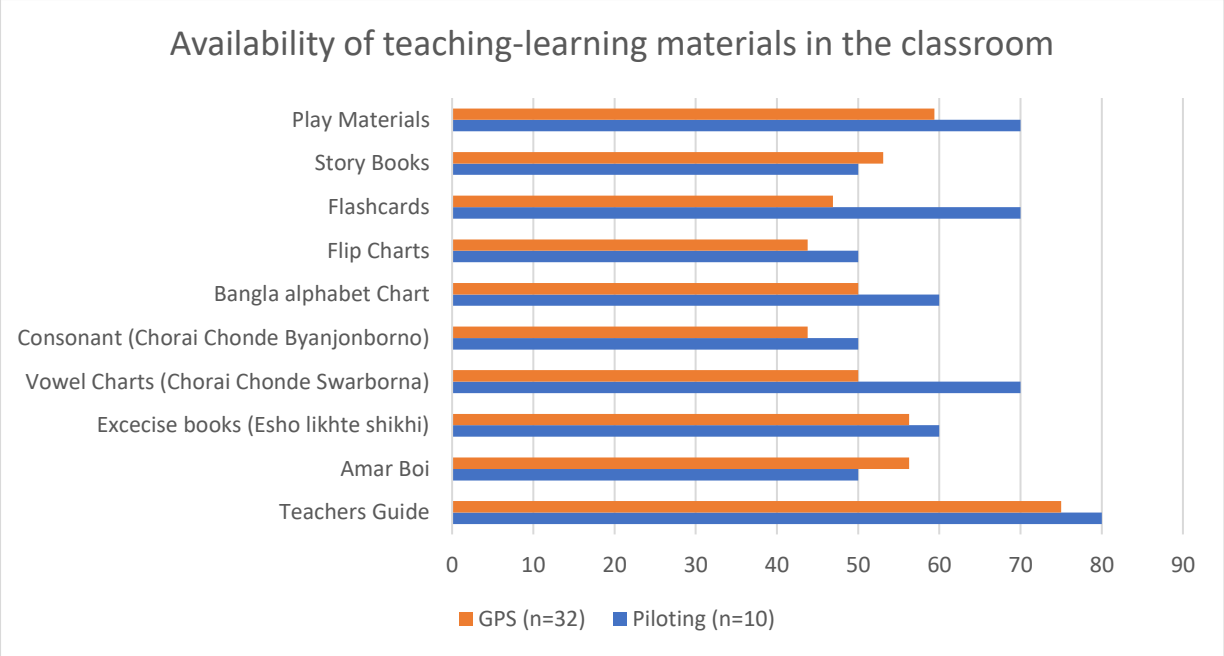


Figure 16: Availability of teaching learning materials in classrooms.

Adequacy of the learning and play materials

The findings provide insights into the adequacy and use of teaching-learning materials in PPE classrooms, comparing piloting schools and GPS as well as different geographical locations in Bangladesh. The study shows that 40 per cent of piloting schools were found with adequate instructional materials for conducting learning-teaching activities, while in GPS, it is slightly lower at 34.4 per cent (***See:*** Table 31). This indicates that there is a significant gap in availability of adequate teaching learning materials in both types of schools.

In the case of play materials for PPE children, piloting schools found a higher percentage (60.0 per cent) of suitable materials compared to GPS (46.9 per cent). The reason given by the teachers was that piloting schools received new materials for the PPE pilot for the 4+ age group, while most of the non-piloting GPS continued with the previous used materials which are found to be broken or unusable due to continued use of long periods.

In the case of location-based analysis, the adequacy and use of materials were found to be very low in different geographical locations, which is found less than or equal to 40 per cent. Between urban and rural areas, rural schools were found to be with slightly better adequacy and use of the materials. In the case of other locations, the Hill Tracts areas were found with a comparatively better situation, while the schools in the char areas were found in a worst situation. Thus, variations in the adequacy and use of teaching-learning materials across locations highlights potential disparities in resource access and utilisation that suggests a need for the improvement in both school types regardless of the location.

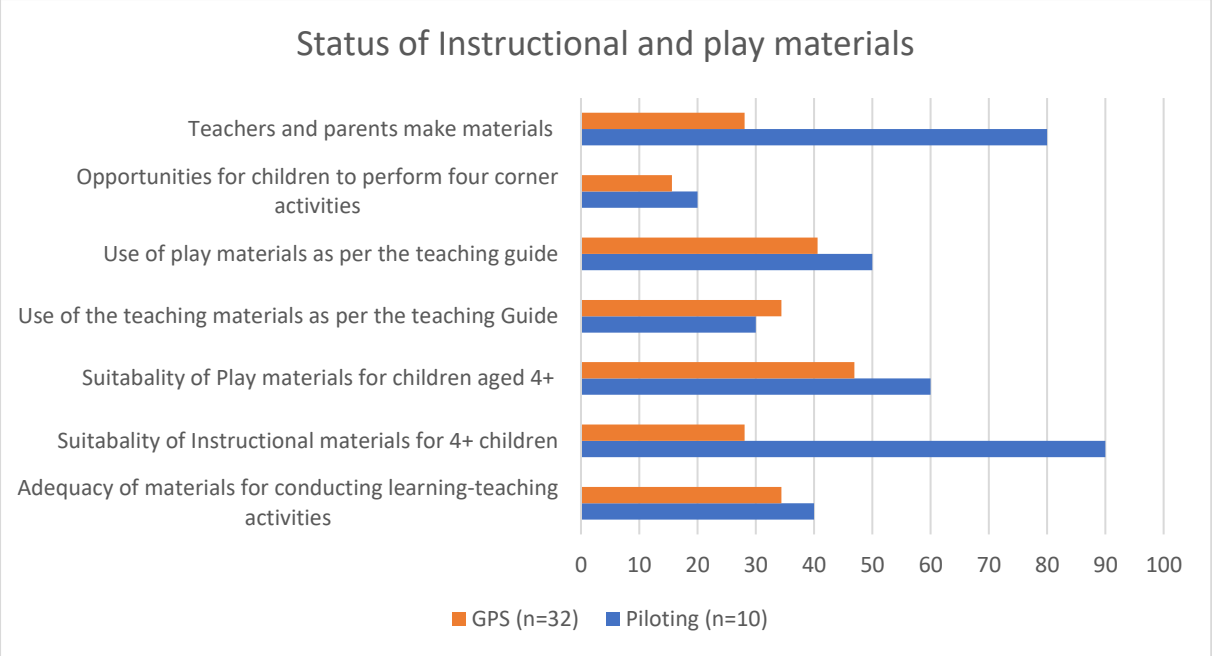


Figure 17: Adequacy and use of teaching-learning materials by piloting school and GPS

It is also clear from the respondents' responses that a few non-piloting Government Primary Schools received additional learning and play materials for pre-primary children which were mainly supplied for the piloting schools. Other schools were found with low availability, adequacy, and use of materials. During the classroom visits of the non-piloting GPS, it was found that only 53 per cent of PPE classes have the designated four corners for the children as per the PPE implementation guideline. Among them, only 34 per cent were properly furnished with the relevant corner materials.

Although some pre-primary teachers and head teachers said that they have adequate materials, on the contrary, most teachers and upazila education officers pointed out the opposite picture. Their responses revealed that most schools do not have enough materials for learning and playing for children. These materials are difficult to maintain for a long time, as young children destroy/ damage the materials in a short time, and the replenishment is irregular. For instance, a head teacher said:

> *"Our school does not have the necessary learning-teaching materials and play materials as specified in the pre-primary curriculum, teacher guidelines, and pre-primary education implementation guidelines. Some of the materials have been destroyed after using over a long time, and some other materials have been lost. Sometimes children carry the materials away, and we do not get those materials back."* – A Head Teacher from Sylhet.

Replenishment of materials

Teachers emphasized that learning and play materials for pre-primary education (PPE) need to be replenished annually due to wear and loss over time. While the Government of Bangladesh has allocated BDT 10,000 for 5+ PPE and BDT 5,000 for 4+ PPE, many teachers reported that these allocations are insufficient to meet actual needs, and the funds are not provided consistently. The policy guidelines recommend supplementing these funds with School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) funds, however in practice, competing priorities often make this not feasible. To address this gap,

teachers strongly advocated for doubling the budget allocation and ensuring regular disbursement if the two-year PPE programme is scaled up nationwide.

Recent data indicates that not all Government Primary Schools (GPS) receive their allocated funds. For instance, 13 out of 32 GPS did not receive the BDT 10,000 allocation for 5+ PPE, while 3 out of 10 schools missed out on the BDT 5,000 allocation for 4+ PPE. In some cases, schools managed to procure materials through local support from school committees and parents. However, the persistent scarcity of adequate materials, particularly in schools in coastal areas, river islands, and haor regions, remains a critical issue. These areas utilised their available funds for PPE, yet they still struggled to meet the needs of all the enrolled children.

Escalating prices have further compounded the challenge, making it increasingly difficult to manage costs within the current budget allocation. Teachers suggested that doubling the current allocation is essential to provide sufficient materials in line with PPE implementation guidelines and expansion plans. Additionally, they highlighted the need for durable and health-conscious materials, such as cold-resistant floor coverings to replace thin carpets that pose health risks to children in winter.

Use of the play corners and available materials

In the case of the use of these materials, both piloting schools (30 per cent) and GPS (34.4 per cent) report a relatively low percentage of teachers using teaching materials as per the requirements of the teaching guide, suggesting a potential area for improvement in adherence to instructional guidance in both school types. Like teaching materials, the use of play materials according to the benchmarks of the teaching guide is reported at 50 per cent in piloting schools and 40.6 per cent in GPS, which indicates that the use of play materials is found in less than half of the schools of both types. The study observations found that corner-based activities are less practiced, the use of water and sand corner is found in less than 20 per cent of schools indicating room for improvement. Additionally, it was found that 80 per cent of piloting schools reported teachers, children, and parents making materials on their own initiative, compared to only 28.1 per cent in GPS.

In the case of location-based analysis, adequacy and use of materials were found to be very low in different geographical locations, which is found to be less than or equal to 40 per cent. Between urban and rural areas, rural schools were found with slightly better in adequacy and use of the materials. In the case of other locations, hill tracts areas were found with comparatively a better situation while the schools in the char areas were found in the worst situation. Thus, variations in the adequacy and use of teaching-learning materials across locations highlight potential disparities in resource access and utilisation that suggests a need for improvement in both school types regardless of the location.

Class duration and schedule

As per guidance from DPE, GPSs are required to follow a two-hour schedule for 4+ pre-primary education. Teachers of GPS across the country suggested for DPE to consider a slightly different schedule based on the contexts in the different regions. The suggested duration ranges from 2 to 3 hours and the time slot ranges from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM (***See:*** Table 11).

Table 11: Suggested options for learning hours of PPE for 4+ aged children

Suggested teaching-learning time for the 4+ aged group (Teachers)	Urban (n=14)	Rural (n=27)	Hill Tracts (n=5)	Coastal Area (n=4)	River Island (n=2)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)
8:30 AM - 10:30 AM (2 hours)	0.0	14.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
9.00 AM - 11.00 AM (2 hours)	35.6	28.1	20.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM (2 hours)	28.5	14.6	60.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
10.30 AM - 12.30 AM (2 hours)	0.0	14.6	0.0	0.0	33.0	0.0	0.0
9.30 AM -12.00 AM (2 and half hours)	28.5	28.1	20.0	50.0	33.0	50.0	50.0
9.00 AM - 12.00 AM (3 hours)	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.0	50.0	0.0

Teachers expressed preferences for single shifts to maintain consistency for children and teachers; however, some schools proposed two shifts due to resource constraints and student numbers. While a single shift promotes consistency, challenges like late arrivals in winter arise. Adjusting the schedule, such as starting later or shortening session times is suggested for improved effectiveness. The study also found that there is an ongoing debate regarding the need for a break in between the two-hour PPE classes for PPE and suggestions for modifying teaching for effective language and math learning. A portion of the teachers (40 per cent) and parents (55 per cent) prosed to have breaks in between lessons and enhancing or increasing the time for literacy and numeracy skills practice. Overall, the findings emphasise the need for flexibility in setting learning hours and duration based on resources and local needs, with adequate facilities playing a crucial role in effectiveness of PPE.

Student Teacher ratio

The benchmark for the student teacher-ratio for PPE suggests the standard of 1:25. The study findings suggest that the average number of 5 + aged children enrolled in the classes was around 30 in both piloting and GPS, which is as per the expected ratio of PPE implementation guidelines. In the case of the 4 + -age group, the average number of PPE enrolment was only 16, which is also within the range of PPE implementation guidelines. For 4 years and over age-group, enrolment is relatively low, with around 31,821 children in total implying an average of 10 child per piloting school across the country.

Teachers' interaction

Classroom observation reveals variations in teaching-learning and assessment between piloting schools and GPS. The data indicates that 80 per cent of teachers in piloting schools and 56.3 per cent in GPS follow the teaching-learning method suggested in the teacher's guide for various activities (***See:*** Table 32. This suggests a relatively higher capacity in piloting schools, possibly due to a more targeted focus on implementing prescribed teaching methods. Moreover, it shows that 20 per cent of teachers in piloting schools and 6.3 per cent in GPS make necessary modifications in the teaching-learning process during the class considering curriculum needs. The PPE curriculum focuses on four learning domains: physical, language and communication, social and emotional, and cognitive development. It outlines developmental milestones and supports school readiness in each domain. While assessing children's learning progress, 40 per cent of teachers were found to assess the learning progress in piloting school, and 12.5 per cent were found in all GPSs. It was also found that, 30 per cent of teachers in piloting schools and 9.4 per cent in GPS maintain the records regularly.

These insights indicate that although teachers claimed that they were knowledgeable and skilled in PPE after getting the training, significant gaps were found in knowledge and skills regarding teaching-learning and assessment practices.

Table 12: Teachers' Capacity Regarding teaching-learning and assessment

Teachers' capacity regarding teaching-learning and assessment (observation)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Teachers follow the teaching-learning method suggested in the teacher's guide for the various activities	80.0	56.3
Teachers make necessary modifications in the teaching-learning process in the light of curriculum needs	20.0	6.3
Teachers assess the learning progress of children aged 4+	40.0	12.5
Teachers assess the learning progress of children aged 5+	30.0	12.5
Found assessment records regularly	30.0	9.4
Teachers evaluate and record the progress of children based on their participation and proficiency in daily activities	30.0	25.0

Inclusion and Accessibility

In exploring the dynamics of inclusiveness, safety, and security within the context of the two-year PPE programme in GPS, this section scrutinises critical issues impacting on the participation of children with diverse needs and safety concerns within these educational environments. This section focuses on enrolment and participation opportunities for children with special needs, accessibility of classrooms and infrastructure, access to inclusive learning materials, and teaching-learning strategies, and sheds lights on the challenges hindering inclusive education. Additionally, it highlights safety and security concerns, notably the absence of school boundaries, inadequate water and hygiene facilities, and safety measures, which collectively pose significant challenges requiring immediate attention for the effective implementation and scaling up of the PPE programme.

Enrolment of children with disabilities

The study delved into the inclusivity of PPE classrooms in Bangladesh by examining the enrolment status of children with disabilities across various school types and geographical locations. The findings, presented in Table 26, offer a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to the inclusion of children with disabilities in PPE. Across the piloting schools and general primary schools (GPS), the study identified one child with a disability in the 4+ age group in the catchment area of piloting schools but did not enrol in school. Among the 5+ age group, only one out of a total nine of the identified children (17 per cent) with disabilities were enrolled in PPE, and in GPS, only four out of the 15 identified children in total (26.7 per cent) were enrolled. Despite the identification of children with disabilities, the enrolment of these children in PPE classrooms is notably low.

