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How Universal is Universal Primary Education in Bangladesh: A Case Study of the Haor Area

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Dedication

To my mother Azima Samad Chowdhury

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ABSTRACT

The research paper on the Haor area of north-eastern part of Bangladesh tries to find explanations to the rather disappointing outcome of the National Universal Primary Education policy which is far from the universal coverage it aims for.

The secondary data focuses on the educational policy documents and information on the conditions and demand for education in the Haor area. It revealed that the low coverage of universal primary education in the areas studied is due to a lack of consideration and understanding of the special geographic and climatic condition and the different livelihood that people pursue, reflecting in the policy and implementation process. The author has arrived at the decision that it will be possible to give full coverage to universal primary education when the need of each child is taken into consideration in the policy and the full implementation of the policy is ensured.

For ensuring universal coverage of primary education, along with providing educational services mentioned in the policy, special incentives for teachers and other education staff in the disadvantaged area, contextual and need based education curriculum, school based learning process, Go-NGO collaboration, proper media coverage need to be taken into account in the future.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATEO	Assistant Thana/Upzilla Education Officer
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BEPS	Basic Education and Policy Support
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CPD	Centre for Policy Dialogue
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DFA	Dakar Framework for Action
EFA	Education For All
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIVDB	Friends In Village Development Bangladesh
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MGD	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOLJPA	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NPA	National Plan of Action
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RBA	Right Based Approach
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SMC	School Management Committee
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WCEFA	World Conference on Education For All

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The introductory chapter make the reader familiar with the study. This chapter presents the background, objectives and research process along with the relevance of the study and the methodology used for collecting and analysing data. The structure of the paper is illustrated at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Introduction

Bangladesh has been facing problems because of poverty and illiteracy since independence in 1971; both are a cause and effect of each other. National progress depends on the reinforcement of both these sectors. Education is one of the basic needs as well as the strongest weapon in the fight against poverty, and for a developing country like Bangladesh the importance of education cannot be denied. It is trying to ensure education for the children and several initiatives in this regard have been taken by the government as well as other development actors like national and international NGOs who have a vision to step in the educational programme. As a result of their initiation, the education enrolment rate is improving since 1990.

According to the MDG progress report 2005, net enrolment rate for primary education is 82.7 percent, showing that nearly one fifth of the total children of the country have no access to school. Apart from this, 33 percent of the children enrolled in schools drop out before completing the primary level of education. Among those who are not enrolled and who drop out, a significant number come from poor households and live in rural areas, urban slums, coastal areas and the hill-tracts. (GoB and UN, 2005) Though primary education is free and compulsory for all, it is very important to find out why children of some specific areas are lagging behind and do not avail the opportunity provided for ensuring universal primary education. As such questions arise: Who are these excluded children? What factors explain this exclusion?

This research paper explains the factors what excludes children from education. The research is focused in the Haor area of Bangladesh, where children are excluded from universal education coverage, and they can not avail the services which they are entitled for. This study tries to find explanations to the rather disappointing outcome

of the National Universal Primary Education policy which is far from the universal coverage it aims for the Hoar area of Bangladesh.

1.2 Background and Importance of this study

The Bangladeshi government has identified the education sector as the most important sector for human resource management and poverty reduction. National development planning initiatives have been incorporated by putting it on the highest priority (MOPME (GoB), 2003). According to The Article 17(a), 17(b) and 17(c) of the Constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh, primary education is the responsibility of the State. To bear this responsibility, primary education in Bangladesh has undergone a great deal of change and development during the last few years. (MOPME, Webpage, 2005; MoE, 2004:8). Along with the constitutional bindings, Bangladesh is also committed to the international community to ensure Universal Primary Education (UPE) (MOPME, Webpage, 2005; MoE, 2004:8).

To facilitate the programme for UPE and to remove illiteracy from the country, the government had created a separate division named Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) in 1992 which was given a Ministry status in 2003 with the Prime Minister also being its Minister. All these steps reflected the commitment and determination of the government to improve primary education in the country both in terms of quality and quantity. Now the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has allocated nearly 14 percent of the national budget to the education sector of which the share of primary and mass education is nearly 43 percent. (MOPME, webpage, 2005; MoE, 2004:8; CPD, 2003:1-2; MOPME, 2002:IX).

To the implementation of Article 28 of CRC, the State should consider education as children's right and take initiatives to ensure it (Unicef, 2005), the Bangladesh government has taken various steps; primary education is free and compulsory for all in Bangladesh according to the compulsory primary education Act 1990. The government has initiated various programmes like Free Primary Education, Stipend Programme at the Primary Level and Food for Education Programme. Some other government programmes like Vulnerable Group Feeding and Vulnerable Group Development Programme also influence school attendance and completion rates. (World Bank, 2005:49-56; Khan, 2003:10; Ahmed, M., et al 2002:30-31) GoB has

introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme to ensure primary education for all children in Bangladesh in line with its Education For All (EFA) goal. The report of the National Action Plan I (NPA I) shows the achievement of Bangladesh in terms of education.

Table -1: National Plan of Action - I: Goal and Achievements

NPA I : Goal and Achievements (Percentage)					
Items	Benchmark	Goals		Achievements	
	1991	1995	2000	1995	2000
GER[1] in primary education	76	82	95	92	96.5
Completion rate in primary education	40	52	70	60	67
Adult Literacy (15-45)	35	40	62	47	64

Source: MOPME, GoB, 2003

Table 1 showed that the achievement of NPA I about GER in primary education (96.5) and adult literacy rate (64) in 2000 was more than the goals set for the Action Plan I. The completion rate in primary education was increased to 67 percent from 60 percent; however, it could not reach the goal set up for it.

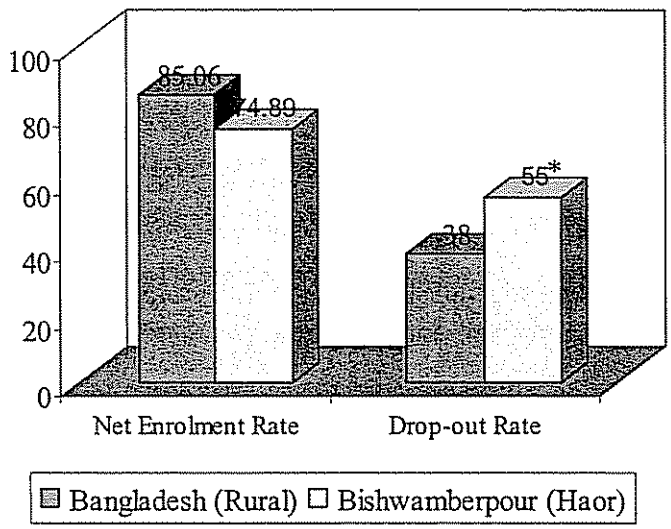
The success of education in Bangladesh varies in different geographical areas. Though the policy has been initiated and applied all over the country, the reality differs for different localities. Thus it is important to find out the applicability of the policy in some remote areas like Haor area where the physical situation is different. Several studies and different initiatives have been undertaken for the areas but most of them are related to fisheries and land. A research report on education in Haor is very rare, as the area holds no interest to education experts.

Enrolment and drop out rate for education in the Haor area is poor compared to the average figures of the entire country and it is even poorer than other rural areas of Bangladesh. As can be seen in Figure-1, the children in the Haor area are lagging behind in terms of enrolment and drop-out in primary school. Gross and net enrolment rate in Bishwamberpour an upzilla (sub-district) of the Haor area, is 89 and 75 percent

[1] GER states Gross Enrolment Rate

whereas it is 106 and 85 in rural Bangladesh, similarly drop-out rate is 55 percent while it is 38 percent in rural Bangladesh.

Figure – 1: Comparison of enrolment and drop-out rates between rural area and Haor area of Bangladesh



*Source: MOPME, 2002 and *The Government Education Office of Bishwamberpour (A sub-district in the Haor area) in Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004:66*

Therefore, it is very important to find out why the education in the Haor area is lagging behind while the UPE policy is being implemented in the area.

1.3 Institutional Set-up

Haor, the freshwater inland wetlands, are scattered across the north-eastern basin of Bangladesh, covering an area of 24,500sq. km with more than 411 isolated and inter-connected Haors with a population of more than five million people. The life and livelihood in terms of agriculture, fisheries, communication and culture of those people, directly or indirectly, depend on the Hoar. Due to the fertile land, abundant fish and water resources the area was very rich 4-5 decades ago. Now various problems have engulfed the Haors and its millions of residents, which makes the area one of the poorest in the country. Natural disaster and unplanned use of resources makes the area vulnerable. (Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:1, 22; Sedere, 1999:5-6) The rise in the river bed increases the risk of flood devastation and deposition of sand in the fertile lands due to unplanned deforestation in the hills, and unplanned fishing makes the rich area become poor (Chowdhury, (a), 2004:5-6).

The poverty affects the social sector of the Haor, especially education. Literacy rate of Sunamganj district (where 75 percent of the area is covered by Haor) is 34 percent where as national literacy rate is 47 percent (BBS, 2002). Bishwamberpour is one of the upzilla (sub-district) of Sunamganj district situated in the Haor area. In Bishwamberpour similar to the other Haor area, in the rainy season the area is covered by water and is dotted with hundreds of small islands, however, in the dry season the water covered area turns into paddy fields and footways for the villagers. While boat is the main and the only means of communication in the rainy season, but in the dry season people mostly walk. (Chowdhury (a), 2004:3-7; Chowdhury (eds), 2004:4, Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:1, 22; Wennubst, 2002:1; Sedere, 1999:5-6) These Haor conditions may complicate supply and demand for education, and create challenges for universal coverage.

1.4 Research Strategy

1.4.1 Objective of the Study

As it is mentioned in the problem statement about the limitation of education in some specific and disadvantaged areas, therefore, the research will look into the applicability of the education policy of Bangladesh. Is the general policy fit for the entire country or do specific regions need specific facilities. To find this, the study will determine the gap between policy and implementation practice in reality for the children of the Haor areas of the north-eastern part of Bangladesh.

1.4.2 Research Questions

Main question

What explains the current low coverage of the Haor area despite universal education policy?

Sub questions

- How does the universal education policy of Bangladesh take into account the specific needs of different children?
- What are the education services actually provided in the Haor area?
- What is the actual demand for education in the Haor area?

1.4.3 Methodology

In the study study, I am trying to explain the gap between the UPE policy of Bangladesh and the implementation practice in reality especially in the Haor area. Sometimes the policy can not cover the issue which is important for universal coverage and sometimes the policy is nicely operationalised on paper yet it is important to find out how it is functioning in reality. Several interventions mentioned in the policy have already been implemented in the Haor area to enhance demands and now my research will show how it is implemented in the area. The non-universal coverage is linked to the demand factors for education in the Haor area and the services provided for the area to meet-up the demands. In the study, several literatures have reviewed for developing the framework of the paper.

To achieve the objective, the study mainly presents and analyses two types of secondary data: the education policy documents and information on conditions and demand for education in the Haor area.

The documents used for analysing education policy of Bangladesh are:

- National Education Policy of Bangladesh is used for analysing policy for ensuring UPE coverage.
- Research reports on education conducted by various organisations like CAMPE the coalition of NGOs working in the education sector in Bangladesh, CPD a policy research organisation in Bangladesh and some other researcher's research report has used for collecting information about education policy and it's implementation practice in reality.
- Various education reports of the Government like report on National Plan of Action, Study report on Best Practices in Quality of Primary Education has used.
- Statistical report from the Government and other sources like the report from UNESCO and UNDP are also used for providing statistical information on education of Bangladesh.

