



## Message from the Chair



I greet you all from the Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN); Happy New Year!

We have been passing a difficult time over the last two years facing the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges, efforts have been made by many organizations.

In this issue of Bangladesh ECD Newsletter, we have put together recent relevant news and information, which I hope, you will find of interest. We would like to thank all of you who have provided news and information for this newsletter.

We urge all to keep submitting short news on your ECD related activities or any item which you consider to be interest to the community. We would like to produce and publish the newsletter electronically and post it in BEN's website periodically.

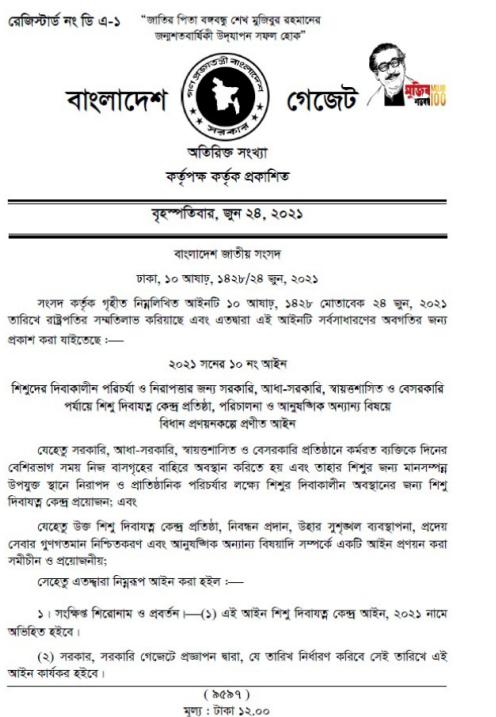
We would welcome your observations and suggestion on the content of the newsletter.

Stay safe and healthy!

Dr. Manzoor Ahmed



# 'Child Daycare Centre Act, 2021 (শিশু দিবাযন্ত্র কেন্দ্র আইন, ২০২১)' enacted by the government



The much awaited 'Child Daycare Centre Act, 2021 (শিশু দিবাযন্ত্র কেন্দ্র আইন, ২০২১)' has been endorsed in the National Parliament. The act was published as a gazette on 24 June 2021.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs with the Department of Women Affairs has taken initiative to develop the Rules (বিধি) as a part of executing the act.

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) being the key forum of early childhood care and development in Bangladesh has collected and compiled observations and suggestions from the BEN member organizations on the Child Daycare Centre Act, 2021. BEN will share these with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs for consideration in the Rules.

The Child Daycare Centre Act, 2021 can be downloaded from the following link.

<https://mowca.gov.bd/site/view/law/Law>

## Daycare Center Operational Manual including Measurement Tools and Guideline developed by BSA, MoWCA

The Daycare Center Operational Manual including Measurement Tools and Guideline have been developed under the Early Learning for Child Development Project (3rd phase) implemented by the Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA) of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) with financial and technical support from UNICEF. BRAC Institute of Educational Development (BRAC IED) was assigned by BSA to develop the manual. A participatory process was followed for development of the manual and measurement tools along with guidelines. As a first step BRAC IED prepared the draft version of the operational manual on the basis of findings of review of the day care manual, guidelines, and other related materials which were collected from national and international organizations involved in implementation of daycare center services. Next step was the organization of a series of consultation meetings with experts and key individuals working in ECD Sector in Bangladesh to get their feedback on the draft version of the manual. Following that final version of the daycare center operational along with measurement tools and guideline was prepared incorporating feedback received through these consultation meetings.

An interagency working group consisting of representatives from UNICEF, BSA and Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) provided technical guidance and inputs to BRAC IED in the process of drafting and finalization of the operational manual, measurement tools and guideline. It is expected that the daycare center operational manual including measurement tools and guidelines will contribute to the operationalization of the Day Care Act 2021 for implementation of standardized Day Care services in Bangladesh. The final version of the daycare center operational manual including measurement tools and guideline is currently under process of approval by MoWCA for publication by the Bangladesh Shishu Academy.