The pre-primary enrolment rate falls below expectations, making it challenging to assess participation opportunities for children with special needs. Most teachers lack interaction with children with disabilities making it difficult for the child with disabilities to meaningfully participate

due to a significant lack of training in inclusive approaches. While some teachers support inclusion, the parental attitudes, not to bring their children out of their home due to fear of social shaming often deters enrolment. Some also think that the school and teachers are not properly equipped to support their children. Inadequate teacher training and reluctance of teachers to promote inclusion pose challenges to inclusive education. Two teachers out of 32 expressed that inclusion of diverse children, especially children with disabilities are challenging. Teachers are unable to adequately manage children with disabilities and suggested these children enrol in special schools. To implement a truly inclusive two-year PPE programme, it is essential to provide adequate facilities, resources, and trained personnel.

Table 13: Status of accessibility of the physical infrastructure in piloting school and GPS

School type	Measure	Total number of 4+ aged children with disabilities in catchment area	Total number 4+ aged children with disabilities enrolled in PPE	Percentage of 4+ aged children with disabilities who enrolled in PPE	Total number of 5+ aged children with disabilities in catchment area	Total number 5+ aged children with disabilities enrolled in PPE	Percentage of 5+ aged children with disabilities who enrolled in PPE
Piloting (n=10)	Total	1	0	0.0	9	1	17.0
	Mean	0.1	0.0		1.5	0.2	
GPS (n=32)	Total	Na	Na	Na	15	4	26.7
	Mean	Na	Na		0.8	0.2	

Accessibility of classroom and infrastructure

The study investigated accessibility to physical infrastructure for children with diverse needs in PPE classrooms across different types of schools and geographical locations in Bangladesh. The findings provide valuable insights into the status of infrastructure, revealing variations based on school types and regional characteristics. Data shows that the presence of a ramp in the entrance is observed in less than half of the visited schools —– 40 per cent in piloting schools and 44 per cent in GPS (***See:*** Table 33. Urban areas and river islands exhibit higher percentages, indicating a relatively better infrastructure while the haor and hill tracts area shows worse accessibility around infrastructure. For example, schools with congested classrooms, inaccessible ramps, blockades in doors and passages make the school inaccessible for children with disabilities. Notably, the usability of ramps is relatively consistent across piloting schools (40 per cent) and GPS (38 per cent). However, in urban and river island areas, the usability is higher, suggesting more functional infrastructure. In the case of suitable seating arrangements, 60 per cent of piloting schools and 47 per cent of GPS were found accessible and equitable for young children and children with disabilities (***see:*** Table 33 in Appendix 2). Notably, urban areas and river islands have well-arranged seating, whereas rural and char areas exhibit lower percentages.

Entrance accessibility was higher in piloting schools (70 per cent) compared to GPS (63 per cent). Rural and coastal areas revealed substantial accessibility challenges, emphasising the need for improvement. Aside from accessibility, easily moveable passages are more prevalent in piloting schools (70 per cent) compared to GPS (59 per cent). River island areas exhibit the highest percentage, indicating relatively better passage conditions. The presence of blockades or obstacles on doors, passages, or boundaries is a concern. Piloting schools (40 per cent) and GPS (41 per cent) report similar challenges. The Hill Tracts and river island areas face higher obstruction rates, suggesting a need for infrastructure adjustments.

Suitable washroom/toilet facilities for the young and special needs children are reported in 30 per cent of piloting schools and 25 per cent of GPS. Urban areas and chars exhibit higher percentages, indicating a need for substantial improvement, especially in rural areas. Besides, accessible basin/WASH block facilities for these types of children are reported in 50 per cent of piloting schools and 34 per cent of GPS. Accessibility is higher in urban and coastal areas, suggesting a need for focused efforts in rural and river island regions.

Table 14: Status of accessibility of the physical infrastructure in piloting school and GPS

Accessibility of the physical infrastructure (observation)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Ramp in the entrance	40	44
Ramp usability	40	38
Entrance accessibility	70	63
Passage accessible and easily moveable	70	59
Blockade/obstacle on the door/passage/boundary	40	41
Suitable seating arrangement	60	47
Suitable washroom/toilet	30	25
Accessible basin/WASH block etc.	50	34

Overall, the accessibility of physical infrastructure is better in urban and river island areas compared to rural, Hill Tracts, and coastal areas. While entrance and passage accessibility are relatively high, there is room for improvement in the availability and usability of ramps and suitable seating arrangements. The presence of blockades or obstacles in certain regions, particularly the Hill Tracts, is a concern and requires attention. Adequate washroom/toilet facilities are lacking in many areas, indicating this as a critical area for improvement to ensure a hygienic environment for PPE. Addressing these infrastructure gaps is crucial for providing a conducive learning environment in pre-primary schools, contributing to the overall feasibility and success of PPE in Bangladesh.

Data regarding accessible and equitable facilities provides insights into the inclusivity and equitability of facilities within the educational environment. Across both piloting schools and GPS, there is a strong emphasis on equitability and accessibility. All piloting schools and the majority of GPS (90.6 per cent) ensure that classrooms and related facilities are equitable and accessible for all children (***See:*** Table 15). It also identifies a positive trend in promoting equitable access to learning and play materials. In piloting schools, 90 per cent ensure the equitability and accessibility of such materials, while in GPS, the percentage is slightly lower at 81.3 per cent. In the case of gender neutrality and sensitivity, both piloting schools and GPS show a high degree of commitment to gender-neutral and

gender-sensitive learning and play materials. Most schools in both categories (90 per cent in piloting schools and 93.8 per cent in GPS) ensure that materials are designed without gender bias.

Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring equitable access to learning and play materials. In piloting schools, 80 per cent of teachers actively promote equitable access, while in GPS, the percentage is slightly lower at 68.8 per cent. Like equitability, teachers also contribute significantly to maintaining gender neutrality and sensitivity in learning and play materials. In both piloting schools (90 per cent) and GPS (87.5 per cent), teachers are actively involved in fostering gender-inclusive environments. However, there is room for improvement for the teachers as the findings indicate that in half of the schools, especially in piloting schools (50 per cent), teachers provide special attention to children with disabilities or special needs. In GPS, this percentage is slightly lower at 34.4 per cent.

Table 15: status of accessible and equitable facilities in piloting school and GPS

Status of accessible and equitable facilities (observation)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Classrooms and related facilities are accessible for all children	100.0	90.6
Learning and play materials are accessible for all children	90.0	81.3
Learning and play materials found gender neutral / gender sensitive	90.0	93.8
Teachers ensure children's equitable access to learning and play materials	80.0	68.8
Teachers ensure gender neutrality/sensitivity in learning and play materials	90.0	87.5
Special attention was given to children with disabilities	50.0	34.4

While interviewing teachers, it was found that most schools have materials that are accessible to learners. Play materials such as educational toys and learning aids can be considered accessible to children with disabilities. However, children's exercise books, story books and learning materials are not accessible to all. On the other hand, children with severe disabilities are not enrolled in the PPE classes and could benefit from more accessible approaches or resources (e.g. through braille, sign language, tactile materials or any other teaching aids). Even with the existing minimal number of children with disabilities in the classrooms, teachers lack the experience and training to use inclusive approaches in the classroom. Teachers acknowledged the diverse needs but struggle to cater to them effectively. They also acknowledged the language needs of children from different ethnic backgrounds. Besides, learning packages are available only in five ethnic minority languages, while others do not have that option to learn in their mother tongue which is a challenge for the teachers. Teachers lack training in inclusive instruction and assessment strategies in GPS.

Existing systems in primary schools, kindergartens, and madrasahs are not conducive to diverse student needs. Paper-based assessments hinder children with special needs. While some flexibility exists in assessment, teacher training deficiencies limit inclusivity indicating a greater need for teacher capacity to address special learning.

Staffing and human resource development

Teacher Qualification

The designated teacher of the PPE class should hold the benchmark qualification of a Diploma in Education. Findings show that, most teachers in both piloting schools (90 per cent) and GPS (72 per cent) hold a Diploma in Primary Education (DPEd). This underscores the significance of having qualified educators with specialised 15 days training in PPE, contributing to a more effective learning environment for young children. It has been reported that a total of 74,674 teachers received training under the Third Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP3), and 30,024 teachers have been trained under the Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP4). In total, 104,698 teachers nationwide have received the 15-day PPE teacher training during the implementation periods of either PEDP3 or PEDP4 (Source: Training Division, Directorate of Primary Education, 2024). Moreover, 3320 teachers in FY 2022-23, and 3400 teachers in FY 2023-24 received the 15 days PPE training for smooth implementation of 4+ PPE in the piloting 3214 schools.

The benchmark requirement of the provision of teacher assistance through volunteer, community teacher, or para-teacher/assistant to support the class teacher in the teaching-learning process and classroom management was not found in either the piloting schools nor in the GPS.

Table 16: Status of required teachers in piloting school and GPS

Sub-area (staffing)	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Assistant Teachers	Graduate with Diploma in Education	80.0	71.9
Assistants	1 volunteer or community teacher or para teacher/assistant to support the main teacher in the teaching-learning process and classroom management.	0	0

All teachers in the piloting schools and most of GPS schools (81 per cent) have completed the 15 days of PPE training (***see:*** Table 17). In the case of refresher training, there is no provision of refresher training for teachers, however 80 per cent of piloting school, teachers receive seven days of specialised training. The seven days specialised training was provided to all the 3,214 however, during the piloting period, some of the trained teachers also got transferred, to a non-piloting GPS. It was also found that, sometimes PPE teachers are transferred without any replacement of another trained PPE teacher. As a result, some schools ended up having two or more trained PPE teachers and some schools run out of trained PPE teachers. It creates challenges for the school and the untrained teachers who are given the charge of the PPE classroom. According to the teachers and education supervisors, the lack of relevant policy is one of the reasons behind this anomaly.

Table 17: Teachers with training in PPE in piloting school and GPS

Teachers got training on PPE (school information)	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Teachers got training on PPE for the 5+ age group	100.0	81.3
The teacher received refresher training	0	0
PPE specialised training on PPE for the 4+ aged	80.0	25.0

Nevertheless, teachers have raised several crucial points that warrant careful deliberation and are prepared to improve their competence and efficiency. However, most of the respondents raised concerns that a single teacher cannot effectively manage PPE for children aged 4 and 5. Classroom management becomes increasingly difficult for a teacher when the class size is above 20 as the young children need individualised support in many areas. Hence, managing two PPE classes (PPE for the 4 years and older age group and the 5 years and older age group) by a single teacher in two shifts becomes stressful for the teacher. The standards of the PPE expansion plan suggest that there should be one PPE teacher and one teacher assistant for every 25 children. Thus, the scaling up of two-year PPE with a single teacher may lead to the potential failure of the programme. Teachers also stated that dependence on a single teacher has creates significant risks, especially in the proper management of the replacement of a PPE teacher within a short period during an emergency.

> *"Our school is renowned for its pre-primary education. The designated PPE teacher is knowledgeable, skilled, and enthusiastic in his approach to teaching the children. However, during her maternity leave, we encountered significant obstacles in sustaining classes in the pre-primary section, given that she was the only teacher with adequate training while the rest of us (the teachers) have no orientation on PPE."* - a head teacher from Dhaka.

Qualification of the supervisors

The benchmarks suggested a prerequisite of a master's degree preferably in education with relevant training and experience in education for the designated personnel who have a supervisory and monitoring role for effective implementation of PPE. Data indicates that none of the supervisors (head teachers) in piloting schools or GPS have a master's degree in education or relevant training and experience (***See:*** Table 18). This highlights a potential gap in the qualifications of those responsible for supervisory roles, warranting consideration for the improvement of supervisory staff skills and training. Data reveals a relatively low compliance in both piloting schools (10 per cent) and GPS (6.25 per cent). This highlights a common challenge in terms of the qualifications of those responsible for supervision and monitoring in PPE.

Table 18: Status of required supervisor and monitor in piloting school and GPS

Sub-area (staffing)	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Supervisor (head teacher)	Master's degree preferably in education/with relevant training and experience	0	0
Monitor (AUEO)	Master's degree preferably in education/with relevant training	10.0	6.25

A positive attitude towards the two years of PPE was found among teachers and other staff**,** however a need for additional trained pre-primary teachers was observed. There is also the need for the upgrading of supervisor and monitor's skills through a comprehensive training programme to mitigate the gap between the reality and the preset benchmark. To create a potential impact on PPE of the children 4 and over age group there needs to be deployment of adequate qualified teachers and staff equipped with proper orientation and training in PPE.

Teachers' Capacity

To operate the two years pre-primary at the existing GPS demands a large and skilled workforce. An efficient pre-primary teacher requires knowledge, skills, a positive attitude, management capacities and leadership abilities. Supervisors, monitors, and managers of the programme should also have relevant knowledge and skills for effective implementation of the PPE programme. The PPE expansion plan suggests some specific training for PPE teachers in its standards. The findings are discussed in comparison with these standards in the next sections.

The first standard regarding the teacher capacity building suggested that PPE teachers should complete at least 12 days of basic training in the first year and six in the second year. However, the current provision of teacher training is a one-time PPE training for 15 days. Data indicates (***See*:** Table 19) a high compliance of the training in piloting schools (100 per cent) and a substantial but slightly lower compliance in GPS (81.3 per cent). Most teachers expressed positive views about the training, suggesting a relatively strong commitment to the training of teachers, particularly in piloting schools that showed higher adherence to the benchmark. In total, 104,698 teachers nationwide have received the 15-day PPE teacher training during the implementation periods of either PEDP3 or PEDP4 (Source: Training Division, Directorate of Primary Education, 2024).The 15 days teacher training manual is now updated according to the new curriculum of the two-year PPE although the training duration remains the same, raising concerns for this training potential to meet the required duration of a comprehensive training package to better prepare the PPE teachers.

The second standard suggested at least two times refresher training in a year period with a minimum duration of three days and a minimum of two guided cross-visits in the nearest schools in a year. However, this provision is yet to be incorporated in the existing professional development plan for PPE teachers, and this signifies a critical gap in the provision of ongoing training opportunities for PPE teachers in GPS. Similarly, there is no scope for training for teacher assistants as this provision has not yet been affected by GPS. If at least three days of orientation on PPE could be provided for community people/para/volunteer teachers or adolescents in a year as suggested by the standards, then it would create the scope for the PPE teachers to access support in managing PPE classroom activities.

Table 19: Status of professional development of the teachers and relevant staff

Sub-area	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Training of teacher	At least 12 days of basic training in the first year and 6 days in second year (instead of 15 days PPE training conducted currently)	100.0	81.3
	At least two times refreshers training in a year with a minimum 3-day duration	Not created the scope yet	
	Minimum two guided cross-visits with the nearest schools in a year	Not created the scope yet	
Training of teacher assistant	At least three days of orientation on pre-primary for community/para/ volunteer teachers or adolescents in a year	Not created the scope yet	

Most pre-primary teachers at the GPS have received 15 days of PPE training for children aged 5 years and over and PPE teachers from the piloting schools received an additional seven days of specialised training on PPE for children aged 4 years and over– both positive steps. A few teachers could not participate in training due to a pre-scheduling issues or maternity leave. Teachers have also expressed an optimistic attitude towards the necessity and effectiveness of the training. Teachers appreciated the training's effectiveness, highlighting its role in understanding the sensitivity of children aged 4 years and over, managing their attention span, and employing play-based teaching techniques. They recognised the training for significantly improving their skills and knowledge, emphasising the supportive nature of the trainers. According to a head teacher,

> *"The situation has changed significantly. Earlier, it was thought that kindergartens provide high-quality education, but now the way the government is training teachers, they are teaching in a joyful environment, there has been a lot of change in our society's attitude."* – a head teacher from a GPS school.

