Upazilas as champions of change in English language teaching and learning!

Bangladesh is aiming towards 'Digital Bangladesh' by 2021, and becoming a middle income country by 2030. Education will play a pivotal role in realising this goal, as it depends on the emerging youth population. We all know the language of digital technologies is English, and, having sound expertise in English, can bring both economic and social advancement.
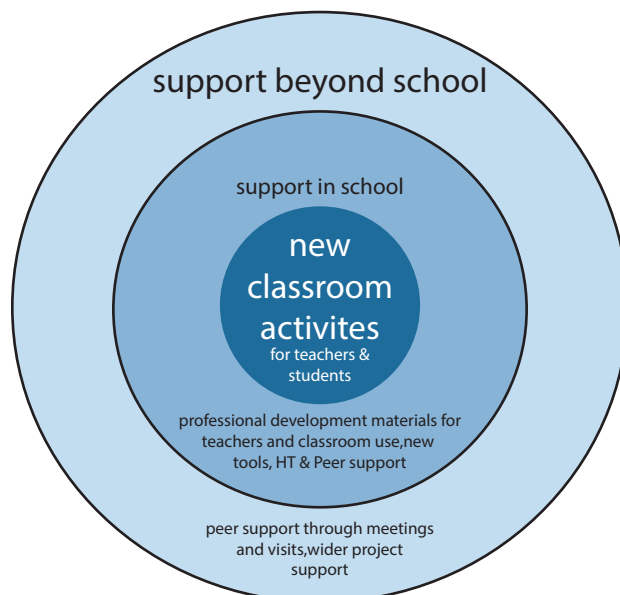
To support and ensure quality education, responsibilities fall on the shoulders of Education Officials. An Upazila can attain remarkable results in the education system, if changes are adopted to implement and sustain effective Teacher Professional Development (TPD).

Effective, workable strategies for enriching TPD can be a major asset to classrooms, schools and an entire Upazila. English in Action (EIA), a project funded by the UK Government and implemented by the Government of Bangladesh, has demonstrated effective, sustainable and easy to implement approaches towards effective TPD practices.

Teachers make changes in the classroom, head teachers support the school environment to be student and learning friendly, and Upazila Education Officials steer and support these changes to make the entire Upazila a place for future generations to learn and grow.

But what drives these changes?

- New classroom activities: in class, teachers use techniques and activities with students from EIA TPD videos and Teacher Guide, with classroom audios in support
- Support in school: teachers use EIA TPD materials and plan classroom use, teachers discuss together and observe classes, head teachers promote and monitor
- Support beyond school: teachers discuss experiences of TPD activities with other teachers at meetings and in school visits, Education Officials support and monitor

support beyond school

support in school

new classroom activites
for teachers & students

professional development materials for teachers and classroom use,new tools, HT & Peer support

peer support through meetings and visits,wider project support

EIA model of School Based Teacher Development

In many Upazilas, Education Officials, in collaboration with EIA, are beginning to take the lead in bringing these experiences to teachers. Let us find out what is happening…..

Across all Divisions, Upazila Education Teams are finding ways to adopt EIA TPD approaches and to promote the use of EIA activities and resources to strengthen classroom practice. Each Upazila is different and will find its own way that best fits with its context and the needs of its teachers. Here are examples of what some Upazila Education Teams are doing to spread EIA materials into non-intervention schools and to provide follow-up TPD support to all teachers who have EIA materials.

New classroom activities

Education Officials are ………

▸ Copying EIA TPD videos and audios on to SD cards for all Head Teachers and distributing at monthly Upazila meetings

▸ Nominating shops in the Upazila bazar where interested English Teachers can copy EIA materials onto SD card

Education Officials are encouraging……..

▸ All schools in the Upazila to use SLIP fund to purchase speakers to play classroom audios

Support in school

Education Officials are ………

▸ Observing classes, drawing on the EIA Implementation Guide as a tool

Education Officials are encouraging……..

