

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Ministry of Education**  
**Secondary and Higher Education Division**  
**Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education**  
**Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE) Project**  
**(WB Loan No. 74120- BD)**

**Terms of Reference (ToR)**

**[Package number: SD-06]**

**Assignment Title:**

Design, Development, Implementation, and Management of National Assessment of Secondary Students (NASS) of Bangladesh for 2025 and 2027.

**A. Background**

**A-1 Background and Project Brief of the LAISE Project**

01. The **Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE)** Project is a five-year initiative (October 2023–September 2028) led by the **Secondary and Higher Education Division (SHED)** and implemented by the **Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE)**. Funded jointly by the World Bank and Government of Bangladesh (GoB) LAISE responds to Bangladesh's progress in education and the ongoing challenges of quality, equity, and resilience, particularly after the learning setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

02. Building on previous efforts like Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP), Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project (SEQAEP), Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education (TQI-SEP), and Secondary Education Sector Investment Program (SESIP), LAISE aims to modernize secondary education through ICT integration, blended learning, and skills development aligned with the **Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)**. It supports national strategies including the **8th Five-Year Plan, National Education Policy, ICT in Education Master Plan, and SDG4 targets for quality education** to prepare students for a knowledge-based economy. By leveraging ICT in education, the LAISE Project aims to address learning losses, prepare students for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and ensure that education remains relevant to future job markets. This transformative vision positions the LAISE Project as a critical intervention for advancing Bangladesh's human capital development and achieving its long-term socioeconomic goals.

03. The **Learning Acceleration in Secondary Education (LAISE)** is a **World Bank-aided hybrid project comprising of a Program-For-Results (PforR)** component of \$280 million, allocated by The World Bank across 8 Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs), and a Technical Assistance component (TA) of \$20 million using the Investment Project Financing (IPF) instrument. The project implementation period is five years (October 2023 to September 2028), which syncs with the duration of the Government's Secondary Education Program (SEP). DHSE intends to apply a portion of the said credit to engage a firm ("Consultants") for providing consultancy services for Design, Development, Implementation, and Management of National Assessment of Secondary Students (NASS) of Bangladesh for 2025 and 2027.

04. **The Program Development Objective (PDO)** is to improve student learning and retention and build system resilience in secondary education. **The PDO** is to improve student learning and retention, and build system resilience in secondary education. **There are four PDO indicators:**

- a. PDO 1: Students meeting basic proficiency in Grade 8 in math and Bangla (Disaggregated by subjects) (Percentage)
- b. PDO 2: Grade 10 (of those started in Grade 6) retention rate - Overall (Disaggregated by gender) (Percentage)
- c. PDO 3: Grade 6 and 8 students in targeted institutions actively using blended learning programs designed for learning acceleration for math or Bangla (percentage)
- d. PDO 4: Students in targeted schools exhibiting improved climate change mindsets or behaviors (percentage)

05. The project has multiple sub-results, which are divided into three result areas. Result Area 1 is focused on student support for improved learning and retention, and its sub-results include learning loss recovery, **national assessment of secondary students**, formative assessment for improved learning, library development and reading acceleration, supporting adolescent student program, mental health program and student counseling, and supporting student retention and learning acceleration. Result Area 2 focuses on improving teacher effectiveness, with sub-results that include developing teacher support systems, teachers' capacity development, enhancing the leadership capacity of secondary institutions heads, and teachers' readiness for blended learning. Result Area 3 aims to improve secondary education systems, and its sub-results include supporting enhancing IT infrastructure and connectivity, online monitoring and assessment of teachers' performance, inclusive education, climate education, and strengthening the capacity of secondary education agencies. The project is funded by the World Bank and will focus on teacher development, promoting blended learning, and institutional capacity building.

06. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) has been established by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Secondary and Higher Education Division, Ministry of Education, Bangladesh for implementation of the project. PIU is responsible for the overall implementation of the project. A Project Management Consultancy firm comprising of a team of consultants will be recruited to support the PIU in the implementation of the project.

07. One of the important Disbursement-Linked Indicators under LAISE is DLI 5 National Assessment of Secondary Students (NASS) carried out nationally for grades 6, 8 and 10 in 2025 and 2027 and the findings published.