## "Early investment matters (বিনিয়োগ হোক প্রারম্ভিক শৈশবেই)": BEN organized webinar on the occasion of World Children's Day and Child Rights Week 2021

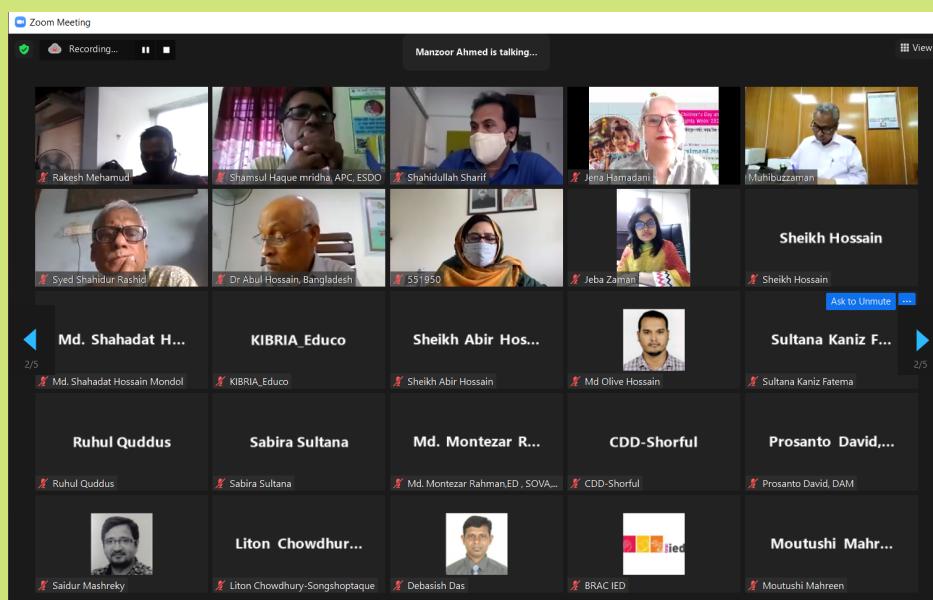
Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) jointly with BRAC IED and Synergos organized a webinar titled "Early investment matters (বিনিয়োগ হোক প্রারম্ভিক শৈশবেই)" on Wednesday, 6 October 2021, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. The webinar was planned as a part of celebrating World Children's Day and Child Rights Week 2021 as a part of the initiative of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Bangladesh Shishu Academy on celebrating World Children's Day and Child Rights Week 2021. The title of the webinar was determined in line with the the slogan of World Children's Day and Child Rights Week 2021 – "শিশুর জন্য বিনিয়োগ করি, সমৃদ্ধ বিশ্ব গড়ি".

175 participants including representatives from different ECCD stakeholders including ministries, government agencies, UN agencies, development partners, NGOs and academic institutions and media joined the webinar on "Early investment matters (বিনিয়োগ হোক প্রারম্ভিক শৈশবেই)".

The webinar was chaired by the Chairperson of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN). Additional Secretary Mr. Md. Muhibuzzaman joined the webinar on behalf of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. Dr. Jena Hamadani, Scientist, icddr,b and Dr. Shamim Ferdous, Executive Director, Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation were other two panelists in the webinar.

Two presentations were made in the webinar – 1. "Investing in Early Childhood Care and Development" presented from the ELCD Project of Bangladesh Shishu Academy by Mr. Sultan Alam, Project Director and Mr. Tariqul Islam Chowdhury, ECD Specialist; 2. "Investing in Play for Early Childhood Care and Development" presented jointly by Ms. Ferdousi Khanom, Senior Lecturer, BRAC IED, BRAC University and Ms. Esha Husain, Project Lead, Drowning Prevention Partnership (DPP)-Synergos. The discussion by the panelists and the open discussion were moderated by Ms. Mahmuda Akhter, Vice-Chair of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN).

A summary of recommendations has been prepared drawing from the discussions in the webinar. A team from the BEN Executive Board will meet the Secretary of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to share the summary of recommendations.



## Phulki's effort for the wellbeing of young children and their parents continues during Covid-19

Phulki's work for children was severely affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All factories and community based childcare centres were shut down. In such a difficult time, Phulki decided to use its community resources to help create awareness about hygiene and Covid-19.



After the lockdown though childcare centers could not reopen, Phulki focused on building capacity by giving training to our volunteers in the community on how to help the children at home through home

visit. Virtually through telephone messages and one to one discussion, the mothers were kept in touch. School closure caused a huge impact on the preschool students of age 4-6 years. Phulki tried to keep the children active academically by providing school books and arranging home visits by caregivers and teachers.

