



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPPs) IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR OF BANGLADESH: WHAT PROSPECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Compared to many developing nations, Bangladesh scored strongly in reducing poverty and other goals of the UN MDGs programme between 2000 and 2015. Bangladesh now has major initiatives to implement several projects to make the UN's plan on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda a grand success.

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There are only 12 years until 2030 in which to make the SDGs agenda of the UN a success. The public-private partnership (PPP) initiative is regarded as one of the pathways towards achieving the SDGs in Bangladesh. In this paper we will investigate how this nation would make use of the PPP approach in the higher education sub-sector, by employing a sectoral analysis introduced by the World Bank (WB) in establishing its Public-Private-Partnership in Infrastructure Resource Centre (PPIRC).

Design/methodology/approach: In order to transform Bangladesh into a developed country as per its ambitious Vision 2041, the government needs to create an effective domestic education agenda in order to develop a critical mass of globally competent citizens. While the country has been pursuing the vision with the aim of transforming itself into a developed economy, with sustainable economic growth and consistent improvement of human and social development indicators by the year 2041, according to a recent dialogue jointly organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Bangladesh and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) (an international development NGO), the new generation will need to compete with their peers around the world.

With a view to incorporate values of internationalism in the domestic education system of Bangladesh, the programme was organised with a view to start a dialogue about how to turn the aspiration into reality. It was emphasised that, “Students have to be capable of addressing the emerging challenges like climate change, migration, financial crisis and traditional and non-traditional security that cut across the borders, on the one hand, while they need to develop communicative skills and collaborative approach to discuss those challenges in the global platforms, on the other”. At present, there is no effective mechanism to create coherence between the core international curricula and domestic education agenda. At the same time, establishing a useful link between the international and national education system may create good opportunities for students to learn from different worldwide experiences to foster their global citizenship skills, further emphasised by the organisers of the dialogue. In view of the above, the present paper will investigate the PPP approach in the education sector of Bangladesh, in particular covering the vocational and higher education areas. In this respect both public and private sectors have a major role to play under the SDG agenda.

Findings: The present study would contribute to the Bangladesh government’s policy strategy to create and examine effective domestic education in the area of vocational, trade, polytechnic and commerce, and other skilled based education. This would be done with the support of private investment in order to develop an effective public-private partnership to attain SDGs by 2030.

Originality/value: The study is original in its approach (no other studies have been found so far) and would generate debate with a view to how to embrace a private-public partnership approach in investing in the education sector, particularly technical education, over the next 20 years. The PPP will enhance and enrich the skills of millions joining the workforce in the next two decades, and attain the SDGs by 2030.

Keywords: Bangladesh; Education; Public-Private Partnership; Higher Education; Technical Education

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh became an independent nation through an armed struggle against former West Pakistan in 1971. The country was initially characterised by political and economic instability and natural disasters, resulting in a weak and fragile economy. This is discussed further in the next section.

Bangladesh is surrounded by Indian Territory on three borders. However, a small strip borders Myanmar (formerly Burma) on the south-east, with another to the south, the Bay of Bengal. The country has more than 160 million people in an area of 144,000 square kilometres (over 1,000 people per square kilometre) - the most densely populated nation in the world after city states such as Singapore, Hong Kong and the province of Java, Indonesia. The population has more than doubled since 1971. More than 75% of the population live in rural villages, while more than 80% of the people live on agriculture, which accounts for the major source of paid and unpaid employment. The principal crops are rice, jute, tea, wheat, oilseeds, potato and pulses.

Natural gas is abundant in supply and is used to generate electricity and produce nitrogenous fertilisers. It is also the main source for domestic cooking, industrial use and transport in urban areas. Bangladesh has a tropical monsoon climate; this results in frequent cyclones (more than 30 cyclones have hit Bangladesh in the last 50 years) and widespread flooding almost every year (it has three large rivers, and thousands of small rivers and tributaries) causing damage to property and loss of life.

THE ECONOMY

Table 1 compares the major economic indicators between 1983 and 2015. In 1983, Bangladesh had a population of more than 90 million, with a density of population over 590 per square kilometre in 1983: the annual rate of population growth was 2.7%. The GDP per capita was very low at US\$590 in 1983 prices. The growth rate in 1982 was only 0.1%. Ready-made garments (RMG) and shrimp exports had been nil or negligible. Remittances from abroad were only US\$300 million in 1983. The population under the poverty line (head count ratio) was 60% in the same year. The production of rice was only 13 million tonnes, and inflation was running at 19%. Literacy rate was dismal, below 50%. Longevity was less than 50 years in the early 1970s.