## **A-2 National Assessments for Secondary Students in Bangladesh**

### **08. Education as a Human Right and Development Lever**

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a key driver of economic productivity, civic engagement, socio-cultural progress, and sustainable development. It fosters the creation of a knowledgeable, resilient, and skilled population capable of contributing meaningfully to 21st-century societies and economies.

### **09. Progress in Access to Education**

Bangladesh has made remarkable strides in expanding access to education, achieving near-universal enrollment and high completion rates at the primary level and significant increase in the secondary enrollment. These gains reflect the country's strong commitment to education as part of its broader national development vision.



## 10. Persistent Challenges in Learning Outcomes

Despite the expanded access, learning outcomes remain worryingly low. Many students fail to acquire foundational skills in literacy and numeracy, limiting their ability to thrive in modern social and economic contexts. This misalignment between access and achievement highlights a pressing need to improve education quality.

## 11. National and Global Commitments to Learning

Bangladesh's national development strategies and education reform agendas—such as the current **National Education Policy**, the **8th Five Year Plan**, and sectoral reform programs—all emphasize improving learning outcomes. This aligns with the global Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), which commits countries to ensure **inclusive, equitable, and quality education** for all by 2030. Specifically, **SDG Target 4.1** and **Indicator 4.1.1** stress the importance of measuring **Minimum Proficiency Levels (MPL)** at various stages of basic education.

## 12. The Need for System-Level Assessment

To address these challenges and fulfill national and global education goals, it is critical to systematically assess students' learning outcomes as set out in the national curriculum. Large-scale **National Assessment of Secondary Student (NASS)** help:

- Generate reliable, comparable evidence on learning achievement
- Identify disparities and contextual factors affecting learning
- Guide education policy, resource allocation, and reforms
- Track progress over time and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

## 13. NASS vs. Public Examinations

Unlike public examinations, which are high-stakes and focus primarily on assigning grades and certifying students, national assessments are low-stakes and designed to evaluate the **overall performance of the education system**. They provide insights into how well students are mastering the competencies expected for their grade levels, without the pressure of individual promotion or certification.

## 14. Benefits of National Assessments

The national student assessments serve several vital functions:

- **Measuring Learning Outcomes:** Provide a comprehensive picture of student competencies in core subjects such as Bangla, English, and Mathematics at grades 6, 8 and 10.
- **Informing Policy and Reforms:** Offer evidence-based insights to shape curriculum, teaching methods, and educational policies.
- **Identifying Learning Disparities:** Reveal performance gaps based on geography, gender, socioeconomic status, and other demographic factors.
- **Strengthening Accountability:** Hold the education system accountable by offering objective indicators of system performance.

- **Guiding Teacher Development:** Highlight areas where teachers need further training and support.
- **Tracking Progress:** Facilitate longitudinal monitoring of trends in learning outcomes.
- **Engaging Stakeholders:** Foster community and parental involvement through increased transparency about educational performance.

### A-3 Historical Development of National Assessments in Secondary Education in Bangladesh

#### 15. Early Initiatives under SEQAEP

The first large-scale initiative in student learning assessment began in **2012** under the **SEQAEP**, funded by the World Bank (IDA Credit 5325-BD). The **Learning Assessment of SEQAEP Institutions (LASI)** was introduced to assess literacy and numeracy competencies in selected upazilas. Administered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Wing (MEW) of DSHE, LASI evaluated Grades 6, 8, and 10 students in Bangla, English, and Math.

- **2012:** LASI assessed Grade 9 students.
- **2013 and 2015:** LASI expanded to Grades 6 and 8.
- **2017:** LASI included Grade 10 students and expanded to a nationally representative sample under SEQAEP's Additional Financing.

#### 16. Transition from LASI to NASS

Recognizing the value of these assessments, the Ministry of Education rebranded LASI as the **National Assessment of Secondary Students (NASS)** in **2019** under SEDP, extending its coverage and significance. NASS surveys were conducted in **2019** and **2023**, assessing Bangla, English, and Mathematics in Grades 6, 8, and 10. These assessments captured both academic performance and contextual data (e.g., school climate, socio-economic conditions), providing a holistic view of student learning.

