

Bangladesh ECD Network: A Brief Description

1. Introduction

Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) is a forum of governmental, non-governmental and United Nations organisations and donor agencies engaged in promoting ECD in Bangladesh. The Network was formally established on 7 September 2005 with the purpose of being a forum for sharing information and experiences regarding ECD and increase cooperation among members.

2. Goal

To encourage and support the governmental, non-governmental, national and international organisations and partners and other relevant actors in their commitment and investment in ECD in Bangladesh.

3. Key Objectives

- Advocate for and support the government in preparing and implementing a national policy framework for ECD initiatives throughout the country
- Promote public awareness about the importance of ECD and provide caregivers with support and information on how to practice age-appropriate interactive care
- Strengthen ECD capacity in Bangladesh by ensuring co-ordination of ECD activities and convergence of ECD best practices among ECD partners
- Develop a knowledge base and promote an organisational culture on ECD, facilitating a common understanding of the concept of ECD and of the whole child approach underlying ECD efforts
- Support ECD partners in sharing information and research results in gaining easy access to new information and knowledge on ECD
- Develop generic guidelines for development of ECD materials and activities and promote their wide use in a coordinated and concerted effort to ensure that all young children in Bangladesh receive age-appropriate ECD care.

4. Membership

Any organisation working in promoting early learning and cognitive development in Bangladesh can be enrolled in the network. This includes organisations that:

- Work with cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child
- Advocate for early learning and cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child

- Provide training in cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child
- Develop materials for early learning and cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child
- Have expertise in the field of cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child
- Fund activities for cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child

- Conduct research in cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development of the young child.

Members' Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a network member include:

- Attend and participate in network meetings
- Contribute to information sharing on ECD activities with the network
- Build close relation with other ECD partners
- Keep liaison with the network secretariat and act as an active ECD partner when required by the network
- Advocate for the network and seek to enrol potential new members
- Support the sustainability of the network either through funding or providing voluntary assistance.

Benefits of Membership

An organisation subscribing to the Bangladesh ECD Network membership receives several benefits such as:

- Subscription to the quarterly newsletter published by Bangladesh ECD Network.
- Complimentary copies of the ECD Directory, posters, booklets, reports and other publications.
- Access to the interactive Bangladesh ECD website (www.ecd-bangladesh.net), where substantial issues can be discussed, up-to-the-minute information can be shared, expertise can be shared and participants can make sure that their projects and efforts in ECD are well designed and decrease duplication of expenditures.
- Invitation to regional meetings, seminars, BEN Annual General Meetings and workshops. There is also access to the pooled expertise of the ECD field in Bangladesh through technical assistance, responses to particular requests for information, formal and informal discussions, and written updates.

- Establish a close relation among the Network members.

Joining ECD Network

Bangladesh ECD Network invites applications for membership time to time by advertising in daily newspapers. The interested organisations can apply with filled-up prescribed forms, available in the Network Secretariat. After primary sorting the Executive Committee will consider the requests and take decision about membership.

Membership applications are considered based on above mentioned criteria for membership. No political, religious, cultural or ethnical grounds or reasons related to differences in values or beliefs are not considered in offering membership.

5. Executive Committee of BEN

The executive committee elected at the first general meeting of the ECD Network in 2005 is as follows

- Chairperson:
Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, *Director, BU-IED*
- Vice Chairperson:
Md. Nuruzzaman, *Director of Early Learning for Child Development (ELCD) Project, Bangladesh Shishu Academy*
- Member Secretary:
Mahmuda Akhter, *Head, ECDRC, BU-IED*
- Executive Committee Members:
M. Habibur Rahman, *Director, Education Section, Save the children USA*
Mohammad Mohsin, *Learning Advisor, PLAN Bangladesh*
Dr. Golam Mostafa, *Team Leader, ECD Project, UNICEF*
Tapan Kumar Das, *Programme Manager, Education, CAMPE*
Hasena Afroj, *Succeed-TA Team Leader, FIVDB*
Dr. M. Quamrul Hasan, *Child Health Specialist, Apollo Hospital*

Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

The responsibilities of the committee include:

- Mobilise resources for the Network activities, prepare annual budgets for the network and ensure budget accountability
- Identify, plan and organise relevant network activities in line with objectives and policies of the Network development at the general meeting of Network members.

- Prepare and distribute annual network activity plan
- Approve new membership
- Ensure that the network directory and website is updated on a regular basis
- Supervise secretariat in performing its duties
- Delegate required network tasks to network members
- Represent the network domestically and internationally according to availability of funds
- Establish advisory and consultation structures and mechanisms, specially regarding ECD policy and prepare development and potential capacity building.

6. Secretariat of ECD Network

A secretariat has been established to support the network under the supervision of the Executive Committee. The secretariat is located at the Early Childhood Development Resource Centre (ECDRC) of BRAC University Institute of Educational Development (BU-IED). The centre's mandate of research, training, technical assistance and policy dialogue fits in well with the purpose of the ECD Network

Responsibilities of the Secretariat

The responsibilities of the secretariat include:

- Support the Executive Committee in its work
- Perform all administrative duties of the network including servicing members, maintaining and updating ECD Network Directory and the website and publishing the ECD newsletter
- Plan and organise network activities according to the annual activity plan.