

English in Action, Implementation Phase, Bangladesh

Assignment	Assistance in a 9-year programme that will equip up to 30 million Bangladeshis with English language skills to allow them to participate more effectively in economic activities.
Client	Government of Bangladesh
Financing Agency	Department for International Development (UK)
Partners	BBC World Service Trust (UK), Open University (UK), Open Learning Systems Educational Trust (South Africa)
Composition of Team	<p><i>BMB Mott MacDonald</i>: Project Director, Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader</p> <p><i>Partner(s)</i>: English Language Materials Development and Interactive Radio Development Specialist (OLSET), TV Programme Design and Development Specialist (BBC WST), Head of Professional Development and Teacher Training (OU)</p>
Period of Assignment	From May 2008 to May 2017 Staff months: BMB Mott MacDonald: 417; Partner(s): 194
Contract value	BMB Mott MacDonald: € 7,963,000 Partner(s): € 64,560,000
Background	In the Bangladesh education system, the English language has been neglected, despite the fact that it is a compulsory subject on the school curriculum, and it is the most commonly failed examination subject at the secondary certificate level. To add to this problem, there is little visual, spoken or written English available to reinforce learning, especially outside of Dhaka. There is a critical shortage of skilled English teachers. Comparatively few people in Bangladesh under fifty are confident and fluent English speakers. This national bilingual deficit is regarded, both by government and development partners, as a constraint to economic development, and the English in Action (EIA) project has been designed to address this constraint.
Description of project	<p>The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has requested DFID's assistance in reversing the situation described above. DFID funded two phases of the English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP-1997 to 2001), but in a huge unitary education system, this resulted in insufficient impact. The problem has to be addressed at scale through a project that will have reach and impact and which for this reason warrants significant funding.</p> <p>The goal of the project is to contribute to the economic growth of Bangladesh by providing English language as a tool for better access to the economy. The purpose is to increase significantly the number of people able to communicate in English, to levels that enable them to participate fully in economic and social activity and opportunities. The target group of the project is both the present and the future workforce of</p>

Bangladesh across age, sexes and socio-economic groups. The beneficiaries will be both male and female adults in urban and rural communities, school age children, especially those at primary level and families seeking to migrate, to ensure improved prospects. The project will provide new skills to a minimum of one million adults and eventually most of the thirty million school age children.

Services provided

Phase One will realize an operational and costed plan indicating how the pilot initiatives developed during the phase will be taken to scale. These initiatives will include: high-impact English courses for primary and secondary schooling using radio support in the classroom; TV programmes aiming to highlight the importance of English in the Bangladesh context and promote a greater understanding of the UK; a series of innovative IT initiatives; and establishment of a rigorous monitoring, research and evaluation framework to monitor the development of the project and measure its impact.

Phase Two will take the gains of the inception phase to scale, introduce an effective methodology for English language teachers training, and develop the institutional capacity to deliver future programmes and courses. The continued airing of successful radio and TV programmes will contribute to a changed perception towards learning English, and the development of an English Language Teaching policy for the Government of Bangladesh.

Phase Three will be developed around the institutionalization of the project within the government and civil society education systems. This will result in a feasible and functional model of effective English language teaching through media and outreach, adopted by the government system, private sector and civil society.