The picture has changed dramatically over the last three decades to 2015 (Table 1). Population has increased by 80% as a result of a drop in the growth rate 60%. Population density per square kilometre has increased to 70%. The GDP per capita advanced

Table 1 Bangladesh's Achievements between 1983–2013

<i>Items</i>	<i>1983</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>Folds</i>
Population (Millions)	90	160	1.80
Population growth rate (%)	2.7	1.7	–1.60
Population per square kilometre	590	1,030	1.70
GDP (in billion US\$)	N/A	205	–
GDP per capita (in US\$)	150	1,300	8.67
Growth rate (%)	0.1	6.5	65.00
Garments Exports (in billion US\$)	Nil	26	–
Shrimp Exports (in billion US\$)	Neg	0.64	–
Remittance (in billion US\$)	0.3	15.50	51.67
Foreign Reserve (in billion US\$)	N/A	27	–
Under Poverty Line (in % of total population)	60	23	–2.60
Rice Production (in million tonne)	13	33	2.54
Inflation Rate (%)	19	6.4	–3.00
Literacy Rate (%)	25	65	2.60
Longevity (years)	45	70	1.60

Note: N/A = Not available; Neg = Negligible

Source: Hossain (1983); Haider (2016)

almost nine fold as a result of sustained growth in GDP of between 5.0% and 6.5% in recent decades. The difference of population growth and GDP growth in 2015 suggests that GDP has grown by more than four times. In 1983, the population growth was more than 27 times that of the GDP rate. The export of garments reached more than US\$25 billion, and shrimp exports were worth US\$650 million in 2015. Remittance reached US\$15 billion, and foreign reserves were at their peak at US\$27 billion in 2015. In the production of rice, the nation had a surplus of 2 million tonnes in 2015 as against a deficit of a similar amount few years ago. Production hit 33 million tonnes. The inflation rate was brought down to single digit at 6.5% in 2015: it had been running at double digits over a long period since 1983. The literacy rate has improved at a strong pace and is now at 65% or more; longevity has passed 70 years.

POVERTY REDUCTION

In terms of reducing extreme poverty in Asia, certainly the East Asian nations have been ahead of South Asia. The Head Count Ratio (HCR) suggests that almost half the population in Bangladesh and 41% in India lived under Purchasing Power Parity of \$1.25 a day. Recently, the Bangladesh Planning Commission (PC) published a report on the country's achievements and non-achievements in poverty reduction until 2014.

PPP in Education Sector of Bangladesh

Table 2 Poverty Reduction in Bangladesh, 2002–2014 (%)

Year	People under Poverty*	Hard Core Poor**	People above Poverty Level
2002	44.6	–	55.4
2006	38.4	–	61.6
2009	33.4	–	66.6
2013	26.2	–	73.8
2014	24.3	10.6	75.5

Note: The Planning Commission defines poverty in terms of calories a person requires per day. In Bangladesh this is about 2,122Kcal. To purchase the required calories, a person's income per month has been considered to determine who are poor, people under poverty, and hard core poor. It has been estimated that Taka 3,000 per capita per month is needed to buy 2,122Kcal per day. The following estimates have been provided by the PC for these groups:
 *People under poverty: Having income below Taka 3,000 per month per person is someone who is considered poor.
 **Hard core poor: Having income below Taka 1,600 per month per person is someone who is considered to be hard core poor.

Source: Hossain and Hoque (2016) cited from Shah (2015)

The PC's assessment was based on data collected by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). Table 2 presents a picture of poverty reduction between 2002 and 2014. Figures for 2014 are very encouraging. The national poverty level went down to one quarter of the population compared to almost one half in early 2000. More interestingly, hard core poor in 2014 accounted for 10.6% out of the 24.3% of total poor. This suggests that if this momentum can be continued, the prediction is by 2021, the 50th anniversary of independence, the nation would be in a position to push another 15% out of poverty, and the entire hard core poor eliminated with only 10% of the total population remaining poor. In absolute terms, this would be below 20 million under the poverty line as against 40 million today. Indeed, in absolute terms poverty will remain a challenge for the nation in the years to come (Hossain and Hoque, 2016).