For collecting data about primary education situation of the Haor used four studies by FIVDB and two studies by SDC.

- ⇨ Friends In Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB a national NGO in Bangladesh) carried four studies[2] on Haor areas, namely in Bishwamberpour upzilla under Sunamganj district of Sylhet Division. The studies were carried out during 2003 to 2004. I was directly involved with all the studies as a researcher. The studies are

  (1) Chowdhury, W. S. and Razee, B.M., 2003, "Life in the Haor: Report on a survey in the Haor basin area of Sunamganj". A Baseline survey of the socio-economic conditions of the people in the wetland area of north-east Bangladesh was done by door-to-door survey covering twelve villages in Bishwamberpour.

  (2) Chowdhury, W. S., 2004 (a), "Need and Prospects: Life in Haor". The objective of the study was to identify the long-term development needs in the Haor area, the factors limiting development process and find-out the possible ways to overcome the backwardness. PRA, observations, discussions and workshops was the methods used in the study.

  (3) Chowdhury, W. S., 2004 (b), "Pattern and Possibilities: Livelihood in Haor". It was done through workshop, observation and discussion sessions for find-out the current situation and the potentiality of livelihood skills viable in the region.

  (4) Chowdhury, W. S. (ed), 2004 (c), "Expectation and Reality: Education scenario of children in the Haor and the Tea garden area of Sylhet"[3]. The paper is in Bangla. Current education situation in the low-land area and tea garden area of Bangladesh has presented in the paper. The data of this study was collected through school survey, household survey, case studies (from school going children, drop-out children and non-enrolled children), and separate Focus Group Discussions (FGD) (with school going children, drop-out children, excluded children, teachers, parents both fathers and mothers separately, School Management Committee (SMC) members, members of

[2] The studies were done under FIVDB's two projects named Sunamganj Pilot Intervention Project and Project on Mobilisation on Primary Education with Civil Society. Both of the projects have implemented in Bishwamberpour.

[3] My translation

the local government elected body, the government officials and community members). This study has an elaborate version named 'Primary Education Condition in Haor and Tea Garden of Sylhet'[4].

All four of the studies were conducted in Bishwamberpour upzilla. The Hoar area of Bangladesh has similarity because of their geographical location; along with it, they have some dissimilarity. In some areas most of the people are depend on fishing while others live on agriculture. In Biswamberpour people are mostly dependent on agriculture, sand and stone collection, fishing and handicraft. The different livelihoods make a difference among the localities in the Haor area. Bishwamberpour upzilla cannot represent the all Haor area of Bangladesh but it can represent the Haor area of north-eastern part of Bangladesh.

⇨ Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) conducted one study on the Haor area of north-east Bangladesh. It is a pre-appraisal study on the providers of functional skills, education and assessing under-served areas covering four upzillas of the Haor area of Sunamganj district including Bishwamberpour. The other is a systemic approach based on the understanding of society evolution on Bishwamberpour.

I have used the studies to collect informed about education services available in the area and demand for education to the Haor people. Besides the studies, my work experience in Haor area of north-east part of Bangladesh for two years gave me an insight about the lifestyle of the people.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

To carry out the objective of the research the study need to analyse the documents on education policy and the implementation especially in the Haor area. As the study is based on secondary data, I have to depend on the available documents related to the subject matter.

[4] My translation

The limitation of the study is mainly based on the unavailability of different data. The number of research report from various sources on Haor area of Bangladesh about education is limited, which limits the opportunity of getting more information and comparing the existing analysis. Along with it, the paper would have been richer if data on quality of education achievement in the Haor area was available. The other limitation is that statistics from different sources present different figures about enrolment and completion rates for the same area during the same year. Therefore I can not present statement about the exact outcome of the enrolment. Indeed it is different but it does not affect my quest of explanation as I am looking for the dynamics of the gaps and there is no dispute that there is a gap.

1.6 Organisation of the Paper

This chapter has provided a brief introduction with problem statement along with the research strategy. Chapter II describes the main concepts related to the primary education used in the paper within the wider context of education; the chapter also introduces the analytical framework for this research by which the policy documents and the data on education in the Haor areas has been analysed. Chapter III, IV and V present the findings of the study based on the scope and limitation of the education policy of Bangladesh and primary education in the Haor area. A brief analysis of Bangladesh education policy is presented in chapter III. It explains the willingness of the government to achieve the universal coverage and the education services which the children are entitled to get according to the policy. Chapter IV describes the real picture of the education policy in practical life to the Haor area. In chapter V the Haor people's demand for education has been explained and the demand shaping factors for education in the Haor area are analysed. Chapter VI is the concluding chapter that relates the findings with the research questions and objectives.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION

The chapter describes the concepts used in this study as well as analysis education in the wider development context. It then highlights the main treaties, conventions and declarations on the needs and rights of education for children. The analytical framework of the study follows from the Right Based Approaches (RBA) based on the international human rights of children presented at the end of the chapter.

2.1 Concepts to Analyse Coverage of Education

The study tries to look at the universal coverage of the UPE policy in terms of enrolment, drop out and exclusion from primary education. Education is now viewed as the right of children and different actors have the responsibility to ensure it. The enrolment, drop out and exclusion from education are influenced by the interplay between demand factors and supply factors of education.

Supply of education depends on the state's willingness as established by the policy, implementation mechanism and the management. Demand for education depends on the physical and geographical characteristics of the area, livelihood of the people in the area as influenced by their economic situation and social status, gender and culture. Quantity and quality of services also manipulate the demand for education.

2.1.1 Universal Primary Education

Literally, Universal Primary Education means that everybody in the country acquires a full course of primary education (Webster, 2000). To ensure primary education means that every child in the country should be enrolled in primary school and complete his/her education up to the primary level. In Bangladesh, the duration of primary education in formal institution like a school is from grade one to grade five for children between ages six to ten (Sattar, 1982:13). All respective policies and programmes of Bangladesh are intended to achieve UPE.

2.1.2 Education Policy

Policy means the purposive actions undertaken by the state or by other institutions with acknowledged public purposes. This action conceived as serving some wider public objective such as social and economic development and not individual private

gain. (Mackintosh, 1992) Education policy of a country is the guideline for creating dutiful, morally enriched and humanitarian manpower. A country's tradition, culture, socio-religious and moral values are reflected by its education policy. (MoE, 1997) The direction of education in Bangladesh is guided by the national education policy.

2.1.3 Situation and Rates in terms of Coverage of Education

With respect to education children can be categorised as enrolled children, excluded or non-enrolled children and drop out children. The children who are admitted in the primary school are mentioned as 'enrolled child' or 'included in education'. Children who leave the school before completing their primary education are called 'drop out children'. 'Excluded or non-enrolled children' are the children who have no opportunity to enter in a formal education institution like a school.

Different rates are used to present various situations of education, which are net enrolment rate, gross enrolment rate, drop out rate, literacy rate and adult literacy rate. Net enrolment rate is calculated by the number of school aged children enrolled in school divided by the number of school-aged children. Gross enrolment rate is counted by the number of children enrolled in school divided by the number of school-aged children in the population. Drop-out rate is the rate found by the number of children who leave school at some stage before completion divided by the number who began the level that year. (Ancell, 2005) Literacy rate mentions the rate produced by dividing literate population in a specific age group by the entire population of this age group. Adult literacy rate is calculated by dividing the number of literate population aged 15 years and above by the corresponding total population. (UIS Literacy Team, 2005)

2.1.4 Universal Coverage

Universal coverage means an outcome of supply and demand in terms of including all school-aged children within a school. It wants no exclusion but exclusion comes as the effect of the process not the design of the initiatives, the design tries to include all. Bangladesh education policy wishes to include all children in the education coverage but the gap between policy and reality makes some children excluded.

2.1.5 Livelihood – Shapes the Demand for Education

Poverty is one of the main reasons for children to be excluded or drop-out from education. Child labour is not the only factor for children not going to school; many children are neither at school nor at work. There are some other reasons that push children out of school; these are lack of availability of school, social discrimination based on caste and gender, cultural exclusion based on tribal and religious status. Moreover, regional background, policies and practices of education system and involvement of various actors for providing education also influence the status of children's education. (Kabir, Nambissan and Subrahmanian, 2003:17) According to Child Education and Literacy Survey of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, most children in Bangladesh dropped out from primary level of school mainly because of economic hardship, child marriage or death of a parent/guardian (MOPME, 2002).

The decision to send children for education comes from the family or the household. Social and economic conditions of the household as well as economic opportunities in the locality influence the decision. Along with it, norms and values of the community are reflected in the household's decision. (Kabir, Nambissan and Subrahmanian, 2003:17)

Demand for education is also influenced by quality of school, locality of school, school timing, parent's expectation about pecuniary benefit, parent's values on education, opportunity cost and educational infrastructure (Burke and Beegle, 2004:334-335). The relevance of the school calendar with the livelihood system of the poor people is also an influential factor for a child's education. If the school calendar fits with the agricultural calendar of the area, the children from poor families can continue their schooling (Kadzamira and Rose, 2003: 513).

2.1.6 Quality of Education

Quality is defined in various ways; there is no absolute definition of quality. UNICEF provided definition of quality by putting emphasis on health and well-nourishment of children and the learning support they are getting from their family and community. It states that the environment should be healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive along with sufficient resources and facilities for education. It also mentions that

curricula and learning materials should be relevant for acquiring adequate basic skills on literacy, numeracy and life skills and also for acquiring knowledge in different areas of life like gender, health, nutrition, peace and so on. Quality education also concerns itself with child-centred teaching approach along with trained teachers, adequately furnished classroom and schools. (MOPME, 2003:13-18)

2.2 Universal Education in the Wider Development Context

Demand for education as well as supply of education and the government's expenditure on education has been increasing in developing countries for the past two decades. The countries have been spending a large share of their budget on education with the notion that literate people will be more productive and responsive than illiterate. High drop-out is a big problem in these countries. Basic problems of education in Third World countries are inefficiency and inertia of educational system like outdated content and dubious quality of education, with teachers who have no opportunity for training to upgrade and update them and become less competent and less motivated by the curriculum and the method. Poor management, distorted incentives and maladjustment of social needs at the primary level is another problem for LDCs. (Todaro, 91: 325-335)

In Bangladesh, the government's emphasis on education and spending towards it has increased from 1990. Enrolment on education has been increasing as the outcome of the several service providers' initiatives; however, dropout rate is still very high. Like other countries of the Third World, Bangladesh also faces various problems, linked with the quality of education, teacher's skill and motivation, poor management and incentives. Besides knowledge imparted in primary school does not focus on rural livelihood development though the biggest proportion of the population lives in rural areas. The knowledge mainly tries to prepare children to enrol in secondary school.

All global human rights treaties and all regulatory bodies address education. Different treaties have dealt with different components of education. Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 mentioned that, "education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages and elementary education shall be compulsory". UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education 1960 states that "The state parties to this convention undertake to formulate, develop and apply a national policy

which will tend to promote equality of opportunity and of treatment and in particular to make primary education free and compulsory". International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights 1966 also mentioned about education, it says, "primary education shall be compulsory and available free for all". (Tomasevski, 2003:51-53) According to UN CRC Article 28 "State parties recognise the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall in particular: (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all and (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop out rates" (UN CRC, 1989). According to Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), education is a fundamental human right and it emphasizes right based government action about implementing Education For All (EFA) in national level. EFA highlighted the gender discrimination in education and the rights of child (Tomasevski, 2004:2-3). Likewise, Millennium Development Gaol (MDG) has a goal to achieve UPE and it has a target that every child either boy or girl everywhere will be able to complete full course of primary schooling by 2015 (UNDP, 2000).

