



Strategy Document

2021-2023



BRAC Institute of Educational Development,
BRAC University

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Who We Are

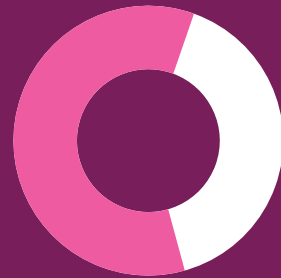
BRAC Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University (BRAC IED), is an active pioneer in the development of education from a holistic perspective. Since our inception in 2004 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, we have worked in diverse areas including but not limited to - early childhood development, early learning with a particular focus on play-based learning methods, psychosocial well-being of stakeholders from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, primary and secondary education, and curriculum & textbook design.

We design solutions for change that are culturally responsive and authentic to the needs and desires of local communities. Through our close collaboration with BRAC, we implement models that are high-impact and scalable and advocate for the adoption of evidence-based best practices. We also partner with BRAC University to focus on education research, program evaluation, and to offer postgraduate degrees and professional education opportunities to train educators and education leaders who share our mission. Thus we are uniquely positioned as an institute to draw upon the strengths of both BRAC and BRAC University as we work to make the world a better place for children.

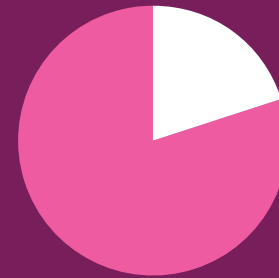
Need for a Road Map

Bangladesh is home to over

160
million people.



Around
40%
of the population, or more than
64 million, are children.



Only **1/4**
children in fifth grade have required skills in
mathematics and Bangla, according to the 2013
National Student Assessment.

These children and young people hold tremendous potential to transform the future of this country. With such opportunity, however, comes great responsibility – the responsibility to prepare our next generation to thrive economically and socially in a world characterized by globalization, rapid technological change, climate change, and shifting demographics.

Children from vulnerable backgrounds often lack access to safe, stimulating opportunities that promote child holistic development before they enroll in schools. The education system in Bangladesh, which traditionally focuses on memorization and assessment, further hampers their access to quality learning and development opportunities. This system strains relationships between students, families, and

teachers, and generates stress that is linked to harmful behaviors and poor mental health outcomes. Educational opportunities in Bangladesh are also unequally distributed. Despite remarkable progress in expanding access at all levels of the education system, challenges in quality and equity remain.

Around the world, millions of children displaced by humanitarian crises also continue to lack access to educational opportunities and basic social services. This problem is particularly acute in the Rohingya camps of Bangladesh, where children, who make up over 51% of the refugee population and have already faced severe trauma, are at further risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse.

Furthermore, as a result of the closure of educational institutions due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the classroom teaching of

39.8 million students in Bangladesh fell into uncertainty (BANBEIS, 2020). Of them,

3.8
million
are at pre-primary

16.3
million
are at primary

12.5
million
are at secondary

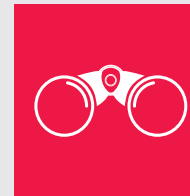
2.6
million
are at higher secondary

3.4
million
are at tertiary levels.

This leaves students with little option but to rely on remote learning. However, not all students have access to digital technology and in many cases, students find virtual classes fall short of their expectations and learning needs. Prolonged school closures mean that students, especially from marginalized backgrounds, will face a huge learning loss. Cases of child marriage and child labor, and school drop-out rates are expected to rise. The various stressors that families face as a result of the pandemic, including health and financial stressors, are also expected to have adverse consequences for mental health outcomes.

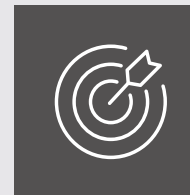
Thus, investing in children, their families, and communities, is key to bringing about a systemic, generational change especially as we transition to a post-pandemic context. With a roadmap ahead of us for the next three years, we will strive to drive our efforts to address the challenges mentioned, and find innovative solutions for the next generation.





Our Vision

A world where all children grow up with dignity.



Our Mission

Create innovative solutions for children to become engaged, empathetic, and empowered individuals.

Our Approach to Change

In BRAC IED, learning is seen through the lens of what works best for a child in the long run.

How does a child learn best in a safe and nurturing environment? How can we build safe and stimulating spaces, both at home and in schools? During the adolescent years, how can we provide an accessible environment to young people that can enable them to become healthy and happy adults? How do we best provide psychosocial support to children, adolescents and adults, especially those from vulnerable communities? How can we ensure that our interventions are evidence-based, scalable, and sustainable? These questions drive our work.

We aim to create lasting solutions for change in both humanitarian and mainstream settings, focusing on beneficiaries who come from vulnerable backgrounds. We begin with the needs of the community in mind to design innovative, culturally-contextualized interventions. We ensure our interventions are effective through a continuous process of refinement based on monitoring and research, and then we enable our interventions to transition to scale. We focus our efforts in the following program areas:



Early Childhood Development and Play-based Learning

Create safe, stimulating, nurturing environments where children's holistic development is promoted through the science of play



Mental Health and Well-being

Create community-based mental health and psychosocial support interventions for children, adolescents, and their families



Leadership in Teaching and Learning

Enable and empower individuals in diverse access points (e.g. school, community, family, government) with strengthened capabilities and transformative attitudes



Evidence-based Advocacy

Develop evidence-based models and systems through iterations and rigor that value replicability and cultural contextualization, and create awareness about our learnings through various channels

Our Goals

As we transition towards a post-pandemic world, our efforts for children, their families, and their communities will need to be reflective of their circumstances. The strategic plan establishes 5 goal areas:



1

Design culturally-contextualized, innovative solutions for children and families from marginalized backgrounds

We will continue to develop and refine low-cost, high-quality, scalable interventions to provide playful learning experiences and psychosocial support to children and families from marginalized backgrounds. Our interventions will be culturally responsive, authentic to the needs of beneficiaries, and suitable for different contexts.