Phulki ensured personal protection equipment and other precaution facilities to all field staff to help continue their work. Phulki is preparing the centers and the caregivers as the center will start functioning again.

Since Phulki works mostly with the working mothers in the ready-made garments sector, Phulki tried to give support to the parents as much as possible in such difficult times. Mental well-being was addressed in all our sessions and home visits.

## DAM Pre-primary CLCs turn into play centers to continue Child development activities in Corona



Mitigating the COVID-19 challenges, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) has connected 750 children aged 4 to below 6 years with pre-primary education by establishing 75 Learning Centers in slum areas of Mirpur, Mohammadpur and Saidpur. In slum houses, children have less space for their childhood development. On the other hand, DAM's Children Learning Centers (CLC) are in open space, have necessary toys, game and sports materials, colorful walls, play corner, joyful environment, etc. These non-formal CLCs are located in the vicinity of the children's home so that they can attend CLC at their convenience. During COVID-19 DAM opens and turns all the pre-primary CLCs as playgrounds for children to roam in the open environment, get closer to teachers, get social learning with friends, stay healthy through sports & game. Children come to the CLCs for playing and making funs in a roaster basis of three alternative days per week.

Besides, teachers also visit to the children's houses and orient their parents on home schooling, one-on-one lessons through their home siblings by following COVID-19 pre-caution and maintaining physical distance. For this reason, teachers' honorarium was continued though pre-primary classes were physically closed. Therefore, in this pandemic situation DAM's Pre-primary CLCs become not just an education center rather it pays close attention to the overall holistic development of children, including physical, social emotional development, language, communication and cognitive development.



## **BRAC Pashe Achhi: A Remote Learning Intervention to Connect with Children & Caregivers during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

In the wake of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, nation-wide lockdowns were imposed in Bangladesh and the country began preparing for an unprecedented crisis at the first sign of confirmed cases in early March, 2020. Schools and offices

were closed indefinitely and institutions across the board rushed to establish safety protocols.

As COVID-19 marched on across Bangladesh, BRAC IED collaborated with BRAC to establish pathways which would increase awareness among community levels and maintain connection with children and families. Through a series of piloting and multiple iterations, the BRAC Pashe Achhi Telecommunication model was created to stand beside children and families living in isolation and cut-off from most of the world. The model is currently running all across Bangladesh, including the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazaar.

Piloting and iterations with Play Leaders, children and parents have shown that staying connected with beneficiaries, ensuring learning through play, and fostering psychosocial support during these difficult times was essential. The model integrated telecounselling and BRAC's learning-through-play framework to create a remote, play-based learning intervention for beneficiaries. Following conversations between program and field teams, a 20-minute script was created for the model, the first 10 minutes of which focuses on counselling content & inclusion of COVID-19 messages for caregivers and children, while the final 10 minutes concentrates on learning content to keep children engaged. Play Leaders & Volunteers would call children & caregivers 4 times a month (4 calls in 4 weeks), using the script shared with them, to connect and communicate. In 2020, facilitators have reached 47749 families.

With time, the Pashe Achhi model has evolved as well. While staying connected, ensuring beneficiary wellbeing and fostering remote, playful learning activities for children remain key objectives, the model adapted to include skills development of Play Leaders & Volunteers, educate caregivers on playful approaches to learning & early stimulation & positive engagement with children, as well as ensure that staff feel validated and are informed on COVID-19 updates and practices. As the COVID-19 global pandemic continues to evolve, Pashe Achhi, as with all of our other interventions, will also continue through iterations and evolve.

## **ESDO's initiative for the children through SBK: A foundation of lifelong learning**



Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO) has been implementing Shishu Bikash Kendro (SBK) program in Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari districts with support from Plan International Bangladesh to support children of 3-5 years in their physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional and overall development in a child friendly environment. Through this program a good number of children in this area are getting opportunity to develop their creativity through their engagement in different games, rhymes, singing, storytelling, working in small and large group, tiny problem solving activities, drawing etc. These SBKs are run home based and facilitated by a trained mother or caregiver from the community. Parents are directly involved with each SBK in overall management. Exposure to these SBKs is helping children become confident and skilled from their childhood, develop positive attitude towards learning and get ready indirectly for formal education. Because of parents' engagement in SBKs, positive changes in parents are seen in terms of knowledge on child development and their behavior with the children.