The GoB is committed to ensure UPE as a signatory of different treaties and conventions. Bangladesh is a part of the Declaration at the World Conference on Education For All (WCEFA) held in Jomtein, Thailand, 1990. The commitment on ensuring education has reiterated several times in several summits and forums, like world summit for education at New York 1990, summit of the nine highly populated countries in Delhi 1993, EFA ministerial review meetings from 1995 to 2001 held in Indonesia, Pakistan and China, and the World Education Forum at Dakar 2000 (MoE, 2004:8). According to Millennium Development Goal Bangladesh is also committed to increase its enrolment and completion rate to hundred percent by 2015 (GoB and UN, 2005:i). As part of UN CRC Bangladesh government has also the obligation to implement it. According to the government's commitment to the international community, the government is trying to ensure that all the children get sufficient support to enrol in school and complete their education as they have the right to get it.

2.3 Right Based Approach to Education

Right Based Approach (RBA) to education developed by different actors deal with education from different perspectives. Duty bearer's obligation as well as right

holder's right and demand are analysed by the RBA. UNESCO mentions education as a right along with it they also declare that education makes people conscious about other human rights. Both individual and society benefit and become empowered by education, and human, economic and social development becomes possible.

According to UNESCO human RBA to education programming consists of human right norms and principles with good practices. The framework for education programming is based on education related international declaration, treaties and conventions. The approach incorporate human rights norms, standards and principles in all phases. The programming also takes into account the learners well-being, relevance of content and outcomes and quality of teaching and learning process and learning environments which is defined in the Dakar Framework for action. The approach also mentions and wants to involve four actors as the key actors. These are the government and its institutions, child, parents and teachers. According to it, the child is the right holder and parents are his/her representatives, teachers are right holders and also duty-bearers and governments and their institutions are duty-bearers to obliged to ensure the right to education.

Social benefit for education exceeds the personal benefit and economic growth of a country depends on the educational attainment and human capital. A country can not achieve and sustain high economic growth without literacy. (Deininger, 2001:291) So the government has the main responsibility to provide educational services. It needs to analyse duty bearer's responsibility documented in policy as well as implemented in reality. The framework of UNESCO RBA, follows 4-'A' schemes consists of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability.

2.3.1 Right Based Approach for Duty-bearers

Availability

Availability describes the government's three obligations which are: the government has to establish adequate number of schools to respect freedom in education, and mention education as a civil and political right. The second obligation is about social and economic right, where the government has to ensure availability of free and compulsory education to all children up-to minimum the age for employment. The third obligation concerning education as cultural rights which enable parents to

choose the education for their children, and this obligation also respects diversity mentioned in the minority and indigenous rights (Tomasevski, 2004:7). As the guide line for duty bearer, education policy should take step to make school available to all children of the country. The situation is possible to analyse by the scheme.

Accessibility

Accessibility states the Government's obligation about expanding access to education and being aware of inclusion of discriminated children. The government has to take practical initiatives to eradicate gender and racial discrimination and ensure equal benefit from all human rights. It also mentions that along with primary education, accessibility of secondary and tertiary education should be realised. (Tomasevski, 2004:7). This scheme is useful to analyse the duty bearer's initiatives to eliminate discrimination in terms of poverty and gender.

Acceptability

Acceptability illustrates the Government's obligation to ensure the quality of education which depends on teacher, learning material and environment, monitoring and supervision of supply of education services. It considers the minority and indigenous rights, provision of corporal punishment and so on. (Tomasevski, 2004:7) It is applicable to analyse the duty bearer's responsibility to ensure teacher's quality and remuneration, learning environment in favour of children and provision of monitoring and supervision, which are the dominant factors for quality of education.

Adaptability

Adaptability is revealed as the safeguard of all human rights and also enhances human rights through education. It mentions that the government should consider the rights mentioned in CRC about schooling. According to it, the school should be responsive to children instead of children adjusting themselves to the services provided by the school. It also mentions that every child's need should be considered by the school (Tomasevski, 2004:7-8). It is useful to analyse how the needs of the children from various localities is respected by the government's education policy and initiatives.

The framework used by UNESCO is developed through participatory way as it is developed through workshops on universalising the right to education. The manual

developed by UNESCO follows 4'A' scheme has the objective to translate globally accepted human right standards into guidelines for policy makers and practitioners for formulating national education strategies (Tomasevski, 2004:i-ii). So it is relevant to analyse the government's responsibility about education services in the Haor area by the framework.

2.3.2 Right Based Approach for Right-holders

The main elements of the RBA of education are described by Save the Children RBA on education. The approach is useful to analyse the demand side factors of education. According to right-based education, children have the right to education, and state along with the other duty bearers are obligated to fulfil the rights. Children, as right holders and their parents, are entitled to demand and on the other side states are responsible to respect, protect and fulfil the right to education for all children. According to the approach, quality of education should be concern with child's health, nutrition, well-being, safety and protection from abuse and violence instead of only thinking about learning. Right holder's situation is relevant to analyse by Save the Children right based approach. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) RBA to education implies that children have right to the following:

a. Free access to education for all children

All school-aged children up to the minimum age of employment have access to free, compulsory, affordable and accessible education. Excluded children and children who are at risk for exclusion have the right to be identified and included in schooling. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) School location, transportation facilities and cost influences children's schooling.

b. Equal and inclusive education

Diversity should be respected and there will be no exclusion or discrimination to children for education based on their race, colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, economic status, social status, birth, minority or indigenous status or disability. Every child even from labour market, affected by conflict, displacement or abused should be able to get the equal rights and opportunities for education. The aspect about equal and inclusive education also says that the rights mentioned about children's diverse needs according to their circumstances should be responded.

(Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) Children in all circumstances are entitled to get school facilities.

c. Effective and relevant learning

Content, method and schedule have to be relevant and responsive to different circumstances and needs of children. Teaching techniques, learning methods and materials need to be child-centred and appropriate for the children, and it has to be useful for children to fit in the job market. In addition, according to this aspect teacher's capacity, morale, commitment, status, income and their recognition to child rights should be ensured. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) Children have the right to get education which is effective and realistic for them and it influences educational demand.

d. Gender sensitive

Both boys and girls are entitled to get proper treatment for enrolment and learning. Facilities, curricula, textbooks and teaching learning process should assist children socialise in a non violent environment and respect each others' rights, dignity, diversity and equity. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) All children irrespective of gender are entitled to receive adequate educational facilities.

e. Supportive, nurturing, safe and healthy learning environment

Safe, secure, supportive, encouraging and healthy learning environment will be promoted for children that will protect their physical and psychological health and well being. Policy and practices will guarantee children to be safe and secure from drug, corporal punishment, abuse, harassment and so on. Adequate water and sanitation facilities and health education will be provided. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) Children have the right to get a safe, secure, supportive, encouraging and healthy learning environment.

f. Participation

Child-friendly environment has to be promoted for children. Involvement of student, parents and teacher in curriculum development, choice of learning contents, selection of learning materials, education reforms and school management also need to be

promoted. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) Participation of right holders to curriculum development for ensuring child-friendly environment is children's right.

The approach is developed through a number of workshops and seminars and the main base of the approach is experience in Asia and the Pacific (Theis, 2004:vii). Along with it Save the Children is aware about child right, so it is relevant to use the approach to analyse Haor children's demand and the right to education is shaped.

2.3.3 To Sum up: Main Stakeholders and their Responsibilities

Different stakeholder's various responsibilities are described by the approach. International donors are responsible to ensure social and economic policies on the basis of international human rights. They are also responsible to allocate adequate support for basic education. National governments are responsible about adequate resources to provide free basic education for all children; set, enforce and monitor education standards; harmonise to national policies to international human rights standard and monitor the rights and well being of all children in the country. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30)

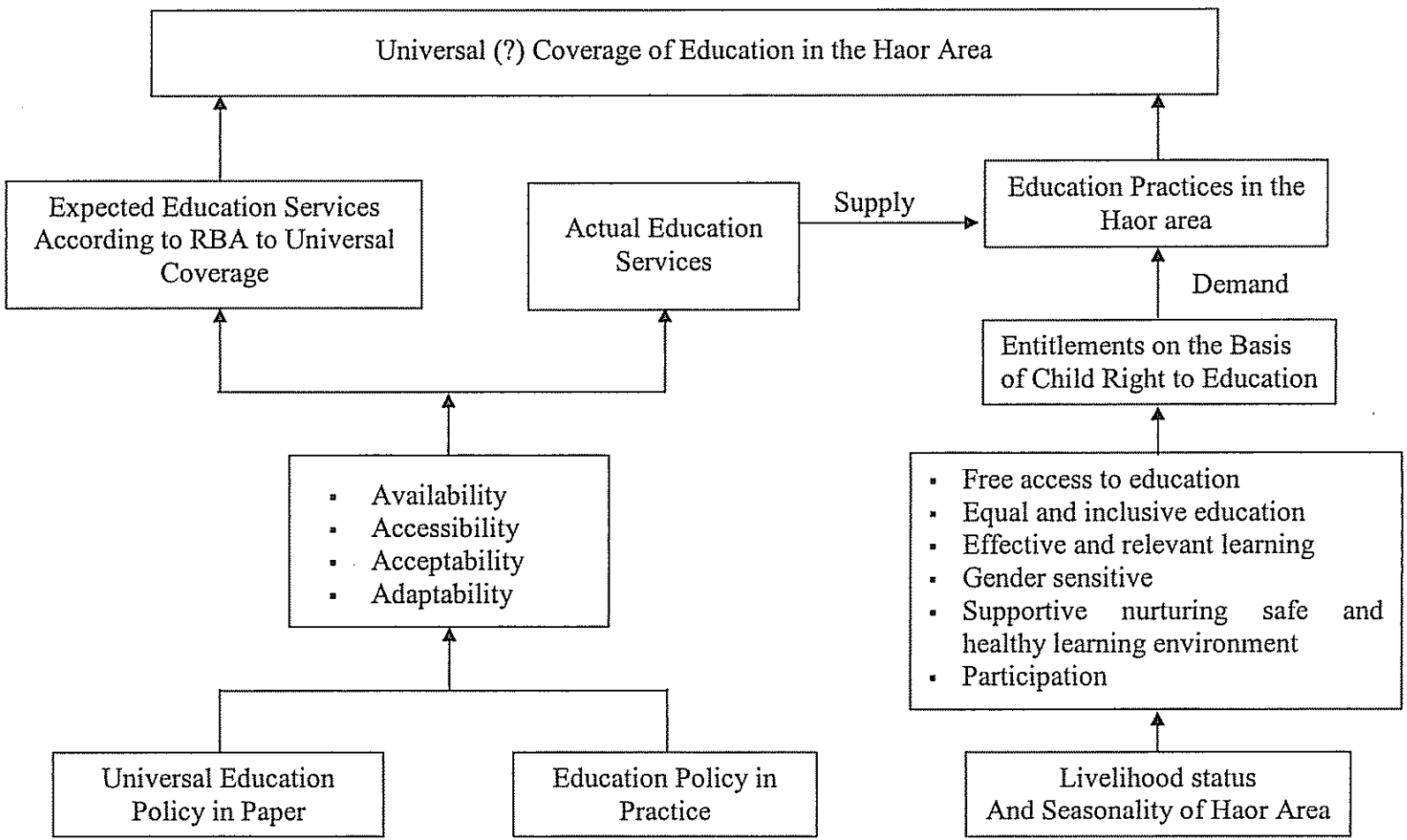
Parents have the primary responsibility to care, support and guide their children, and comply with compulsory education requirements. Teachers are responsible about children to teach them respect for human rights and ensure the relevancy of curriculum and teaching methods in line with it. Private companies, media and religious, cultural and political institutions are responsible to provide education and information services, materials and resources to meet standard of right based education. Education institutions have the responsibility to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the education sector. (Theis, J., 2004: 28-30) The role of different stakeholder on Haor children's right and demand for education is identified by it.

