

Inclusive and equitable access to quality education for disadvantaged children

(Chapai Nawabganj and Kurigram District, Bangladesh, Project Progress Report and Outlook, March 2020)



10 € per student per year create good schools.

Completely immersed in playful learning. (Photo: Silke Geissert, Chapai Nawabganj, February 2020).



In the land of the Bengals

Bangladesh - a country with potential: About 170 million people live in an area twice the size of Bavaria. Due to climate change, rainfall increases and becomes more difficult to plan and is thus increasingly endangering crop yields. Heavy rainfall regularly triggers massive floods that uproot people. Although the state as a whole is developing positively economically, at least 2.6 million children have no access to school education at all. Young people often do not learn to read and write properly at government schools.

Girls are particularly likely to drop out of school early. Our project wants to prevent this and give them a good future.



With support classes we help to catch up on missed lessons.



In the project region, the parents' everyday life consists of hard manual work.

The North in particular is neglected: Infrastructure and flood protection are lacking. Outside agriculture, there is hardly any work. Many religious and indigenous minorities, who are marginalised and sometimes severely discriminated, live in the North. According to official statistics, barely 45% of adults can read and write. In some villages the figure is less than 10%. Often the parents do not understand why regular school attendance is important and what constitutes good teaching.

Poorly trained teachers and large classes: Especially in rural areas, many of the teachers are poorly trained. There are major deficits in terms of expertise and knowledge about child-centred teaching. Most schools have too few teachers and rooms. Lessons are therefore held in shifts. The children learn only little. Individual support for weaker pupils remains a utopia.

Regular school attendance is a challenge: Although almost all children start school, many drop out after grade 5 at the latest. Girls in particular are married at an early age - mostly under the age of 15. Even the children who officially attend school often do not appear regularly because they have to help at home or with the harvest or because nobody cares whether they go to school or not. It is not uncommon for up to 30% of the students to be absent from class.

The goal: High-quality education for 18,000 children

Good education for all: Together with experienced local partners, Childaid Network has initiated a project that improves the educational opportunities for 18,000 children at 60 primary schools in the structurally weak north and northwest of Bangladesh. We provide intensive support to the schools with social workers and help with the purchase of learning materials and books. In-service training for teachers is intended to improve the quality of teaching and strengthen the teachers' commitment. With reformed educational concepts, students with learning difficulties in particular can be better supported.

Two project regions - Kurigram and Chapai Nawabganj: Kurigram is the poorest district in Bangladesh. The population grows rice and other agricultural products. There is practically no industry. Often the men are employed in other parts of the country or in the Gulf States to do unskilled work. The region lies in the catchment area of the Jamuna (Brahmaputra) and is often hit by devastating floods. The second project region is located in Chapai Nawabganj and also belongs to the poorer districts. Many Adivasi communities live here. Besides rice, mango is an important crop. In each region, 30 schools with 9.000 children are supported.

Pre-school classes exist, but are inadequate: Since 2015, all schools in Bangladesh have been obliged to offer pre-school classes. As there is usually a lack of suitable premises, tin huts are being built in which the little ones are accommodated under completely inadequate conditions.



He likes the changes in his pre-school class.



The new works of art are created with full concentration.



The new coat of paint suits the school well.

There is also a lack of suitable materials and trained teachers. We want to change this.

Structural improvements: Only 20% of schools have parents' councils and these are often unaware of their duties and rights. Advisory boards will be set up and trained in all schools to ensure the regular presence of pupils and teachers and to seek support and funding for the schools from the local authorities. Previous projects have shown that it is possible to achieve significant improvements in the schools through the parents' councils.

Our goals in the four-year project:

<p>18,000 children receive access to good education</p>	<p>60 schools will be equipped with learning materials</p>	<p>240 teachers receive further training</p>
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Interim balance after one year - things are moving forward!

First successes are visible: The project started in February 2019 and the reports of our project coordinator for Bangladesh after her project trip exactly one year later clearly show that the start was more than successful. Some of the schools are hardly recognizable. The local partners have done a great job so far.