## ECD Activities of CRP during Covid-19



Centre for the rehabilitation of the paralysed (CRP), serving for the last 41 years, providing rehabilitation services for the betterment of children and person with disabilities through health, education & training. William & Marie Taylor Inclusive School (WMTS) is an Inclusive school of CRP where it provides lifelong learning to help children grow into independent, respectful and creative environment. Due to Corona pandemic situation, the regular yearly educational and co curricular activities of school were interrupted. In this reporting year, WMTS has total 276 students among them 41 students is admitted Special Education Needs Unit (SENU) and 235 students admitted in Inclusive Education Unit (IEU) where 55 students are children with special needs.

Pediatric department of CRP offered regular services by taking all measures declared by WHO. During COVID-19 pandemic, total 3,978 children with special needs and their mother received various services from In-patient department and Out-patient department in last one year with special safety and precautions. Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy, Speech & Language therapy are the key activities in this department. Additionally, activities like hydrotherapy, sensory integration therapy, communication skill training, group therapy, individual therapy services, assistive device assessments are remarkable for various types of condition such as Cerebral Palsy, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Down's Syndrome, multiple disability, Physical disability, Mental retardation, ADHD etc. Besides regular activities CRP put special attention on awareness rising and proper mothers' education on COVID-19. Different departments and units take initiatives like ensuring hand wash, wearing mask, visual instruction, posters, leaflet, sticker and hands on training for children/people with disabilities. CRP has done a special survey phone follow-up to know the actual situation during this time.

## Caritas Bangladesh interventions on ECD services during COVID-19 pandemic

Caritas Bangladesh has been implementing Early Childhood Care and Development (ECD) programs through Ankur Project (previous Momota Project). Since 2015, it started its activities for the low-paid workers in Chattogram city through the establishment of Day Care Centers (DCC) and Home Care Centers.

The project mainly focuses on children's optimal and holistic development, child protection, and capacity building of women who are interested in child care as a profession in the project area. These ECD centers are being operated with all kind of precautions including hand washing and maintaining social distance, since the lockdown and restrictions were relaxed and the factories reopened during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Currently, in the two cities total 14 Model DCCs (each city has 7 DCCs) are running and providing ECD services to 222 children (Dhaka-102 and 120-Chattogram). All the teaching materials and toys are prepared by the Educators and the Day Mothers for minimizing cost and maintaining hygiene.

At DCCs these children are safe and are fed, well taken care of. The parents are happy that their children have positive linguistic development. They were not so amicable before, but now they play in groups.

Trainers of the Ankur Project train the staff members of other NGO/organizations on the method. Technical assistance is also provided for establishment of Day Care Center, preparing toys, developing educational materials and managing the centre routinely.



## Sisimpur App: Helping Children Learn with Fun

After 16 years of unparalleled strong presence on television in Bangladesh, Sisimpur has established its brand as a household name in the country considering its acceptance, popularity, and demand by the children and their parents and caregivers. To meet the learning need of tech savvy kids, Sisimpur carefully ensured its online presence by creating an android-based platform of Sisimpur App, backed up by a strong web version of the app named Sisimpur village ([www.sisimpurvillage.com](http://www.sisimpurvillage.com)). The broader objective of this platform is to create a safe internet space for Bangladeshi children, where they can find themselves engaged with many different innovative learning activities. This platform is designed with variety of landing stations to meet the interest and learning needs of the kids including Bioscope Dekhi for videos, Golpo Shuni for listening stories, Golpo Pori for reading stories, Esho Kheli for playing games, Chobi Anki for drawing and painting etc. The platform contains a very rich treasure corner for the parents in the name of Ma-baba o jotnokarider jonyo where our loving parents will find important contents to strengthen their child caring knowledge and skills. One of the special features of this platform is COVID station where different sorts of audio-visuals and print contents have been embedded both for parents and children by focusing on several health aspects considering the COVID pandemic situation.



To give our children a safe space in the puzzling internet world, our beloved parents and adults can download Sisimpur App on their smartphone and tabs from google play store, get them registered and let children access to the world of Sisimpur. Writing the key word of 'Sisimpur' or 'সিসিম্পুর' on google play store, the app can be easily found for downloading.