#### 17. Institutionalization and Continuation under LAISE

The **LAISE** project will continue and strengthen the national assessment initiatives. Specifically, LAISE will:

- Review and institutionalize the **NASS framework** under DSHE.
- Conduct two rounds of **NASS during the project period**: once in **2025** and again in **2027**, targeting Grades 6, 8, and 10.
- Align assessments with **national and SDG4 targets**, ensuring results contribute meaningfully to both national and global progress tracking.

**18.** The institutionalization of national student assessments like NASS represents a strategic investment in improving education quality in Bangladesh. By generating data-driven insights and fostering accountability, these assessments play a critical role in transforming the education system to ensure all students are equipped with the skills they need to succeed in life and work.

## **B. Objective of the Assignment**

19. The objective of this assignment is to provide technical assistance to the MEW, DSHE and its LAISE Project in designing, developing, administering, implementing, analyzing, and reporting on the NASS in 2025 and 2027, ensuring robust a methodology, quality assurance, and alignment with international and national standards. The assignment will also focus on comparing the assessment findings with the results of the NASS 2023 and earlier rounds, while embedding strategies for planning future assessments. Specifically, the NASS will aim to:

- Assess whether, and to what extent, children are learning by measuring what they know and can do.
- Analyze changes in student learning outcomes compared to previous NASS rounds.
- Identify specific groups of students who are falling behind in learning achievement.
- Examine critical barriers or issues hindering student learning, with an emphasis on variations across regions and geographical areas as well as learning differentiations based on socio-economic backgrounds.

## **C. Scope of Services for the Consultants: NASS 2025 and 2027**

20. The consultants will be engaged to provide comprehensive technical and operational support to the MEW, DSHE for the successful implementation of the NASS to be conducted in 2025 and 2027 under the LAISE Project. The consultants will be responsible for the end-to-end execution of both assessment rounds, ensuring adherence to international standards and national priorities including alignment with SDG4 indicators.

## **21. Instrument Design and Development**

- Review and refine existing **NASS assessment frameworks**, tools, and methodologies in consultation with MEW, DSHE and LAISE and its technical partners.
- Develop valid, curriculum-aligned assessment instruments (test booklets) in Bangla, English, and Mathematics for Grades 6, 8, and 10.
- Design contextual/background questionnaires for students, teachers, and head teachers to collect data on school environment, socio-economic context, and other influencing factors.
- Ensure instruments include both Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) and Constructed Response Questions (CRQ), using standard rubrics for CRQ scoring.
- Submit instruments for technical review and approval by MEW, DSHE/LAISE.

## **22. Sampling Design**

- Develop a statistically sound and nationally representative sampling framework covering rural, urban, and disadvantaged areas across all divisions.

- Finalize sample size, stratification criteria, and selection methods, ensuring representation from the whole country.
- Obtain MEW, DSHE/LAISE's formal approval of the sampling plan.

### **23. Piloting and Validation**

- Conduct pilot testing of assessment instruments and questionnaires.
- Perform psychometric analysis to validate reliability, difficulty levels, and discriminatory power of test items.
- Revise instruments based on pilot findings in consultation with MEW, DSHE/LAISE and technical specialists.

### **24. Printing and Logistics**

- Print finalized versions of test booklets, answer sheets, questionnaires, training manuals, and field guides for piloting and final test
- Anticipated printing includes
  - Test booklets and questionnaires for students (Grades 6, 8, 10)
  - Head teacher questionnaires
  - Teacher questionnaires
  - Field supervisor and test administrator manuals

### **25. Training and Capacity Building**

- Organize and conduct comprehensive training sessions for:
  - Field supervisors and test administrators
  - CRQ scorers/test markers
  - Data entry personnel
- DSHE/MEW/LAISE officials and learning assessment experts will participate as resource persons.
- Provide on-the-job technical support and mentoring to MEW/DSHE and LAISE staff to build institutional capacity for future assessments.
- Develop a sustainability and transition plan for long-term institutionalization of national assessments.

### **26. Field Implementation**

- Deploy trained teams to administer the NASS across all sampled institutions within the designated survey period (typically within 2-3 days).

