

Implementing Secondary Education in Bangladesh: Governance Challenges and Way Forward

Executive Summary

Background

- The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) is responsible for administering, managing, and monitoring activities that pertain to Secondary and Higher Education in Bangladesh.
- Institutions offering Secondary and Higher Education in Bangladesh can be broadly categorized to fall into three distinct streams: General, Technical, and Madrasa education curriculum. Nearly sixty-one percent (61%) of these institutions offer schooling following the General Curriculum to their students.
- Nearly eighty-two percent (82%) of the institutions under the governance of the DSHE are Secondary Level Educational Institutions.
- Under the overall supervision and direction of the Ministry of Education (MoE), the DSHE has been implementing secondary education activities in the country through its offices located at various administrative tiers - the Upazila (sub-district), the District, and the Divisional administrative levels in Bangladesh.
- Despite various positive initiatives undertaken by the government, the news media as well as published research have revealed various problems, irregularities, and incidents of corruption related to the secondary education activities in the country.
- Findings of TIB's National Household Survey 2017 reveal that 42.9% of the surveyed households who had received services from various government and/or Monthly Payment Order (MPO)-registered educational institutions were victims of corruption and irregularities in some way or other.
- The News media have published and highlighted various irregularities and corruption in the process of teacher recruitment, MPO registration, and teaching approval, to name a few examples.
- In Addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has created a critical situation in the Secondary Education sector in the country.
- There is a lack of structured research on the challenges of good governance, as well as on the causes, effects, nature and extent of irregularities and corruption observed in the Secondary Education Sector.

- Education Sector is one of the priority areas of TIB activities– and it has been conducting civic initiatives, research, and advocacy at the local and national level in the Primary Education Sector as well as in the Higher Education Sector for a long time.
- In continuation of TIB's activities in the education sector, the present research has been conducted to study the level of transparency, accountability, irregularities, corruptions and other challenges that persist in the Secondary Education Sector of the country.

Research Objective

Overall Objective

The main objective of this research is to review the challenges of Good Governance in the implementation of Secondary Educational activities in Bangladesh in the General Curriculum stream.

Specific Objectives

The **specific objectives** are:

- To identify the legal and institutional deficits in the implementation of Secondary Education activities.
- To identify the deficits in Transparency and Accountability in the implementation of Secondary Education activities.
- To identify the nature and extent of irregularities and corruption in the implementation of Secondary Education activities.
- To propose recommendations for overcoming existing challenges.

Scope and Methodology of this Research

- This research investigates the activities conducted by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), Regional Educational Offices, District Educational Offices and Upazila Secondary Educational Offices. In addition, it also investigates the relevant activities of affiliates in the case of management of MPO registered private as well as fully governmental education institutions from Class VI to Class XII in the General Curriculum.
- This is primarily a qualitative research - however, quantitative data from secondary sources have also been used in limited cases.
- Data was collected from Divisional, District and Upazila education offices, as well as the central office of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE).
- In addition, data was collected from 54 educational institutions located in 18 Upazilas, each two selected from nine Divisions. From each Upazila, two private MPO registered institutions, and one governmental institution, were selected.
- New and old MPO registered educations, government or recently nationalized institutions, geographical location etc. were considered in selection of the educational institutions.
- Primary data were collected through key informant interviews (KII, total 325) with relevant officers and employees of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education and its subordinate divisional, district and upazila secondary education offices, teachers and staff of educational institutions, members of teachers' association, School Management Committee /Governing body and other relevant stakeholders, education experts and media personnel.
- Sources of secondary data include the National Education Policy 2010, relevant rules, regulations, and notifications, institutional annual reports, related website and various published report.

- Field data collection was carried out from May-October 2019. Subsequently, collection of further secondary data, analysis of collected data, and preparation of report were completed by 15 September 2021.
- The research was analyzed considering various broader indicators of good governance like laws and institutional capacities, transparency, accountability and prevention of irregularities and corruption.