2.4 Analytical Framework

The study needs to analyse both the supply and demand side factors for education to figure out the explanation of the low coverage of the universal primary education. Supply side factors consist of the duty bearer's responsibility documented in the policy and the implementation mechanism in the reality especially in the Haor area. At the same time, demand side factors are shaped by livelihood, locality and service

provision. The study has used RBA developed by UNESCO for analysing UPE policy in paper and in practice. Conversely RBA developed by Save The Children is relevant for analysing demand side factors. The government's responsibility to make education free, compulsory, affordable, child friendly, qualitative and responsive to diverse needs, investigated by 4-'A' scheme, consists of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability. The demand for education in the Hoar has been analysed by the Save the Children RBA which expect education should be free access to education for all children, equal and inclusive education, effective and relevant learning, gender sensitive, supportive nurturing safe and healthy learning environment and participation. The overall education scenario of Bangladesh and the Haor area has been described along with the policy analysis. Finally the level of universality of UPE in Bangladesh has been analysed on the basis of all findings.

2.5.1 Process Leads to Universal Coverage of Education



CHAPTER 3: UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH: THE POLICY IN PAPERS

The chapter has analysed the supply side of education to find what can be expected to be in place for education services in the Haor area on the basis of educational policy of Bangladesh to ensure universal coverage. The chapter explains and analyses the educational policy of Bangladesh. These findings will help to identify how Haor people's specific need has been taken or not taken into account in the policy document and it will give basic information which is important for explanation of the next chapters.

3.1 Universal Primary Education Campaign in Bangladesh

Universal primary education depends on the demands for education as well as supply of educational services. Education is seen as the right of every child instead of a need. The government as the main duty bearer is obliged to provide it. Government's obligation or responsibility has been mentioned in the policy of the country. Education policy is the guideline for every duty bearer. It guides the education service providers to ensure UPE for all children in the country.

The GoB feels that the primary school going age is the phase to turn people into human capital (MoE, 1997:39). Free and compulsory primary education is one of the fundamental principles of the state policy of Bangladesh and free education for girls up to higher secondary level is also a cornerstone of state policies (MoE, 2004:8). The constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh commands the government to ensure education for its entire citizen. The constitution dictates the state to take effective initiatives to achieve the purpose which is mentioned in article 17 of the constitution –

"17 (a) Establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law;

17 (b) relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs;

17 (c) removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law" (MOLJPA, 1999:9-10)

The constitution recognised UPE as a state responsibility. To fulfil their responsibility the government has approved an act called Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990. After the endorsement of the Primary Education Act 1990, the government becomes directly responsible for providing primary education for all the children of the country. Along with the formation of separate ministry for managing primary education, the government also has introduced compulsory primary education programme all over the country from 1993. (MoE, 2004:8, CPD, 2003:1-2, MOPME, 2002:IX, Ahmed, M., et al 2002:30-31)

To execute the commitment, the government has to consider the needs of all children of the country; especially the children living in the disadvantaged or remote area of the country. The constitution and the commitments push the government as the main duty bearer to provide adequate support to the children in disadvantaged area like Haor area. Therefore the government can declare to have achieved her goal when the children in these areas are able to complete their primary education.

3.2 Universal Primary Education Policy

After Independence in 1971, Bangladesh government formed four commissions and committees in 1972, 1988, 1997 and 2000 to maintain a modern, scientific and effective education system. The education policy of Bangladesh is based on the reports of the commissions and committees. (MOPME, webpage, 2005)

3.2.1 Aim of the Policy

The goal of primary education of Bangladesh is to help the children for their physical, moral, mental, social, spiritual, human and aesthetic development. The GoB has been putting emphasis on value based, job oriented and need based education, and ensuring gender equity, efficient management and effectiveness of teacher. Primary education has the objective to make children capable to receive further education and gather practical literacy and basic education consist of basic knowledge of life, skill, attitude and values. As some people of Bangladesh have no opportunity to further study and they have to start a career after primary school, for that one of the objective is to prepare children for meaningful physical labour. (MoE, 2004:9, 22, MoE, 2000:4, MoE, 1997:39-42)

3.2.2 Goals of the Policy

Make education reachable by all children

According to the education policy of Bangladesh, primary education should be universal, compulsory, free and same for everybody. The policy encourages taking initiatives to establish adequate number of schools for reaching all children in the country and providing facilities. It mentioned that "for expansion of universal primary education necessary number of schools should be established and facilities should be increased, --, establishment of non-government schools will be encouraged simultaneously" (MoE, 2000:8). Policy also states that all villages have to have a school and if necessary more than one school will be established in one village on the basis of population. (MoE, 2000:3-9, MoE, 1997:38-52)

Non-government initiatives to organisation of schools, local people's donation for development of schools are encouraged by the policy. According to the policy "it is a constitutional responsibility of the state to ensure proper primary education for all children of the country, but this task is so mammoth that it is not possible for the state to discharge the above responsibility properly without the help of all citizens of the country and the government and non-government organisations"(MoE, 1997:52). For removing the poverty gap and gender gap from education, the government have to take initiatives to provide stipend to poor and girl students. (MoE, 2000:3-9, MoE, 1997:38-52)

Quality of education and learning environment

The education policy has mentioned that "due to low quality of teaching, students lose interest for school and remain absent or drop-out, so it is necessary to take multifarious steps to develop the quality of primary education, main steps are: to bring the teacher student ratio up to a satisfactory mark and to give importance on self learning" (MOE, 1997:42). According to the policy, teacher-student ratio will be 1:40; children will be encouraged to do their work individually or in a group. Adequate learning materials should be ensured to the school; along with it sufficient number of class rooms and teachers should be available in every school. Proper learning environment also needs libraries, sport equipments, drinking water facilities and separate latrine facilities for boys and girls which is also emphasised by the policy. (MoE, 2000:3-9, MoE, 1997:38-52)

Children's socio-economic environment, their psychological and physical make up and cultural awareness is needed to be considered at the time of developing curriculum and syllabus for school. Education system should be able to develop children's creativity and encourage them to be involved with creative activities. The policy says that "the method of teaching at primary level will be child oriented, productive and pragmatic". (MoE, 1997:43)

According to the education policy of Bangladesh "effective measures will be taken for teacher training and opportunities will be created for in-service training" (MoE, 2000:7). Education policy also accentuates teacher's qualification and skill, the lowest qualification of teacher for recruitment should be higher secondary school certificate and then they will receive basic training on teaching. Policy also mentioned that teachers will be encouraged and motivated by providing opportunity for promotion and realistic salary scale, it says "linkage should be established between the teacher's training and promotion" (MoE, 2000:7). (MoE, 2000:3-9, MoE, 1997:38-52)

Monitoring and supervision

According to the policy, "appropriate management and supervision can play an important role in the development of the standard of primary education" (MoE, 1997:50). Involvement of society for development of school is encouraged by the policy; they can join as the member of SMC or Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The members of SMC, guardians and teachers are responsible to solve local problems related to school. The local government elected body is also responsible to provide supervisory support for implementation of primary education activities. The Assistance Thana Education Officer (ATEO) is responsible to supervise and monitor the schools and the teachers, the policy states that they will be assigned for practical number of schools which is possible for them to manage properly by taking adequate time. (MoE, 2000:3-9, MoE, 1997:38-52)

3.3 Analysis of Policy Intended Service Delivery

The paper has analysed the education policy on the basis of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability of services in general and in relation to specific categories of children and specific conditions.

3.3.1 Availability

After introducing the Act of Parliament in 1990 on a free and compulsory primary education, the GoB has put lots of emphasis to make education available for all children of the country. Education policy is trying to make education easily accessible to all children of the country. In Bangladesh, education is basically state financed and the government uses its own resources along with external development fund for education. The government is responsible to provide all expenditures for the government primary schools. The government is also accountable to provide financial support to the non-government schools; the support covers their teacher's salary and text books for the students. The government's education policy has been encouraging local communities and NGOs to establish schools to meet the gaps of primary education. (MOPME, 2003:6, CPD, 2003:3-4, MoE, 1997:52) Though the policy mentioned about involvement of civil society, however, there is no strategy mentioned about how to involve them. The government has, created space for NGOs to operate non-formal education programmes, unfortunately there is no recognition of their contribution to primary and basic education. (Nath, 2001) However, education policy recommends setting up required number of primary schools and provides various facilities to make primary education available to all children of the country. (MOPME, 2003:6, CPD, 2003:3-4, MoE, 1997:52)

Education policy of Bangladesh is adequate to make education available to all children of the country which is free and compulsory for them. Policy does not exclude any children from the school and it encourages other service providers to provide education services to ensure universal coverage. These sections of the policy provides an expectation that the Haor children have school in their neighbourhood and all the children in the area are studying in the school as it is free and compulsory and several actors like NGOs along with the government are providing education facilities.

3.3.2 Accessibility

The government has taken different initiatives to improve the access of children to education. Fifty percent of the government education budget is used for primary education sector (MOPME, 2002: IX). It has clearly mentioned that schools should be easily reachable to the children and it will be in easy walking distance to the children.

The government has introduced primary education stipend project replaced the food for education programme. Under the project, students from poor household are entitled to receive 100 taka for per child and 125 taka for more than one child to send them school regularly (CPD, 2003:6, Tietjen, 2003:6). The children from lowest 40 percent poor families will be entitled to get the support from the stipend programme. Along with poverty they have to fulfil some other conditions which include 85 percent attendance in school and 40 percent marks in exams it will also encourage children to work for better achievement (MOPME, 2003:17). A school has to fulfil some conditions to be a part of the stipend project. The conditions are - the average student attendance in the school should be 60 percent and 10 percent of the total students of grade five have to sit for scholarship exam (Tietjen, 2003:22-23).

The stipend programme is a relevant initiative for the country because a significant number of children from very poor households have no access to enter school. Most of them who enrol in the school have no chance to complete their schooling up-to primary level before that they have to involve themselves to earning for the surviving of their family members.

The stipend programme is helpful for poor children for the continuation of their education, but it may not be sufficient to include all poor children to avail the opportunity. Also school's inability to maintain the conditions restrict student to get the support for education. Another point is that when poor children are included they may face limitation in making good result or attend regularly. In addition the condition about 40 percent of the student will get the stipend is same for all socio-economic areas, while poverty statistics varied on the basis of socio-economic conditions some area may have large number of families living at the bottom of the poverty level. As a result some children from poorest families become excluded from the stipend support. The policy is not adequate for ensuring accessibility of schooling for all poor children.