Although teachers found the seven-day specialised PPE training for children aged 4 years and over to be useful, they suggested extending the duration from 7 to 15 days. Most teachers also suggested arranging at least a 3-day refresher training on PPE once a year as the training and exchange of experiences with other teachers helps them to enhance their knowledge, understand skills and find solutions for improving the effectiveness of the PPE classes.

In consideration of the capacity development needs of the PPE teachers, field-level trainers suggested the need for creating provisions for refresher trainings regularly. According to a URC instructor:

> *"Pre-primary education services will be effective if enough teachers can be appointed proportionately to the children. Block teaching can be managed in some way, but we must accept that there is a need for additional teachers. In most of the schools, only one teacher teaches children of both ages, which puts a huge pressure on the teacher. Many do not have proper training to teach children aged 4 and over and children aged 5 and over. It would be excellent if refresher training is arranged for teachers regularly." - a URC instructor*

Monitoring and supervision

This section explores the prevailing mechanisms and practices in place for monitoring and supervision of pre-primary education by the Directorate of Primary Education and how the Directorate is addressing the challenges encountered during the implementation of PPE in schools.

Monitoring and supervision by head teachers

The benchmark on supervision and monitoring indicates that each PPE classroom should receive a minimum of four working hours of monitoring each month. Data around this benchmark revealed higher compliance in piloting schools (70 per cent) compared to non-piloting GPS (34.4 per cent which implies that the piloting schools are more likely to receive frequent supervisory support, than the non-piloting GPS (***See*:** Table 20). The second benchmark emphasises that PPE classrooms should be supervised for at least one full class (2.3 hours), and that on-the-spot academic and technical support is provided to the PPE teachers. Data shows that piloting schools exhibit higher compliance (80 per cent) compared to GPS (37.5 per cent). In both cases, the overall supervision rate in non-

piloting GPS were less than 40 per cent of the school. This highlights a potential gap in the supervisory role of the head teachers. Lack of relevant training and orientation might be one of the reasons behind this gap which is expressed through the interview of the head teachers.

Table 20: Status of required supervisor and monitor in piloting school and non-piloting GPS

Sub-area (staffing)	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Supervisor (head teacher)	Each school receives 4 working hours of supervisory support each month	70.0	34.4
	Supervising at least one full class (2.30 hours) and providing spot academic and other types of technical support to a teacher	80.0	37.5

An overwhelming majority of head teachers indicated they did not receive any orientation on the two years PPE. They further stated that this has constrained their effectiveness to contribute to augment the programme quality and value. The head teachers at the piloting schools have documented favourable experiences. Nevertheless, the head teachers expressed the need for a comprehensive orientation regarding the two years of PPE to be able to meaningfully monitor and supervise the PPE programme.

According to the PPE expansion plan standards, the head teachers should receive a minimum of four days of training on pre-primary supervision and two days of refresher training in a year along with quarterly reflection and academic support by trainers. However, head teachers do not receive training as the provision is not created yet in the PPE training plan (***See:*** Table 21). This suggests a potential need for the introduction of structured professional development mechanisms for the head teachers to enhance their effectiveness in supporting PPE.

Table 21: Status of professional development of the teachers and relevant staff

Sub-area	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Training of supervisor (Headteacher)	Minimum 4 days training on pre-primary supervision in a year	0.0	0.0
	2 days of refreshers training in a year	0.0	0.0
	Quarterly reflection and academic support by trainers	0.0	0.0

Monitoring by sub-national level officials

The PPE expansion plan benchmark suggested that each school should receive three working hours of monitoring support through sub-national level officials every two months. Both piloting schools and GPS show some compliance, with 80 per cent and 31.3 per cent, respectively (***See:*** Table 22). This suggests that there is a gap and room for improvement in the frequency of monitoring support, particularly in GPS. Assistant Upazilla Education Officers (AUEO) oversee monitoring of PPE activities, and they should play their role in this regard.

Table 22: Status of required monitoring in piloting school and GPS

Sub area (staffing)	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Monitor (AUEO)	Each school receives 3 working hours of monitoring support every two months	80.0	31.3

According to the benchmark, AUEOs and UEOs should receive a minimum of five days of training on pre-primary monitoring, two-days of refresher training in a year, and quarterly reflections and professional support from trainers. The UEO should receive a minimum of three days of orientation on pre-primary management in a year and a half-yearly reflections and management support at the district level. Data revealed that there is no such training arranged for the AUEOs and UEOs on their monitoring and managerial roles (***See:*** Table 23). However, some AUEOs received PPE training as they were involved as teacher trainers at the field level. The absence of structured training programmes for these roles highlights a significant gap in the professional development of relevant staff beyond teachers.

Table 23: Status of professional development of the AUEO and UEO

Sub-area	Benchmark	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)
Training of monitor (AUEO)	Minimum 5 days of training on pre-primary monitoring in a year	0.0	
	2 days of refreshers training in a year	0.0	
	Quarterly reflection and professional support from trainers	0.0	
Training of manager (UEO)	Minimum 3 days orientation on pre-primary management in a year	0.0	
	Half-yearly reflection and management support at the district level	0.0	

Most education officials (around 80 per cent) stated they had received a 3-day orientation on monitoring of two years of PPE. Furthermore, the 40 per cent of AUEO who were involved as trainers in the seven days specialised training on PPE, were also well-equipped on the PPE training for children aged 4 years and over group.

Involvement of parents/community members in monitoring

The engagement, supervision and training of community members, including parents, caregivers, and school or community governing bodies, is glaringly lacking. These stakeholders have not received any orientation on the pre-primary education (PPE) programme or the two-year PPE initiative, which has limited their understanding of PPE's importance and their ability to positively impact children's development.

Parent and community perceptions

This section explores the role of the community and their perceptions in the effective implementation of the two-year PPE programme in GPSs. It underlines the importance of creating awareness of the parents and caregivers about the benefits of early education. While the community

generally holds a positive attitude toward PPE, the lack of a clear orientation has led to scepticism about PPE among parents. Concerns about the balance between play-based activities and academic learning have also prompted some families to favour private kindergartens over the GPSs. Varying expectations between rural and urban parents, including demands for provisions like meals, uniforms, and safety measures, underscore the necessity for informed orientation, strengthened partnerships, and addressing parental concerns for successful PPE implementation in government schools.

Perception of the community towards two-year PPE

Data revealed that the community respondents held an overwhelmingly positive perceptions of the two-year PPE programme. Most parents and SMC members believe that the additional year allows children to gradually learn through play in a joyful environment, supporting children to achieve competences of the developmental domains. They emphasized PPE's role in fostering social skills, peer to peer interaction and play activities. Most parents in GPS, kindergarten, and NGO-based schools said that children develop their social and communication skills in the early years, and preschool can help them in this regard. They stated that if children access additional contact hours in PPE/kindergarten or Early Childhood Development (ECD) classes, they have more time to prepare themselves for primary education. Similarly, regardless of school type the community highlighted that PPE reduces children's fear of school as well as increases their interest in school. Many parents said that PPE provider also work as a substitute for daycare centre facility for children. Parents who do not have extra support at home stated that extended pre-school programmes help them to manage their time effectively as their children are occupied in the classes. Working parents also said that PPE offers a safe space for children and creates opportunities for providing support that helps them to ensure age-appropriate development. A SMC member said,

> *"Because many parents work, they do not have much time for their children. When children come to school, they will meet their friends, and the teachers, who show care and love to them. This will create a sense of love in the child's mind. In addition, children will learn through entertainment. That is why early pre-primary education is necessary."*

In this regard, community members said that the extended PPE would contribute significantly to children's holistic development, and overall wellbeing. Such satisfactory experiences of parents and caregivers highlight a positive attitude towards the PPE. One parent said,

> *"We are positive about enrolling children in two-year pre-primary education. This will lead to their overall development, and they will be attracted to the school."*

Increasingly, PPE in Government Primary Schools opens the door to preparatory education for children from families across society. Responses from community members revealed that children from economically well-off families can gain admission to various reputable kindergarten schools. On the other hand, it is almost impossible for children from low socio-economic groups to gain access to kindergartens if NGOs do not offer ECE programmes in their area. The Government's two-year PPE therefore opens a new avenue for conducive learning opportunities for young children across the country.

Demand of the community for two-year PPE

Respondents revealed mixed results regarding the demand for two-year PPE for their children. The FGD data revealed an increasing demand of PPE in rural areas. On the other hand, most parents from urban areas preferred private kindergarten schools because GPS emphasise more on play and non-academic components like rhymes, dance, and songs in pre-primary classrooms, while learning

literacy, numeracy, and other components are overlooked. Interviews with parents/caregivers who enrolled their children in kindergarten instead of PPE in the GPS revealed that they prefer the traditional paper-pencil-based teaching-learning and assessment followed in kindergarten schools. For instance, one of the parents said,

> *"In kindergarten, my daughter learned general knowledge, English words, sentences, etc. along with Bangla and mathematics. But in Government Primary School, I did not find many things to learn. Most of the time is spent playing, singing, and other activities. When will the children learn?"*

These parents recommended incorporating more academic learning contents in the pre-primary curriculum. For instance, a parent said,

> *"We enrol our children in kindergarten because they teach them from a very young age, and we are happy to see children studying. I do not understand why the Government schools spend most of their teaching-learning time singing, dancing, and playing! They (PPE in GPS) should emphasize 'true learning."*

Additionally, other reasons like providing religious education to the children are among the reasons for parent not choosing PPE in GPS. For example, a parent who sent her child pre-ebtedayee class of madrasah said,

> "*Here children can learn Bangla, English, math as well as Arabic. They can learn all the things they need to learn along with religious education".*

Discussions with teachers and the school management committee also revealed similar findings. According to them, a portion of parents expected that the pre-school should focus on some 'real' learning where 'real' indicates an emphasis on traditional paper-pencil-based literacy, and numeric competencies, instead of the holistic development of the children. It is likely that a lack of parental awareness of the importance of play and play based pedagogy in early child development is one of the reasons behind this perception.

Some parents also expressed the need for tiffin (or light meal), uniforms, and stipends for pre-primary children. According to them, some of the children attend school without having breakfast as poor families are not always able to provide all meals for children. Spending long hours in school on a hungry stomach is hard for children. Parents therefore feel that school meals should be provided in PPE programmes as a priority. Additionally, parents expressed the need for a stipend and clothing for young children, suggesting that it will incentivize parents to be interested in PPE and that children from poor families will not feel lesser than their peers. As one parent and SMC member said:

> *"Most of us are not from very financially able families. So, it would be helpful for us if the Government took the initiative of giving biscuits, food packets, bags, stipends and uniforms to the children who enrol in pre-primary schools. Although the Government is already giving us books free of cost, it will help us to reduce our cost of out-of-pocket expenses for children's education."*

Parents also requested comfortable seating areas at the schools when they accompany their child to school. These waiting areas where parents can sit when they drop-off or come to pick-up the children provide a friendly environment and opportunities to keep the children in PPE.

Parents also expressed the need for ECD-related orientation/ training during their stay at school, which would help them to support their children. Interestingly, some pre-primary teachers feel that if

parents receive short-term training on parenting and PPE, these trained parents or guardians can volunteer in pre-primary classroom activities which will help them as there is a lack of teachers/assistants in PPE.

Many community members emphasised the need for building boundary walls in schools for the safety and security of children. They also said that it would be better if the school timings were set a little later for the children aged 4 years old and over. Many parents cannot send their children to school at 9 am due to children doing family chores.

Orientation of parents/caregivers and School Managing Committee

The findings show that most schools (80 per cent of GPS and pilot schools) arrange regular mother assemblies or parent-teacher meetings; however, these meetings are focused on administrative, disciplinary, or evaluation purposes. Around half of the schools were found with the register books of the parents' meetings and descriptions of the registrar were also evident. All respondents stated that the Government should consider orienting parents/caregivers about the two-year PPE. A parent said,

> *"I think there is a need for a session or a meeting to inform us about two-years pre-primary education. This will give us more information about the current initiative. It will also help us to properly care for our children for their development."*

Most parents said that they did not participate in any orientation or discussion on two-year PPE. They heard that PPE for children aged 4 years and over was designed for young children, and in attending the programme, children would learn essential skills through play, without necessary relying on textbooks or assessments. The findings of the study showed that parents were sceptical about PPE precisely because of the approach PPE is using.

In this regard, regular parenting sessions in schools can help to develop awareness among parents. Relevant stakeholders highlighted the importance of educating parents about the benefits of sending their children aged 4 years and over to school. They emphasised that schools need to organise regular parents' meetings or sessions to inform them about the advantages of early education. The respondents argued that for the successful implementation of PPE, it's crucial to provide parents with proper orientation/training sessions to inform them about their role in their children's education.

Additionally, they suggested collaborative programmes to teach parents about the significance of the health, hygiene, and nutrition of children in early childhood development through various educational methods and community engagements, such as distributing health-related materials and organising assemblies and meetings involving mothers. Parents stated they could not take initiative to arrange such a programme for the parents and the community due to a lack of relevant guidelines.

SMC members were also found to lack proper orientation on the two-year PPE and their role in implementing it effectively. Many did not have any idea about PPE for children aged 4 and over. A member of the SMC said:

> *"We have no idea what is going on. The Government should organise orientation/training sessions on pre-primary education to help us fulfil our roles and responsibilities. It will also enhance our interest, and we can impact the programme positively."*

According to respondents, various initiatives can be taken to inform and involve the parents and community, including awareness campaigns, community meetings, distribution of leaflets, and

training programmes for stakeholders. Targeted communication, workshops, and community events can also be organised to further engage them.

Linkage of PPE with social services

Linkage with community-level organisations was emphasised for effective implementation of PPE for children aged 4 and over. According to respondents, given that a child spends most of their time in the community and only 2-3 hours in school, community people must be aware of the child's health, hygiene and protection needs to ensure they are supported holistically. The community potentially ensures safety and security and increases the enrolment rate at the pre-primary level. Community-level organisations such as religious institutes and community clinics can play a supportive role in implementing PPE in primary schools.

According to a head teacher:

> *"The Imams and maqtab teachers can play an important role in motivating community people to send their children to pre-primary level. If they are oriented and motivated, they can encourage community people to enrol their children in PPE."*

Community clinics have an important role to play in supporting the health of young children and regular health checkups for children every 1-2 months will mean that health risks for children will be reduced. According to PPE experts, community clinics can help schools with disability screening of children and provide referrals for them. The study found that this practice is rare in the PPE programme. Data shows that there is a lack of linkage of schools with other social service institutes, religious institutes and community clinics for this purpose. A head teacher said:

> *"We did not get any instruction for linkage with community clinics and religious institutes. If we get a proper guideline, we can follow it in the future."*

In some NGO-operated schools, parents are welcomed in the classroom and encouraged to participate in teaching-learning activities, assist the teacher, and prepare learning materials.

However, the practice is rarely seen in PPE in GPS. A complementary guideline for linkage with parents/caregivers, community clinics, religious institutes, and other relevant community entities can be helpful in this regard.

