

# ***Project Completion Report***

## **Championing Play Project**

15<sup>th</sup> July 2023 – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023

## **Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)**

### **Reporting Team**

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### **Report Reviewed by**

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Save the Children and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) are jointly implementing a program titled Championing Play. The program supports the physical and mental development of children through quality play-based activities for children aged 0-6 years. One of the responsibilities of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) is to implement advocacy initiatives to spread the achievements and results of this program at the national level, as well as to inspect the progress of learning through play activities in selected 25 private schools in the Dhaka urban area.

CAMPE has also implemented specific activities at the national level to strengthen the Learning through Play Approach.

### **Goal of the project**

Improved learning and wellbeing outcomes for children affected by COVID-19 (0-6 years) through increased application (or experience) of Learning through quality play approach along with their caregivers for ensuring children's holistic development.

### **Major objectives**

- Increased access of early stimulation and playful learning environment at home and at the community level for children aged 0-5 including children with disabilities;
- Increased availability and accessibility, as well as encourage uptake of play materials for children aged 5-6 including children with disabilities at schools;
- Government officials and relevant stakeholders are proactively engaged in efforts to build the capacity of primary school teachers to use effectively Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) activities and Play materials for incorporating Learning through Play approach.

The project has directly worked with 1100 students of nursery and play grade under 25 kindergarten schools of Dhaka City and 75 teachers of those schools. Under these project 50 magic bags has provided to the urban schools for children as they can play in their classroom.

To achieve the 3<sup>rd</sup> outcomes of the project CAMPE has played an advocacy role through the following outcome based activities:

## Outcome wise Major Programmatic achievement

### Outcome 3

Government officials and relevant stakeholders are proactively engaged in efforts to build the capacity of primary school teachers to use effectively Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) activities and Play materials for incorporating Learning

### Meeting with NGO/INGOs on Importance of Learning through Play

On 14 September 2023, Save the Children and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) were jointly organized a discussion meeting on Learning through Play approach under Championing Play project at the DNET conference room, with the support of LEGO Foundation. The meeting was moderated by Tapon Kumar Das, Deputy Director of CAMPE.



A total of 31 participants including representatives from UNICEF, BRAC, Islamic Relief Bangladesh, Phulki, Inner Force, FH Association, Sisimpur, ICDDR,b, VERC, Plan International Bangladesh, EDUCO Bangladesh, Caritas Bangladesh, FIVDB, Aporajeyo Bangladesh, GSS, Friendship, GCFIL, USPT, DAM and CAMPE staff were participated and contributed in the meeting.

Tapon Kumar Das, Deputy Director of CAMPE, warmly greeted to all and also participants introduced themselves from the very beginning of the program. Then the program started with PowerPoint presentation and sharing experience and proposal of the participants.

Welcoming the guests and other participants in the meeting, Mr. Tapon Kumar Das emphasized the importance of learning through play, introduced the Championing Play project and highlighted the importance of the project's implementation process and the experiences. He also encouraged suggestions for the future direction/steps in expanding this project.



Rehnuma Akhtar, project manager of Championing Play project (Save the Children), presented a PowerPoint presentation about the Championing Play project. Her presentation covered project Introduction, Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities etc. Md. Ariful Islam, Project coordinator of Championing Play project (CAMPE), he also shared the project intervention in 25 urban schools under the project.

Honorable chair Mohammad Mohsin, Member of Education Watch, emphasized the importance of ensuring the play materials for children are not harmful. He stated that in society, there is not enough awareness

about using play materials to promote the early development of children, and therefore, he praised the initiative and expressed his opinions about the project's sustainability and its future positive impact.

Jacob Baroi, Executive Director of USPT, he emphasized the importance of evidence based advocacy. He requested to provide play materials (Magic Bag) to NGOs through Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN).

Biplob Chandra Dey, Project Manager of VERC, said that sometimes teachers don't allow play materials because they think that it will distract children from education. So teachers should be trained about the benefits of learning through play. He suggested that every NGO can adopt the learning through play activity and they can share about their activity by organizing a discussion meeting in future. By doing so, this initiative can spread in a wide range.

