

## Accessible learning materials for students with visual impairments

Bangladesh – YPSA (Young Power in Social Action)

### SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Young Power in Social Action is an organization employing nearly 2,000 people and 32 persons with disabilities. In this specific project, 80% are persons with disabilities. It was initiated in cooperation with Access to information (a2i) under the Prime Minister Office, the Government of Bangladesh, the DAISY Consortium, the Accessible Book Consortium, the World Intellectual Property Organization, and the Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments to produce and distribute digital multimedia books, fully accessible e-books, and digital Braille books.

*“Accessible books are a dream came true.”*

—Mr. Vashkar Bhattacharjee, GAATES Bangladesh

### FACTS & FIGURES

- 155 schoolbooks have been converted to multimedia books, available as DAISY text and audio books, digital Braille, and accessible e-books.
- Through the provision of accessible learning materials, about 100,000 students with visual impairments and learning disabilities will be able to improve their literacy.
- In each of 2015 and 2016, some 10,000 students with visual impairments will receive accessible books.

### PROBLEMS TARGETED

The World Health Organization notes that about 4 million people in Bangladesh are visually impaired, but they are normally disadvantaged due to lack of adequate and fully accessible materials. Even more, people with disabilities in Bangladesh are predominantly poor and are not able to afford assistive devices or materials to participate in the education system in a fully inclusive way.

## SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

In preparing the project, planning meetings were held with DPO groups and student with disabilities to identify problems, required books, and format. The project converts textbooks from school classes 1 to 10 into DAISY digital multimedia format, and the contents can then again be converted into DAISY full text/full audio textbooks, Braille, and accessible e-books. The digital textbooks are accessible to all, including students with visual, print, and/or learning disabilities. The process is cost effective, less time consuming than traditional methods, and universally designed so that all children can have easy access to these reading materials all over the country. Digital talking books are for anyone who needs accessible information and who loves to read. Readers can play the audio and display and highlight the corresponding text simultaneously.

## OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Around 100,000 students with visual and learning disabilities have been equipped with materials to date. YPSA has many development partners and an excellent network at the national and international level. Currently, the organization is working for and with an estimated 9 million disadvantaged and vulnerable people; and to ensure community ownership of its project activities, disadvantage groups are involved in the planning, implementation, and monitoring process. To ensure the sustainability, YPSA will match these various groups with other ongoing YPSA projects so that they can continue to be supported beyond the project period.



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