School management committees (SMCs) are another key stakeholder in the implementation of PPE. However, findings reveal that most SMCs are reluctant to engage actively, and as a result, fall short of providing the expected support. Findings show that only one-third of the schools found with SMC members' visit entry in the registrar.

Pre-primary education provisions across different types of schools

This section analyses the status of pre-primary education (PPE) in GPS in comparison with kindergartens, NGO-run centres, ebtedayee madrasahs, and para-canters emphasising both existing services and crucial deficiencies. It notes the presence of pre-primary classrooms highlighting the quality and capacity features necessary to accommodate children of different age groups. There is

multiple issues that impact on the provision including the classroom spaces, inadequate materials, and limited learning hours that are presented as significant impediments for effective PPE delivery. The report proposes infrastructure improvements, better material management, adopting flexible learning hours, and enhanced teacher training to address these challenges and bolster enrolment and educational quality in PPE.

Infrastructure

Data collected shows that the situation of pre-ebtedayee section of ebtedayee madrasah is even more critical in terms of infrastructure. In the visited madrasahs, only one classroom was found in each madrasah for pre-ebtedayee section, and the class was congested, inaccessible for children with disabilities, with no suitable sitting arrangement. There was a lack of organised pre-school teaching-learning facilities including play materials, activity corners, furniture, and unavailability of boards available at a level of reach suitable for young children.

In NGO-run ECE and para centres, the classroom situation was comparatively better. Though they have only one classroom and depend on single teachers, classrooms are well maintained with four corners, relevant learning and play materials, safe drinking water and hand WASH facilities, a smooth floor, and a suitable sitting arrangement that is mostly accessible for children with disabilities.

For kindergarten students, 2-3 classrooms were found for the preschool section and there were 3-4 teachers available. In each classroom, sitting arrangements were organised setting low benches suitable for children while boards and furniture were also suitable in most cases. However, the seating arrangement, entrances, and passages were not accessible and equitable for children with disabilities in most schools. Moreover, there was a lack of corner-based activities and play materials in the kindergartens.

Teaching-learning materials

The presence of four corner facilities stands out in the offerings of PPE within GPS. While relevant teaching-learning materials including teachers' guides, textbooks, story books, flip charts, blocks, drawing materials, play materials for imagination corners, sand and water corner materials and exercise books are used in PPE of GPS.

The NGO-run ECE centres and para centres of Chittagong Hill Tract Development Board (CHTDB) were found to have the same type of materials as the GPS including four corner facilities, teachers' guides, textbooks, story books, flip charts, blocks, drawing materials, play materials for imagination corners, sand and water corner materials and exercise books (writing khata) etc. During the data collection, most teaching-learning and play materials were found available in the visited ECE centres of NGO and CHTDB. There were also shelves and boxes for keeping materials.

In GPS, some schools possess the recommended learning and playing materials. However, there is a widespread shortage of adequate materials relative to the number of enrolled children. The primary reason for the shortfall is damage or loss of the materials, which makes timely replenishment difficult and results in a lack of resources in most schools.

In addition, ebtedayee madrasahs enrol a certain number of children in their pre-primary classes. In these institutions, no learning and playing materials were found suitable for children. In most cases, the authorities collect the materials on their initiatives. They do not receive any significant government support for the required equipment. One ebtedayee teacher said,

"We barely know about pre-primary curriculum, teacher guidance, etc. We gather some teaching learning materials on our own and the initiative of the parents."

The physical facilities including classrooms and furniture were better in kindergarten, however, the teaching-learning and play materials are not available in the kindergarten classroom. No play materials are usually used in the visited kindergarten, rather they use specific books, exercise books are prescribed by the schools.

These institutions can significantly contribute to implementing two- year PPE throughout Bangladesh. However, when evaluating the above situation, it indicates that there is a lack of preparedness regarding learning and playing materials.

Learning hours

The typical learning hours for PPE range from 2-2.5 hours in the GPS, NGO-run ECE, and para-centres. In the kindergarten and pre-ebtedayee section, the duration also ranges from 2-3 hours.

Teacher and teacher training

In GPS, NGO-run schools, and para-centres, usually one teacher conducted teaching-learning activities. However, in ebtedayee madrasah and kindergarten, around two to four teachers were found at the preschool section where separate subject-based teachers are deployed.

The teachers at piloting schools appreciated the 15 days PPE training and the seven days specialised training for the children aged 4 and over age group PPE training sessions, which lasted for 15 days and 7 days respectively. However, there's a growing demand to extend the duration of the pre-primary for children aged 4 years and over education training. Teachers mentioned that although the training was helpful, supporting 4-year-olds requires more time and suggested extending the training to 15 days. Teachers also expressed the need for additional capacity building opportunities into the 15 days training to enable them to address the challenges that emerge in day-to-day classrooms. Continuous professional development opportunities including refresher training, yearly review meetings/training, exposure meetings, etc. were suggested as capacity-building efforts by teachers and other stakeholders during the interview. PPE expansion plans also suggested additional 2–3-day refresher training each year, and quarterly review by the trainers.

With regards to the kindergarten and ebtedayee madrasahs, no specific training provisions were found at the preschool-level. However, in NGO-run ECE and para kendra specific training packages are offered. For para kendra teachers, a 15-day foundation training along with one refresher training is offered every year, and bi-monthly review sessions are held. In the NGO-run ECE programme, 7 -12 days of foundation training, yearly refreshers' training, and quarterly review sessions are held with some variations across different organisations.

Regarding two-year PPE training, teachers suggested comprehensive training with hands-on experience and practical classes in real classrooms for them. One of the teachers said:

> *"I think it would be better if the classes are conducted with children aged 4 years old and above instead of taking the demo class during the training. Senior officers can observe the problems of teachers and provide feedback. Providing respondents with pre-training materials can ensure a basic understanding, which will be useful in the practical application of training. Ensuring strong technical support to minimise interruptions and frustrations during virtual sessions is essential."*

Teachers proposed to include a practical class in PPE classroom with children aged 4 and over during the training period, allowing officers to observe and provide feedback to better address teachers' challenges. Headteachers, AUEO, and URC instructors said that they also require orientation on two-year PPE, as many still lack this understanding. The PPE expansion plan also suggested specific training for the head teachers, AUEO, and UEO for their advisory, monitoring, and managerial roles. They asked for a comprehensive training, stating the need for enhanced skills in managing, supervising, and monitoring PPE. Additionally, there was a desire for refresher training sessions to maintain teachers' motivation and improve classroom practices.

Chapter 3

Challenges and risks

This section details the challenges and risks in implementing and scaling up of the two-year PPE programme in Government Primary Schools. It highlights the infrastructure limitations, teacher shortages, resource insufficiencies, community misconceptions and logistical hurdles that are impacting negatively on the scale-up of PPE. Addressing these barriers through strategic interventions and stakeholder collaborations is crucial for a successful scale-up of the PPE across the country.

Infrastructure bottlenecks

The challenges identified in implementing the two-year PPE programme in Government Primary Schools include inadequate infrastructure and facilities. Common issues include a shortage of classrooms, small class sizes, deficient and unsuitable WASH blocks for young children, the absence of boundary walls leading to security concerns, electricity problems, and insufficient seating arrangements for parents and caregivers.

Teachers highlighted the lack of adequate classrooms as the primary obstacle, with some schools using small spaces or wooden rooms to accommodate many children. Additionally, inadequate WASH blocks and water supply persist, posing additional challenges to younger children. Safety concerns due to the absence of boundary walls, especially in flood-prone areas, deter parents from enrolling their children in pre-primary classes. The absence of electricity creates a further challenge, especially during hot season.

Furthermore, insufficient seating arrangements for parents and caregivers present a significant challenge as young children are more comfortable and engaged when their caregivers are nearby. This lack of waiting areas where parents or guardians can sit when picking up or dropping-off children makes it difficult for many parents to remain close to the schools or classrooms. These challenges collectively hinder the smooth implementation of the two-year PPE programme.

Teachers' capacity development gaps

The main challenge in PPE is the shortage of teachers, causing difficulties during training sessions and routine continuation. Participants emphasize the need to extend training duration and content, incorporating new techniques and materials. However, challenges arise for female teachers in residential training, particularly those with young children. Participants suggest periodic refresher training using online/blended modes for ongoing professional development. They advocate for regular monitoring and mentoring to optimise teachers' existing skills and knowledge. Additionally, there's a call for increasing the number of teachers due to the challenge of handling many children by a single teacher.

Teaching-learning and playing materials shortages

Most schools possess some educational materials for PPE; however, these resources are often insufficient for the number of students enrolled. These materials are damaged frequently and cannot be replaced on a short notice, leading to a scarcity of recommended materials for the PPE curriculum. The flood-prone areas also experience damage of learning materials on a regular basis, creating shortages of learning materials in the primary schools. The allocation of budgets for purchase of learning materials is often lacking, including during the disasters, making it challenging

to procure costs of materials within the provided budget and these shortages often result in teachers contributing funds themselves for materials. The space constraints in pre-primary classrooms limit the feasibility of putting storage/shelves inside the classroom, and the inadequate shelving further complicates the organisation and maintenance of materials inside the PPE classrooms, increasing the risk of damage or loss.

Community perceptions

The primary hurdle faced by the community in expanding the two-year pre-primary programme is their limited understanding and awareness regarding the importance of PPE in child development. Parents often view early education as unnecessary pressure on young children, fostering a competitive academic atmosphere that contradicts pre-primary education's intended goals. Poverty is another significant obstacle, as earning a livelihood often takes precedence over education. Additionally, maintaining schedules and providing proper meals for children poses challenges, particularly in rural areas. The safety of children while coming to school and returning home and crossing the busy roads is a safety concern for most parents. Some of the parents requested for a safety boundary walls around the schools and a school marshal 'employed' and managed by the school to help and support students safely cross the road. These concerns might significantly impact the successful implementation of the extended PPE programme.

Learning hours and linkage with relevant entities

The study revealed positive feedback regarding the current duration of PPE, yet respondents made various suggestions. Teachers highlighted weather-related challenges and suggested flexible scheduling to ensure children' comfort during extreme conditions such as rains and floods. Many schools face a single teacher managing multiple classrooms, necessitating flexible timings and shifts based on school capacity and community comfort to accommodate the PPE classes. The limited awareness among school committees and communities emerged as a major challenge, leading parents to prefer more traditional academic activities rather than play-based pedagogy. However, some schools with strong community engagement reported positive experiences, citing improvements in children's social and cognitive development. Positive changes observed by parents after enrolling their children in PPE were also noted. The study emphasizes the need for stakeholder awareness and engagement to mitigate challenges, suggesting collaborative efforts, local initiatives, awareness campaigns, and orientations as potential solutions. Additionally, respondents recommended adjusting school timings to accommodate weather conditions and increasing class duration along with learning materials.

Opportunities

The expansion of the two-year pre-primary education (PPE) programme in Bangladesh offers significant opportunities through innovative solutions to address infrastructure challenges. The opportunities include the following:

Optimising the use of existing infrastructure

Optimising the use of existing infrastructure is a key opportunity. By using resources creatively such as spacious single decorated rooms for multiple classes or implementing shift systems, schools can address the shortage of classroom to accommodate the 4+ age group. Tailored modifications to ensure age-appropriate facilities, including sanitation improvements, can further enhance inclusivity

and functionality, ensuring that younger children are provided with safe and engaging learning environments.

Parental involvement

Parental involvement and the optimisation of human resources also present promising avenues. Training parents and caregivers to support pre-primary teaching offers a cost-effective and community-driven approach. This strategy not only empowers parents to extend learning support at home but also reduces the burden on teachers. Additionally, hiring more teachers dedicated to PPE will ensure that the distinct needs of both the 4+ and 5+ age groups are met, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the programme.

Enhancing teacher capacity

Teacher capacity building remains central to the success of the two-year PPE programme. Specialised training, mentoring and constructive feedback mechanism, tailored to psychological and behavioural needs of younger children will equip teachers to manage classrooms more effectively. DPE may hire more teachers and potential orient parents to aid in teaching in the absence of teachers.

Using online platforms

Online platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Muktopaath[16] can be leveraged to raise awareness and improve skills among teachers, ensuring a scalable and accessible approach to capacity development, including offering online courses aimed at enhancing skills of teachers. Strengthening the monitoring mechanism using the e-monitoring app and IPEMIS should be optimized.

Expanding and diversifying learning materials

Expanding and diversifying learning materials offers another critical opportunity. The PPE programme can benefit from the introduction of additional resources, such as puzzles, sensory tools, and art supplies, which are essential for fostering creativity and cognitive development in the 4+ age group. Locally available low-cost materials can complement these efforts, by directly addressing budget constraints while promoting innovative teaching practices using locally available resources. Ensuring that budgets for play and learning materials align with the number of enrolled children will optimise use of resources and effectiveness of the classes.

Strengthening community awareness and engagement

Strengthening community awareness and engagement is also pivotal. Raising awareness about the benefits of the two-year PPE programme among teachers, parents, and the broader community will encourage greater participation and support. By emphasising the holistic development of children through play-based and age-appropriate learning, the programme can build a supportive ecosystem that values pre-primary education as a critical foundation for lifelong success.

[16] Launched in 2016, MuktoPaath brings skill-based professional and academic courses at affordable costs to every citizen's, with varied courses for teachers, students and has helped enhance knowledge and skills of millions, including the poor and underserved.

Chapter 4

Recommendations

Based on the findings, there are several recommendations that emerged from the study and provides pointers to how to effectiveness enhance the access, quality, inclusiveness, and governance of pre-primary education and to scale-up the two-year PPE across the Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh. These are summarised as follows:

Schools should focus on improving accessibility and safety through planned placements and protective measures. It was found that most schools are within one kilometre of children' homes, and efforts should continue to be made to maintain and expand access to schools. The absence of protective fencing in many schools needs immediate attention by the Government, by allocating resources for installing boundary walls and safety barriers, especially in schools that are near potential hazards like highways or water bodies. Expanding outdoor play spaces and providing age-appropriate equipment such as swings, slides, climbing nets can further enhance the children's engagement in outdoor play significantly, thereby contributing to their physical development (around the gross motor, fine motor and sensory motor skills development), and complemented with all the other domains for the development of children.

Designating separate classrooms for PPE is essential, **and schools should prioritize dedicated rooms for these children** to support age-appropriate learning environment especially for children aged 4 years and older. Planning for two-year PPE programme will require additional classrooms in most schools, which should be factored into future infrastructure or facility development plans. Allocating budgets specifically for spatial expansion can alleviate classroom shortages, following a robust classroom design that ensures child-friendly classrooms. Investing in infrastructure improvements is crucial for the successful expansion of the PPE.

Addressing classroom sizes is critical for accommodating enrolled children safely and comfortably. The current standards fall short of the recommended 17 square feet per child, which indicates a need for reviewing and reinforcing space requirements in Government Primary Schools. This issue of classroom sizes is especially pressing in GPS facilities, where the existing small classrooms constrain learners' movements and limit storage of essential learning materials. Expanding classroom sizes or constructing new ones should be a priority, especially in regions with higher non-compliance, such as coastal areas and schools where enrolment rate is high.

Physical facilities, such as seats, blackboards, and ventilation, require consistent maintenance and monitoring to ensure child-friendly standards. Schools should consider regular facility assessments to identify and repair damaged items, like seats and classroom boards, which impede effective learning.