During the event, representatives from NGOs and INGOs, all stated that learning through play is an extremely crucial method for overall child development. They stressed the need to raise awareness nationally about the importance of learning through play. They also recommended to upload video content from each training session on play material into social platforms to ensure that the learning through play approach continues even after the project's completion. They emphasized the urgency of soliciting children's opinions and providing training to both mothers and fathers alongside affordable play materials for children. They further noted that research-based work can help to get a fruitful result of learning through play approach.

In the closing statement at the meeting, Dr. Jena Hamadani, scientist, ICDDR, thanked Save the Children and CAMPE for organizing the meeting. She stressed the importance of motivating children in every activity, promoting education through cooperation rather than competition, and providing education on environmental awareness alongside education.

## Meeting with Department of Women Affairs on Learning through Play Approach

Save the Children and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) were jointly organized a discussion meeting on September 11, 2023, with the support of LEGO Foundation. It was held at the conference room of Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWCA).



The meeting was attended by the government officials from the Department of Women Affairs (Daycare Centre). Farida Parveen, Director-General of the Department of Women Affairs (DWA), was the chief guest and Monowara Ishrat, Director of the Women Affairs Department, was a special guest at the event. During the discussion meeting, Sabnam Mostari, the project director of the Women Affairs Department, presided over the meeting. The meeting was moderated by Ms. Kaniz Tazia, Assistant Director of DWA (Daycare Centre). The main purpose of this program was emphasizing the importance of "Learning through Play" at national level and taking recommendations for expanding this for ensuring children's holistic development.

Honorable chief guest warmly greeted to all and also participants introduced themselves from the very beginning of the program. Mr. Mohammad Mahiuddin Ahmed, the Deputy Director of Daycare center, delivered the welcome speech, and Ms. Meherunnahar Shapna, Advisor-Education, Save the Children, extended her greetings to all of them. After that Rehnuma Akhtar, project manager of Save the Children, presented a PowerPoint presentation about the Championing Play project. Her presentation covered project Introduction, Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities etc.

Ms. Farida Parveen, expressed gratitude to Save the Children and CAMPE for taking such kind of initiative. She also mentioned that the activities of this project are similar to their Daycare Center's activity. She said that learning through play is an extremely important approach, especially for a child's holistic development. Through play, children engage with the people, places and objects around them to form their understanding of the world and how they fit into it. Play helps to develop a child's knowledge and skills, and prepares them for a lifetime of learning both in school and beyond. Moreover, she requested to provide play materials (Magic Bag) to all the daycare centre of DWA and conduct training session on using play materials effectively to all daycare centre teachers.

Ms. Sabnam Mostari, the project director of Department of Women Affairs, presented documentation on the DWA (Daycare Centre) activity. She said that children are naturally curious about the world around them. They experience and come to understand the world and their place in it through play. She appreciated the initiative.

Ms. Meherunnahar Swapna, Advisor-Education, Save the Children, said that Learning through play can build on everyday activities in the home and make use of common household items such as a butterfly can easily make with paper.

At the end of the discussion, two Magic Bags and a pen drive containing video clips are transferred from the project to the Director General of DWA, and Save the Children's representatives reassured that Magic Bags will be supplied to the Daycare centers gradually,



along with arrangements for training the teachers at the Daycare Centers. Ms. Manwara Ishrat, Director of the DWA, delivered the concluding speech.

## Roundtable Discussion on Importance of Learning through Play for Child Development

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) & Samakal has jointly organized a Roundtable discussion in collaboration with Save the Children on 5 October 2023 at the conference room of Samakal. The roundtable discussion focusing on the importance of Learning through Play for Child Development. Children will play and learn through play. For this, playing-friendly education system should be developed for child development. Appropriate playing environment should be ensured in educational institutions through the National Education Curriculum. Speakers gave their opinion at the round table meeting on the importance of learning through play in the development of children at the conference room of Samakal.



In the round table meeting project director of Save the Children Shahin Islam said in the main article, as part of the integrated care and development of children, the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and Save the Children are jointly implementing a program called Championing Play with the support of Logo Foundation. Under this, the government school of Saghata Upazila of Gaibandha, some centers at the community level and some private schools of Dhaka have been provided learning materials for children aged 0-6 years and a favorable environment for plays has been created. As well as, public-private partners, local governments, local education authorities and head teachers have been included in this program at the national level. Bangladesh Shishu Academy is also involved in this program.