Pre-school classes are set up: Already after 9 months, all 60 preschool classrooms were newly and child-friendly furnished. The work was carried out jointly by the teachers and the parents' councils with the support of our project partners - the results are impressive! Instead of going into dark rooms every day without decoration, equipped with only a few toys, the children are now looking forward every morning anew. The enthusiasm about this is great among all of them.

Attendance rates significantly increased: The other classrooms in the schools, the schools themselves and the outdoor facilities were also inspected and jointly improved by the project staff, teachers and parents. At the Jonike Para Primary School in Nachole, for example, it was decided to finally build a footpath to the school so that the children no longer have to wade through 30 cm deep mud to get to class during the rainy season. The construction was paid for by the local government. These and similar improvements ensured that the attendance rates of the pupils



In the new pre-school classrooms, learning through play is fun.



The new path to the Jonike Para primary school in Nachole, Chapai Nawabganj.



The curiosity of the youngest must be encouraged.



The changes in the schools weld together.

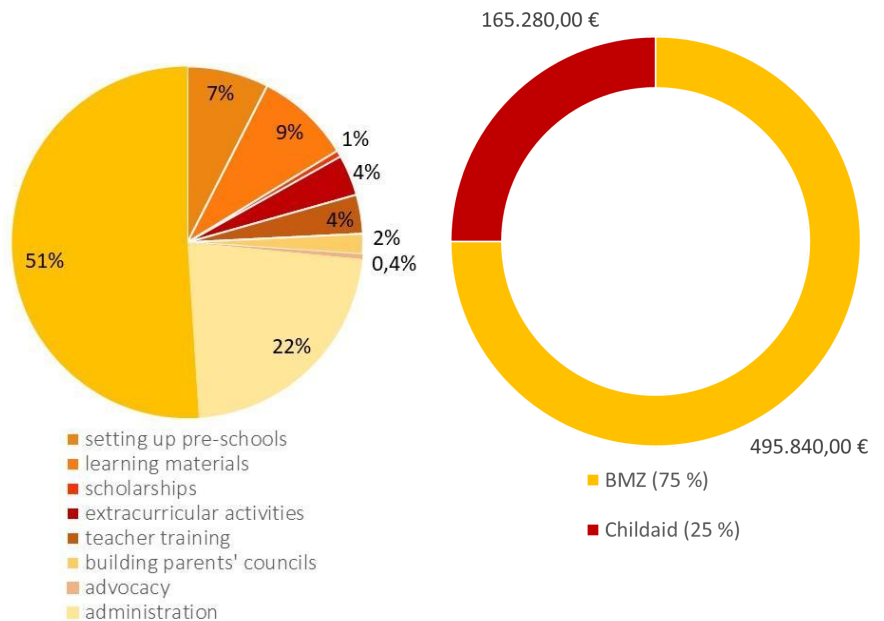
have now increased by more than 20% to between 93 and 97%. (For comparison: the attendance rate in Germany is 97 %.) A great success!

Outlook for the coming years

Mobilisation of parents and government: In order to ensure the sustainability of the project beyond the project duration, the mobilisation of parents and the local government is of particular importance in the remaining three years of the project. The formation of the parents' councils has been completed. Now, it is important to help them to fulfill their important role and to make them aware of what constitutes quality education. In addition, the local government is now being given greater responsibility.

Improvement of science teaching: This year, the project will develop new application-oriented teaching materials for the natural sciences. These are intended to help teachers to convey knowledge in an exciting and very practical way. In science exhibitions at school and district level, the pupils will then demonstrate their skills. We also draw from the experience gained in other projects.

Strong and effective support: The school project will be supported with a total of 661,120 € for the years 2019-2022. Every euro from Childaid Network is quadrupled by the BMZ. We are still looking for additional sponsors for the Childaid Network share of 165,280 € over four years.



Please support us in giving more than 18,000 students in the Kurigram and Chapai Nawabganj districts in Bangladesh access to quality education and the path to a self-determined life.



The support classes are well attended.