Improving age-appropriate WASH facilities is crucial, especially for young learners who need accessible, safe, clean and well-maintained facilities to ensure a healthy, safe learning environment. This includes installing child-height water taps, toilets and basins and ensuring WASH facilities are close to classrooms. Regular maintenance and inspection of these facilities, especially during the rainy season, will reduce potential hazards for students. Emphasis should be placed on capacity-building, and equipping stakeholders with the skills to maintain positive hygiene practices and safe environment in schools.

To strengthen the safety and security of young children, schools should be equipped with comprehensive safety protocols to reduce risks, particularly near highways and other high-traffic areas. First-aid boxes should be stocked regularly, with clear protocols to check for expired supplies, and timely replacements. School management committees should play a proactive role in identifying potential hazards within and around school premises to create a safer, and more conducive environment for early learners.

Efforts should be directed towards ensuring an adequate supply of learning and play materials, given the limited supplies and quality issues. This involves procuring and organising materials in multiple sets, creating simpler versions, and allocating budgets based on student numbers. Creative approaches, such as using locally available low-cost materials can contribute to sustainable solutions.

Flexible scheduling of PPE classes based on weather conditions, especially in flood-prone areas, is recommended. This includes adjusting school schedules and introducing shifts to accommodate the comfort and safety of children and teachers. Stakeholders should be made aware of the benefits of such adjustments to mobilise wider support for policy directives and guidance to teachers.

Immediate steps are required to overcome the shortage of teachers dedicated to the pre-primary classes, including appointing an assistant/caregiver for each classroom as suggested in the two-year PPE summary report. This includes extending the training duration and content, incorporating new techniques and materials, and periodic refresher training through online/blended modalities. Additionally, adopting innovative strategies like involving parents and caregivers in teaching would contribute to optimising gaps in existing human resources. Overall, a skilled workforce with specialised knowledge is required to expand the two-year PPE programme across the country.

Addressing community misconceptions about the purpose of PPE is crucial. Awareness campaigns, orientations, and local initiatives should be implemented to foster a better understanding among parents and community members. Collaborative efforts involving parents, guardians and key stakeholders can significantly contribute to overcoming challenges related to unfavourable community perceptions so that there is a positive support to children's access to pre-primary education.

Conclusion

The assessment of the two-year PPE in the Government Primary Schools in Bangladesh highlights a blend of successes, challenges, and potential areas for improvement with the purpose of scaling-up the two-year PPE in schools in Bangladesh.

Satisfactory progress has been observed in infrastructure development, teacher-student ratio compliance, and comprehensive teacher training across both piloting schools and GPS. This progress is reflected in the availability of dedicated classrooms, adherence to safety benchmarks, and the maintenance of clean, child-friendly school premises.

However, challenges persist, particularly in terms of infrastructure limitations. The shortage of classrooms in schools, the prevalence of small class sizes in others, the deficient WASH blocks, and security concerns, due to the lack of boundary walls in some schools pose significant hurdles. Additionally, teacher shortages, especially for the 4+ age group, demand immediate attention. The proposed solutions range from hiring more teachers to involving parents and caregivers in the teaching learning process.

Furthermore, the unavailability and ineffective management of learning materials also present challenges. Moreover, the scarcity of PPE teachers, the budgetary constraints, the unfavourable community perceptions how PPE classes are run, influenced by the limited understanding of the benefits of play based pedagogies for children hinders enrolment and positive parental engagement.

Despite these challenges, there are notable opportunities for improvement in the provision of PPE, such as the innovative use of existing infrastructure, flexible scheduling of classes based on weather conditions, and engaging parents and caregivers in teaching roles. Optimisation of human resources, including comprehensive training for teachers and the involvement of parents, emerged as a possible strategy. The study recognises the potential of community engagement, stakeholder collaborations, and awareness initiatives to address challenges and enhance effectiveness of pre-school provisions.

Recommendations include urgent infrastructure enhancements, addressing classroom shortage, deficient WASH blocks, and rethinking seating arrangements in the PPE classes. Immediate measures are needed to overcome teacher shortages, including extending training, periodic refresher courses, and exploring innovative approaches like involving parents in learning of children. Efficient management of learning materials, by creating simpler versions, organising materials in multiple sets, and allocating budgets based on student numbers are some pathways for change. Community engagement through awareness campaigns, orientations, and local initiatives is pivotal to overcoming misconceptions and fostering support for pre-primary education.

The success of the scale-up of the two-year PPE hinges on strategic interventions, which will entail stakeholder collaborations, and an initiative-taking approaches to overcome the identified obstacles for and transforming PPE. By implementing the recommendations outlined in this feasibility study report, there is a momentous opportunity scale-up the two-year PPE, which will not only ensure a more inclusive and effective learning environment for young children, but it will prepare the children for primary school, which is critical for all future learning and development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Data collection tools of the study

Feasibility study for 2-year pre-primary education in GPS

School observation checklist

A. Background information

1. School name: _____ 2. Intervene school: yes/ no.

3. School type: GPS / NNPS / NGOs / mtb PPE / kindergarten / ebtedayee

4. Upazila: _____ 5. District: _____ 6. Location type: urban/ rural

7. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

8. No. Of 4+ aged children in the catchment: _____ 9. No. Of 4+ aged children enrolled: _

10. No. Of 5+ aged children in the catchment: _____ 11. No. Of 5+ aged children enrolled:

B. Physical facilities

Sl.	Facilities	Yes	No	Comments
1	Have a separate/designated room for PPE?			
2	Have scope of extension of the room?			
3	Number of rooms available for PPE			
4	Number of children enrolled in PPE			
5	Is the room size sufficient for the number of 30 children?			
6	Have four-corner facilities available in the room?			
7	Are the corners (4) decorated with relevant materials?			
8	Is the room decorated with children's work?			
9	Are there available teaching-learning materials in the room as listed in the PPE curriculum and teacher guide?			
10	Are there available play materials in the room as listed in the PPE curriculum and teacher guide?			
11	Is the seating arrangement (mat and seating in a u shape) suitable for PPE children?			
12	Are there available sitting materials (mats) for the children?			

13	Is there a handwashing facility in the room or near the room for all children?			
14	Are the learning facilities equitable and accessible for all children?			
15	Are the teaching-learning materials and play materials equitable and accessible for all the children?			
15	Are the teaching-learning and play materials gender-neutral/sensitive?			

C. Teaching-learning practice

Sl.	**Teaching-learning practice**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
1	Does the teacher follow the time distribution suggested for different activities in the teacher guide?			
2	Is the time distribution for different activities suggested in the teacher guide balanced/appropriate for conducting the activities?			
3	In that case, can the teacher revise the time distribution according to the curriculum needs?			
4	Is the learning hour suggested in the teacher's guide appropriate/sufficient for conducting the teaching-learning activities?			
5	Does the teacher follow the teaching-learning approaches suggested for different activities in the teacher guide?			
6	Are the teaching-learning approaches suggested in the teacher guide balanced/appropriate for conducting the activities?			
7	In that case, can the teacher revise the teaching-learning approaches according to the curriculum needs?			
8	Does the teacher use the teaching-learning materials as suggested in the teacher guide?			
9	Are the teaching-learning materials appropriate/sufficient for conducting the teaching-learning activities?			

10	Does the teacher use the play materials as suggested in the teacher guide?			
11	Are the play materials appropriate/sufficient for conducting the activities suggested in the teacher guide?			
12	Does the teacher provide children with scope to do four-corner activities including water and sand corner activities?			
13	Does the teacher assess children' progress based on their participation and performance in regular activities and keep records of the assessment?			
14	Does the teacher ensure equitable access to the teaching-learning and play materials to the children?			
15	Does the teacher ensure gender-neutral/ sensitive use of the teaching-learning and play materials?			
16	Is there any schedule/plan for measuring children's physical, mental, language, and social development status? (visiting community clinic, doctor's visit, health check-up, therapy, etc.)			
17	Is there any records/entry of children's physical, mental, language, and social development status in the school register?			

D. Community and parent engagement

Sl.	**Community and parent engagement activities**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
1	Is there any schedule/plan for parent engagement/orientation on parenting for effective implementation of PPE?			
2	If yes, how frequently does the engagement/ orientation happen?			
3	Is there any registrar where the plan/ schedule/ events are given entry?			
4	Is there any courtyard meeting/session or parents' meeting plan regularly?			

5	If yes, how frequently does the meeting/ session happen?			
6	Is there any registrar where the meeting/ session descriptions are written?			
7	If yes, what topics are discussed in the meeting/ session?			
8	Is there any plan/schedule for visiting the SMC members in PPE?			
9	Is there any registrar/entry of SMC member's visit in PPE?			
10	Is there any scope for parents/caregivers' visiting in the PPE?			
11	Is there any registrar/entry/ monitoring board for the parents/caregivers in the PPE?			

D. Implementation of PPE for 4+ aged curriculum

Sl.	**Implementation of 4+aged curriculum**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
1	Is there any difference found in practice between 4+ and 5+ aged PPE programme s?			
2	What basic differences are found in teachers' practice?			
3	Does the teacher's practice reflect the 4+ aged PPE curriculum competencies?			
4	Are the activities suitable for the 4+ aged PPE curriculum competencies?			
5	Are the available materials suitable for 4+ aged PPE?			
6	What other materials are needed for the implementation of 4+ aged PPE?			
7	Are the teaching-learning strategies used/ followed by the teachers suitable for 4+ aged PPE?			
8	Does the teacher assess learning progress of 4+ aged children?			
9	Is there any assessment record of 4+ aged children's learning progress?			

10	Learning hour and duration of 4+ aged PPE	Time:		duration:
11	Is the learning time and duration suitable for the 4+ aged children?			
12	Is there any consistency of timing between 4+ aged and 5+ aged PPE?			

E. Other observation

(please record other relevant observations including opportunity, challenges and risks here)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Feasibility study for Two -year pre-primary education in GPS

Interview protocol for PPE teacher

A. Background information

1. Name of the teacher: _____ 2. Year of experience: _____

3. Education: HSC / graduation / post-graduation 4. Professional education: C-in-Ed/DPEd /Nill

5. Got 15 days of PPE training: yes / no. 6. Got training on 4+ aged PPE: yes / no

7. School name: _____ 8. Intervene school: yes/ no.

9. School type: GPS / NNPS / NGOs / mtb PPE / kindergarten / ebtedayee

10. Upazila: _____ 11. District: _____ 12. Location type: urban/ rural

13. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

14. No. Of 4+ aged children in the catchment: _____ 15. No. Of 4+ aged children enrolled:

16. No. Of 5+ aged children in the catchment: _____ 17. No. Of 5+ aged children enrolled:

B. Study-related questions

1. Have you got any training on PPE? Duration and content of the training? Was the training sufficient to equip your knowledge and skills to facilitate PPE?

If you get training on 4+ aged PPE, duration and content of the training? Was the content, approach, and duration enough to equip your knowledge and skills to facilitate 4+ aged PPE? Is it possible for you to facilitate 4+ old children with the same facilities and opportunities? What additional training and facilities are necessary?

2. Is the existing infrastructure of your school sufficient for facilitating PPE? Is it enough to accommodate the number of enrolled children and PPE-aged children in the catchment area?

Are the facilities enough to accommodate the number of 4+ age group children in your catchment area along with 5+ aged children? What additional facilities are necessary to accommodate the 4+ aged PPE children?

3. Are there sufficient teaching-learning and play materials (including 4-corners) for facilitating PPE as per guidelines of the curriculum, teacher guide, and PPE implementation guidelines?

Can these teaching-learning and play materials be utilised for 4+ aged PPE children? What additional materials are needed?

4. What is the learning hour and time duration for PPE? Is it convenient for the learners and sufficient to facilitate the PPE sessions as per the curriculum, teacher guide, and implementation guidelines?

Is it possible to accommodate 4+ aged PPE programme aligned with the existing PPE learning hours and time duration for a PPE single teacher? What additional arrangements are necessary to facilitate 4+ aged PPE programme aligned with the existing PPE programme time duration and contact hours?

5. What minimum facilities (human resources, physical facilities, teaching-learning and play materials, contact hours, and time duration) are needed in the primary schools to introduce two-year pre-primary?

6. To what extent were the relevant stakeholders (including parents, caregivers, community people, SMC members, and community clinic) oriented on the PPE (along with 4+ aged PPE) programme and their role in it? What initiatives can be taken for their orientation and engagement in the programme? Do you conduct any parenting sessions/meetings with the parents/caregivers? Is yes, how?

7. What are the challenges and risks of introducing the Two- years of PPE in the existing structure and facilities? What can be done to address the challenges and risks identified?

Feasibility study for Two -year pre-primary education in GPS

Interview protocol for head teacher

A. Background information

1. Name of the teacher: _____ 2. Year of experience: _____

3. Education: HSC / graduation / post-graduation 4. Professional education: c-in-ed/DPEd/Nill

5. Got any orientation on PPE: yes / no. 6. Got any orientation on 4+ aged PPE: yes / no

7. School name: _____ 8. Intervene school: yes/ no.

9. School type: GPS / NNPS / NGOs / mtbPPE / kindergarten / ebtedayee

10. Upazila: _____ 11. District: _____ 12. Location type: urban/ rural

13. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

14. No. Of 4+ aged children in the catchment: _____ 15. No. Of 4+ aged children enrolled:

16. No. Of 5+ aged children in the catchment: _____ 17. No. Of 5+ aged children enrolled:

B. Study-related questions

1. Did your PPE teacher get any training on PPE? Can s/he facilitate PPE with the training s/he got? What is your observation and suggestion regarding the training?

Did s/he get training on 4+ aged PPE? What is your observation regarding 4+ aged PPE training? Did it properly equip your teacher on 4+ aged PPE? What additional training and facilities are necessary?

2. Is the existing infrastructure of your school sufficient for facilitating PPE? Is it enough to accommodate the number of enrolled children and PPE-aged children in the catchment area?

Are the facilities enough to accommodate the number of 4+ age group children in your catchment area along with 5+ aged children? What additional facilities are necessary to accommodate the 4+ aged PPE children?

3. Are there sufficient teaching-learning and play materials (including 4-corners) for facilitating PPE as per guidelines of the curriculum, teacher guide, and PPE implementation guidelines?

Can these teaching-learning and play materials be utilized for 4+ aged PPE children? What additional materials are needed?

4. What are the learning hours and time duration for PPE? Is it convenient for the learners and sufficient to facilitate the PPE sessions as per the curriculum, teacher guide, and implementation guidelines?

Is it possible to accommodate 4+ aged PPE programme aligned with the existing PPE learning hours and time duration for a PPE single teacher? What additional arrangements are necessary to facilitate 4+ aged PPE programme aligned with the existing PPE programme time duration and contact hours?

5. What minimum facilities (human resources, physical facilities, teaching-learning and play materials, contact hours, and time duration) are needed in the primary schools to introduce two-year pre-primary?

6. To what extent were the relevant stakeholders (including parents, caregivers, community people, SMC members, and community clinic) oriented on the PPE (along with 4+ aged PPE) programme and their role in it? What initiatives can be taken for their orientation and engagement in the programme?

7. What are the challenges and risks of introducing Two- years of PPE in the existing structure and facilities? What can be done to address those challenges and risks?

Feasibility study for two- years pre-primary education in GPS

FGD schedule for the SMC members

A. Background information

1. School name: _____ 2. Intervene school: yes/ no.

3. School type: GPS / NNPS / NGOs / mtb PPE / kindergarten / ebtedayee

4. Upazila: _____ 5. District: _____ 6. Location type: urban/ rural

7. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

Name	**Representative type**	**Profession**

B. Study-related questions

1. Did you get any orientation on PPE? What do you know about PPE? What do you know about two-year PPE? What changes are there compared to the One -year PPE? Do you feel that you need sufficient orientation on two-year PPE and its implementation process?