To make the Sisimpur contents available on all many possible avenues, Sesame Workshop Bangladesh officially launched the app on December 15, 2020, and over the time of last 9 months the app is downloaded on thousands of devices. Along with our strong presence on three television channels, broadcasting every day and reaching more than 12 million children annually; on social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram; and on YouTube, this App initiative has appeared as most potential initiative for reaching and teaching young children.

## Aparajeyo - Bangladesh strives to supports young children of working mothers



Aparajeyo -Bangladesh has been operating Early Childhood Development (ECD) program since 1995 in each Divisional City. Children from 1 to 5 years are enrolled in the Daycare Centres and they stay there from 8 am to 5 pm in a child friendly, safe and healthy environment. The centres are decorated with colourful and attractive materials. The Centres promote bonding and interaction between infants, young children, their parents and caregivers to ensure that children are physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and intellectually able to learn, by the time they reach primary school age.

Specifically children of the working mothers are enrolled in the ECD Centres on a priority basis. Priority is given to the low-income families, destitute women of slum, brothels and 7 Central Jails. Many of these mothers have small babies and cannot work or an elderly daughter is engaged to care for the baby thus sacrificing her education. Establishment of ECD centres for the babies of the working children's family also reduces the number of children involved in labour. About 1200 children are being supported through the ECD Centres. ECD programs are inspiring the mothers to involve in work for better earning livelihoods to develop their socio-economic status without any tension for their children's protection.





## Kajoli Early Childhood Learning Centres Thrive through the Pandemic and Lockdown



Although the pandemic and consequent government restrictions to avoid mass spread of Covid-19 had an adverse impact on

the full-fledged operation of the Early Childhood Learning (ECL) Kajoli Model Centres in general, many of the centres continued to thrive because of their close link with their immediate clientele, the children, their parents who came from adjacent neighbourhoods and the principles of community engagement which were enhanced at a time of crisis.

More than eighty Kajoli Model Learning centres are currently being run by the initiative of local communities with the technical assistance of Research Initiatives Bangladesh in the Northern part of Bangladesh. Some Kajoli centres are more than 16 years old and continue to grow further. The uniqueness of Kajoli Model is children at the centres enjoy 'joyful learning' techniques and the whole process of learning is owned by the community itself. The people of the local community run the centre on their own. They are the decision makers and collectively share the responsibility among themselves. Such process of imparting knowledge with community ownership strengthens the bonding between centres, community and the children. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many Kajoli centres also remained closed initially. But children of some Kajoli Centers regularly visited the centres even just to play in the playground. Radha Rani, a teacher, claimed that even though centres were closed, children came to the centers on time and requested to be taught. Another teacher Alta Banu said seeing the interest of children, the community allowed teachers to continue teaching. Thus, the teachers also felt motivated and started running the centers during lockdown period dividing children into groups using open spaces under the trees. They strictly followed the health instructions given by the Government.



## CDD Strengthening Parents' Capacity to Support the Deaf Children

Deaf children in Bangladesh often lag behind their hearing peers due to inadequate support from families and schools. They face tremendous challenges to access in mainstream education. The Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) has been piloting projects with the support from Deaf Child Worldwide (DCW) since 2014 primarily focusing on improving deaf children's education and communication skills in four districts of Bangladesh. From January 2021, the Sustainable Education Support for Deaf Children in Bangladesh (SES-DCB) project is being implemented by four partner NGOs in Dhaka, Jhenaidah, Chattogram, and Nilphamary districts and supporting 3 to 14 years old 128 deaf children and their families.

As the schools remained closed for months due to COVID-19 pandemic, many deaf children under the project were in threat of being dropped out. Therefore, the project focuses exclusively on improving parents/caregivers' capacities for supporting the deaf children at home. From January 2021, the project started training to the parents/family members of the deaf children on "How to Support a Deaf Child in Communication and Literacy". The training includes contents for pre-primary, primary and secondary level deaf children separately.

Considering COVID-19 pandemic, the training is being conducted with parents at their homes through one-to-one sessions maintaining appropriate COVID-19 safety measures. Total 18 sessions (2 hours per session) will be conducted by March 2022. Each parent gets two sessions in a month and undergoes thorough regular follow up and assessments. Parents with low literacy level are trained along with their other educated children or other extended family members so that the deaf children get sustainable support within the family or community.