Research Findings

National Education Policy (NEP) 2010

- The government adopted the National Education Policy in 2010, and the quality of education depends on the successful implementation of this policy. However, there is a lack of effective initiatives at the policy-making level.
- Although a restructuring of the educational administration and management system between Class IX to Class XII was stated in the policy, no specific plan or outline has been made to date.
- Although a comprehensive and integrated Education Law was supposed to be developed by consolidating all existing laws, rules, and regulations that pertain to Education, and based on the Education Policy 2010, it has not been developed yet due to bureaucratic delays, even though more than a decade has passed. In the meantime, Secondary Education activities have been operating under executive orders and directions.
- While 1) an Office of a Chief Education Inspector with the requisite power and skilled personnel, 2) a separate Directorate for Secondary Education, were proposed in the Education Policy 2010, no effective initiatives have been taken to date. Consequently, this has created obstacles in improving the quality of Education and education system.
- Formation of an independent and permanent National Education Commission was proposed in the NEP 2010. The Ministry of Education (MoEdu) has recently started the work for forming such a Commission.
- The NEP 2010 recommended formation of a “Private Teacher Selection Commission” for the selection of subject-based teachers, which will be similar to the Public Service Commission. However, a “Teacher Registration and Certification Authority” has been formed instead. There have been allegations of irregularities and corruption in the recruitment process of teachers by the SMC/ Governing body, specifically for recruitment in Headmaster and Assistant Headmaster roles.
- The NEP recommended that a high powered committee be formed to make recommendations on the salary, allowance, and other benefits available to teachers. In addition, an ethical code of conduct be drafted, which will state the specific disciplinary actions to be taken against teachers who are accused of violating the code of conduct. However, in practice there is a lack of initiative towards ensuring effective accountability as well as improving the financial benefits and social stature available to teachers.
- It was also proposed that a Regional Education Management Academy be established in each division to provide speedy subject-based training. In addition, an intensive monitoring system was proposed to assess the proficiency of trained teachers, and special measures taken to eliminate skill gaps. However, this has not come to fruition to date. As a consequence, the professional skill level of teachers is not being developed, and obstructing the improvement in the quality of the education.

- A goal toward improving the Teacher: Student ratio to 1:30 by 2018 had been proposed. However, this goal has not been attained. As a result, it is harder for teachers to pay attention to all their students in a classroom, and for students to receive proper education. In Secondary Education specifically, the Teacher: Student ratio currently stands at 1:45.
- It was proposed that a method for continuous student learning assessment be determined and implemented. In reality it is yet to be done and absence of an effective measure to assess student learning in classrooms remains is a barrier to quality education. Although a new curriculum has recently been outlined by the government, it will have to be implemented by the DSHE, which poses a challenge to DSHE institutional capacity (for example, a deficit of highly qualified and skilled teachers, a poor Teacher: Student ratio, to name a few).
- After the completion of the stipend project, the staff of the Upazila Secondary Education office were recruited according to draft recruitment rules (2006). However, the final recruitment rules have not been approved to date – depriving these staff members from time scale, pension benefits, and promotion opportunities for a long time.

Institutional Capacity (Financial)

- According to international standards, a minimum allocation of 6% of a country's GDP or 20% of the national budget should be set aside for Education.
- At 2% - 3%, Bangladesh allocates a significantly lower proportion of its GDP for spending in Education. For contrast, other South Asian countries allocate about 3% - 6% of their GDP to Education.
- The proportion of Bangladesh National budget that is set aside for Education ranges usually from 11% - 12%. This is insufficient according to international standards.
- It is observed that in the last five years, the money allocated for Secondary and Higher Education has been increased, but in terms of a percentage of the national budget, it remains on average at 5.5-6.5%. Although it is necessary to increase allocation for the Secondary Education to increase MPO enrollment for teachers and staff, nationalize educational institutions, expedite the retirement benefits of MPO teachers, and increase medical and other benefits for the.
- The financial benefits that are offered to MPO teachers and staff by the government are inadequate in the current socioeconomic context. For teachers and staff alike, house rent allowance is set at BDT 1000 while medical allowance is set at BDT 500. Festival allowance, meanwhile, are set at 25% of the monthly basic salary for teachers, and at 50% of the monthly basic salary for staff. Medical allowance and house rent were not determined according to rank and scale. Although the festival allowance has been given since 2004, it has not been incremented in almost 17 years.
- Due to a shortage of money in Pension Fund, it takes nearly 3 to 4 years for an applicant to receive the pension owed to them after retirement.
- The money paid by the government from time to time is not enough to cover the deficit in the Pension Fund. The deficit is about Tk. 420 crore per annum (as per information from 18 June 2019).
- Although government employees began receiving salary increments of 5%, and a *Baishakhi* festival allowance of 20%, from 2015 as per the 8th Salary Structure, the same benefits were not extended to MPO teachers and staff till 2018.