2. What is your role in implementing the PPE? How do you manage your role and responsibilities? What support do you need to wait upon your roles?

3. To what extent are the relevant stakeholders (including parents, caregivers, community people, and community clinic) oriented on the PPE (and two-year PPE) programme and their role in it? What initiatives can be taken for their orientation and engagement in the programme?

4. Is the existing infrastructure of your school sufficient for facilitating two-year PPE? Is it enough to accommodate the number of enrolled children and PPE-aged children in the catchment area? What additional facilities are necessary to accommodate the 4+ aged PPE children?

5. Does the school conduct any parenting sessions/meetings with the parents/caregivers? How?

6. Are there sufficient teaching-learning and play materials that can be used for PPE? What additional materials are needed?

7. What are the challenges and risks of introducing the two years of PPE in the existing structure and facilities? What can be done to address those challenges and risks?

Feasibility study for two- years pre-primary education in GPS

FGD schedule for parents/caregivers and community people

A. Background information

1. School name: _____ 2. Intervene school: yes/ no.

3. School type: GPS / NNPS / NGOs / mtbPPE / kindergarten / ebtedayee

4. Upazila: _____ 5. District: _____ 6. Location type: urban/ rural

7. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

Name	**Representative type**	**Profession**

B. Study-related questions

1. Did you get any orientation on PPE? What do you know about PPE? What do you know about two-year PPE? What changes are there compared to the One-year PPE? Do you feel that you need sufficient orientation on two-year PPE and its implementation process?

2. What is your role in implementing the PPE? How do you manage your role and responsibilities? What support do you need to wait upon your roles?

3. Does the school conduct any parenting sessions/meetings with the parents/caregivers? How? How frequently does it happen?

4. Can the existing school facilities (room, materials) be utilised for two-year PPE? What is your experience?

5. What are the challenges and risks of introducing two-year PPE in the existing structure and facilities? What can be done to address those challenges and risks?

Feasibility study for two- years pre-primary education in GPS

Interview protocol for UEO/AUEO/URCI/PTI

A. Background information

1. Name: _____ 2. Designation: _____ 3. Upazila: _____
4. District: _____ 5. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

B. Study-related questions

1. Did you get any orientation on two-year PPE? What type of orientation/training? What do you know about two-year PPE?

2. Did you facilitate any training on two-year PPE? Is the training good enough to equip teachers with 4+ aged PPE? Is the training duration, content, and approach appropriate to transfer the relevant knowledge and skills?

3. Is there a sufficient number of PPE teachers in the school where two-year PPE is being piloted? Did the two-year PPE pilot schoolteachers get the training? What percentage of teachers got the training? What is your observation and suggestion regarding the training? What additional training and facilities are necessary?

4. Is the existing infrastructure of primary schools under you sufficient for facilitating two-year PPE? Is it enough to accommodate the number of enrolled children and PPE-aged children in the catchment area? What additional facilities are necessary to accommodate the 4+ aged PPE children?

5. Are there sufficient teaching-learning and play materials (including 4-corners) for facilitating PPE as per guidelines of the curriculum, teacher guide, and PPE implementation guidelines? Can these teaching-learning and play materials be utilized for 4+ aged PPE children? What additional materials are needed?

6. What are the learning hours and time duration for two-year PPE? Is it convenient for the learners and sufficient to facilitate the PPE sessions as per the curriculum, teacher guide, and implementation guidelines? What additional arrangements are necessary?

7. What minimum facilities (human resources, physical facilities, teaching-learning and play materials, contact hours, and time duration) are needed in the primary schools to introduce two-year pre-primary?

8. To what extent were the relevant stakeholders (including parents, caregivers, community people, SMC members, and community clinic) oriented on the PPE (along with 4+ aged PPE) programme and their role in it? What initiatives can be taken for their orientation and engagement in the programme?

9. What are the challenges and risks of introducing two- years of PPE in the existing structure and facilities? What can be done to address those challenges and risks?

Feasibility study for two-year pre-primary education in GPS

KII questionnaire for PPE experts

A. Background information

1. Name: _____ 2. Designation: _____ 3. Upazila: _____
4. District: _____ 5. Vulnerability type: poorest districts / hill tracts / island / coastal area / riverine area / char / ethnic minority / tea garden

B. Study-related questions

1. What do you know about the two-year PPE? What is your reflection about the two-year PPE and its implementation plan?

2. Did you go through the teaching-learning and training package on two-year PPE? Is the training package good enough to equip teachers with two-year PPE? Is the training duration, content, and approach appropriate to transfer the relevant knowledge and skills?

3. Is the teaching-learning package good enough to transfer expected competencies among the learners? What changes are needed there?

4. Is there a sufficient number of PPE teachers in the school to implement two-year PPE? What mechanism can be followed for capacity building of the PPE teachers? What additional measures including teacher recruitment are necessary?

5. Is the existing infrastructure of primary schools sufficient for facilitating two-year PPE? What additional facilities are necessary to accommodate the 4+ aged PPE children?

6. Are there sufficient teaching-learning and play materials (including 4-corners) for facilitating PPE as per guidelines of the curriculum, teacher guide, and PPE implementation guidelines? Can these teaching-learning and play materials be utilized for 4+ aged PPE children? What additional materials are needed?

7. What are the learning hours and time duration for two-year PPE? Is it convenient for the learners and sufficient to facilitate the PPE sessions as per the curriculum, teacher guide, and implementation guidelines? What additional arrangements are necessary?

8. What minimum facilities (human resources, physical facilities, teaching-learning and play materials, contact hours, and time duration) are needed in the primary schools to introduce two-year pre-primary?

8. To what extent were the relevant stakeholders (including parents, caregivers, community people, SMC members, and community clinic) oriented on the PPE (along with 4+ aged PPE) programme and their role in it? What initiatives can be taken for their orientation and engagement in the programme? What is thought about the courtyard meeting/parenting meeting for the parents/caregivers?

9. What are the challenges and risks of introducing two years of PPE in the existing structure and facilities? What can be done to address those challenges and risks?

Feasibility study for two-year pre-primary education in GPS

Quantitative information collection format

Background information

Information provided by: ----------, data collector: ----------

Study-related information (primary school):

Sl.	**Description**	**2023**		
		Total	Female	Male
1	Total number of GPS in the country			
2	Number of schools where two-year PPE is being piloted			
3	Total number of PPE teachers working in the country			
4	Total number of PPE teachers working in the two-year PPE piloted schools			
5	Total number of teachers trained on PPE			
6	Total number of teachers trained on two-year PPE			
7	Total number of PPE teachers trained on PPE			
8	Total number of PPE teachers trained on two-year PPE			
9	Total number of GPS has separate assigned rooms for PPE			
10	Total number of two-year piloted schools has separate assigned rooms for PPE			
11	Total number of GPS with below or equal to 1:30 teacher-student ratio in PPE			
12	Total number of two-year piloted schools with below or equal to 1:30 teacher-student ratio in PPE			
13	Total number of GPS have a community clinic in their catchment area			
14	Total number of two-year piloted schools have a community clinic in their catchment area			
15	Total number of GPS have collaborated with community clinics for children's health checkups			
16	Total number of two-year piloted schools have collaborated with community clinics for children's health checkups			

17	Number of GPS conducts parenting sessions on a regular basis (1 in every 2 months)			
18	Number of two-year piloted schools conduct parenting sessions on a regular basis (1 in every 2 months)			
19	Number of GPS have relevant materials including materials for the corner-based (4 corners) activities			
20	Number of two-year piloted schools have relevant materials including materials for the corner-based (4 corners) activities			
21	Number of GPS conducts corner-based (4 corners) activities on a regular basis			
22	Number of two-year piloted schools conduct corner-based (4 corners) activities on a regular basis			
23	Number of GPS follow PPE implementation guidelines properly			
24	Number of two-year piloted schools follow PPE implementation guidelines properly			
25	Number of GPS follow stimulating and play-based pedagogy in conducting learning sessions			
26	Number of two-year piloted schools follow stimulating and play-based pedagogy in conducting learning sessions			
27	Number of GPS conduct formative assessments every month by using the assessment indicators			
28	Number of two-year piloted schools conduct formative assessments every month by using the assessment indicators			
29	Number of GPS that conducted orientation sessions for the community people on PPE			
30	Number of two-year piloted schools conducted orientation sessions for the community people on PPE			
31	Number of GPS that conducted orientation sessions for the SMC members on PPE and their role in implementing PPE			
32	Number of two-year piloted schools conducted orientation sessions for the SMC members on PPE and their role in implementing PPE			

Appendix 2: Tables of the study

Table 24: Sample schools by geographical location

Districts	Urban	Rural	Hill tracts	Coastal area	River island	Char	Haor	Total
Dhaka	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
Patuakhali	2	2	0	2	1	0	0	4
Chapainawabganj	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	4
Kishoreganj	2	2	0	0	0	0	4	4
Netrakona	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
Chittagong	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Bandarban	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	4
Moulovibazar	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Kurigram	2	2	0	0	1	2	0	4
Satkhira	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	4
Total	14	27	5	4	3	2	4	41

Table 25: Sample schools by different types of school

PPE offered for the age group	Piloting (n=10)	GPS (n=32)	NGO (n=3)	Kindergarten (n=3)	Ebtedayee (n=2)	Others (n=1)
4+	100.0	31.3	66.7	100.0	0.0	100.0
5+	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 26: Status of PPE classroom and designated rooms by geographical locations

Status of PPE classroom (observation)	Urban (n=11)	Rural (n=21)	Hill tracts (n=5)	Coastal area (n=4)	River island (n=3)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)
Separate/designated rooms for pre-primary education	100.0	92.6	60.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Separate/designated rooms for pre-primary education of children aged 4+	28.6	7.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0

Table 27: Status of PPE classroom expansion and room size by geographical locations

Status of PPE classroom (observation)	Urban (n=11)	Rural (n=21)	Hill tracts (n=5)	Coastal area (n=4)	River island (n=3)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)

Have room to expand PPE classroom	35.7	37.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0
250 square feet in size of the assigned room	50.0	77.8	80.0	75.0	67.0	50.0	75.0
Room size sufficient for the total admitted children	50.0	66.7	80.0	75.0	67.0	100.0	50.0

Table 28: Available physical facilities by location

Available physical facilities (observation)	**Urban (n=14)**	**Rural (n=27)**	**Hill tracts (n=5)**	**Coastal area (n=4)**	**River island (n=3)**	**Char (n=2)**	**Haor (n=4)**
Schools have a playground	79.0	81.0	80.0	100.0	67.0	100.0	75.0
Have adequate opportunities for sports outside the classroom	78.6	81.5	60.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	75.0
Room decorated according to the pre-primary classroom decoration policy	21.4	37.0	40.0	50.0	33.0	0.0	25.0
Arrangement of materials and wall hangings/ pictures/charts/crafts at the level that children can easily reach	28.6	63.0	40.0	75.0	33.0	0.0	75.0
There are 4 corner facilities inside the room	42.9	44.4	40.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	25.0
4 corners furnished with relevant materials	14.3	40.7	40.0	0.0	33.0	0.0	0.0
Children's drawings hung/put up in the classroom	0.0	37.0	20.0	25.0	33.0	0.0	0.0

Table 29: Appropriateness of the physical facilities for the children by location

Appropriateness of the physical facilities for the children (observation)	**Urban (n=14)**	**Rural (n=27)**	**Hill tracts (n=5)**	**Coastal area (n=4)**	**River island (n=3)**	**Char (n=2)**	**Haor (n=4)**
Materials used in the classroom are child friendly	86.0	93.0	80.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	75.0
Enough light and air in the classroom	93.0	93.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	100
Floor of the room is smooth	78.6	74.1	80.0	75.0	100.0	50.0	50.0
Classroom seating arrangement (mats or u-shaped seating) is suitable for children	50.0	70.4	80.0	50.0	67.0	50.0	50.0
Chalk board/white board within reach of the child	57.1	77.8	40.0	100.0	67.0	50.0	75.0

Table 30: Status of cleanliness and hygiene facilities by location

Status of cleanliness and hygiene facilities (observation)	Urban (n=14)	Rural (n=27)	Hill tracts (n=5)	Coastal area (n=4)	River island (n=3)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)
Adequate safe water facilities with jugs and glasses in the classroom	35.7	40.7	20.0	50.0	67.0	0.0	0.0
Have designated place to wash hands with soap and water	50.0	48.1	0.0	75.0	67.0	50.0	0.0
Toilet suitable for pre-primary children	42.9	59.3	40.0	75.0	33.0	0.0	25.0
Availability of bins/waste baskets in the classroom	35.7	55.6	40.0	50.0	100.0	0.0	0.0

Table 31: Availability of different types of teaching-learning materials by location

Availability of teaching-learning materials in the classroom (observation)	Urban (n=14)	Rural (n=27)	Hill tracts (n=5)	Coastal area (n=4)	River island (n=3)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)
Teachers guide	50.0	74.1	60.0	75.0	100.0	0.0	75.0
Amar boi	35.7	59.3	60.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	75.0
Esho likhte shikhi khata	35.7	55.6	40.0	25.0	100.0	0.0	75.0
Chorai chonde swarborna	14.3	59.3	60.0	50.0	67.0	0.0	0.0
Chorai chonde byanjonborno	7.1	51.9	0.0	75.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Swarborno and banjonborno chart	21.4	51.9	20.0	50.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Flip chart	21.4	48.1	20.0	25.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Flash card	21.4	48.1	40.0	25.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Story book	42.9	48.1	60.0	25.0	100.0	0.0	25.0
Games materials	35.7	59.3	40.0	50.0	100.0	0.0	0.0

Table 32: Adequacy and use of teaching-learning materials by location

Status of instructional and play materials (observation)	Urban (n=14)	Rural (n=27)	Hill tracts (n=5)	Coastal area (n=4)	River island (n=3)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)
Instructional materials found adequate for conducting teaching-learning activities	21.4	25.9	40.0	0.0	33.0	0.0	0.0

Instructional materials found suitable for PPE of children aged 4+	14.3	25.9	40.0	25.0	33.0	0.0	0.0
Play materials found suitable for children aged 4+	14.3	25.9	20.0	25.0	33.0	0.0	0.0
Teacher uses the teaching materials as directed by the teaching guide	28.6	33.3	20.0	25.0	33.0	0.0	25.0
Teacher uses the play materials according to the instruction of the teaching guide	28.6	40.7	40.0	25.0	33.0	0.0	25.0
Teachers who provide opportunities for children to do four corner activities including sand and water corner activities	0.0	22.2	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teachers, children and parents make materials on their own initiative	28.6	59.3	40.0	75.0	33.0	0.0	0.0

Table 33: Status of accessibility of the physical infrastructure by location

Accessibility of the physical infrastructure (observation)	**Urban (n=14)**	**Rural (n=27)**	**Hill Tracts (n=5)**	**Coastal area (n=4)**	**River island (n=3)**	**Char (n=2)**	**Haor (n=4)**
Ramp in the entrance	42.9	29.6	0.0	0.0	67.0	50.0	0.0
Ramp usable	28.6	29.6	0.0	0.0	67.0	50.0	0.0
Entrance/gate accessible	42.9	55.6	20.0	50.0	33.0	50.0	25.0
Passage accessible and easily moveable	50.0	48.1	40.0	50.0	67.0	50.0	25.0
Blockade/obstacle on the door/passage/boundary	50.0	44.4	80.0	25.0	33.0	50.0	50.0
Suitable seating arrangement	42.9	44.4	0.0	25.0	100.0	100.0	50.0
Suitable washroom/toilet	35.7	22.2	0.0	25.0	33.0	100.0	25.0
Useable basin/WASH block etc.	14.3	40.7	40.0	50.0	33.0	50.0	25.0