2

Build agents of change in local communities

We will build the capacity of frontline staff including facilitators, teachers, and para-counselors so that they are empowered to act as changemakers in their communities.

3

Build sustainable solutions

We will continue to develop and refine interventions in both the mainstream and humanitarian settings that will deliver sustainable impact at scale, and we will work to build the capacity of other leaders in the system who are aligned with our mission through our academic degrees and short courses.

4

Build partnerships for lasting change

We will continue to build partnerships with NGOS, INGOS, governments, academic institutions, the private sector, and local communities, both in Bangladesh and abroad, to ensure that we fulfill our mission more effectively.

5

Be the voice from the Global South

We will continue to build a body of evidence on best practices for child development and learning in the Global South, and we will advocate and campaign for better policies and practices for children and families from marginalized backgrounds.

How will we **achieve these goals?**

To drive results, we will pursue the following priorities
over the next three years:





Early Childhood Development and Play-based Learning

- Partner with the Bangladesh government to implement our play-based learning interventions for children in pre-primary settings
- Develop innovative ways to implement play-based pedagogies in primary school classrooms
- Develop parenting interventions that focus on parents' engagement with children, including fathers' engagement
- Develop creative learning and psychosocial support interventions for adolescents
- Develop a telecommunication based intervention to provide psychosocial support and play-based learning opportunities to parents and children from vulnerable backgrounds
- Strengthen the integration of psychosocial support in our play-based interventions
- Involve communities in promoting play-based learning, by actively engaging them in different stages of program, space and material design.
- Incorporate innovative and low-cost design solutions for creating child-friendly play materials and physical environments
- Promote local materials, art, culture, crafts, expertise and technology in designing play and learning materials, as well as spatial environments.
- Partner with universities and other research institutes to externally evaluate our play-based interventions
- Continue to research the impact of play and psychosocial support on child development
- Strengthen partnership with BRAC International to expand presence and technical assistance in Africa (Uganda, Tanzania, and other countries) and explore new opportunities in Asia for establishing our play-based interventions
- Identify potential private and public partnerships for scale-up of our play-based interventions through direct implementation and through providing technical assistance
- Explore new delivery settings and social enterprise opportunities (eg day-cares) for scale-up of our play-based interventions
- Explore opportunities to establish the presence of play-based learning in international humanitarian crisis contexts
- Continue to build public and private sector awareness on the importance of play-based parenting and learning



Mental Health and Well-being

- Prioritize the scale-up of community-based mental health and psychosocial support interventions, e.g. the Para-Counselor Model in both mainstream and humanitarian contexts
- Refine our tele-counseling intervention to provide mental health and psychosocial support to larger target groups as well as to people from vulnerable backgrounds who lack access to traditional means of mental health support
- Identify opportunities to provide technical assistance to other BRAC programs on integrating psychosocial support in their interventions and build the capacity of staff within BRAC on the fundamentals of providing psychosocial support
- Work with an external consortium of experts who can deal with cases requiring greater attention as well as contribute towards research, capacity development, maintaining quality standards, and ensuring a system of ethical standards
- Form partnerships with different actors, such as service-based organizations, INGOs & the government for cross-learning and creation of a network
- Continue research on our interventions to build greater evidence on the importance of emotional well-being and mental health
- Advocate for the inclusion of mental health and psychosocial support in government's education and health programming



Leadership in Teaching and Learning

- Develop the pedagogical skills of teachers to implement a curriculum in innovative, child-friendly ways for both mainstream and humanitarian settings
- Develop a range of short courses focused on play, early childhood development, and psychosocial support
- Refine online delivery model to expand the reach of our academic programs and short courses
- Review curriculum of master's courses periodically to maintain relevance
- Continue developing partnerships with governments, NGOS, schools, and private actors for expansion of capacity building arenas (e.g. through short courses and academic programs)
- Identify approaches to attract international students to our academic programs and short courses and elevate the profile of BRAC IED as an expert on education, play, and well-being outside Bangladesh



Evidence-based Advocacy

- Continue to adapt evidence-based international tools to evaluate the effectiveness of our interventions
- Continue evaluation of our interventions in partnership with universities and other research institutes
- Increase external dissemination of our research findings through seminars, publications in peer-reviewed journals, and other avenues
- Develop an outcome-based advocacy plan, in alignment with BRAC's strategic goals
- Continue internal advocacy efforts to establish change - with our own staff, and with the wider BRAC family (university and NGO)
- Engage with digital media platforms to create awareness on child development, parenting, educational leadership, and psychosocial well-being
- Engage with local media to raise awareness and build allies for helping change mindsets
- Engage with relevant organizations and networks to raise awareness of our learnings and proven approaches from the Global South

Cross-Cutting Priority - Road Map to Financial Sustainability

Over the next three years, we will explore ways to develop sustainable revenue streams and reduce dependency on donor funding across all our program areas. Whether that is through developing business models based on our initiatives (e.g. play-based daycares), providing technical assistance to partners as they implement our programs/models, increasing revenue from our academic courses by exploring partnerships with government, NGOs, schools and the private sector, or through other means - our aim is to increasingly self-fund our existing programs and new initiatives.



Our Partners

Our local partners include



Our international partners include





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Join us

