Presentation on Alternative Learning / Schooling Program
Community Involvement: Lessons & Challenges
(A perspective from Bangladesh)

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Presented in: Regional Meeting on Alternative Learning/Schooling Program for Primary Education to reach the unreached held from 7-9 November 2012, organized by: UNICEF-ROSA & UNESCO-Bangkok,

Bangkok, Thailand
Community Involvement in Alternative Learning
(A perspective from Bangladesh)

• Bangladesh achieved a lot in primary education during last 2 decades. But, still there are at least 1.8 million children's are out of school (Education Watch).
• High drop out rate also exist in primary education. Around 45.1% dropout rate fading up the achievement in primary education and increasing the number of illiterate people in Bangladesh.
• Considering learning needs of out of school and dropout children, Non Government Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) formed by the organized effort of civil society and community started NFPE Program
• As philosophical aspects of NFE, NGOs and CBOs implement their activities through ensuring community participation.
Community Involvement: Concept

• Community involvement means a process of participation where concerned people play a crucial role to identify the needs of their own community and setting a priority relevant to the policies, strategies and expected outputs.

• Oakley and Marsden (1987) defined community participation as the process by which individuals, or communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to the community’s development.
NGOs formed following Committees in NFE Centres

- Mothers Committee
- Parents/Guardians Committee
- Centre/School Management Committee (CMC)
- Event based Committee / Sub Committee

Following committee / Community Development process also mandatory in formal primary schools in Bangladesh.

- Parents-Teachers Association
- School Management Committee (SMC)
- School Level Implementation Plan (SLIP)
- Upazila Primary Education Plan (UPEP)

Union Education Standing Committee (UESC) is a legal forum, responsible for monitoring progress of primary education in respective union.
Steps for Community Involvement

- Advocacy in grassroots
  - Mobilization
  - Motivation
  - Group Formation

- Capacity Development
  - Right To Education
  - Teaching Learning
  - Supervision, Monitoring
  - Equity
  - Sustainability through local resource mobilization

- Empowerment
  - Responsibility
  - Authority
  - Equipped with information

- Recognition with benefit sharing
  - Formal and informal
**Benefits of Community Involvement**

**Sharing project cost:** Community can play managerial and supervisory role.
- Community can contribute to develop physical infrastructure of school.
- Community can play vital role to enroll all children in school, prevent absenteeism which reduce dropout in school.

**Increase Efficiency:** Community people participate in organizing process including planning and management, so that need assessment and delivery mechanism become appropriate.
- No chance to create gaps in implementation process.
- Less scope for duplication and repetition.

**Enhance Empowerment:** Through community involvement ownership and control over resources allocated to school/community and decision making process establish, which effect their lives and participation in the benefit.

**Building capacity of the community:** Community can have an opportunity to receive informal and formal training and awareness raising program, which strengthened capacity of community in the long run.
Type of Responsibilities Carried out by the Community

**Mothers’ Committee**
- Enroll children and ensure regular attendance in school
- Take care of learning materials at home and help children to practice
- Visit school and follow-up progress of children
- Organize and attend monthly meeting of mothers

**Centre/School Management Committee**
- Manage / Maintain / Repair school house and surrounding atmosphere.
- Enroll 100% children with addressing all disparities.
- Dialogue with family and school to reduce absenteeism and follow-up action.
- Ensure / arrange co-curricular activities and observe different national/international days / events.
- Supervise school activities and share/disseminate school related information
- Recruit teacher and assess (only in NGO School) their performance.
- Attend regular meeting and training when arranged.

**Union Education Development Committee (UEDC)**
- Organize enrollment campaign
- Conduct survey to identify school age children and follow-up action.
- Maintain liaison with education authorities including SLIP and UPEP.
- Organize and attend all national events, meetings and trainings on Right to Education
- Prepare union level implementation plan with follow-up action.
Ways of Ensuring Effective Community Engagement

RDC of “Cornell university” came up with four recommendation to ensure participation. These are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Nature of participation</th>
<th>Proposed task / Direction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Decision Making</td>
<td>• Transfer responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Implementation</td>
<td>• Transfer Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluation</td>
<td>• Involve in process</td>
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<td>• Benefits</td>
<td>• Share with stakeholders</td>
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BRAC and other NGOs transfer following responsibilities to the community

- BRAC decide to establish centre / school while community placed their demand on the basis of learners survey.
- Community decide the place where centre could be established.
  - They are also responsible to repair school building.
- Community select learners and recruit teachers
- Parents decide school timing as per learners convenience.
- Community even local elites can participate in the center management committee.
  - A BRAC school / Centre run by a Management Committee (CMC) consisting of 7 (Seven) members of which at least four are women.
  - School based management decisions and its implementation responsibility given to the community, So that community feel ownership of the program at local level.

Along with this, professional supervisor, trainers and monitors are also engaged by BRAC
The Community Education Watch Group is a demand-driven community-based social audit initiative facilitated by CAMPE with a view to strengthen accountability mechanisms for creating a campaign on Enrolment, Retention and Completion (ERC) of primary education with quality.

The Community Education Watch Group was formed through a participatory process involving representatives of Union Parishad, Teachers/Teacher Unions, Parents, SMC Members, local opinion leaders, religious leaders NGOs etc.

CAMPE facilitated the whole process with the help of local implementing partner NGOs.

Expected Results:
- Community engagement strengthened and functional in facilitating and monitoring progress of Primary Education by 32 Community Watch group in 32 union benefiting at least 200,000 children.
Level of Community Voice and Accountability

Diagram 1: Voice and Accountability Model

- **Voice & Accountability established**
  - National Interventions through CAMPE and Media for Policy and Strategy changes
  - Sub-national level Interventions through PNGOs for Opinion Building and accelerating the process Implementation
  - Grassroots Interventions through Community Education Watch For Strengthen Community Voice and Ownership

**FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY**

**POLICY DECISION & RESOURCES**
Diagram 2: Types of activities at different levels for establishing Voice and Accountability

National level intervention
- Policy Dialogue
- Nation-wide Campaign
- Engagement of Media
- Meeting, Seminar, Reality

Sub-national level intervention
- Consultation for acceleration
- Public hearing
- Sharing information
- Capacity development
- Engaged local Media

Grassroots intervention
- Community Education Watch Group formation
- CRC campaign
- Capacity development of Community
- Sharing of ideas
- Consolidation of work findings

Policy and Strategy changed
# GO-NGOs Collaboration at different levels

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Networking &amp; coordination</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Consultation, dissemination and networking</td>
<td>ADVOCACY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Awareness &amp; capacity building</td>
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Challenges in Community Involvement

- Sometimes, existing policy, accountability, leadership, working space, time schedules are non-supportive to work effectively and efficiently.
- Difference in the conditions and intensives associated with participation such as staff and teachers get salary but other people are expected to volunteer their time.
- Deficiency of knowledge and skill and social power in different stakeholders.
- Political grouping influences people to be scattered, not united
- Day by day voluntary attitude is decreasing
Please consider

• Who should be your stakeholder (Age, attitude, Morality, Volunteerism, Interest etc.)

Please identify

• Needs and strategies to meet those needs
• Necessary resources required

Please Remember

• Community involvement required Volunteerism
• Community is Independent but willing
• Community people are not your staff, but associate

Please do

• Respect, believe and
• Enhance their voice

Please try to be

• Accountable to the community