## ECD Project at Tea-Garden Area: Educo's Experience and Learning

In Bangladesh, there are 164 Tea Gardens where 38 different ethnic groups of diverse cultures live who are mostly tea garden labor. These peoples are most deprived among the marginalized communities in Bangladesh. Due to lack of access to government services, inadequate NGOs support, development disparity, and increased challenges of the recent COVID19 crisis, education, health and overall development of young children has been hampered in the tea-garden area largely compared to the other parts of the country. Lack of awareness about the childhood care among the parents is extreme and it accelerates malnutrition and stunting and overall development. Early childhood development supports, primary school environment and social safety net program are also very poor in quality in this area of Bangladesh.

Educo Bangladesh has been implementing an integrated holistic early childhood development program in 30 Tea Gardens and 02 Haor areas in Sreemangal and Komalganj Upazila under Moulvibazar district. Emphasis is given on sustainable approach addressing the spirit of SDG principle 'leaving no one behind'. To establish a sustainable model of ECD program, 36 permanent ECD centers have been constructed in Tea Garden area in Moulvibazar through effective engagement of community people, Panchayet (Garden/community based committee) and Tea Garden authority. The ECD centres have comprehensive daycare facility, parenting education, and homestead gardening for nutrition supply. The project also supports Pre-primary Education to prepare children for formal schooling and to primary school program for improving school environment. Through these program interventions, parents, mothers, adolescents and family level participants have been engaged in child development activities. As a result of the program, Panchayet and TG authority have been showing positive attitudes towards the activities related to the young children. Through continuous effort and network building initiatives, relevant government departments are getting interested to provide support in the garden areas. Yet there are challenges to achieve the optimum support and to create opportunities for early childhood development in the tea garden area.

## ICMH conducted two studies on issues related to early childhood development

Institute of Child and Mother Health (ICMH) has been working as a partner of National ECCD program since 2001. It has a Child Development and Disability Management Center which has been running with the objective of promotion of ECD and early identification and early intervention. A multidisciplinary skilled professional team is providing training to the doctors, developmental therapists and psychologists. From the institute, two studies were conducted in the last two years in Shanmandi village of Sonargoan, Narayangonj.

The first one was a *Survey on Childhood Neurodevelopmental Impairment and Disability in a Selected Rural Area of Bangladesh*. This population-based survey was conducted from January to June 2019, using a cross-sectional two-stage design to identify different types of neurodevelopmental impairment-(NDI) and N. disabilities( NDDs) among children aged 0–18 years in a selected rural area of Bangladesh.

The second one was a *Baseline survey on Knowledge, Attitude and Practices about Early Childhood Care and Development among the Caregivers of Under Five Children in a Selected Rural Village*. This survey was done from January 2020 to June 2020 among the parents and caregivers having at least one under five children, with the aim to assess their knowledge, attitude and practices regarding early childhood care and development. Total 405 parents /caregivers were interviewed. The study covered the knowledge and attitude about child development, domains, early stimulation, child friendly environment, importance of play for ECCD and the existing practices of child care and development.



## **Sylhet Jubo Academy (SJA)'s endeavor for supporting children and their families during COVID-19 pandemic**

Sylhet Jubo Academy (SJA) continue its effort during the Covid-19 pandemic for the development and wellbeing of children through three initiatives - Khasdobir Education, welfare and Development project (KEWDP), Pre-Primary Education for Slum Children in Sylhet and help Poor to get Food During Covid-19 Pandemic.

On the break out of Covid-19, when the centres were closed, teacher visited homes of 2 children every day, raised awareness among parents on hygiene rules to prevent the COVID 19 epidemic and later conducted classes 2 days in a week by maintaining safe distance and handwashing system at the centers. SJA provided support to families in terms of giving food, hygiene items and cloths for children.

## **SKSS working for children and parents in Natore**

Sachetan Karma Shahayak Sangstha (SKSS) worked on raising awareness among parents and communities in Natore regarding prevention measures of Covid-19 and immunization. SKSS has been working for children with disabilities and indigenous children through its inclusive education program through its own funding and through partnership. SKSS has also been participating in the program for pregnant and lactating women under the Department of Women Affairs.

## **SoftShadow's initiatives during COVID-19 pandemic: women's entrepreneurship through child care services**

The COVID-19 pandemic immensely disrupted Early Childhood Development (ECD) and caused an unprecedented national and global crisis. During the pandemic, many child care organizations are at risk of downfall because of the financial impact.