- Ensure adherence to standardized protocols for test administration, questionnaire delivery, and secure handling of all materials.
- Collect completed test scripts and unused materials and safely transport them to the consultant's central office for processing.

## **27. Test Marking and Data Management**

- Score the CRQ sections following standardized rubrics provided by MEW, DSHE/LAISE under the supervision of assessment specialists.
- Enter data from MCQs and questionnaires using ICT-enabled systems with robust data validation and error-checking protocols.
- Maintain two rounds of data entry (double data entry) to minimize errors and perform consistency checks.
- Provide preliminary and cleaned datasets to MEW, DSHE/LAISE and the assessment specialist for review.

## **28. Data Analysis and Reporting**

- Conduct detailed statistical and psychometric analyses including:
  - Item analysis, scaling, proficiency level categorization, learning outcome mapping
  - Disaggregated analysis by gender, region, socioeconomic status, etc.
- Prepare comprehensive technical reports, summary briefs, and policy notes highlighting key findings and recommendations.
- Ensure alignment of results reporting with SDG 4.1.1 indicators and Project Development Objectives (PDOs) of the LAISE Project.

## **29. Dissemination and Stakeholder Engagement**

- Organize national and sub-national dissemination events including workshops, consultations, and policy dialogues.
- Present findings to policymakers, education stakeholders, civil society, and development partners in accessible formats (infographics, briefs, presentations).
- Promote the use of findings in policy formulation, school improvement strategies, and education planning processes.

## **30. Reporting and Coordination**

- Submit periodic progress reports, pilot reports, fieldwork completion reports, and data quality summaries to MEW/DSHE and LAISE.
- Address all technical feedback and make necessary revisions to outputs at no additional cost.

- Maintain close coordination with MEW/DSHE, LAISE technical consultants, World Bank experts and relevant project monitoring teams.

#### D. Duration

- The assignment is expected to span approximately thirty (30) months from the contract effective date, implemented in two phases: Phase I will encompass activities scheduled for 2025, and Phase II will cover those planned for 2027.

#### E. Key Deliverables

**The consultant will have to submit deliverables as per the set milestones, which include (May be adjusted during the final contract):**

1. Finalized assessment plan and instruments
2. Sampling plan and pilot test report
3. Training manuals and training completion reports
4. Field operation plan and survey completion report
5. Fully scored CRQ data and cleaned datasets
6. Analytical report with disaggregated results
7. Policy briefs, infographics, and dissemination materials
8. Capacity-building report and sustainability roadmap

#### F. Timeline

Key Activities	NASS 2025	NASS 2027
Inception & Framework Design	Nov 2025	Sept - Nov 2027
Instrument Development & Sampling and Piloting	Dec 2025	Oct – Nov 2027
Fieldwork, Main Survey, and Data Collection	Jan 2026	Dec 2026 – Jan 2027
Data Analysis & Reporting	Feb – Mar 2026	Feb – Mar 2028
Dissemination	April - May 2026	April – May 2028

#### G. Team Composition (Indicative)

The effective implementation of this assignment will require a well-balanced team, consisting of both key and non-key experts with diverse skills.



## G.1: Key Experts

The broad qualifications and responsibilities of the Key Experts are given below.

Key Experts	Qualification	Key Responsibilities
Team Leader/Assessment Specialist (1) (05 PM for 2025+ 05 PM for 2027= 10 PM)	Masters in education, Assessment/Measurement, or related field. PhD and/or degree/diploma on assessment will be considered as an added qualification. Experience of 3 similar assignment experience as a Team Leader/Assessment Expert.	Overall coordination, technical oversight, preparation of assignment progress reports, regular reporting to the project office
Sr. Psychometrician (1) (03 PM for 2025+ 03 PM for 2027= 06 PM)	Master's in Psychometrics/Statistics/Educational Measurement or relevant field. PhD and/or degree/diploma on assessment will be considered as an added qualification. Experience of 3 similar assignment experience as a Psychometrician.	Test design, psychometric analysis
Psychometrician (2) (03 PM for 2025+ 03 PM for 2027= 06 PM)	Master's in Psychometrics/Statistics/Educational Measurement or relevant field. PhD and/or degree/diploma on assessment will be considered as an added qualification. Experience of 1 similar assignment experience as a Psychometrician.	Test design, psychometric analysis
Sampling Expert (01 PM for 2025+ 01PM for 2027)	Master's in Statistics/Economics or relevant field. Any additional relevant degree/diploma will be considered as an added qualification. Experience of 3 similar assignment experience as a statistician.	Sampling design, weight calculation
Data Management Expert (02 PM for 2025+ 02PM for 2027)	Master's in Data Science/Statistics or relevant field. Any additional relevant degree/diploma will be considered as an added qualification. Experience of 3 similar assignment experience in the field of data management.	Data processing and quality assurance







