

Bangladesh National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Secondary and Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education is responsible for defining national policies in higher education. In addition, the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh implements government policies on behalf of the Ministry of Education, especially in the area of resource allocation among public higher education institutions (<http://www.ugc.gov.bd/en>).

Higher Education Policy Documents

- The approved Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Bangladesh (2017- 2030) is the main official document defining the national higher education strategy. (Waiting for Government’s formal launching)
- The National Education Policy (2010).
- 7th Five Year Plan – Education Chapter

Equity Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- “To achieve excellence in higher education comparable to global standards; to establish equity and guarantee access to higher education by anyone qualified to pursue it, and to prepare the learners as ideal citizens” (UGC forthcoming, p. 36).
- “Initiative will be taken to provide scholarships to poor and meritorious students from a fund created through the contribution of the authority, donations of citizens and former students.” (National Education Policy, p. 55)
- “The Access, Dropout and Equity Issue: Despite the impressive progress made in the education sector, there are still issues and challenges that impede human capital formation. In terms of enrolment, the poor are lagging behind, especially at the secondary level.” (7th Five Year Plan, p. 584)
- “In order to address the issues at the secondary and higher levels, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) has always focused on specific actions to raising the quality of education and improving equity and access in secondary and higher education through various continuous strategies.” (7th Five Year Plan, p. 592)
- “These universities cannot discriminate students in respect of race, religion, caste, socio-economic conditions and physical disabilities. Such institutions will not be established and conducted for profiteering. They cannot advocate anything against our freedom, spirit of war of liberation and Bengali culture and must refrain from doing anything of that kind.” (National Education Policy 2010, p. 24)

- “After successful completion of secondary education from different streams, students will be allowed to take up higher study according to their merit, interests and aptitudes.” (National Education Policy 2010, p. 23)

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Low-income students
- Students with disability
- Meritorious Students from disadvantaged families
- Female students

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

- No

Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education?

- No

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

What are the main financial instruments to promote equity?

- Stipends for low-income students (Prime Ministers Education Support Trust Fund Stipends)
- Stipends for female students

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

What are the main non-monetary instruments to promote equity?

- “These universities cannot discriminate students in respect of race, religion, caste, socio-economic conditions and physical disabilities. Such institutions will not be established and conducted for profiteering. They cannot advocate anything against our freedom, spirit of war of liberation and Bengali culture and must refrain from doing anything of that kind.” (National Education Policy 2010, p. 24)
- Encourage access to higher education from all ethnic and minority groups of people by placing admission quotas in universities and other higher education institutions.

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Amount / amount per beneficiary – in fiscal year 2014 -15, the total amount of funds from the Prime Minister’s Education Support Trust fund for tertiary education given as stipends was BDT 1140 million. This assistance is provided on a regular basis.
- Proportion of higher education budget – Not available
- Private universities and colleges exempt tuition fees and provide stipends to deserving students from economically disadvantaged families. However, the data on the exempted amount of such assistance are not readily available.

Quality Assurance

Do the quality assurance criteria take equity elements into consideration? In what way?
- No.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of equity promotion measures?
 - Concerned government agencies
- What instruments, methods and data are in place to carry out the monitoring and evaluation activities?
 - No defined instruments or specific data available.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Bangladesh does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Sources

SABER Country Report: Bangladesh, *World Bank Group* 2017

http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/CountryReports/TEd/SABER_Tertiary_Bangladesh_CR2017_preliminary.pdf

Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Bangladesh: 2018 – 2030; *University Grants Commission* <http://www.ugc.gov.bd/en>

University of Dhaka

http://www.du.ac.bd/footer_widget/footer_widget_item/financial_aid

National Education Policy:

http://old.moedu.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=338&Itemid=416

7th Five-year plan:

http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/wpcontent/uploads/2015/11/7FYP_after-NEC_11_11_2015.pdf