To eliminate all types of discrimination especially gender discrimination, the government makes education free for girl students up to higher secondary level and they are eligible to get cash grant, book allowance, examination fee and tuition fee. In the stipend programme, mothers are the guardian of the students, and they are the

responsible person to receive the grants from the school. The government has also introduced a quota for recruiting female in primary school, 60 percent of the post is fixed for female teachers. To expand the access for the school-aged children, The government has introduced community and satellite schools from 1990s. Children of the community and satellite schools are entitled to receive stationeries and other teacher-learning aids free of cost along with text books from government. (MOPME, 2003)

According to the policy, children from the poorest families in the Haor area should be able to continue their education with the support from stipend programme. The expectation from the section of the policy is that the poorest families in the area are sending their children to the school instead of work. The girl children in the area are continuing their education as they are entitled to receive special facilities for their study. The Haor children are also entitled to receive free text books.

3.3.3 Acceptability

Learning environment and quality of education is very important for completion of schooling along with the enrolment. It depends on classroom environment, teacher's quality and skill, facilities provided in school and monitoring and supervision for ensuring quality. The policy states to ensure quality of education and learning environment by maintaining adequate teacher's quality, teacher-student ratio, learning material, child friendly teaching method and monitoring and supervision.

The policy recommends that teacher student ratio in a primary school will be 1:40 (MoE, 1997:47, 2000:5), which is very important to ensure effective learning environment. The conditions mentioned in the policy for getting fund for non-government schools is supportive for ensuring minimum guarantee of quality of schools. The conditions follow the specified rules for teacher recruitment, number of enrolled students, use of curriculum and account, acceptance of the government account and audit system, performance of student in examination and presence of SMC (CPD, 2003:5).

The policy emphasises on the prerequisites of the teachers in terms of qualification and training of teacher. Policy recommends to identify untrained teachers and arrange

training for them, along with pre-service training in-service is also very important to vitalize teacher's skill and knowledge, according to the policy, a good number of qualified Assistant Thana/Upzilla Education Officer (ATEO) should be appointed and they will be responsible to provide training to the teacher every teacher will receive six days training per year it mentioned that transport, conveyance, food and incidental expense for the ATEO will be arranged. Policy also recommends that teachers will be properly trained up on reviewed curriculum and content regularly. (MoE, 1997:46-48, MoE, 2000:7-8)

Teacher's teaching depends not only on their skill but also motivation which is linked with their remuneration and attractiveness of location. There are poor infrastructural facilities exist in the rural Bangladesh and the policy does not directly mention any special remuneration for the teachers in the area, either in primary or secondary level (CPD,2003:19). But the policy states that teachers will be encouraged and motivated by providing opportunity for promotion and realistic salary scale.

Supervision and monitoring is emphasised by the policy. According to the policy education officers are responsible to supervise school and support the teachers regularly. People's participation is encouraged by the policy, there are three committees are exiting for providing administrative support and problem shutting, these are SMC, PTA and Ward Committee. The members of local government are also assigned to looking after the schools. (MoE, 1997:49-50)

These components of the policy provide the hope to Haor area that effective and healthy learning environment with adequate facilities will be available to all Haor children.

3.3.4 Adaptability

The education policy of Bangladesh covers various areas for making education reachable to all children of the country it concentrates the need of poor children and girl children along with consider to make school child friendly and healthful, however there is nothing mentioned in the policy about the diverse need of the children based on their geographical variations. Needs of the children from different geographic area

is varied. Geographically remote and disadvantaged areas need some special attentions; unfortunately it is not specifically mentioned by the policy.

According to the document the school authority that are primarily responsible to provide education for the students are enjoying very limited authority and power (CPD, 2003:16) so that they are not able to take any decision in response to diverse needs.

3.4 Concluding Remarks on Expected Education Services

The expected education services in the Haor area according to the universal education policy of Bangladesh is found in this chapter. On the basis of the findings, education has been emphasised by the government as well as non-government organisations in Bangladesh. The education policy is crucial but not sufficient to cover all the necessary factors important to ensure universal primary education. However it has covered most of the issues for universal coverage. To make education available education policy encourages education service providers to establish adequate number of schools. Policy states to make education free and provide necessary financial and material support like free text book and stipend to make education accessible to all children, especially girl and poor children. The condition for stipend may not be sufficient to include all poor children. Policy also states some points to make learning environment effective, child friendly and healthy. Teacher's skill, motivation and proper supervision and monitoring are also emphasised by the policy. Unfortunately there is nothing mentioned about the specific initiatives based on geographical variation. Now it is important to see how implementation practice is different from the documents. This chapter help the rest of the sections of the paper to identify the gap between the policy and implementation practice and special needs of the Haor area what makes the gap between education practice in the Haor area and the policy wider.

CHAPTER 4: UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION OF BANGLADESH: THE POLICY IN PRACTICE [5]

The chapter presents the brief of actual services provided in the Hoar area. The chapter also shows the general gap between the policy in paper and implementation practices in reality.

4.1 Primary Education in Reality

The description of the policy shows that most of the concept which is important for UPE is covered by it, now it is important to see how implementation practice in reality is different from the document.

4.2 The Haor Area of Bangladesh

The studied Haor area is situated in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh called Sylhet division. The area is bounded by broad valley on the north and hills of considerable heights on south. The area is intersected by various rivers and dotted over with huge saucer-like depression called Haor. The entire low land goes under water from June to September and it is cultivated in winter season. Physical access and the lack of communication is the major barrier of the Haor area especially in the dry season. In rainy season when water fills the geographic basin, the land block neighbourhood which is a few feet higher in elevation in dry season becomes isolated from each other. The communication is better in rainy season than in the dry season at that time every neighbourhood becomes accessible by water transport, in the dry season when the river water level goes down most of the area becomes more difficult to reach. A non-motorised three wheeler called rickshaw is the main mode of transport available in the rain washed roads with no bridges and culverts. The rickshaw riders to Haor area (Bishwamberpour) from the town have to get off and on from the rickshaw at least 30-40 times during the 3-4 hours journey because of the road condition. The rickshaw is an expensive means of transportation for poor people in the area. In the dry season motorbike is used for transportation, which is very expensive for them.

[5] The information has used in the chapter on education in the Haor has collected from Chowdhury (eds), 2004 and Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004 (the study named 'Primary Education Condition of Haor and Tea Garden of Sylhet' and the summery and published version of the above mentioned report called 'Expectation and Reality: Education Scenario of Tea Garden and Haor area of Sylhet').

(Chowdhury (a), 2004:3-7; Chowdhury (b), 2004:3-4; Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:1, 22; Wennubst, 2002:1; Sedere, 1999:5-6)

Around 72 percent of people are illiterate in Bishwamberpour the Haor area (Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:11). Though as a result of education campaign, the number of children enrol in school is increasing but a group of children are still have no access to education. As a result of relentless struggle of the government, the net enrolment rate of education in Bangladesh is 86.6 percent however the drop out rate is still very high which is 33 percent. (BANBEIS, 2003 in MoE, 2004:27, Khan, 2003:18-20). The net enrolment rate in the Haor area (Bishwambrpour) is lower namely 74.89 percent (MOPME, 2002:1,167), and the drop out rate is higher which is 55.76 percent according to the local government education office collected in 2004 (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 66). This shows that more than half of the student enrolled in the school become drop-out before completing their primary education and the figure is much more than that of the national figure. (BANBEIS, 2003 in MoE, 2004: 27) Around 30 percent of the total household in the Haor area are illiterate. They are educationally in the dark. Even there are some villages in the Bishwamberpour where half of the households have no literate member. (Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:16). This shows that education situation in general and especially in Haor is not satisfactory in terms of universal coverage.

4.3 Policy Implementation: Services in Practice

The explanation of education services and the difference between the policy and practice in general as well as in the Haor area is described below by using 4'A' scheme consist of Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Adaptability.

4.3.1 Availability

To improve and enhance primary education after declaration of commitment for education for all at 1990, Bangladesh government has taken various initiatives, which includes setting the law on free and compulsory education, provide free text book to all primary school children, free tuition for girl and stipend for rural girl students at secondary level which try to check the drop out rate for girls, food for education which turned to stipend programme for poor student, and establishment of primary

and mass education ministry for managing primary education. (Ahmed, M., et al 2002:30-31)

To make school available to all the children in the country, different types of schools exist to provide education. Along with the government, non-government and private sector also becomes a part of education provider. There are eight types of schools involved in providing primary education. Six of them are using government curriculum. These are State owned primary schools, Registered non-government primary school, Non-registered non-government primary school, Satellite school, Community school and Primary attached to secondary school. The rest two are the Non-formal NGO schools and *Ebtedayee Madrassah* (Religious school). State owned primary schools are established and fully managed by the government and SMC are responsible for regular management. Registered non-government primary schools are established and managed by private initiative, community people set up the schools and 80 percent of the teachers salary and text books is provided by the government. Non-government non-registered primary schools are established and managed by private owners however they are using government national curriculum without receiving any incentives from the government. Satellite schools are started by UNICEF provided fund and it is set up as feeder schools to make schools available to disadvantaged children especially female children and it is run by a SMC selected local voluntary female teacher. Teacher salary has provided by UNICEF through the government. The community schools are set up by the government in remote areas where there is no school and the teacher salary is paid by the government. Necessary facilities along with teacher salaries are provided by the government, however, school building is constructed on the locally donated land. Primary attached with secondary school could be government or privately managed and 80 percent of teacher salary is provided by the government. Most of the NGO schools and Madrassahs have their own curriculum. (BEPS, 2002:4-5, PMED, 2002:22)

Along with the government programme the number of enrolment rate becomes better because of the education programme of non-government organisations, especially their programme for children in underserved areas (Behrman, Deolalikar and Soon, 2002:14). More than 400 NGOs have been working for ensuring UPE in Bangladesh (World Bank, 2005: 56-57). The Bangladesh Rural Advanced Committee (BRAC)

non-formal education programme, is serving 1.2 million children who were devoid from education. As such, they have 34,000 primary education centres all over the country. (Ahmed, M., et al 2002:45).

In the Haor area primary education is free, similar to the rest of the country. There exist different types of schools in the area like government primary schools, registered non-government schools, community schools, satellite schools, NGO schools and Madrassah. However, the number of NGO schools is very rare in the area and there is no BRAC school in the respective Haor area though they cover a big part of the country. Several NGOs including BRAC are working in the area but they are operating basically micro-credit programme not education.

To make education available, the government has several initiatives, such as providing education by different types of schools. Along with the encouragement by the policy several NGOs are providing education facilities for the children of the country. Still the need of the Hoar children is not achieved in terms of making the school available.

4.3.2 Accessibility

Financial Support

Though different types of schools have existed to provide education through out the country, the number of primary school is not equally distributed among all the socio-economic groups (Behrman, Deolalikar and Soon, 2002:14). Children living in rural areas, urban slum, socio-economically disadvantaged family and ethnic minority have faced limitations (Chowdhury, 2003:293, Nath, 2001). Even primary school is free for all children but the various costs of schooling like dress, transport, education materials restricts poor families to send their children to school (Behrman, Deolalikar and Soon, 2002:14).

The National government is providing stipend for the student in primary level to motivate people to send their children to school instead of sending them to work. This programme has an influence in the children enrolment as well as completion of education in the Haor area. Poor parents become interested in sending their child to the school, as a result a large number of children are enrolled in the schools in the

area. As a result of various initiatives like stipend and 'Hard to reach' project for street children, children from economically worse-off families have been coming to school but the rate of enrolment, attendance, drop out and achievement for the children of the poorest families is not satisfactory (BEPS, 2002:13).