At the round table meeting, the advisor of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and the Chairperson of Bangladesh ECD Network Dr. Manzoor Ahmed said, "We have no disagreement about the play and welfare of children." But think about a formal and organizational system for all children. 10 years ago, the government's child policy included playing. It must be executed. Pre-primary is being made for two years instead of one year. But are there still proven play-based learning strategies? Children's education should be given importance in all aspects of learning through play."

Tapan Kumar Das, Deputy Director of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) said, "Play-based education programs are ongoing in different countries of the world. In our country, some institutions like BRAC, Save the Children, Dhaka Ahsania Mission have included dance, singing and sports in child-based education programs. A similar program has been launched in the pre-primary as well. In this curriculum, the child's development will begin through play, but in reality, the opposite picture prevails. Check the status of Kindergarten schools. The pressure of children's education in these educational institutions is very high. As a result, parents are also rushing to the coaching center with their children. Bangladesh Shishu Academy must be proactive in transitioning from this situation."





Member of Education Watch Principal Kazi Faruq Ahmed said, "Boys and girls could play outside earlier. But now their sports and paintings have become confined and dependent on technology. Because there is not enough field to play. Parents also see play as play. Do not want to accept the relationship of education with this. We have to come out of this trend of separating sports and education."

Anjir Liton, director general of Shishu Academy said, "The role of media in child development is huge. Children's issues should be promoted seriously in the media. Sadly, children's development issues are not given much importance in our media." Giving an example, he said, "On the occasion of Child Rights Week, a seven-day program is going on in Shishu Academy. More than four hundred children are attending daily and programs are being presided over and conducted by them. Various play materials are kept. But these did not come in any media. Many parents don't know, what are the facilities for children in Shishu Academy? He also said that we can do a campaign for children named Cholo Kheli. And the campaign will be run jointly with the collaboration of Bangladesh Shishu Academy, BEN, Save the Children and CAMPE. Save the Children can take the main lead of the campaign. "

Samakal Planning Editor Farooq Wasif said, "Children learn socialization while playing. They learn to argue about different issues while fighting with each other. Their primary education is developed through play. Parents should understand how much we want to pay for the child. We have to make our educational institutions child-friendly."

The Executive Director of Sesame Workshop Mohammad Shah Alam said, "The child's work is playing, he will play." We have to give them security. The Play can be divided into two parts. One being, free play; the other is Play in the Rules. And the child comes into the rules when he grows up. Child development will be increased as much they involved in."

Mountaineer Nishat Majumdar said that children learn by playing and watching. In him, compassion, cooperation and the desire to dream begin with seeing. And the mind changes through play. It is our responsibility to build this system of education for children.

Director of Bangla Academy and poet Selina Hossain, Director of Education and Research Institute of Dhaka University Abdul Halim, TDI Director Prof. Nazmul Haque, Education Watch Member Dr. M Ehsanur Rahman, Program Head of BRAC Education Program Prafulla Chandra Burman, Executive Director of Jabarang Kalyan Samiti Mathura Vikas Tripura, Member of Abhiyaan Council and Founder Managing Director of Chalpadi Zerin Mahmud, Institute of Child and Human Development Executive Director Mahmuda Akhtar, Mohammadpur Thana Education Officer Momtaz Begum, Kindergarten School and College Association Secretary General MA Mannan Monir, Government Primary Teachers Association General Secretary Abul Kashem and parents of various schools were present.

## Meeting with Govt. and non govt. Stakeholders on importance of Learning through Play

On October 12, 2023, at 10:00 am, Save the Children and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) were jointly organized a discussion meeting on “Championing Play project: Learning through Play approach” at the YWCA of Bangladesh with the support of LEGO Foundation. The event was chaired by Dr. Manjoor Ahmed, Advisor to the CAMPE Council and Chairperson of the Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN).