With all these achievements on the economic front, according to the World Bank's definition of prosperity, Bangladesh has now advanced to lower middle income status. The next step in the ladder is achieving middle income, and it appears that with current development in economic activities, this is indeed likely to be achieved by 2025, providing the country maintains political stability.

In the meantime, the incumbent government has a major agenda in place called Vision 2041. The aim of this vision is to enable the nation to catch up with more developed countries, at least in economic and social terms. In other words, it would like to achieve a GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Parity terms equivalent to developed nations, and reach a literacy rate, longevity, sanitation, maternal and child mortality, nutrition intake and so on, on a par with developed nations. Of course, it is a tall order to achieve this within another quarter of a century. However, if the nation continues to grow at its present pace for another 25 to 30 years, there is a possibility of reaching the targets before it celebrates 100 year of its birth in 2071. The major obstacle that

appear on the horizon at this moment is the impact of global warming induced climate change to 2100. It is predicted that the sea level will rise to 2100 and, if unabated, almost 40% of farmland would be inundated by saline water and more than half of its population would become climate refugees (Hossain and Selvanathan, 2011).

SANITATION ACCESS

Professor Amartya Sen and Jean Dreze published a volume in 2013 called, *An Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradictions*, in which the authors have strongly criticised India's non-achievement in sanitation access, even after this nation's recent success in economic prosperity. When comparing with India's neighbours, they were disappointed that India placed well behind Bangladesh (Sen and Dreze, 2013).

Compared to its immediate neighbours, on an aggregate nationally, Bangladesh performs quite well in terms of improved and shared sanitation access. For example, India, with 53% access (improved plus shared facilities) to sanitation performs poorly relative to Pakistan (54%) and Bangladesh (81%) in 2010. Comparing this national performance in rural and urban areas, the difference at the urban level in India (77%) is lower against Bangladesh (83%) and Pakistan at 78% (Hossain and Howard, 2014).

At the rural level, the difference has been phenomenal. For example, in Pakistan, 40% of the rural population has access to an improved plus shared sanitation facility, which is significantly higher than the 27% of rural people in India. In stark contrast to both India and Pakistan, in Bangladesh 80% of rural people had access. This raises the question of why Bangladesh has been outperforming Pakistan and India. The main reason was availability of microfinance to the poor in rural areas. Bangladesh is the home of large microfinance institutions (MFIs) of the world such as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee BRAC, Grameen Bank, Association for Social Advancement ASA, and so on (this was also mentioned in Sen's observations in the 16 July 2014 edition of the prestigious London based daily, *The Guardian*).

EDUCATION

Having relative prosperity on the economic front, education and its importance in Bangladesh have been effectively and sustainably gaining recognition over the last three decades. The country now has a literacy rate of 70%; this was only 20% in 1981 and 17% in 1961. Education beyond primary level has been within the reach of only the well-off. Some of the major problems and difficulties in improving education in Bangladesh have been: inadequate implementation mechanisms in introducing education programmes, social inhibitions discouraging the education of girls, poverty, shortage of trained teachers, and lack of or poor quality of physical facilities. These were typical problems of developing countries in the 1960s and 1970s (Hossain and National Office for Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR), 1992).

However, in Bangladesh, two forces, the GOs (Public) and the NGOs (Private), have worked together to improve education since the 1980s. Major efforts have been made to change the century-old education system, to make it more effective and universal, and less elitist. The Second Five Year Plan (SFYP) of 1980–85, for the first time made provision for a national primary education and mass literacy programme. The Government was willing to develop a skilled labour force base instead of expanding liberal education. The Third Five Year Plan (TFYP) for 1986–1990 aimed at increasing primary age enrolments to 70%, and improve the retention rate to the end of the primary school cycle. It also aimed to reduce the rural-urban gap in educational facilities, reduce the gap in educational opportunities between the sexes, continue the efforts to reduce illiteracy among adults, and provide more in-service training for teachers.