Key Experts	Qualification	Key Responsibilities
Subject Experts (Bangla, English, Mathematics) (3X1 PM for 2025 +3X1 PM for 2027), (one for each subject)	Master's in relevant subject. 10 years experience as the expert of the relevant subject.	Test item development
Training Specialist (01 PM for 2025+ 01 PM for 2027= 02 PM)	Master's in Education or relevant subject. Any degree/diploma in Training Management will be considered as an added qualification. Experience of 5 years/5 similar assignment experience in implementing training.	Training design and delivery

## G.2: Non-Key Expert

In addition to the key experts, the following non-key experts/staff may be required to carry out the activities as outlined in the Terms of Reference. The indicative list of non-key staff is provided as a guideline; however, the consultants are free to propose their own estimate of non-key staff as deemed necessary.

Non-Key Expert/Staff	Qualification	Key Responsibilities
Field Coordinator (9, one for each zone) 9X15 days for 2025 + 9X15 Days for 2027	Bachelor's/Master's in Social Science/Education. one year experience in coordination work.	Supervision of fieldwork operations

## H. Reporting & Supervision

31. The consultants will work under the overall supervision of DSHE/MEW with close collaboration with the LAISE Project Implementation Unit (PIU). All deliverables will be reviewed and approved by DSHE/MEW/LAISE.

**I. Selection Process:** The consultants will be selected using the Consultants' Qualifications and Cost-based Selection (QCBS) method as set for in the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016, revised November 2020.

## J. Confidentiality/Data Security

32. All data and intellectual property generated under this assignment will be the sole property of the DSHE. The consultants shall maintain strict confidentiality.

The consultants shall ensure strict compliance with the legal and regulatory framework for data privacy and protection applicable in Bangladesh, including provisions under the Cyber Security Ordinance 2025 and any relevant ICT regulations. The consultants must ensure that personal data is only collected for specified purposes, used lawfully and fairly, and not shared with any

unauthorized third party. All staff handling personal data must be trained in data privacy protocols.

Also, the consultants must implement robust technical and organizational measures to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and security of personal data collected, stored, or processed. Any data breach or unauthorized access must be reported to the client immediately and remediated according to agreed procedures.

#### **K. Environmental and Social Policy**

Government of Bangladesh and World Bank's environmental, social, health and safety policies will apply to the project.



**The following requirement does not form part of the Terms of Reference (ToR), but it will be reflected in the Request for Proposals (RFP)**

**Payment Schedule (Indicative - May be adjusted during final contract):**

32. The payment will be divided into two equal segments for NASS 2025 and NASS 2027. Payment for each NASS will be made in accordance with the following schedule:

Milestone	Payment (%)	
	2025	2027
Upon approval of Inception Report with detailed methodology and work plan	10%	
Upon completion and acceptance by the client of instrument development and sampling	7.5%	7.5%
After successful piloting and finalization of tools	7.5%	7.5%
Upon completion and acceptance by the client of data collection	10%	10%
Upon submission and acceptance by the client of cleaned dataset and draft report	10%	10%
Upon approval of Final Report and Dissemination	10%	10%

*However, payment shall be made to the Consultant on acceptance of the reports by the client. For the unaccepted Report(s), the Client, within 60 (sixty) days from receipt of such reports from the Consultant, shall advise the Consultant in writing the reasons of non-acceptance and shall instruct the Consultant in writing to re-submit the Report(s) addressing the same, within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of receipt of such instruction by the Consultant from the Client. Payment for re-submitted reports shall be made to the Consultant within 15 (fifteen) days of resubmission of the Report(s) if accepted.*

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