Distance

In the Haor area children have to walk a long to reach nearby school. Even in some villages they have to walk five kilometres to go to their school. School fees and text book is free for all students at the primary level, which makes education affordable to poor children. Though the text books are free but in most of the schools children have to pay 2-4 taka as fees. According to the teachers of the Haor area, the government does not provide any transport cost to the schools for bringing free books from upzilla offices to schools (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):12), therefore the teachers have no way but to collect money from the students and use it for this purpose. Sometimes teachers also collect fees from the students to maintain teaching material cost as the allocation provided to school is not sufficient to maintain it. Similarly, in some schools they recruit local teachers to solve the problem arising from teacher scarcity and they cut down 10 percent of the stipend money from children to maintain this locally recruited teacher's salary.

Books

About text books, usually every year only one third of the schools receive text books in January and a large number of schools do not receive books on time and in sufficient numbers (BEPS, 2002: 9-12). In the Haor area children do not get text books on time and sometimes they have to use old torn books. Sometimes teachers are able to provide text books to children when 4-5 months of the calendar year is left. The condition about text book in satellite and community school is poorer than that in other schools. It is also found in some satellite and community schools that teachers write down the questions and answers on the blackboard to prepare students for the exam on the subject in which book has not been available to them (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):12).

Gender gap

The gender gap against girls for enrolment and drop out in primary school has dropped. The boy to girl ratio in primary school is 49:51 (Khan, 2003:18-20). UNICEF information shows that net enrolment rate for girls is 84 percent and boys is 81 percent in 2003 (UNICEF webpage). According to MDG progress report 2005 primary school net enrolment rates has been slightly higher for females compared to males (GoB and UN, 2005). The Bangladesh education sector review report states that the drop out rate for boys is slightly higher than that of the girls; however, in achievement the position of the boys is better than that of the girls (BEPS, 2002:13). The quality of learning is not satisfactory for all the children, only 30 percent of the children aged 11-12 years have passed in an achievement test and disappointingly the girl's situation is worse than that of the boys. Rural children are in a disadvantaged position than the urban children. (Chowdhury, 2003:292). The number of girl students is very poor after the stipend programme stopped in higher education or technical education.

Stipend for girls

In the Haor area, the introduction of intensive stipend programme for girls reduces the gender gap in enrolment. Tuition fee is free for all children in primary level and in secondary level (after grade five) it is free for girls and they can get a stipend. As a result, parents are now getting interested in sending their girls to school. It makes the enrolment as well as dropout rate for girls in primary school better than that of the boys.

To make education accessible, several initiatives have been taken by government, however it is not sufficient to ensure accessibility of education to the Haor children. The services influence to decrease the gender gap against girls but the boys in the area are discriminated now.

4.3.3 Acceptability

Teacher's qualification

Teacher's qualification is an important factor for ensuring school standard and maintaining effective learning. A number of teachers in Bangladesh are not master/specialist of the respective subjects and they have no opportunity to be

properly trained. After the declaration of EFA at 1990, figure of enrolment in primary school is getting very high and in response to it, teachers have been recruited in huge numbers, however the capacity of teacher training institutions have not increased accordingly. Finally the government is trying to meet the problem with the help of external organisational support. Though the government has intensified its teacher training efforts with support from external agencies but they are not able to train teachers equally from all types of schools. Around 95 percent of the government primary school teachers have received training; on the other hand, 75 percent registered non-government primary school teachers have no training. (BEPS, 2002:13) Some times primary school teachers are overburdened with non-academic and non-school activities (Behrman, Deolalikar and Soon, 2002:14).

In the Haor area, unfortunately the number of trained teachers is very limited and even there are some schools where there is no teacher with training from Primary Teachers Training Institute. Teacher absenteeism and irregularity is usually found in the Haor area (Sedere, 1999:9-12), a common phenomenon of the area. The remoteness because of physical barriers and poor communication makes the area underserved and discourages people to go and serve in the area (Sedere, 1999:9-12). There are some teachers who are living far from the area and make a contact with a local person to co-share their job as 'share teacher' (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):9). Along with the communication barrier, remuneration package also discourage teachers to put in their full effort. The primary school teachers salary is very poor; their usual monthly expense is more than their salary, consequently, they have to think about other sources of income for survival instead of putting all their effort into teaching. In community and satellite schools the teachers are getting 500 taka[6] as salary, which can not motivate the teachers to serve their best (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):14-15).

Teaching system

Teaching system imposes children to get educational support from home. Children, parents and community members of the Haor area have voiced their views that usually teachers give home work to the children without giving them proper guidance,

[6] At present 1 € is equivalent to 75-80 taka

so they need household members help on it, however most of the household members are illiterate or have little literacy skill which is not enough support to their children (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):11,18,19). As a result they have failed to do it and get punished from the teachers; it reduces their interest about school and finally they dropped out from the school. Physical punishment is very common in the school of the area which makes education fearful to the children instead of making it enjoyable.

In the Haor area, usually the numbers of student in a class is very high. On average, 135 students have to sit in one classroom though the classrooms have the capacity for 60 students only. Even if in some classes the teacher student ratio is 1:270, which is unmanageable and difficult for the teacher to ensure that all students understand. (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):6, 9) They are unable to give more time to the students. It is important to mention here that in Bangladesh the average teacher student ratio in government primary schools is 1:67 (Khan, 2003:19).

Staff

The schools face problems not only because of scarcity of money allocation but also shortage of staff. Nearly 30 percent of the teaching position is vacant in the Haor area (Sedere, 1999:9-12) because of its unattractive geographical location. In addition, all of the primary schools in the area have no administrative staff, and teachers instead of concentrating on their work and their students spend a lot of time doing administrative work.

Facilities

In general, more than 90 percent of the total schools have water facilities; however, 40 percent of the urban schools and 58 percent of the rural schools have no drinking water facilities. One third of the schools have no toilet facilities, and those who have, half of them have no separate toilets for girls and the maintenance is very poor. Half of the schools have no playground. (BEPS, 2002:13) On average there are 3.5 classrooms per schools in the rural areas; classroom size is enough for 60 students. The catchments area of school is 2 square kilometres. (Khan, 2003:18-20)

In the Haor area most of the schools do not have drinking water facilities; children need to go to nearby houses to collect drinking water. In some schools they have tube-

wells which are not functioning and the teachers have complained to the authority several times but no initiative has been taken to repair it. Similarly, toilet facilities are poor On average 170 students have to use one toilet and half of the schools have no separate toilets for girls and in some instances they are even locked. Almost all of the schools in the area have no library facilities, even if some have it is locked all year round. Limited opportunity exists for co-curriculum activities like sports. The government primary schools organise yearly sports competition but the satellite and community schools have nothing. (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):7-8)

Learning environment

In Haor, learning achievement depends on the learning environment. Therefore, the schools should be child friendly and cooperative to the children. However limitations arise from school and poor household conditions make the children's learning environment unfavourable.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure of most of the schools in the Haor area is unsatisfactory; especially the school buildings of community and satellite schools are very unsafe for the children. The majority of the schools in the area have brick-built tin-roof buildings without having sufficient ventilation and light facilities in the class rooms. The walls of almost all of the schools are damp, unclean and need to be renovated; door and windows of most of the schools are fragile or broken down. In summer the class conditions become worse due to the heat with no sufficient ventilation facilities in the classrooms.

Management and Monitoring

Around 99 percent of the government primary schools have SMC and according to the documents they meet regularly and most of the members have participated in the meetings. Conversely 20 percent of the meetings are falsely documented. Less than half of the schools have Parent Teacher Associations. In most of the cases the committees do not play an important role for governance of schools and schools are not actually accountable to them. (BEPS, 2002:9-12)

In the Haor area, SMCs and PTAs exist in primary schools; however, lots of PTAs and SMCs are inactive Some members of the SMC only participate enough to put their signature in the register and on some days even this has to be collected from their homes. School monitoring from the government education office is insufficient in the Haor area due to scarcity of number of education officers and transportation cost. According to local education officers, geographical location increases the transportation cost and time required to visit; however the allocation is same for all, which restricts the staffs in monitoring the area properly (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):15). In addition, a number of vacant positions makes the situation unmanageable. A large number of positions for supervisory staff in government education offices, who are directly responsible to monitor and supervise the teachers in the area, are vacant. Around 72 percent post of government offices in the respective Haor area is vacant (Sedere, 1999:9-12) due to limited facilities from poor communication. Sometimes there is only 1 staff member where as they need at least four persons to properly monitor the schools of the area. People in the area have said that they hardly ever seen any visitor from the government office in their local schools. The members of local government are also responsible to monitor the schools but lack (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):15) of coordination and power distribution makes it inactive. The members said that they have no authority to do anything if they find any irregularity at the time of the school visit (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 84). On the other hand, the teachers feel that if the local government has the authority it will create complicacy to continue their job as sometimes illiterate people become the member of the local government (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 77).

The education services, like teachers, teaching system, learning environment, monitoring and supervision are not satisfactory for the Haor children.

4.3.4 Adaptability

Usually in rural Bangladesh student attendance rate becomes low in the harvesting season. And Haor area is not exception to it. Moreover attendance rate becomes low in the rainy season. Poor facilities because of remoteness and unavailability of sufficient number of schools exclude the Haor children from education support. Seasonal dependency makes the area dissimilar to the entire country; however school calendar is similar for the whole. Generally most of the land of the Haor area is mono-

crop and major proportion of the people depends on agriculture for their livelihood. In the harvesting season, the student attendance rate becomes low, most of them are involved with harvesting work and help their parents instead of going to school. Student attendance also decreases in the monsoon, due to risky communication because of flash floods and tide in the Haor and the expense of commuting by boat lowers the school attendance rate. In some villages, schools have gone under water in monsoon so it has to close in that period. In the area March April is the harvesting month and heavy monsoons in July August makes communication risky. According to the school calendar, summer vacation is usually in June, and the teaching staff feels that because of these breaks the students are deprived of their schooling. (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 76).

4.4 Concluding Remarks on Actual Education Services

The chapter tried to find what education services are actually provided in the country especially in the Haor area. The education situation of the Haor area is poorer than that of national average of the country. There are different types of schools involved in providing education. The Haor area also has several types of schools; however, it is not adequate for the children of the area. The number of NGO schools is very rare in the area though lots of NGO schools are providing education facilities to the whole country. Children in the Haor area are entitled to get free schools and receive a text book free; however, they can not get it timely and adequately. Though theoretically the school is free but in practice they have to pay fees as the allocation of money to school is insufficient. The number of teachers, their qualification and skills in the area is insufficient and the services provided by the teachers are inadequate. Infrastructural facilities are also insufficient and teacher student ratio is very high in the area. Monitoring and supervision of school in the Haor area is poor. The persons responsible for monitoring and supervision are insufficient in number as the remoteness of the area discourage people to work for the area. The national school calendar has been followed by the schools without respecting the specific needs of the area. All of the limitations in the services restrict the children's schooling in the Haor area. It shows a gap exist in the policy and implementation process in the Haor area, which makes UPE uncertain.

CHAPTER 5: DEMAND FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE HAOR AREA OF BANGLADESH[7]

The chapter describes the factors which shape the education demand for the Haor children. In the Haor area, children's schooling depends on people's occupation, income, views on education and the services available in the area. The educational needs and rights of the Haor children have been explained in terms of children as the right holder and their parent's viewpoint in the chapter.

5.1 Demand for Education

Children enrolment and non-enrolment in school, along with their continuation of study or drop-out depends on the supply of education services as well as demand for education. The supply of education is linked with the policy formulation and implementation mechanism. On the other hand, the livelihood condition of the children's family and their neighbourhood influences the needs and demands for education, as well as their perspective on the education services also influences the demand.