▸ Head Teachers to use session plans from the EIA In-School Support Guide as a tool for their fortnightly whole school teacher meetings

▸ Teachers to video each other's classes and discuss new activities being tried

Support beyond school

Education Officials are ………

▸ Organising and funding dedicated follow-up meetings led by EIA Teacher Facilitators

▸ Integrating EIA TPD materials and videos into needs-based sub-cluster manual

▸ Integrating and discussing EIA TPD activities in needs-based sub-cluster meetings

▸ Using EIA Teacher Facilitators and Teachers to model EIA classroom activities in needs-based sub-cluster meetings

▸ Organising EIA Teacher Facilitators to spend a day per month visiting English classes at nearby schools

▸ Using monthly Head Teacher meetings to promote and share progress on implementing changes in English teaching and learning

▸ Setting up new cluster-based Head Teacher meetings to discuss progress on implementing changes in English teaching and learning

▸ Creating a pool of English resource persons from EIA Teacher Facilitators and Teachers to support teacher networks

▸ Supporting English language forums and clubs for groups of nearby schools

Education Officials are encouraging……..

▸ Head Teachers and EIA Teacher Facilitators to observe classes together

If classroom practices are to change and sustain, an appropriate balance of the above and similar activities is needed. The materials and technologies are just a starting point; professional development activities in the classroom and ongoing teacher support are essential.
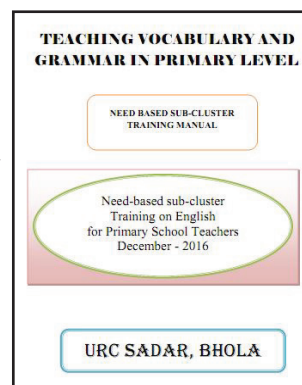
Case Studies

Four case studies follow which show how four Upazilas are getting these to work together in four very different ways.

Case Study 1:
Bhola Sadar – Transformed NBSCT with EIA TFs!

Upazila Resource Centre Instructor, Anowar Hossain, has taken the initiative to incorporate EIA materials, such as teaching vocabulary and grammar, into the needs-based sub-cluster manual. Anowar has done this with the help of EIA Teacher Facilitators, and has also included links to EIA audio materials. He then gathered all the needs-based sub-cluster trainers to brief them about the new manual and asked two EIA Teacher Facilitators to demonstrate activities from the manual in front of the others. It was found that, in most cases, the activities and manual supported a very successful TPD day and were very well received by teachers across the Upazila. His initiative has motivated others! We know this, as Anowar has now been asked to share the manual with Bauphal Upazila.

TEACHING VOCABULARY AND
GRAMMAR IN PRIMARY LEVEL

NEED BASED SUB-CLUSTER
TRAINING MANUAL

Need-based sub-cluster
Training on English
for Primary School Teachers
December - 2016

URC SADAR, BHOLA

Case Study 2: Madhobpur – Whole Upazila orientation to EIA!

In January 2017, Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Upazila Education Officer, was observing an EIA Initial Teacher Orientation. Thinking in the training hall, as it was taking place, he decided that he wanted to bring the remaining 100 schools of his Upazila under EIA. He wanted them to have the EIA materials and orientation as well. But how could this happen?! Getting hold of the EIA SD cards and Teacher Guides was not so difficult, but orientation was still needed. Md. Siddiqur Rahman remembered the local EIA Teacher Facilitators, and he immediately set about arranging teacher orientations for the remaining schools to be facilitated by these EIA Teacher Facilitators. In this way, Md. Siddiqur Rahman has ensured that all schools have started their journey, supported by EIA approaches.

Case Study 3: Keranigonj – EIA follow up for all schools!

EIA was working in 63 out of 128 schools. Seeing big changes among the students in EIA intervention schools, the other 65 schools wanted to join in EIA and asked for EIA materials and orientation. In December 2015, EIA organized a one-day orientation for 195 teachers from these schools, who received a SD card with EIA audio visual materials and Teacher Guide, and were introduced to techniques and activities from EIA. Everyone felt that this was agreat start, but not enough! And so in 2016, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Upazila Chairman and Education Officials orgnized a follow up day for all English teachers in the Upazila, with EIA as technical support. More are planned.