Table 34: Status of safety and security in piloting school and GPS

Status of safety and security (observation)	Urban (n=14)	Rural (n=27)	Hill tracts (n=5)	Coastal area (n=4)	River island (n=3)	Char (n=2)	Haor (n=4)
Schools those have boundary walls	43	59	60	25	67	100	25
Schools those have security guards	57	59	40	50	67	100	75
Classrooms and schools are safe and fear-free for children	71	78	80	75	67	50	100
Classrooms and schools are risk-free for children	64	74	60	75	100	50	75
Materials used in the classroom are safe for children	93	85	100	100	100	100	50
Classroom roofs are risk-free (sturdy, plaster does not fall off if the roof is paved, no holes if it is tin).	86	85	60	75	100	50	75
Classroom walls are risk-free (not leaning, not cracked, not wobbly).	79	89	60	75	67	50	75
Doors and windows are sturdy and risk-free (not broken, windowpanes or sheets not broken or placed in such a way that children could be injured).	79	85	60	75	100	50	50
No broken toys, dangerous items (blades, knives, scissors etc.) In the classroom	57	89	60	100	67	100	100
Keep electrical cords, switches and equipment out of reach of children	57	85	80	50	100	100	100
Have first-aid box	78.6	66.7	0.0	75.0	100.0	50.0	75.0

Appendix 3: Matrix of areas and elements with gradation of PPE service delivery standards

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Physical environment			
Location	The school is attached with or within the catchment area of primary school.	The school is within 1.5 km reach of children. The school is at least 150 ft away from sights that could be dangerous for children (pond, hazardous slopes, river, highways, tannery, chemical factory, noisy places, bus stand, electric transformer etc.)	The school is within 1 km reach. The school is at least 200 ft away from sites that could be dangerous for children (pond, hazardous slopes, river, highways, tannery, chemical factory, noisy places, bus stand, electric transformer etc.
Premises	Premises are clean, flat and not waterlogged. School has space for outdoor play (at least 15 square feet per child). School is accessible by children with disabilities (flat approach road, ramp, wide door etc.)	There is protective fence/wall around the premises. Premises are clean, flat and not waterlogged. School has space for outdoor play (at least 25 square feet per child) School has outdoor play equipment like football, skipping rope, cricket bat-ball etc. School premises have garden School is accessible by children with disabilities (flat approach road, ramp, wide door etc.)	There is protective fence/wall around the premises. Premises are clean, flat and not waterlogged. School has space for outdoor play (at least 35 square feet per child) School has outdoor play equipment in the premises like swings, seesaw, climbing frames, slides etc. School premises have shady trees and garden

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
			School is accessible by children with disabilities (flat approach road, ramp, wide door etc).
Classroom environment	Minimum 250 square feet for 30 children (PPE operational framework) is available in the classroom. Classroom floor is flat, dry, clean and covered by mat. Classroom has adequate light, fresh air ventilation and protection of children during heavy wind and rain. Classroom has adequate wall space for displaying children's work.	Minimum 10 sft space per child is available in the classroom. Classroom floor is flat, dry, clean and covered by mat. Classroom has adequate light, fresh air ventilation and protection of children during heavy wind and rain. Classroom has window for cross ventilation Classroom has adequate wall space for displaying children's work.	17 sft space per child (30 children per class) is available in the classroom (PSQL). Classroom floor is flat, dry, clean and covered by mat. Classroom has adequate light, fresh air ventilation and protection of children during heavy wind and rain. The doors and windows are covering at least 1/7th of the total wall area. Classroom has adequate wall space for displaying children's work.
Furniture and supplies	Floor mat available, wall mounted chalk board accessible to children for free work, chair/tool/mora for teacher, trunk to store materials, waste bin basket and broom.	Floor mat available, wall mounted chalk board accessible to children for free work chair/tool/mora for teacher, display board for children's work, trunk and rack to store materials, waste bin basket and broom, special sitting arrangement for children with disabilities.	Colourful floor mat available, wall mounted chalk board accessible to children for free work, chair/tool/mora for teacher, display board for children's work, racks and cupboards to store materials at eye level of children within their reach, waste bin basket and broom, special sitting arrangement for children with disabilities.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Water and sanitation facilities	Classroom has adequate safe drinking water with necessary devices (jug, glass etc), sanitary toilet facilities with running water or water in a large container, hand washing facilities in a common space with soap and water, toilet cleaner and brush/broom.	Classroom has adequate safe drinking water with necessary devices (jug, jar, glass etc.), sanitary toilet facilities with running water or water in a large container, hand washing facilities in a common space with soap and water, toilet cleaner, detergent and brush.	School has safe drinking water source classroom has adequate safe drinking water with necessary devices (jug, glass, filter etc.), toilet facilities that suits pre-school age children with running water, soap to wash hand in toilet, hand washing facilities in a common space with soap and water, toilet cleaner, detergent and brush.
Safety and security	The classroom is free of health and safety hazards (e.g. Broken toys, unmasked spills, unsanitary toilet facilities, uncovered electrical outlets etc), first aid kit box is available and easily accessible in the classroom, comparatively safe and secure classroom is allocated for preschool, children's way to school is safe and secured, (speed breaker, adult's support during road crossing etc.).	The classroom is free of health and safety hazards (e.g. Broken toys, unmasked spills, unsanitary toilet facilities, uncovered electrical outlets etc), first aid kit box is available and easily accessible in the classroom, clear evacuation plan are visibly posted, children's way to school is safe and secured (speed breaker, adult's support during road crossing etc.).	The classroom is free of health and safety hazards (e.g. Broken toys, unmasked spills, unsanitary toilet facilities, uncovered electrical outlets etc), first aid kit box is available and easily accessible in the classroom, clear evacuation plan are visibly posted, children's way to school is safe and secured (speed breaker, adult's support during road crossing etc.).
Learning environment			
Classroom arrangement	Classrooms are colourfully decorated with painting and materials to make them visually attractive considering children's interest, local culture and heritage, children's work/products are displayed in the classroom items displayed in the	Classrooms are colourfully decorated with painting and materials to make them visually attractive considering children's interest, local culture and heritage, children's work/products are displayed in the classroom, items displayed in the walls are	Classrooms are colourfully decorated with painting and materials to make them visually and intellectually attractive considering children's interest, local culture and heritage. children's work/products are displayed in the

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards		
	Level 1 (basic/minimum)	**Level 2 (desired/medium)**	**Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)**
	walls are at children's eye level, there are at least four clearly marked and organised activity areas/corners for distinct kind of play e.g. Book and art, block, imagination and sand and water, sitting arrangement is gender friendly and inclusive (mixed and need based sitting etc.).	at children's eye level, there are at least four clearly marked and organised activity areas/corners for distinct kind of play e.g. Book and art, block, imagination and sand and water, sitting arrangement is gender friendly and inclusive (mixed and need based sitting etc.).	classroom, items displayed in the walls are at children's eye level, there are at least four clearly marked and organised activity areas/corners for distinct kind of play e.g. Book and art, block, imagination and sand and water, sitting arrangement is gender friendly and inclusive (mixed sitting, need based sitting etc.).
Teaching learning materials	All core[17] materials as per national curriculum are available in the classroom, materials are child friendly, non-toxic, safe (no sharp edge), colourful, with hard and soft texture and light, a mix of locally made and procured materials, children have easy access to all those materials, materials are displayed at appropriate place and not locked materials are stored properly and well maintained/preserved.	All core and supplementary[18] materials as per national curriculum are available in the classroom, materials are child friendly, non-toxic, safe (no sharp edge), colourful, with hard and soft texture and light, a mix of locally made and procured materials, children have easy access to all those materials, materials are displayed at appropriate place and not locked, materials are stored properly and well maintained/preserved, adequate number of playing materials for children.	All core and adequate supplementary materials as per national curriculum are available in the classroom, materials are child friendly, non-toxic, safe (no sharp edge), colourful, with hard and soft texture and light, a mix of locally made and procured materials, children have easy access to all those materials, materials are displayed at appropriate place and not locked in the racks, materials are stored properly and well maintained/preserved.

[17] Curriculum, Teacher's guide, Children workbook, Exercise khata, Bangla alphabet chart, Flip chart (health &environment +++), Flash cards (number, alphabet, objects), Story books (10), Blocks& Play materials set (as per list in TG), Student attendance register as per format given in Teacher's Guide.
[18] All core materials plus more pictorial story books, more blocks & play materials, story cards, more variety of flash cards, number chart, puzzle, board game (ludo++), pictorial books on early literacy & numeracy, big book (story, promote concepts of literacy/numeracy/science etc), audio visual materials, toolbox containing hammer, screw etc.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
			Adequate number of playing materials for children.
Teacher-student ratio	1:30 (maximum) (PPE framework and curriculum)	1:30 (maximum)	1:25 (maximum)
Duration and daily routine	2.30 hours (minimum), class followed daily routine as per curriculum, daily routine is consistent yet flexible around children's interest and responsive to learning needs of individual children, transition time from one activity to another is smooth, responsive to learning needs of all children including those with disabilities daily routine displayed in the classroom.	2.30 hours (minimum), class followed daily routine as per curriculum, daily routine is consistent yet flexible around children's interest and responsive to learning needs of individual children, transition time from one activity to another is smooth, responsive to learning needs of all children including those with disabilities, daily routine displayed in the classroom.	2.30 hours (minimum), class followed daily routine as per curriculum, daily routine is consistent yet flexible around children's interest and responsive to learning needs of individual children, transition time from one activity to another is smooth responsive to learning needs of all children including those with disabilities daily routine is displayed in the classroom in a child friendly way (pictures, posters, symbol).
Teaching learning process / pedagogical standards			
Communication with children	Teacher communicating with children clearly maintaining eye level contact, using soft voice, slow pace and pleasant gesture in an understandable way showing respect to them.	Teacher communicating with children clearly maintaining eye level contact, using soft voice, slow pace and pleasant gesture in an understandable way showing respect to them.	Teacher communicating with children clearly maintaining eye level contact, using soft voice, slow pace and pleasant gesture in an understandable way showing respect to them.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Greetings and encouragement	Greeting is a regular practice; teachers are occasionally encouraging and praising children.	Greeting is a regular practice, teachers are often encouraging, appreciating and praising children mentioning reason.	Greeting is a regular practice maintaining norms, teachers are frequently encouraging, appreciating and praising children during interaction/involvement for a specific task, behaviour or achievement.
Relationship with teacher	Children are occasionally sharing their problems, challenges and personal feelings, learning and needs with teacher.	Children are often sharing their problems, challenges and personal feelings, learning and other needs with teacher.	Children are frequently sharing their problems, challenges and personal feelings, learning and other needs with teacher.
Types of activities	Individual, pair, small group and large group activities are blended and maintained as per curriculum and annual work plan/annual scheme of work.	Individual, pair, small group and large group activities are properly blended and maintained as per curriculum and annual work plan/annual scheme of work with improved understanding and inputs from teacher.	Individual, pair, small group and large group activities are properly blended in a balanced way as per curriculum and annual work plan with clear understanding and involvement of teacher.
Types of play	Different types of plays like physical including gross and fine motor, cognitive, imaginative, creative, free play etc. are blended in daily routine in a balanced way as per direction of curriculum and annual work plan, teachers are facilitating plays as per direction.	Different types of plays like physical including gross and fine motor, cognitive, imaginative, creative, free play etc. are blended in daily routine in a balanced way as per curriculum and annual work plan, and teachers are facilitating plays with improved understanding and involving all children.	Different types of plays like physical including gross and fine motor, cognitive, imaginative, creative, free play etc. are blended in daily routine in a balanced way as per curriculum and annual work plan, teachers are facilitating plays with clear understanding and involving all children in a balanced way.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Using nature and outdoor areas or premises	Teachers are occasionally taking advantages of nature and using outdoor premises around the classroom as per direction of the curriculum and work plan.	Teachers are often taking advantages of nature and using outdoor premises around the classroom aligning with curriculum and work plan.	Teachers are frequently taking advantages of nature and using outdoor premises around the classroom aligning with curriculum and work plan.
Maximising use of teaching learning materials/aids	Children and teachers are occasionally using materials and aids available in the classroom as per direction of the curriculum and work plan.	Children and teachers are often using materials and aids available in the classroom as and when necessary, aligning with curriculum and work plan.	Children and teachers are frequently using materials and aids available in the classroom and around classroom as and when necessary, aligning with curriculum and work plan.
Individualized teaching and support	Children need special attention and support are occasionally receiving those from teachers.	Children need special attention and support are often receiving those from teachers in a regular basis.	Children need special attention and support are frequently receiving those from teachers in a regular basis.
Interaction with others	Children have opportunities to interact with other children and teachers at school.	Children have opportunities to interact with other children and teachers at school and community members.	Children have opportunities to interact with other teachers and children of school and community members in a structured way as part of teaching learning process.
Interaction among children	Children have minimum opportunity to interact among themselves as per direction of teacher's guide and this type of interactions are encouraged and appreciated by teacher.	Children have regular opportunity to interact among themselves, and this type of interactions are encouraged and appreciated by teacher.	Children have enough opportunity to interact among themselves, and this type of interactions are highly encouraged and appreciated by teacher.
Use of local materials	Minimum local materials are available in the classroom as per teacher's guide.	Different types of local materials are available in the classroom teachers are	Adequate number and types of local materials available in the classroom

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
	teachers are occasionally using local materials during teaching learning process as per teacher's guide.	often using local materials during teaching learning process in accordance with curriculum and teacher's guide.	teachers are frequently using local materials during teaching learning process in accordance with curriculum and teacher's guide.
Physical exercise and rest and smooth transition from one physical exercise to another	Children are engaging themselves in physical exercise and have warm up and rest facilities after ending and before beginning of activities as per direction of teacher's guide.	Children are equally engaging themselves in physical exercise and have warm up and rest facilities after ending and before beginning of activities, children know what activity is coming next.	Children are spontaneously and equally engaging themselves in physical exercise and have warm up and rest facilities after ending and before beginning of activities, children know what activity is coming next.
Leadership development and teamwork	Children are getting opportunity by turn to nurture their leadership skill as well as sense of responsibility for team work as per direction of the teacher's guide, teachers are facilitating the process of leadership development and team work as per guideline.	All children are getting opportunity by turn to nurture their leadership skill as well as sense of responsibility for teamwork, teacher with minimum understanding facilitating the process of leadership development and teamwork.	All children are getting opportunity equally by turn to nurture their leadership skill as well as sense of responsibility for teamwork, teacher with clear understanding facilitating the process of leadership development and teamwork.
Flexibility in the teaching learning process`	Teachers are not rigid to class routine and scheme of work rather flexible to accommodate children's interest following guideline. Teachers are occasionally showing flexibility in the process towards children with disabilities as per direction.	Teachers are not rigid to class routine and scheme of work rather flexible to accommodate children's interest. Teachers are often showing flexibility in the process towards children with disabilities as per their need with minimum understanding.	Teachers are not rigid to class routine and scheme of work rather flexible enough to accommodate children's interest but also have skills to link those to planned activities. Teachers are frequently showing flexibility in the process towards children