Institutional Capacity (Human Resources)

- Although regular monitoring and evaluation are very important to improve the quality of education and to bring dynamism in administrative work, the administration is suffering from a lack of manpower.

Manpower of Educational Administration in Field Level

- 12.0% of Upazila Secondary Education Officer posts are vacant.
- In nearly 64% of Upazilas, the post of an assistant Upazila Secondary Education Officer is vacant.
- In more than one third of all districts (~38%), the post of District Education Officer is vacant.
- 3.0% of the posts of Academic Supervisor are vacant.
- 11.0% of Assistant Inspector posts are vacant in the district and Regional offices.
- There are only two monitoring officers in the Monitoring and Evaluation Wing for regular supervision and evaluation in the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE).
- The workforce of the Directorate of Inspection and Audit (DIA) shows that 58% of the total sanctioned post are vacant, from a total of 130 posts.
- Since the rules for appointment of Upazila Secondary Education Officers were not approved in the Revenue sector, there is direct recruitment under the project, and Assistant District Education Officers did not complete their feeder service. These factors have created an additional delay in filling the vacant posts.

Promotion of private MPO teachers

- MPO Lecturers cannot be promoted to a post higher than Assistant Professors.
- Most of the Lecturers are deprived from promotion due to the ratio system (5:2), and as such, they retire from work holding the post of Lecturer.
- The benefits of Salary Grade were limited for the lecturers deprived from promotion.
- The required work experience for a Salary Grade raise has been increased to 10 years from 8 years.
- Salary grade availability has decreased from ninth to eighth, which was previously ninth to seventh.
- There is shortage of posts for promotion from the post of an Assistant Teacher. As a result, most of these teachers end up retiring as Assistant Teachers.

Promotion of government teachers

- Subject-based promotions are offered instead of Batch-based promotions – as a result, the opportunities for promotion are limited for Education cadres of the Civil Service.
- There is a shortage of higher posts for promotion from Assistant Teacher in Government Secondary Schools. As a result, most teachers retire from their job while holding the Assistant Teacher post. However, the creation of the Senior Teacher post has allowed for the promotion of 5452 Assistant Teachers to this new role.

Institutional Capacity (Training)

Lack of effective implementation in teacher training

- During basic Teacher's Training sessions, some teachers do not have their own personal laptops to participate in them. This results in a weak hands-on training for them.
- For in-house training, weakness is observed later in implementing properly in respective educational institutions.

- More emphasis is placed on verbal training instead of practical application based training for Assistant Teachers during their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training in ICT.
- Due to a shortage in Multimedia Multiparty Conferencing (MMC) equipment, and a lack of maintenance for ICT equipment in general, there is a deficit in training on conducting multimedia classes.

Lack of teacher ability in creating *srijonshil* questions

- Teachers are often unable to create *srijonshil* (creative) questions to better assess their students. This happens due to insufficient training time, the inherent difficulty in the task of creating *srijonshil* questions, and due to a lack of skill.
- The Training time that is allocated to teachers is insufficient to develop sufficient proficiency.
- There is also a shortage of necessary scientific equipment and material in science laboratories of educational institutions.
- In addition, there is absence of post-training evaluation.
- In some cases, teachers lack the interest and sincerity in order to ensure effective implementation of training.