In an effort to improve the degree of participation of the people in education development, efforts are being made to decentralise basic education at the *Upazila* (sub-district) level. However, some issues exist that need immediate attention:

- unsatisfactory participation rates in post-primary education;
- high drop-out rates in all stages;
- access to education is unequal. The imbalance is two-fold: a rural-urban imbalance and a gender imbalance;
- the availability of trained and committed teachers at primary level. This has caused a major problem in terms of teacher-student ratio at primary level where the participation rate has jumped in recent years;
- the physical infrastructure still remains inadequate given the increase in participation rate; and,
- absenteeism by primary teachers is a major cause of concern.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Education system in Bangladesh has many of the characteristics of the system introduced by the British in Greater India in the 19th century. There are three levels of school education: primary (Grades I–V), secondary (Grades VI–X) and higher secondary (Grades XI and XII) offered at higher secondary schools (and intermediate colleges).

Public Education System

Responsibility for education rests with the national Government's Ministry of Education. The Directorate of Education under the Ministry is responsible for the operation of secondary and higher secondary education, having annual public examinations for granting secondary and higher secondary certificates respectively. The administration of primary education has been recently decentralised at the sub-district level. The

government run colleges, polytechnic institutions and universities are directly under the control of the Ministry of Education, at least in budgetary and funding terms. In recent years, the allocation of funds towards public education systems has been increasing and has now reached more than 5% of the national budget. The year-on-year increase in budget allocation has been increasing as well. For example, a record amount was committed in 2009–10, which was almost 9% more than the previous year (www.mof.gov.bd, Ministry of Finance, 2009; Hossain and NOOSR, 1992).

At tertiary level, the first public university, the University of Dhaka, was established in 1925. There are now 38 public universities established all over Bangladesh.

Private Education System

About a quarter of primary schools are in the private sector. All junior high schools, *madrasahs* (religious schools), more than 90% of high schools, and almost all intermediate colleges, except some old colleges, are run by private sector. All secondary schools or intermediate colleges offering general education under the private system require affiliation with the regional Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education for academic purposes. Recognition by the Board is required in order for a school or college to register candidates for public examination of the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC). For Islamic education, *madrasahs* are affiliated to the Madrasah Education Board, which is an autonomous board established in 1982. There are two stages of education offered under this Board: The *Dakhil* stage is equivalent to the secondary stage, and the *Alim* stage is equivalent to the higher secondary stage. Some *madrasahs* also offer vocational and technical education.

In the higher education sector, at tertiary level, the government started offering licenses to the private sector to establish private universities in the 1980s. So far, 95 universities have been given approval to run by domestic license holders. Some are doing very well; however, the majority are facing problems in following government rules and regulations.

Options after Secondary Education

At the end of Grade VIII, students may undertake two and three year courses at technical, vocational and commercial institutes. These courses lead to technical certificates and diplomas, and are at the trades' level. Graduates of the Secondary School Certificate examination at the end of Grade X, conducted by the Boards of Secondary and Intermediate Education, may either enter into an HSC (Year XI and XII) course or undertake technical education in the area of engineering, agriculture, trade courses at the polytechnics or technical/vocational institutes. At the post-secondary level, commonly undertaken HSC courses are in science, commerce, humanities and ag-

riculture. These courses are offered at various intermediate colleges and operated with both private and public funding. In addition to the intermediate colleges, there are nine cadet colleges, including one for females, which offer HSC courses. These have been established by public resources with a view to providing both secondary and higher secondary education with full residential facilities, including provision for military training to stimulate young graduates to join the defence forces after completion of the HSC.

Options for vocational/technical, trade and para-professional training are limited in Bangladesh. Post-secondary technical education has been offered mainly at the polytechnic and vocational training institutes. The Technical Education Board (TEB) is responsible for maintaining standards, conducting examinations and awarding all certificates and diplomas. The various types of institutes that were developed before 1986 are as follows:

- 23 agricultural institutes;
- 1 college of leather technology;
- 2 colleges of physical education;
- 1 college of textile technology;
- 16 commercial institutes for business studies;
- 1 institute for glass and ceramics;
- 1 institute of graphic arts;
- 11 nursing institutes;
- 18 polytechnic institutes for engineering studies;
- 1 institute for land survey studies;
- 54 vocational training institutes for trade and business studies;
- 7 primary teacher training institutes.

In addition to public places in technical and vocational institutes, there are also a number of commercial and vocational institutions in urban areas offering courses from three months to one year in duration in various technical, commercial and trade areas. They are run by private initiatives and operate on a commercial basis (Hossain and NOOSR, 1992).