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards		
	Level 1 (basic/minimum)	**Level 2 (desired/medium)**	**Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)**
			with disabilities as per need with clear understanding.
Addressing diversity/ inclusiveness	Teachers facilitate class as per teacher guide and occasionally using multiple ways of teaching learning. Teachers are occasionally using mother tongue or local dialect (colloquial Bangla/mother tongue) as medium of instruction. Teacher is respecting and fairly treating all children irrespective of ability, gender, religion, cultural entities and practices.	Teachers are often using multiple ways and methods of teaching-learning process including materials and aids with appropriate tone and pace considering diverse need of children inside classroom. Teachers are often using mother tongue or local dialect (colloquial Bangla/mother tongue) as medium of instruction consciously with a gradual plan to introduce new words, sentences. Teacher and children are respecting and fairly treating all irrespective of ability, gender, religion, cultural entities and practices.	Teachers are frequently using multiple ways and methods of teaching-learning process including materials and aids with appropriate tone and pace considering diverse need of children inside classroom. Teachers are adequately using mother tongue or local dialect (colloquial Bangla/mother tongue) as medium of instruction consciously with a gradual plan to introduce new words, sentences. Teacher and children are always respecting and fairly treating all irrespective of ability, gender, religion, cultural entities and practices by giving equal importance.
Children's participation	Children are engaging themselves in activities and talking (asking question, clarification, discussing issues etc.) for at least 50 per cent total time of class.	Children are engaging themselves in activities and talking (asking question, clarification, discussing issues etc.) for more than 60 per cent total time of class.	Children are engaging themselves in activities and talking (asking question, clarification, discussing issues etc.) for more than 70 per cent total time of class.
Positive disciplining	Teachers are not practicing any kind of physical or mental punishment or any other negative means to manage the class.	Children are fairly participating in different activities without fear and teachers are managing children positively by supporting them to understand, and resolute conflict.	Children are spontaneously participating in different activities with joy and without fear and teachers are managing children positively with clear understanding and skills of positive disciplining.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Children assessment	Children are assessed comprehensively on different domains through a continuous process by maintaining individual record as per prescribed format. Teachers assessing children by recording monthly progress individually.	Children are assessed comprehensively on different domains through a continuous process by maintaining basic individual portfolio. Teachers assessing children by recording progress individually.	Children are assessed comprehensively on different domains through a continuous process by maintaining detail individual portfolio. Teachers assessing children by recording continuous progress individually.
Staffing			
Teacher	1 teacher per class, secondary school certificate (SSC) (for government school graduate level proposed in new recruitment rule).	1 teacher per class, higher secondary certificate –(HSC) (for government school graduate level proposed in new recruitment rule).	1 teacher per class, graduate with dip. In ed. (for government school as per new recruitment rule).
Assistant	Schools where more than one minority language children are enrolled one assistant teacher from each community except the community from which main teacher belong should be recruited on part-time honoraria basis to facilitate work of children and main teacher.	1 volunteer or community teacher or para teacher/assistant to support the main teacher in the classroom management. Same as level 1 for school where more than one linguistic community children are enrolled.	1 volunteer or community teacher or para teacher/assistant to support the main teacher in the teaching learning process and classroom management. Minimum SSC pass, same as level 1 for school where more than one linguistic community children are enrolled.
Supervisor	Each school receiving at least 2 working hours supervisory support in each month, supervising at least 1 hour class and providing on spot academic and other types of technical support to teacher graduate for government school, supervision will be done by using existing	Each school receiving 3 working hours supervisory support each month, supervising at least 2-hour class and providing on spot academic and other types of technical support to teacher graduate preferably in education/ with relevant training and experience. For government	Each school receiving 4 working hours supervisory support in each month. Supervising at least one full class (2.30 hours) and providing on spot academic and other types of technical support to teacher. Master's preferably in education/with relevant training and

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
	supervisory system. Trained head teacher will act as main supervisor.	school, supervision will be done by using existing supervisory system. Trained head teacher will act as main supervisor.	experience. For government school, supervision will be done by using existing supervisory system. Trained head teacher will act as main supervisor.
Monitor	□ each school receiving 2.5 working hours monitoring support in each quarter. □ graduate. □ for government school, monitoring will be done by AEOU by using existing monitoring system. Number of AUEO could be increased to reduce workload.	□ each school receiving 3 working hours monitoring support in each quarter. □ graduate preferably in education/with relevant training. □ for government school, monitoring will be done by AUEO using existing monitoring system. Number of AUEO could be increased to reduce workload.	□ each school receiving 3 working hours monitoring support in every two months. □ master's degree preferably in education/with relevant training. □ for government school, monitoring will be done by AUEO using existing monitoring system. Number of AUEO could be increased to reduce workload. ICT based monitoring system in place.
Manager	1 manager for maximum 300 schools (for government school UEO will act as manager).	1 manager for maximum 250 schools (for government school UEO will act as manager).	1 manager for maximum 200 schools (for government school UEO will act as manager).
Monitoring and supervision			
Frequency	Each school is receiving at least one structured supervisory visit once in a month by an assigned and trained supervisor. Each school is receiving one structured monitoring visit once in a quarter by an assigned monitor.	Each school is receiving at least one structured supervisory visit once in a month by an assigned and trained supervisor. Each school is receiving at least one structured monitoring visit once in a quarter by a dedicated monitor.	Each school is receiving at least one structured supervisory visit once in a month by an assigned and trained supervisor. Each school is receiving at least one structured monitoring visit once in every two months by a dedicated monitor.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Process	Supervision and monitoring through existing system, guideline and tools for supervision and monitoring are available. 50 per cent of total supervision is on pedagogical (quality) issues, structured monitoring, maintaining minimum record of supervision and monitoring, follow up mechanism initiated to see the change.	Structured supervision and monitoring by assigned staffs from both GO and NGO guideline and tools for supervision and monitoring are available, 60 per cent of total supervision is on pedagogical (quality) issues, quality monitoring covering maximum aspects, on spot academic and other technical support to teacher by supervisor, maintaining record register of supervision and monitoring, follow up mechanism is in place and functional to see the change.	Structured supervision and monitoring by dedicated staffs, guideline and tools for supervision and monitoring are available 80 per cent of total supervision is on pedagogical (quality) issues, comprehensive quality monitoring, on spot academic and other technical support to teacher by supervisor, maintaining detail record of supervision and monitoring, structured follow up mechanism is in place and functional to see the expected change.
Tool	Tool and guideline for supervision, checklist and format for monitoring covering major areas of quality with necessary guideline, simple tool that capturing observation and interaction of children and teachers, tool provoking for observation and discussion.	Tools and guideline for supervision, checklist and format for monitoring covering maximum areas of quality with necessary guideline, tool capturing observation and reflection of children, teachers and parents. Tool provoking for observation, discussion and reflection.	Tools and guideline for in-depth supervision, checklist and format for monitoring covering details of all areas of quality with necessary guideline, tool capturing all qualitative issues through observation and reflection of children, teachers and parents, tool provoking for observation, discussion and reflection in a balanced way.
Reporting	Two-way reporting; report to teacher and report to manager, specific format for reporting. Record keeping at classroom for follow up, report to manager with	Two-way reporting: report to teacher and report to manager, specific format for reporting, record keeping at classroom for follow up, report to manager with action	Two-way reporting: report to teacher and report to manager, specific format for reporting, record keeping at classroom for follow up, report to manager with action

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
	action points and linking with follow up mechanism.	points and linking with follow up mechanism.	points and linking with follow up mechanism.
Follow up action	Mechanism for quarterly follow up.	Mechanism for quarterly follow up.	Mechanism for quarterly follow up.
Parents and community involvement			
Parent's meeting	monthly parents meeting but at least 06 meeting/year, duration: at least 1 hr, at least 50 per cent parents are present, 10 per cent of them are father/male guardian, facilitating by teacher following guideline.	Monthly parents meeting but at least 08 meeting/year, duration: at least 1.5 hrs, at least 70 per cent parents are present, 15 per cent of them are father/male guardian, participatory meeting with necessary guideline, follow up issues discussed.	Monthly parents meeting, duration: 2 hours, at least 90 per cent parents are present, 25 per cent of them are father/male guardian, reflective meeting with necessary guideline, follow up issues discussed.
Role of parent teacher association (PTA)	Initiative taken to form parent teacher association, at least two meetings of PTA per year.	Parent teacher association formed, at least 3 meetings of PTA per year, at least one visit by PTA/yr □ at least one actions taken by PTA (meeting, volunteer teacher managing/ recruiting, support from parents, collecting/arranging local play materials, transportation for children etc.).	Parent –teacher association active □ at least 4 meetings of PTA per year □ at least two organised visits by PTA/yr □ actions taken by PTA (volunteer teacher managing/recruiting, support from parents, collecting/arranging local play materials, transportation for children etc.).
Role of education standing committee (esc) of union parishad	Functional relation/linkage with SMC on pre-primary.	Functional relation/linkage with SMC on pre-primary, at least one visit per year by esc.	Functional relation linkage with SMC on pre-primary, at least two visits per year and one action by esc.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Training and professional development			
Training of teacher	At least 7 days basic training in first year and 3 days from 2nd year, at least one time refreshers training/ year with minimum 3 days duration.	At least 10 days basic training in first year and 5 days from 2nd year, at least two times refreshers training/year with minimum 2 days duration, minimum one guided cross visit with nearest schools in a year, diploma in education started.	At least 12 days basic training in first year and 6 days from 2nd year, at least two times refreshers training in a year with minimum 3 days duration, minimum two guided cross visit with nearest schools in a year, diploma in education started.
Training of assistant		At least two days orientation on pre-primary for community/para/ volunteer teachers or adolescent in a year.	At least three days orientation on pre-primary for community/para/ volunteer teachers or adolescent in a year.
Training of supervisor	Minimum 2 days training on pre-primary supervision in a year, half yearly reflection and academic support by trainers.	Minimum 3 days training on pre-primary supervision in a year, quarterly reflection and academic support by trainers.	Minimum 4 days training on pre-primary supervision in a year, 2 days refreshers training in a year, quarterly reflection and academic support by trainers.
Training of monitor	Minimum 3 days training on pre-primary monitoring in a year, half yearly reflection and professional support from trainers.	Minimum 4 days training on pre-primary monitoring in a year, quarterly reflection and professional support from trainers.	Minimum 5 days training on pre-primary monitoring in a year, 2 days refreshers training in a year, quarterly reflection and professional support from trainers.
Training of manager	Minimum 2 days orientation on pre-primary management in a year.	Minimum 2 days orientation on pre-primary management in a year, half yearly reflection and management support at district level.	Minimum 3 days orientation on pre-primary management in a year, half yearly reflection and management support at district level.
Management			

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Material distribution	All core materials are in school by 31 December.	All core materials are in school by 31 December.	All core and supplementary materials are in school by 31 December.
Replenishment of materials (teaching learning materials and stationeries)	All replenish able materials (attendance register, chalk, duster, toys, play materials etc.) reach at school by 31 December.	All replenish able materials (attendance register, chalk, duster, toys, play materials etc) reach at school by 31 December.	All replenish able materials (attendance register, chalk, duster, toys, play materials etc) reach at school by 31 December.
Teacher deployment	All school have assigned and trained teacher, transfer of trained teacher always follows a replacement of trained teacher.	All school have assigned and trained teacher, teacher deployment and transfer policy developed.	All school have trained and dedicated teacher, teacher deployment and transfer policy developed and maintained.
Management at district, division and central level	Progress reviewed in district, divisional and central coordination meeting as regular basis with action points and follow up, structured format for progress review with necessary contents addressing issues from monitoring findings, at least 1 monthly visit from district management, 1 bi-monthly visit from divisional management and 1 quarterly visit from central management.	Progress reviewed in district, divisional and central coordination meeting as regular basis with action points and follow up. Structured format for progress review with necessary contents, addressing issues from monitoring findings, at least 1 monthly visit from district management, 1 bi-monthly visit from divisional management and 1 quarterly visit from central management.	Progress reviewed in district, divisional and central coordination meeting as regular basis with action points and follow up. Structured format for progress review with necessary contents, addressing issues from monitoring findings, at least 2 monthly visits from district management, 1 monthly visit from divisional management and 1 quarterly visit from central management.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
Professional development	Short term professional development for relevant staffs.	Long term professional development plan for all level staffs developed.	Long term professional development plan for all level staffs developed and execution started.
Local level management	Quarterly progress review by SMC through a format, quarterly visit by SMC from management perspective, half yearly progress review using a format by upazila education coordination committee. Progress review at sub-cluster level.	Bi-monthly progress review by SMC through a format, bi-monthly visit by SMC from management perspective, quarterly progress review using a format by upazila education coordination committee. At least one visit from upazila management, progress review at sub-cluster level.	Progress review through a format is a regular agenda for SMC meeting, monthly visit by SMC from management perspective, regular progress review using a format at upazila education coordination committee. At least two visits from upazila management progress review at sub-cluster level.
Curriculum review			Curriculum, teaching learning materials and children assessment process reviewed based on findings from research, monitoring and supervision by NCTB.
Administrative			
Attendance register	Attendance register is available and updated.	Attendance register is available and updated.	Attendance register is available and updated.
Children assessment register	Children assessment register with attendance registers available with continuous assessment tools and record for each child.	Independent children assessment registers available with continuous assessment tools and record for each child.	Independent children assessment register including portfolio available with continuous assessment tools and record for each child.

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards		
	Level 1 (basic/minimum)	**Level 2 (desired/medium)**	**Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)**
Parent's meeting register	Parent's meeting registers available with attendance register.	Independent parent's meeting registers available with updated information.	Independent parent's meeting registers available with updated information.
Annual plan and class routine	Annual work plan and class routine is available in a visible place.	Annual work plan and class routine is available in a visible place.	□ annual work plan and class routine is available in a visible place
Children's health record		Children's health card introduced.	Children's health care available and maintained with updated information.
Stock register	Stock register available with updated information.	Stock register available with updated information.	Stock register available with updated information.
Emergency contact register	Emergency contact for each child available in attendance register.	Emergency contact for each child available in register.	Emergency contact for each child available in separate register.
Disaster preparedness		Contingency plan available for disaster preparedness.	Contingency plan with necessary logistics available for disaster preparedness.
Administrative focal person	Dedicated administrative focal person at district level with specific responsibilities.	Dedicated administrative focal person at district level with specific responsibilities.	Dedicated administrative focal person at district and upazila level with specific responsibilities.
Central administration	Separate cell/unit for pre-primary with dedicated human resources, timely disbursement of budget and resources, half yearly progress review and action taken □ administrative data collection, progress report on PPE included in the Annual Primary School Census (ASPR).	Separate cell/unit for pre-primary with dedicated human resources and logistics, timely disbursement of budget and resources, quarterly progress review based on monitoring and supervision findings, administrative data collection through mis, 1 progress report in a year with qualitative information.	Separate cell/unit for pre-primary with dedicated human resources and logistics, timely disbursement of budget and resources, quarterly progress review based on monitoring and supervision findings and action taken accordingly, administrative data collection and update regularly through mis, 1 detail progress

Areas and element of standards	Gradation of standards Level 1 (basic/minimum)	Level 2 (desired/medium)	Level 3 (preferred/exemplary)
			report in a year with qualitative information.
Data base		Web-based PPE data based developed with quantitative and qualitative information and piloted.	Web-based PPE data base developed with quantitative and qualitative information and updated regularly by all upazila.