Institutional Capacity (Infrastructure and Logistics)

- Most of the Upazila Secondary Education Offices are located in very old, dilapidated buildings.
- These offices do not have proper seating arrangement for its staff.
- In addition, most education offices do not have adequate space to store books and other educational materials.
- A shortage of necessary furniture leads to the mismanagement of storing important documents.
- When ICT equipment (such as monitors, projectors, printers etc.) malfunction, it takes a long time to repair them for multimedia classrooms and ICT Laboratories.

Transparency

Right to Information

- In some cases, in the MPO process, the concerned officers and heads of institutions do not know, or has lack of interest in knowing the updated information about MPO – such as the number of MPO teacher enrollment, sending demands for additional teachers, appointment of teachers by the ad-hoc committee, etc.
- Additionally, the MPO Online Software is not very user friendly, and is difficult to understand.
- Information regarding teachers and institutions are not updated automatically in the software.
- In addition, the online system does not possess the capacity for verification of various certificates.
- When a teacher retires and applies for their pension, the online system does not communicate an expected date by which they can receive their pension. Consequently, they often have to communicate and lobby in person to receive their dues.
- There is no online system in place for storage of ACR records of Government College teachers. There have been allegations of ACRs that were submitted to the DSHE being lost/misplaced, resulting in additional delays in promotion opportunities for these teachers.
- The Directorate of Inspection and Audit (DIA) does not have a digital system in place to preserve and store audit information of educational institutions.

- The website for the DSHE - with the exception of the fiscal years of 2017-18 and 2018-19 - does not provide the Annual Report of the Directorate for all past years. Complete information is unavailable even in the reports that can be found on the website – information such as manpower, budget, audits, and investigations, to name a few examples.

Accountability

- Due to a lack of manpower and other administrative responsibilities, field level academic and administrative inspections are not rigorous.
- Although Upazila Secondary Education Officers are asked to visit 15 educational institutions per month, in most cases this is not carried out. Some officers visit as few as 2 to 7 educational institutions per month instead.
- Additionally, while District Education Officers are asked to visit 15 educational institutions per month, and Regional Deputy Directors are asked to visit 25 educational institutions per month, this rarely happens to that extent in practice.
- Even though education officers are asked to make surprise visit to at least one educational institution per week, this does not happen regularly.
- In addition, while the DIA has asked to ensure that educational institutions go through an inspection and audit once every year, this is not carried out in practice. Of the institutions that were surveyed during this research, an inspection and audit had not happened in the last 3-13 years.
- Even if allegations of financial corruption and/or irregularities are uncovered during inspections against the institution chief executive/ executive committee, due to political influence and harassment, effective steps to curb them are rarely taken. In most cases, only a verbal warning is issued against them.
- Allegedly about 50% of Education Officers from the Upazila, District, and Regional levels, sometimes do not send field reports to the DSHE, who often cite other duties to shirk this responsibility.
- In Regional Offices, there is an absence of balance of power in the posts of Director and Deputy Director. There is an absence of an integrated manpower structure in the administrative posts in the Field Level as well.
- The responsibilities of the Regional Office Director (College) have not been specified. Although the MPOs of teachers and staff of Secondary schools and colleges have been given final approval from the Deputy Director's Offices of the nine education regions, after a long period of about four years, the Director (College) has been given the power to decide the MPOs of the colleges only.
- There is a deficit of efficient education administration at the field level due to the absence of an integrated manpower structure.
- There is an absence of an accountability structure within education offices in case of irregularities or errors in MPO application processing.
- Some Upazila Academic Supervisors feel that since they hold temporary posts under the Secondary Education Sector Investment Program (SESIP), when they visit educational institutions, they are not regarded appropriately by the institutions.
- There is no system in place for the transfer and annual evaluation of all MPO teachers and staff, including the head of the institution.

- Some of the officers posted in the central and field level education offices of the DSHE do not maintain their office hours properly.
- There is no institutional system in place to report problems, irregularities and cases of corruption that directly pertain to the Education Sector.
- Even though there are delays in the implementation of various projects under the jurisdiction of the DSHE and the MoEdu, there is no effective accountability for it.
- There is no system to verify the list of scholarship and financial aid recipients.