5.2 Demand Shaping Factors for Education for Haor Children

Geographical condition makes the Haor people's livelihood different from other parts of the country. People's source of earning depends on season and natural resources like agriculture land, water-body, sand and stone. Most of the land is mono-crop and people of the area basically depend on agriculture and fishing. Both the earning sources become vulnerable due to natural disasters like flooding and reducing fertility of the land by sand deposition. River flooding and flash flooding from the adjacent hills situated in India create a problem for the inhabitants; though the water makes transportation easer but flash flood creates disaster. Risk of flood devastation increases because of river bed rise. The flood bringing sand which deposited in the fertile lands make them unfertile. Unplanned fishing also makes the fishing occupation risky. The leasing system also makes the poor fisherman unable to fishing, only rich fisherman can lease the water body from the government for fish. Although

[7] The information has used in the chapter on education in the Haor has collected from Chowdhury (ed), 2004 and Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004 (the study named 'Primary Education Condition of Haor and Tea Garden of Sylhet' and the summery and published version of the above mentioned report called 'Expectation and Reality: Education Scenario of Tea Garden and Haor area of Sylhet').

the sand makes the land unfertile but a big labour market has developed on this sand. A large group of people in the Haor area have become involved with sand and stone collection from the river. Children of the area can easily get work in this field. Around 57 percent of the people of the area have no cultivable land of their own (Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:26), most of them (50 percent of the total earner of the area) work as seasonal labour, like sand and stone labourers, agriculture labourers or construction workers (Chowdhury (b), 2004:4). Most of the work depends on the season. The labourers have no work for approximately six months of the year, and they have to migrate for this duration to the towns to seek work. (Chowdhury (a), 2004:3-4; Chowdhury (b), 2004:3-4; Chowdhury and Razee, 2003:1; Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 73).

Communication and transportation facilities influence the lives of the people of Hoar. Water transport is available in the rainy season and in the dry season people can rent rickshaws or motorbikes. Unfortunately, both are unaffordable to the poor. Walking becomes very difficult due to the muddy and sticky roads when the water just went down. People have to wait for the rainy season to carry and send goods to other areas. (Chowdhury (a), 2004:6-7; Chowdhury (b), 2004:6).

The factors which shape the demand for the education of Haor children and their parents depend on their standards are analysed regards free access to education for all children, equal and inclusive education, effective and relevant learning, gender sensitivity, supportive, nurturing, safe and healthy learning environment and participation.

5.2.1 Free access to education for all children

Demand for education interacts with the supply of services. According to the policy, the Haor children are entitled to get school within easy reach. In reality school location is not like that. Most of the schools in the area cover 3-4 square kilometres, and in some villages the school is five kilometres away from the houses (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):6). The terrain of Hoar is such that it is very difficult to walk even for a kilometre especially in the first part of the dry season, when the roads are muddy and sticky.

Transportation facilities in the area depend on the seasons. In the rainy season the children can go to school by boat but in the dry season only rickshaw and van are available in the area which is not affordable to the poor families. Children from these poor families have no other option but to walk. The season when the water transports just take off is the worst season to move around. The young children along with all the people in the area have to walk. Though in the rainy season water makes the communication easier but the expense of schooling becomes high as parents have to pay for the boat. In addition flash floods and strong tides from the hills make communication risky in monsoon. The transportation facility reduces parent and student's interest to go to school. Some of the drop out children in the Haor area said that at first they were absent from the school because of the difficulty in commuting, then their interest dropped as they lagged behind in class. Eventually, they became dropouts. (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 66) Teachers and education officers of the area feel that the area needs more schools than other places because of its geographical remoteness, then young children can easily go to school.

Primary education is free for the Haor children but guardians have to pay for supplementary cost such of material like stationery, notebook, transportation, dress and several other payments that the school needs. These expenses reduce poor people's interest to send their child to school negatively.

5.2.2 Equal and inclusive education

According to equal and inclusive education, diversity should be respected and children will be excluded because of their different circumstances. The lifestyle of Haor children is different from the other children of the country. Usually children of the Haor area have to do household work like cattle rearing, shopping, work in agriculture field, fishing and domestic work such as cleaning, washing, and taking care of siblings. Children of the Haor area spend a lot of their time helping their parents along with studying, which make them unable to concentrate on their studies. (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 64-65). Furthermore during the harvesting season they have to work the whole day with their parents as it is their main harvest and the poor parents can not afford to hire outside help. Education system of Bangladesh is designed in such a way that children have to study at home a lot. The children of the Haor area need education system which puts less emphasis on

homework and more emphasis on learning at school as they have less time to study at home. The present learning practice influences the children as well as the parents to look upon schooling negatively.

5.2.3 Effective and relevant learning

Curriculum and learning content is same for all. There is no special subject incorporated in the curriculum based on their livelihood which can directly help them to develop their livelihood. This type of subject could enhance Haor people's interest in education.

5.2.4 Gender sensitive

Traditionally girls were in backward situation for enrolment, however there are still a large number of students, both boy and girls, who drop out from primary school but the figure is higher for boys than for girls in the Haor area. Besides the stipend programme, the opportunity cost for boys is very high among the poor families. The boys have different opportunities to earn especially in the sand and stone collection field, which encourages parents to send their boys to earn money rather than to school. Usually the girls work at the home to help their mother with the domestic work and take care of siblings, however, the boys in the Haor area can earn 50 taka per day by working as a labourer (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):17) where as the government is providing only 100 taka per month per student as a stipend.

5.2.5 Supportive, nurturing, safe and healthy learning environment

The children of the Haor area have to spend their whole day at school and at work. They have no time to play. Though the school timing is the same for children all over the country but they have to spend an additional time to reach the school as they have to walk. According to some drop-out children in the area, they felt unhappy when they had no time to play and it reduced their interest in schooling. As a result they became detached from the school.

Limited support for study from home makes the children less interested in education. After class three the content becomes harder and the household members are unable to help them. Therefore in the Haor area most of the students drop-out after Class Three (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):11). Scarcity of education material is another

demand factor. Some of the poor and ignorant parents are not concerned about providing adequate education material, even if some parents threaten the children to bring out from the school when the child wants material like pen, pencil or notebook.

5.2.6 Participation

There is no opportunity for students, parents or teachers to participate in the curriculum development or choose material and content or education reform. There is no opportunity to incorporate input from the local people about their need in the curriculum.

5.3 Main Stakeholders and their Responsibility

Family and parents are the primary caregivers and educators for the children. Though most of the parents of the area have a dream about their children that they will get a good and well paid job, and people will respect them. Mothers of the area feel that if their children do not pass primary school they are unable to understand their surroundings (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 80-81). On the other hand, lack of supervision from home along with the school makes student drop out and be excluded. Drop out children of the area said that "when I became irregular, nobody pushed me or encouraged me to go to school" (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 105). It makes them irregular from the school and after sometime they dropout from education. Excluded children also said that nobody told them to go to school that's why they have no scope to go to school in their life. (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):18) Children are also inspired by other excluded and drop out children in the area to become a 'drop out'. Some parents of the area said that they have no time to look after their children's education as they have to think and fight against poverty (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 38).

Though the government is responsible to maintain all the cost of the government primary schools but the inadequate allocation of money makes trouble for the teachers to manage the cost. It bounds them to collect money from students; sometimes it creates misunderstanding between parents and teachers which creates trouble for children to come to the school. Parents become angry when they ask money as fees and stop their children's schooling.

After introduction of the stipend programme parents are sending their children to school, along with it, a problem also arises after starting the programme. The programme discriminates some children they became dropped-out as a result of the programme. The national media broadcasts the message on stipend programme for motivating poor parents for schooling, but the programme says that all of the primary school students are entitled to get stipends from the government; while there are criteria to get the money which the media does not disseminate properly. The criteria are related to attendance, result as well as performance of the school. As a result poor and illiterate parents become confused when their children are unable to get the money; however, their neighbour's children are able to get it. Consequently they blame the teachers, which create an embarrassing situation for the teachers. Some parents become angry and frustrated and shift their child from the school to the labour market. (Chowdhury, (ed), 2004 (c):18, 20, 21)

The education campaign is trying to motivate parents as well as children to go to school, but in the Haor area the campaign is not sufficient to motivate children or parents to complete their primary education. Some drop out children feel that money is the petrol of life. If they have money people will respect them. As such they are interested to earn money from their school going age instead of going to school. Some excluded children do not feel bad about leaving school. Conversely some children feel very bad when they are forced to drop out from school because of financial crisis. (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 102-1046, 109, 112) Some of them feel sad after they have left school. From a dropout child of the area, "I feel embarrassed when I find I am working in the street to reconstruction of it and my ex-classmates are going to school on the same street (Rahman, Ahmed and Chowdhury, 2004: 104).

5.4 Concluding Remarks on Haor People's Demand for Education

The chapter tries to explain the actual demand for education of the Haor people. Poverty because of seasonality is a common phenomenon for the Haor people. Along with it communication makes them more vulnerable. Haor children are getting services like free schooling, free text book and stipend along with the children of the whole country, yet, they are facing various problems which exclude them from education. The factors push them to give-up their education. Though the school is literally free but the parents have to pay for their children's schooling. In addition

children have to suffer a lot for reaching their school because of geographical location, which declines their interest in school. Livelihood of the Haor area bounds the children to work as well as the education system wants the children to study a lot at home, as a result they have no leisure time to play. Poverty gives the poor parents very little time to look after their children's education. Along with it when they become confused about education services provided by the government, their interest in sending their child to school decreases. The different reality creates different educational demand for the children of the area. Demand for education in the Haor area is not enough still values on education is not sufficient for UPE in the area; motivational programme is required for area to ensure all children in the school.

CHAPTER 6: HOW UNIVERSAL IS UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION: A CONCLUSION

The paper tries to explain the reason for non-universal coverage of education in Bangladesh specially the situation of the Haor area. The chapter presents a brief summary of the main findings to explain low coverage from which the conclusion is drawn along with statements for considerations.

6.1 Expectation and Disappointment from Universal Primary Education: Summery

The research paper has analysed the data collected from secondary sources. RBA has been used to prepare the analytical framework. Primary education is seen as the children's right not their need. The Haor children have the right to get education facilities. The universal primary education will be actually universal when the policy will take care of every child's need and the implementation practice fulfils the criteria of the policy. Along with it people's demand for education also influences the universal coverage. The scope and limitation of the education policy of Bangladesh to ensure universal coverage and its implementation practice in reality especially in the Haor area of north-eastern part of Bangladesh has been described in terms of the right of children to have education Available, Accessible, Acceptable and Adaptable (4'A' scheme). The situation of education demand for the Haor people on the basis of their livelihood and seasonality has been explained to verify the relevancy of the policy and practice for ensuring universal coverage of education.

For ensuring universal primary education, Bangladesh has been taking various initiatives from introducing new laws to provide the stipend programmes. Primary education is free and compulsory for all children of the country. Children are entitled to receive free text book. The Education policy encourages non-government service providers along with the government to establish schools to make school available to all children. The government has introduced stipend programmes, to make education affordable to poor parents those who are suffering to maintain indirect cost of schooling. The programme also encourages the poor families to send their children to school rather than to work. The education policy has covered a wide range of area for ensuring children's schooling.