Down to the pandemic, there were countrywide lockdowns in Bangladesh, and educational institutions were closed for a long time. In this situation, SoftShadow has taken different alternative initiatives and used multiple strategies such as distance learning to provide continuous early childhood development services.

Due to lockdown, many child care providers, especially women, became jobless. To address the crisis, SoftShadow has been providing a Home-Based Child Care Provider training for the women who want to become entrepreneurs. Home-Based Child Care can be a great business opportunity for aspiring entrepreneurs who want to work with children. The women, who are educated but have little opportunity to work outside home and lack startup capital, can start a Home-Based Child Care receiving relevant training and with a small investment.

During the pandemic, SoftShadow provided online training on how to start a child care business providing quality childcare. This allows women to set up their own businesses or work from home. It's a worthwhile opportunity to see children grow up as well as earn money.

The Home-Based Child Care Providers training course is designed to equip professionals, managers, caregivers, and parents with the necessary skills and knowledge on how to plan and provide services for the developmentally appropriate needs of the young children in a home setting and in a center-based setting.





## Learning Sharing Seminar on "Child Development in Tea Garden and Haor: Scope and Challenges"

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) and Educo Bangladesh jointly organized a Learning



Sharing Seminar on "Child Development in Tea Garden and Haor: Scope and Challenges" on Tuesday, 30 November 2021, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at Hotel Sarina in Banani, Dhaka. Government officials, representatives from UN agencies, local, national and international organizations, ECD practitioners, experts, and journalists participated in this meeting.

Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Chairperson of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) moderated the seminar. Mr. Abdul Hamid, Country Director of Educo Bangladesh shared the objectives of the seminar. Mr. Bikash Kishore Das, Former Additional Secretary, Government of Bangladesh, Prof. Dr. A.K.M. Reazul Hassan, Member (Primary Curriculum), National Curriculum & Textbook Board (NCTB) and Mr. Md. Delwar Hossain, Field Consultant, JICA Support Program 3, PEDP 4, DPE were the guests of honor of the learning sharing seminar.

Mr. Shariful Islam, Project Manager of ALOY ALOW, Educo Bangladesh presented on the title of the seminar - Child Development in Tea Garden and Haor: Scope and Challenges – from their experiences in the respective area. Educo Bangladesh has been implementing Accessing Learning Opportunities to the Young, Adolescents and Livelihood Options for Women (ALOY-ALOW) project in 30 Tea Gardens and 2 Haors in Sreemangol and Kamalganj upazilas of the Moulvibazar district. The presentation highlighted on key interventions, approaches to holistic child development, problems addressed, major achievements, challenges, learnings and expectations.

Ms. Mahmuda Akhter, Vice-Chair, Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN), Mr. Iqbal Hossain, Education Specialist, UNICEF, Mr. Tariqul Islam Chowdhury, ECD Specialist, ELCD-Project, Bangladesh Shishu Academy and Mr. Md. Muslem Uddin, Divisional Director (Primary Education) of Sylhet Division were the panelists of the discussion on the presentation. After the panel discussion, the session was opened to participants for open discussions. The open discussion was moderated by Dr. Manzoor Ahmed. At the end of the program, Mr. Golam Kibria, Head of Education, Quality Assurance and Compliance, Educo Bangladesh conveyed the vote of thanks.

## Jagorani Chakra Foundation continues efforts in pre-primary education activities during Covid-19



Jagorani Chakra Foundation with financial support from Netz Bangladesh has been implementing pre-primary education activities through three projects in Rangpur district. Under these projects, information of all children aged 5-6 years are collected and admissions to 9 Anondolok Schools and 70 formal pre-primary schools in Gangachara, Kaunia, Pitgacha and Taraganj Upazila of the district. While the schools remained closed during the Covid-19 pandemic, the teachers continued communication through home visits, inspired them to follow hygiene, distributed education and health materials and conducted different necessary activities to help children continue their education and prevent dropouts.