Irregularities and Corruption

MPO Registration

- In some cases, the policy is violated through corruption and irregularities in order for an educational institution to be included in the list of MPOs.
- Even though the MPO enrollment process for teachers and staff, is decentralized and online, speed money /“hadia” (exchange) needs to pay at four stages to speed up the process of forwarding relevant documents.
- Head teachers and principals are alleged to have agreements with MPO applicants to speed up their application process, and collect money from applicants directly, by claiming that the money is needed to “pay bribe at the Education office” and/or to “obtain recommendation from the committee”.
- If these funds are not provided by the applicants, it is alleged that applications are delayed further under the guise of “problems in documentations”.
- Applicants without the requisite qualifications can obtain MPO registration by paying money.
- During MPO decentralization, there were plans to launch a pilot project in one Education region, and extend that project to other regions based on the results of the pilot project. There are allegations that due to the opportunities for financial corruption available in it, the pilot project was prematurely extended to all education regions after only a few months.

Recruitment process in MPO-registered Educational Institutions

- There are allegations such as recruitment of preferred candidates based on political influence, nepotism, and collection of irregular funds from the applicants in most of the appointments against the SMC/Governing Body.
- Teachers applying to an educational institution after being recommended by the NTRCA have to pay irregular funds in order to join their post. It is alleged that money is extracted from them in the name of “Institutional funds, paying for development of the institution”, and saying that “earlier SMC/Governing Body required a lot of money to process the applications” etc.
- Fraudulent certificates for teacher registration, computer training, and other academic credentials, are used to obtain appointments as Assistant Teacher in educational institutions. According to the DIA during 2013 to 2020, 1677 teachers got appointment by using fake certificates in 10 thousand educational institutions.

Transfer of government teachers and staff

- According to the government service rules, there is a provision for transfer every three years, but this rule is not upheld in practice.
- A government high school and college teacher interviewed in this research has been working in the same institution for more than a decade without a transfer.

- Upazila Secondary Education Officers, meanwhile, often spend more than 10-12 years in the same area without a transfer.
- Lobbying and illegal monetary transaction is used to secure a preferred transfer, or to ensure a prolonged stay in a preferred area.
- The specific amount spent in illegal monetary transactions vary depending on the locations in question. Areas that fall under divisional and district cities, have good facilities in place for private coaching, and have a higher possibility of MPO promotions, are sought after - and consequently have higher sums of money exchanging hands.

Teaching Approval and Academic Recognition

- The MoE and the Education Boards are tasked with providing approvals for teaching and academic recognition – however, there are allegations of lobbying, illegal monetary transactions, and administrative delays in the process against them.
- Distance and population certificates are obtained without having the requisite eligibility via political recommendation. In addition, teaching approval is obtained by lobbying to the higher levels in the Ministry.
- Although the Education Board provides teaching approval based on its inspection reports, there is no scope for verification of the inspection report.
- According to the concerned stakeholders, 30% of the inspection reports are approved despite of having errors and irregularities in them.
- Even when all the requisite conditions are met, there are allegations of the approval process being unnecessarily delayed, and illegal monetary transactions being extracted to ensure approval.
- After applications are made to the board for an inspection in order to obtain teaching approval, they are not followed through with inspections, creating delays in the teaching approval process.
- Political leaders arrange for the approval of teaching through lobbying to the concerned departments. In return, financial benefits are collected from the concerned educational institutions.
- In the approval processes for tasks such as adding extra class sections, departments, subjects, and teacher's BEd and higher scale – illegal monetary transactions are made, without which these processes are delayed.

Procurement

- Even during times when there are no challenges posed by natural calamities or time constraints, direct procurement is made without going through the proper channels (ICT Project-2).
- Purchase orders for Multimedia Classroom (MMC) equipment are initialized in one package, but end up being purchased in separate packages, allowing for graft.
- MMC equipment costs exceed the estimated cost in the project budget.
- The higher authorities do not agree upon a unified procurement process.
- Under this project (from July 2016 to July 2020), not a single multimedia classroom was set up – only internet modems were supplied to 5 regions.
- Over BDT 22.5 million was spent on training manuals, certificates, and training equipment – without obtaining proper tenders.