The achievement of the education is not evenly spread in the entire country. Furthermore, the implementation of the policy in the whole country is not similar as the policy has mentioned. In the Haor area, the number of schools is inadequate to cover the children of the area but the children are able to receive free education, free text book and stipend. However, they are facing some problems to receive the facilities adequately and timely. The teacher-student ratio (1:135) for the area is more than double from the average picture (1:67) of the country, though the number recommend in the policy (1:40) is lower. Teachers usually punish the students without considering their reality. Some of the students dropped out because of the fear for punishment. Though the policy mentioned that curriculum should be responsive for psycho-physical make up of children, but it does not have any section that directly states against corporal punishment.

School buildings are not properly constructed and maintained for ensuring healthy learning environment. Similarly water and sanitation facilities provided to the schools are very poor in the Haor area, whereas students have to spend a long time in the school so the facilities are very important for children's safety and health.

The stipend programme for girls has become successful to motivate poor parents to send their girls to school in the Haor area. However, in some poor areas like Hoar, the initiative makes a group of parents concerned about instant pecuniary benefit from their children's schooling. They are calculating opportunity cost of schooling. As a result they are sending their girls to school to bring money, at the same time sending their boys to the labour market to earn money. The education becomes money driven instead of knowledge driven. It shows that the motivational initiative through stipend programme will not be sustainable, after withdrawing the project the gender gap would be returned. Also miscommunication between parents and school authority hampered children's education. Sometimes teachers are bound to cut down the money to maintain school cost as the allocation from the government is insufficient, but the parent does not accept it.

In the Haor area, the monitoring and supervision of school is very poor. The staffs of the government education office is mainly responsible for it, however, a number of vacant posts, time consuming and expensive transportation put additional burden and

restrict them to perform their job efficiently. The allocation of cost does not consider the character of the area and without any motivational incentive make the management and monitoring system week. Moreover, the poor monitoring and supervision further affects the teacher's regularity and performance. It influences the qualitative supply of education.

The education policy of Bangladesh includes all children of the country; it is trying to provide equal service to all. But 'one size does not fit for all', because the needs depend on the livelihood and characteristics of the area. The character of the area limits children's mobility to school in various seasons. The Haor area is very remote and communication is very tough, children have to face lots of problem to reach their schools.

The vacation would be more useful in the Haor area if it is declared in the harvesting season or rainy season instead of the summer. Illiteracy along with poverty makes Haor children's education situation more vulnerable. Teaching method do not match with their lifestyle; the method requires household members to support the children with their homework, whereas around one third of the households in the Haor area have no literate family member. Furthermore, the workload does not allow them to spend more time on homework. The ultimate sufferers are the children of the area.

The children and parents of the area are not motivated enough about schooling. Though the children have the right to get adequate services from the government, the teacher and parents also but the Haor children's right are violated by different actors. It makes UPE questionable.

6.2 Way Forward

To ensure UPE one needs to think about some specific initiatives which will minimise the low coverage of the Haor area as well as make UPE actually universal. It needs something to incorporate in the policy paper. However some initiatives should be taken into action to make implementation practice accurate. Basically policy makers and the government is responsible to take the initiatives.

Policy should incorporate some statements about particular needs of children in the particular geographical location. It also needs to specify some statements of the policy and introduce some initiatives along with the existing one. Different geographical location and livelihood variation demands different supports like schools in closer proximity than the other parts of the country; curriculum should be need based and contextual, school based interactive learning process should be introduced, so that school going children can makeup their study, learning should be enjoyable without fear of punishment. Vacations in the geographically varied area should be context specific and realistic to minimise demand reducing factors in the area. Facilities mentioned for the schooling should be ensured including teacher's qualification and teacher-student ratio. Management and monitoring system is very important to ensure any programme, so it is very important to put an emphasis on it. Remuneration and motivation strategy applied for the teachers and other staffs working in the remote area of the country should be clearer and special remuneration like hardship allowance to motivate service providers is very important to get similar achievement from disadvantaged locality.

An effective GO-NGO collaboration to spread the services all over the country can accelerate universal coverage of education. Coordination is necessary to establish with the media and other duty bearers to help people not to be confused. Realistic motivational programme should be introduced with collaboration of the government, NGO, media and other relevant actors.

Intensive research is needed to be undertaken to identify the most effective way of universal education and disseminating the result of the programme to the entire country. A sustainable approach for reaching the children in the disadvantaged and remote areas should be identified properly. Criteria of some programme such as stipend programme is need to be reviewed through action research.

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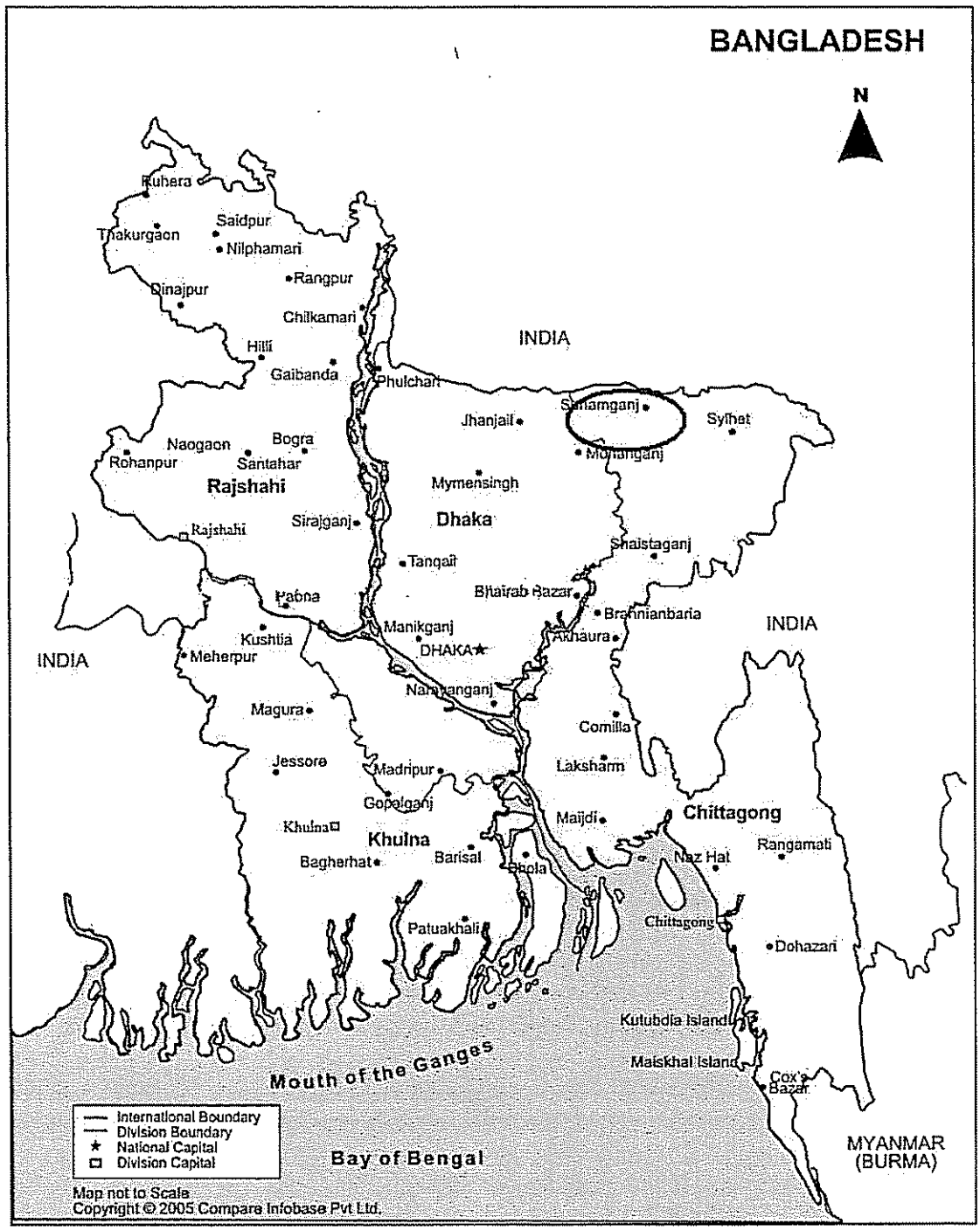
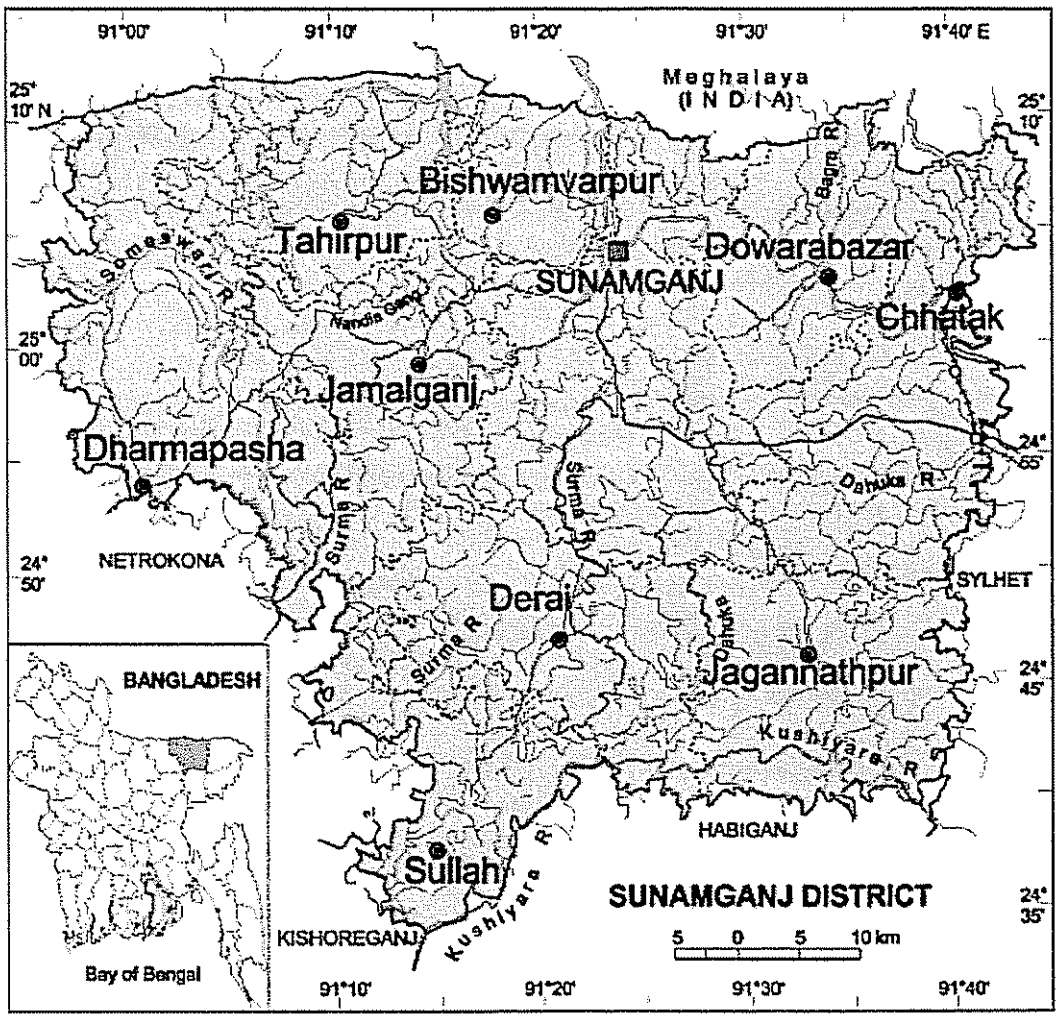
Appendix A – Map of Bangladesh and Haor area



Appendix B – The studied Haor area in Sumanganj District