A total of 50 participants including representatives from Ministry of Women Affairs, Bangladesh ECD Network, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Pathshala Nobodoy Housing, Jamgora School of HOPE, Bidyaniketon Model School, Radian Public School, Confidence Memorial High School, HOPE Worldwide Bangladesh, EDUCO Bangladesh ESDO, Alok Shikkhaloy, Dhaka Real School, Dhaka Ideal Cadet School, Dhanmondi Kochikontho High School, Medhakunjo Model School, Lotus National School, Mission Polly School, Dhaka Mission School, Pole-Star School, Mohammadpur Laboratory High School, Sher-E-Bangla Ideal School, Shamsun Nahar Chowdhury International School, Active Junior School, Dhaka Pre-Laboratory High School, , Marygold International School, Morning Bell Junior High School, Popular International School, Ha-mim Model School, Preparatory Child Haven School, National Model Institute, Fulkuri Kindergarten School, Mission International College,



Staff from CAMPE and Save the Children were present at the meeting.

### Objectives:

1. The goal is to involve government officials and school teachers in enhancing their capacity to execute Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) activities while effectively incorporating the Learning through Play approach.
2. To spread the ideas at national level so that it creates a positive impact on the children’s early childhood development.

In the beginning of the program, Tapon Kumar Das, the Deputy Director of CAMPE, warmly greeted to all. After that A.K.M. Rashidur Rahman, Manager-Education from Save the Children delivered the PowerPoint presentation and Mostafa Moin Ur Rahman Senior Officer from Save the Children, also added his field experience in Gaibandha where the main project area is located. They shared their learning, strengths of the project and opportunity ahead as well as way forward to scale-up the initiatives.

Tapon Kumar Das, Deputy Director of CAMPE, said play is an important part of a child’s early development. He added, we can make playing materials with our own resources. He said that we need to start “Cholo Kheli” campaign and spread the Learning through playing approach in a wide range for a better development of children.

Jyoti F. Gomej, Advisor, CAMPE, said that an educational training should provide to all the primary school teachers. He urged that all the teachers should come forward to scale-up the initiative.



Prof. Shafi Ahmed, Jahangirnagar University and a member of Education Watch, said that maximum guardians don't know about the benefits of play-based learning. Some think that playing is a waste of time and it hampers the academic education of their child. So, he emphasized that an orientation programme should arrange for guardians. Besides, training for teachers is also very important, he added.

Dr. Manjoor Ahmed, Chairperson of Bangladesh ECD Network and Advisor of CAMPE Council, praised the initiative and said that, this initiative should start at the Madrasa as well. "Play helps us learn. Play helps us cope. Play helps us socialize", said Md. Mohsin, member of Education Watch. He also added, to create a safe area where children can play freely, put some simple toys and objects where they can see and reach them, and then let their curiosity and creativity take over.

Shahana Akter, Assistant Director of Department of Women Affairs, emphasized not to pressurize students to read too much. She also added, teacher plays a vital role to protect children against drug use by giving them the facts before they're in a risky situation.

Teachers from 27 schools shared their opinions and delivered their proposal. On behalf of every school attended at the event, M. A. Manan Monir, Head Teacher from Dhaka Ideal Cadet School, he emphasized the necessity of a projector and proposed to provide projectors in school. Shimu Akhter, teacher from Alok Shikkaloy marked the attention of Save the Children with saying that her school has a playground to play but no playing materials for children. Teachers also shared the positive impact of their schools which were generated from the distribution of Magic Bag initiative. These are;

- a) Increased socialization among children.
- b) Developed counting skills.
- c) Learned different types of colors.
- d) Increased interest in going to school.

At the end of this event, Tapon Kumar Das, the Deputy Director of CAMPE, declared that if the teacher wants CAMPE will organize a training programme on "Learning through Playing" for them. After saying that, Mr. Das concluded the meeting.

## **Lessons Learnt from the project**

- Engagement of government officials and authorities can provide required visibility and better acceptance for the program
- Use of age-appropriate play materials increased the participation and engagement of participants in program activities;
- Different and unique types of learning/play materials attracted the children and their caregivers;
- A mass home-based approach was an effective strategy for reaching the target population and achieving project goals;

With an aim to scale up and sustain the Learning through Play model CAMPE closely worked with the government education department at the central level and organized several sharing meetings at the National level with the education stakeholders and policymakers. Championing Play project made collaboration with national and international actors and networks to promote the importance of Learning through Play approach.