Case Study 4:
Panchagarh Sadar – EIA materials and support available everywhere!

EIA AV materials are reaching teachers' hands, and teachers are using audio materials in their classroom and developing themselves by watching TPD videos and practicing 'English Language for Teachers' throughout theUpazila. This has been made possible by the Upazila Education Officer, Upazila Resource Centre Instructor and EIA Teacher Facilitators working together to help primary teachers realize the importance of EIA activities and materials for better teaching and learning. They identified one teacher of the Upazila, who has a mobile accessories shop, where teachers can copy EIA AV materials on to SD cards. The Upazila Education Team also know that materials and support work hand in hand! Therefore, they have embedded EIA activities and materials in needs based sub cluster meetings, curriculum dissemination, leadership and other professional development activities.

What People Are Saying!

Government of Bangladesh education leaders are fully endorsing and supporting these initiatives.

"*I want to encourage Upazila Education Officials and Head Teachers to use EIA-promoted approaches in English and other subjects too.*" - **Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education**

"*It is our request to know how EIA can be integrated and is being integrated into secondary practice.*"
- **Director General and Director Secondary, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education**

"*EIA helps the quality of teaching and learning, and there are visible differences in the classroom; EIA helps teachers to help each other and student attendance and enjoyment increases.*" - **Divisional Director**
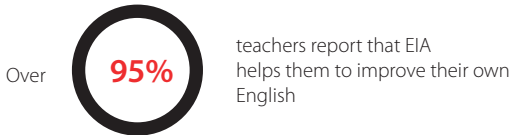
"*EIA has created a pool of good English language teaching practitioners at Upazila level, and they can become mentors and provide support to new teachers across each Upazila.*" - **District Education Officer**

Results from EIA Intervention

When schools are involved in EIA, it has been shown to make a profound difference to how teachers teach and students learn. Just as noteworthy is the fact that the improvements have been maintained when the number of teachers supported by the project has increased from hundreds to thousands.
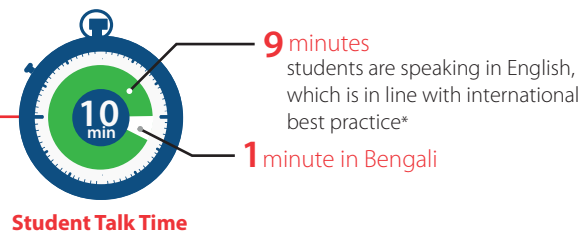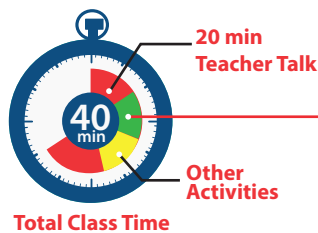
The results speak for themselves!

Teachers feel more confident

Over **95%** — teachers report that EIA helps them to improve their own English

Over **90%** — teachers report that EIA has an impact on the way they teach

Students learn more

Over **70%** — Children in Primary can now communicate at a besic level in English

Over **80%** — Children in Secondary can now communicate at a besic level in English, measured against an international scale

Teachers are changing their practice

40 min Total Class Time
- **20 min Teacher Talk**
- **Other Activities**

10 min Student Talk Time
- **9** minutes students are speaking in English, which is in line with international best practice*
- **1** minute in Bengali

Bangladesh is committed towards the global Sustainable Development Goal 4: To ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning. If Upazilas and schools under the guidance of Upazila Education Teams take steps to adopt the examples and practices showcased by EIA, not only will the learning outcomes of children improve, but strides will be taken towards achieving this Goal!

"English in Action (EIA) is a UK Government funded programme implemented by the Government of Bangladesh and managed by Cambridge Education, a member of Mott MacDonald."

UKaid
from the British people

ENGLISH in ACTION

M M CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION

The Open University

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*Trinity College London's Graded Examinations in Spoken English