Higher Education

Higher education in Bangladesh still bears some of the characteristics of the first universities established by the British Raj in the early part of the 20th century. The main role of these early universities was to maintain a uniform standard in the affiliated colleges under their jurisdiction through determining the courses of study and conducting the examinations. Gradually, over the years, the universities have established their own teaching departments for postgraduate study and research. Currently, Bangladesh has 40 public universities. These universities are mostly both teaching and

affiliated institutions with departments of studies and related institutes; constituent colleges are part of the university, but may be located off the main campus. With the establishment of the National University of Bangladesh, governments over the years brought all colleges under the National University. All universities, including National University, usually offer courses leading to Honours degrees and postgraduate awards. The majority of students of the National University conduct a 'Pass' or ordinary Bachelor degree on campus; off campus, night courses cover a period of two years after HSC. There are some Secondary School Teachers Training colleges that offer Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree courses over one year for teachers who possess an undergraduate degree in any discipline.

In addition to public universities, the nation has now 95 private and 3 international universities. About two dozen private universities are making a major contribution to the nation's drive for building the education infrastructure and to develop human resources for the future. Due to limited space it is not possible here to assess both public and private universities in providing quality education in Bangladesh. However, it is important to mention the roles of a regulatory body that was established to regulate both the public and the private universities on the Government's behalf. This is the University Grants Commission (UGC) established in 1973. The UGC is responsible for assessing the annual financial needs of all public universities, evaluating university development programmes, and advising the government on the establishment of new universities, public or private, or the expansion of existing institutions. For public universities the government allocates a block grant of funds to the UGC, which in turn distributes the funds among the universities based on their requirements as determined by the UGC (see more in Hossain and NOOSR, 1992).

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Global Approach

Since the period of the Breton Wood agreement, written immediately after the conclusion of World War II, the World Bank (WB), one of the initiatives of Breton Wood, have been providing support to low and middle income countries. In recent years, and in order to develop public-private partnerships (PPPs), the Bank has been keen to make further global development efforts through a number of different tools and mechanisms. In addition to the Public-Private Partnership Infrastructure Research Centre (PPPIRC), the World Bank Group also supports a number of knowledge management tools in collaboration with other development partners. These include:

- The PPP Knowledge Lab;
- PPI Database - Private Participation in Infrastructure Database;
- BoKIR - Body of Knowledge on Infrastructure Regulation;
- PPIAF - Public Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility;

The sectoral PPP programme of the WB has been making major efforts to contribute to various sectors of its member economies. These are: Clean Technology, Sub-National and Municipal, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), Telecom and ICT, Transportation, Water and Sanitation. The examples of four related studies are mentioned below:

1. *The Role and Impact of Public-Private Partnerships in Education* by Harry Anthony Patrinos, Felipe Barrera-Osorio, and Juliana Guaqueta, World Bank 2009.

This book examines five ways through which public-private partnerships (PPPs) contracts can help countries meet education goals. First, PPPs can increase access to good quality education for all, especially for poor children who live in remote, under-served communities and for children in minority populations. Second, lessons for innovative means of financing education can be particularly helpful in post-conflict countries undergoing reconstruction. Third, lessons about what works in terms of PPPs contribute to the development of a more differentiated business model, especially for middle-income countries. Fourth, the challenge of meeting the education Millennium Development Goals over 2000–2015 was a daunting task in the poorest countries. Understanding new partnership arrangements within broad international aid architecture in education can help bring us closer to those goals. Fifth, some very innovative PPP arrangements are developing in Arab countries at present, and lessons can be drawn from their experiences.

2. This background paper, commissioned for the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2009 on *Overcoming Inequality: why governance matters?* by Masooda Bano, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2008.

This paper deals with education reform in Pakistan, which has invested PPPs as the primary strategy to address the challenges of access, quality and equity across income, gender, and the urban/rural divide. The paper documents the dominant PPP models in Pakistan, notes their strengths and limitations, and then assesses their potential to act as the ‘anchor’ of education reforms in Pakistan.

3. *Public-Private Partnerships in Education: Lessons Learned from the Punjab Education Foundation* by Allah Bakhsh Malik, Asian Development Bank 2010.