- Although the Project Director has the power to spend a maximum of 3 million BDT per annum, necessary approvals were not taken from higher authorities to receive 960 million BDT for procurement spending.
- In spite of being absent from a training session, the project director took an attendance honorium of 1.7 million BDT for the session.
- Although the in-house training is supposed to be provided over a 6-day period, in practice they were often held for 3 days, or in half day sessions lasting 3 to 6 days.
- About 20 million BDT has been provided to the government training institutions for the venue of 1,121 batches for basic training of head teachers, which is a waste of government funds.

Inspection and Audit

- Various weaknesses in the documentation of the educational institution were used to put pressure on them and extract illegal money. Illegal payments are also made in order to sway the inspectors toward educational institutions where there are weaknesses in documents.
- Influence was exerted from higher level to report favorably on institutions, despite irregularities found during audits.
- Illegal money up to one/two months MPOs were demanded and received from all MPO teachers of institutions during audits.
- Due to the opportunities of earning more money during the audit process through irregular channels, auditors stay in the same department for long periods of time by lobbying to the higher authorities.
- Institutions avoid inspections by lobbying the director directly, and sending gifts to the director.
- There are allegations against head teachers for spreading fear amongst the teachers by threatening by saying “auditor has for inspection”, and collecting illegal money from all teachers to manage the inspector, and even part of this illegal money being embezzled by the head of the institutions.

Infrastructure and Logistics

- Budget allocation is made on political recommendation in most cases without verifying the need for development of infrastructure of specific educational institutions.
- There are complaints that the quality of work in infrastructure development has been below par in some cases.
- Although almost three years have passed since the nationalization of MPO-registered educational institutions, to this day, there is still a delay in the assimilation of MPO teachers. About 18 thousand teachers and staff are deprived from MPO money.
- There are also allegations of extorting money from educational institutions in the process of nationalization.

Other observations

- There is a provision for disbursement of retirement and welfare benefits on a priority basis in case of emergencies (such as daughter’s wedding, medical treatment, *Hajj* pilgrimage, etc.). However, allegations are there that some applicants are given this benefit by breaking the serial in exchange for illegal money/bribe.
- Training abroad is not offered to those who specifically need it – for example, in the Teaching Quality Improvement Project (TQI-2), the number of bureaucrats who went abroad for training was greater than the number of teachers.

- In most institutions the Chairperson is nominated with the intervention of an MP or an influential political figure. Consequently, qualified persons do not get nominated to manage educational institutions. In many cases, uneducated people are included in the committee, as there is no educational qualification requirement to be the chairperson / member of the committee.

Amount of illegal monetary transactions in Secondary Education Activities

Area of collection of bribe/illegal money	Bribe/Illegal money (BDT)	Person(s) involved in collection of money
Appointment of Principal/ Head Master / Assistant Head	350,000 – 1,500,000	Local political leader / Governing Body / SMC
Joining of the Assistant Teacher in an Educational Institution recommended by NTRCA	50,000 - 200,000	Headmaster / Governing Body / SMC
Appointment of Assistant Librarian	200,000 - 300,000	Headmaster / Governing Body / SMC
MPO registration of teacher	5,000 - 100,000	Relevant officer / employee of DSHE
Audit and inspection of educational institution	50,000 – 500,000 (One month's MPO money of all the teachers of the inspected educational institution)	Relevant officer of the Department of Inspection and Audit
Teaching approval	100,000 - 500,000	Intermediary / Concerned officer/employee of the Ministry or the Board
Academic Recognition renewal	5,000 – 30,000	Relevant officer/employee of the board
Teacher Transfer	1,00,000 - 2,00,000	Intermediary / Relevant officer/employee of DSHE

Challenges in Secondary Education during Covid-19 Pandemic

- Television programs, online classes, and assignments were arranged to continue the regular educational activities of the students after the closure of all educational institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic in Bangladesh – however, in many cases, it was not successful.
- A deficit in technical skills, a lack of uninterrupted electric and internet connectivity, and a lack of financial means to purchase equipment necessary for online classes, led to teachers and students being unable to access online classes in many cases.