## Aid Foundation working for disabilities in Jhenaidah district

Aid Foundation has been running an ECD centre in Jhenaidah district providing education services for 20 children with speech and hearing impairment. Trained teachers have been engaged to provide education to these children with disabilities. Aid foundation is working on inclusiveness by ensuring admission of children with disabilities to the regular schools, meeting with school management committee to create disability friendly environment, conducting awareness sessions with teachers and children and providing teaching materials. Beside these activities, Aid Foundation provides material and medicine support for the disabled people, conducts program for eco-social development of adolescents with disabilities and provide physiotherapy and training on disabilities.

## ASDE begins food and safety items to affected families in Cox's Bazar

ISDE Bangladesh has started distributing food to the most vulnerable families in the East Bara Bheola and Kayerbil Union of Cox's Bazar district impacted by shutdowns due to COVID-19 and flood hits. Alongside making changes in the food and protection materials distribution process in the Rohingya camps as well as host communities to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 and Flash flood, ISDE is working to provide support to the host communities and Rohingya communities of Cox's Bazar as needed. As well as providing food to vulnerable households, ISDE is also supplying emergency food and protection materials to host communities in the flood and climate change affected peoples in Cox's Bazar.

## MBSK's support to the families in northern districts to recover from COVID-19

Mohila Bohumukhi Shikkha Kendra (MBSK) is a regional level development organization working in northern districts Dinajpur, Nilphamari, Thakurgaon and Rangpur. The organization has been carefully observing the COVID-19 crisis from the beginning and creating awareness among the community people to maintain Government declared health-hygiene practices like using of mask, hand sanitizer, social distancing, avoiding mass gathering etc. Beyond these the organization is distributed relief material to about 800 families of Rangpur, Dinajpur Thakurgaon and Nilphamari district during COVID-19 period. The relief materials included daily necessities like Rice, Dal, Atta, Potato, Oil, soap masks etc. Hand sanitizer, mask and PPE were also given among the staff members.

## Grambangla Unnayan Committee: A lighthouse of hope for marginal children and their families



Grambangla Unnayan Committee has been continuing to work relentlessly to carry on its goal of disseminating education among the marginal groups. Nomadic society, waste-pickers, street children etc. are the beneficiary groups of Grambangla Unnayan Committee's initiatives.

Grambangla School in Matuail, Dhaka providing inclusive education to the waste picking children and ensuring good care of the children through its trained teachers and caregivers.

To prevent dropouts from school and to ensure proper nutrition for the children in the pandemic, Grambangla Unnayan Committee has taken initiatives to provide relief support to children and women of the waste picker community, Bede, street children, day laborers, and other people from low-income groups. In this process, Grambangla distributed relief goods without having any social contact and this process is also dignified for the poor people.

In order to provide a safe, clean and child-friendly environment to the waste picker children, Grambangla Day Care Center was established in 2008 at Matuail near the Sanitary Land Fill area. The children get uniforms, learning materials, morning breakfast, and mid-day meals free of cost. This daycare center plays a significant role in preventing children from being dropout later.

To deliver pre-school services to the children of farmers, boatmen, craftsmen, and lower-caste Hindus at Nalchityupazila under Jhalokathi district in Barisal division, Abdul Mannan Pre-School was established in 2005. Besides, Abdul Mannan Pre-School provides the opportunity to the dropout children to study in class one and to get admission at mainstream schools.



# Upcoming International ECD Events

Early Years Virtual World Conference on  
**Reimagining and reshaping Early Childhood  
Care and Education for the “New” Normal**

27-29 January 2022

Organizer: Association for early childhood education & development (AECED) in collaboration with Mobile Creches, India

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.aeced.org.in/world-conference-2022/>

22nd PECERA Annual Conference

**Transforming Early Childhood Education  
Quality – From Policy to Practice**

8-10 July 2022

Organizer: Pacific Early Childhood Education Research Association (PECERA), Hong Kong

For more information, please visit:

<http://pecera2022.com/>

74th OMEP World Assembly and Conference  
**Early Childhood Education in 21st Century:  
new perspectives and dilemmas**

11-15 July 2022, Athens, Greece

Organizer: OMEP

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.omep2022.org/en/>

2022 Orlando Event

**World Forum on Early Care and Education**

16-19 May 2022, Orlando, Florida, USA

Organizer: World Forum Foundation

For more information, please visit:

<https://worldforumfoundation.org/orlando-event/>



## ECD Newsletter

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## NATIONAL ECD CONFERENCE

14-15 MAY 2022  
DHAKA, BANGLADESH

**Announcement  
coming  
soon!**