This study has investigated an alternative to the country’s struggling public school system for impoverished children living in the remote rural areas and urban slums of Pakistan. The provincial government of Punjab revitalised the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF), which works with private schools located in poor communities throughout the province. Through these public-private partnerships (PPPs), the PEF provides school funding, teacher training, and vouchers allowing needy children to attend participating private schools for free. The parity between male and female students is ensured by a policy that makes it mandatory for participating households to enrol both girls and boys. If a household enrolls its boys using an education voucher but not

its girls, the voucher will no longer be valid. This condition, coupled with an awareness campaign, has persuaded parents to send both their boys and girls to school. This report examines a number of aspects of the PEF experience with the design and implementation of PPPs in the education sector including, a brief discussion of the lessons that can be drawn from the PEF's experience with education PPPs.

4. *Public-Private Partnerships in Education and the Pursuit of Gender Equality: A view from South Asia* by Shailaja Fennell, International Development Policy, Revue internationale de politique de développement, 2014.

This study found the introduction of public-private partnerships (PPPs) into the educational sphere has opened up the sector to a wide range of new private providers in India and Pakistan. In addition to the relationship between PPPs and gender, it analyses the role of PPPs in the education sector and reviews the extent to which policies regarding PPPs in education have addressed the objective of gender equality. It compares these policy perspectives with the local data obtained from field studies conducted in India and Pakistan, and evaluates the implications of the findings for moving forward the manner by which partnerships could reduce gender gaps in both countries. For details, see <https://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/>.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROSPECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CONCLUDING COMMENTS

There are only 12 years to make the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda of the UN a success by 2030. The public-private partnership (PPP) initiative is regarded as one of the pathways that can be used to achieve the SDGs in Bangladesh. In this paper we investigated this nation's prospects of making use of the PPP approach in the domestic education sector, employing a sectoral analysis introduced by the World Bank (WB).

In order to transform Bangladesh into a developed country as per its ambitious Vision 2041, the government needs to create an effective domestic education agenda in order to develop a critical mass of globally competent citizens. While the country has been pursuing the vision with the aim of transforming itself into a developed economy with sustainable economic growth and consistent improvement of human and social development indicators by the year 2041, the new generation will need to compete with their peers around the world to make the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda of the UN a success. The public-private partnership (PPP) initiative is regarded as one of the pathways to achieve the SDGs in Bangladesh. In this paper we investigated how this nation could make use of the PPP approach in the domestic education sector, employing a sectoral analysis introduced by the World Bank (World Bank, 2003; PPRIC, 2015).

Indeed, the time has arrived to look at higher education and vocational sub-sectors from the viewpoint of enriching skills for increasing productivity and generating more and more jobs for the ever increasing labour force in Bangladesh. At this stage, a huge opportunity exists to increase productivity by introducing state-of-the-art technology and new age curricula in order to meet not only domestic demand for skilled works, but also demand for such workers from foreign nations. To achieve this, Bangladesh will need the following strategies in the education industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Every year the nation faces huge difficulties in offering higher education places to school leavers, with increased imbalances between places offered and demand for public university places. This, indeed, is a major issue, even for large number of students with high grades in HSC. The PPP approach could be of use to meet this challenge.
2. Using new regulations, private universities need a device for providing places in certificate and diploma courses at trade levels. They also need to develop training programmes for existing employees to enrich and enhance their skills on a regular basis. Through PPPs, public funds to private universities can make a breakthrough in this area.
3. The quality of education is at a crossroads in Bangladesh, particularly at the post-HSC level. This is due to millions of students with undergraduate degrees in liberal arts, sciences, and business studies remaining unemployed over a long period of time. The public-private approach could play a major role in developing alternative strategies to improve the quality of education.
4. SMEs from any nation, developing or least developed, are the engine of economic growth and development. The workers with technical, trade, and vocational skills are the bread and butter of all SMEs, and are also the major source of employment of these workers. Through public-private partnerships, the existing public and/or private education providers can invest in preparing the workers with new and advanced technologies.

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BIOGRAPHY

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Mohammad Samsul Hoque, is a Deputy Secretary of the Government of Bangladesh. He has been doing research work with Dr Moazzem Hossain, an associate Professor of Griffith University Australia, for the last four years. Mr Hoque has attended several national and international conferences, including the WASD conferences in the UK and Bahrain. His papers have been published in WASD outlook 2016 and 2017, respectively. Mr Hoque has a BSc (honours), an MSc (Chemistry), and is a Commonwealth Executive Master of Public Administration (CEMPA).