- About 15% of secondary school students were deprived of the opportunity to take classes through the “Songsod TV” (the Parliament TV). Although there was assurance of providing digital devices to those deprived from the policy-making level, no initiative was taken to do so.
- The inequality between rich-poor and urban-rural in terms of access to education has been evident, and students have dropped out as a consequence.
- The pandemic has led to a major deficit in student learning and retention – yet no specific initiatives have been taken to address it.

Overall Observation

- The government has taken various positive steps to expand or improve the quality of secondary education. Nevertheless, there is still a shortfall in achieving the expected excellence in this vital sector.
- Although there was a national education policy in 2010, many important issues outlined in the policy have not been implemented yet.
- Although a long time has been elapsed, the Education Act has not been passed, as it has not been given priority in principle.
- The allocation towards education sector in the national budget is not in accordance with international standards. The allocation in the national budget for the secondary and higher education sub-sector is not adequate as well.
- There is a lack of adequate facilities for teachers and staff.
- There is an absence of an integrated manpower structure for implementing field level administrative activities in Secondary and Higher education. In addition, there is a lack of proper supervision and inspection due to low manpower.
- Lack of appropriate measures taken to ensure transparency and accountability has led to spread of irregularities and corruption.
- Political influence, irregularities and financial corruption have long persisted in the education sector -institutionalisation of corruption in some cases.
- Overall, in the implementation of secondary education activities, limiting factors such as lack of effective laws and their enforcement, limited institutional capacity, lack of transparency and accountability have led to challenges of good governance to persist.

Recommendations

Law and Policy

1. In light of the Education Policy 2010, immediate and effective steps have to be taken in formulating and implementing plans for development of the secondary and higher education in the country.
2. At the field level, an integrated manpower structure should be created directly under the revenue budget.
3. Steps need to be taken to roll out Covid-19 vaccinations for the age groups who can be safely vaccinated; formulate and implement specific plans for improving the technical skills of online teachers, bringing students who dropped out back to the classroom, and addressing the learning gap amassed by students during the pandemic, and other adverse impacts created by the Pandemic.

Financial Allocation

4. According to the recommendations of UNESCO, the allocation towards the education sector in the national budget should be increased.
5. The financial benefits of MPO registered teachers and staff need to be increased in accordance with social realities. Provision should be made in the budget for early retirement allowance, and necessary measures should be taken to make teachers more efficient in the new curriculum, and to improve the teacher-student ratio for better learning.

Human Resources

6. Recruitment rules for the Upazila Secondary Education Officers and Employees need to be finalized as early as possible.
7. All private appointments have to be done through NTRCA / Private Teacher Selection Commission.
8. The number of higher level posts available in the hierarchy will have to be increased to provide opportunities for career advancement for teachers.

Training

9. Teachers undergoing training should be closely monitored for effective evaluation of said training.
10. The duration of training should be extended to ensure complete proficiency and knowledge over the training material.

Infrastructure and Logistics

11. All procurement must be made through e-GP.
12. There should be a central database for storing up-to-date information on ICT materials provided to educational institutions.

Transparency and Accountability

13. All types of updated information related to tenders, work orders, project procurements, and audits, should be published on the respective websites.
14. The annual monitoring report published by the Monitoring and Evaluation Wing should specify the causes of irregularities, corruption, and weaknesses in various projects.
15. MPO-registered teachers should have an annual evaluation system in place.

Irregularities and Corruption

16. MPO online software needs to be made more user friendly for teacher and staff, and one-stop service should be launched.
17. To stop irregularities and corruption in private educational institutions, MPO registered educational institutions should be nationalized in phases.
18. The required educational qualifications of the chairperson/president as well as other members of committees who manage private educational institutions should be clearly defined.