

Quarterly NEWSLETTER

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In This Issue

- Education in Crisis: When Systems Strain, Children Pay the Cost
- Recruitment & Youth Mobilization Updates
- Classrooms Rising Amid Challenges
- Alumni Leading Shifts: Creating Impact Through Community Ownership
- Partnerships & Resource Mobilization Updates

In the time of
POLY-CRISIS,
EDUCATION
is the **HOPE**.

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EDUCATION IN CRISIS

WHEN SYSTEMS STRAIN, CHILDREN PAY THE COST

Bangladesh's development sector is facing a funding squeeze of historic proportions. The sudden closure of most USAID programs in 2025—worth an estimated US\$700 million—has disrupted projects and left over 50,000 professionals jobless (Anadolu Agency, 2025; The Daily Star, 2025). This shift aligns with broader global trends: official development assistance (ODA) is projected to fall significantly in 2025 as donor priorities shift and fiscal pressures mount (OECD, 2025; Donor Tracker, 2025). For Bangladesh, this contraction narrows critical pipelines that have long supported education, health, and social protection.

The impact on children is immediate and severe. In Cox's Bazar, funding gaps are forcing the closure of learning centers, leaving nearly 300,000 Rohingya children at risk of losing education (Save the Children, 2025; UNICEF, 2025). Parallel cuts to food rations are worsening malnutrition, undermining children's ability to learn (Reuters, 2025; The Guardian, 2025). Without adequate support, vulnerable families may resort to negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage and child labor. These cascading shocks not only endanger learning but also jeopardize children's safety and futures.

At the national level, Bangladesh's education budget remains chronically low—hovering below 2% of GDP, far short of UNESCO's recommended 4–6% (The Business Standard, 2025; The Financial Express, 2025). This underinvestment limits classroom resources, teacher training, and digital infrastructure, especially in rural and disaster-affected areas (CPD, 2024). Combined with shrinking external aid, the shortfall widens inequalities, leaving marginalized children most exposed to disruptions. Civil society organizations, which often bridge these gaps, are equally strained. Over a hundred projects have been suspended, forcing NGOs to scale back vital services in teacher support, after-school programming, and advocacy (Caritas Internationalis, 2025). The contraction of funding for grassroots initiatives threatens to unravel the social safety nets that keep children connected to learning and care during crises.

In this context, the role of organizations like Teach For Bangladesh becomes indispensable. When systems are strained, education must act as the anchor of hope and



If the crisis continues, classrooms may echo with silence — not laughter or learning.

resilience. By sustaining classroom teaching, integrating social-emotional learning, and mobilizing domestic and diaspora resources, TFB and similar initiatives ensure that children in marginalized communities do not lose their right to learn. The path forward demands renewed investment—both domestic and international—into education as the foundation for resilience, equity, and a more just Bangladesh.

1. Anadolu Agency. (2025, May 27). USAID shutdown leaves 50,000 professionals jobless in Bangladesh.
2. The Daily Star. (2025, May 28). Bangladesh lost \$700m in aid as USAID halted most projects.
3. OECD. (2025, June 26). Cuts in official development assistance: Full report.
4. Donor Tracker. (2025, July 4). The budget cuts tracker: ODA outlook 2025.
5. Save the Children. (2025, June 5). About 300,000 children risk losing education as learning centers in Rohingya camps shut.
6. UNICEF Bangladesh. (2025, June 1). Education of almost a quarter million Rohingya children at risk.
7. Reuters. (2025, March 6). UN to slash food rations for Rohingya in Bangladesh.
8. The Guardian. (2025, March 6). World Food Programme halves food rations for Rohingya in Bangladesh.
9. The Business Standard. (2025, June). Education budget remains below 2% of GDP, experts say.
10. The Financial Express. (2025, June 12). Education budget in South Asia: Where Bangladesh stands?
11. Center for Policy Dialogue. (2024, June). Education budget of Bangladesh: Investing resources for improved learning outcomes.
12. Caritas Internationalis. (2025, June 13). Urgent needs grow as aid projects shut down in Bangladesh..

■ RECRUITMENT & YOUTH MOBILIZATION UPDATES

FELLOWSHIP 2026: A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS EMERGES

In Q3, the Recruitment & Youth Mobilization (RYM) team successfully concluded the second deadline of Fellowship Selection 2026, guiding a strong pool of high-potential applicants through the multi-stage process. The cycle closed with an inspiring group of the Accepted Fellows for the 2026 Fellowship cohort, who have now begun their TFB journey through matriculation, mentorship, and confirmed regional placements.

WELCOME EVENT: NEW LEADERS STEPPING FORWARD

To mark this milestone, the RYM team hosted the Welcome Event for Accepted Fellows—a powerful gathering where new members connected with TFB's vision and the realities of Bangladesh's education landscape. They heard from leaders, current Fellows, and alumni, reinforcing their sense of belonging and commitment at a time when leadership is urgently needed.

The mentorship program further deepened this journey. Accepted Fellows were paired with current Fellows, gaining peer-to-peer guidance on classroom realities, the education crisis, and the responsibility of leading from the front. This not only prepared incoming Fellows but also marked the culture of interdependence in continuous learning across generations.



Photo: The Fellowship 2026 Welcome Event brought together new leaders ready to take on Bangladesh's education challenges — connecting with TFB's vision, learning from current Fellows and alumni, and beginning their journey of purpose, partnership, and impact.

AGENTS OF CHANGE 4.0: YOUTH TURNING CRISIS INTO OPPORTUNITY



Congratulations to our Agents of Change 4.0 champions — Access4All (Winner), Mindful (1st Runner Up), and Team 2037 (2nd Runner Up) — with heartfelt appreciation for Protoye and Ungavunga for making it to the finals and inspiring us all!

Beyond recruitment, the RYM team sparked youth energy nationwide through Agents of Change 4.0. Despite ongoing crises, young people are refusing to stand still—they are stepping up, leading, and creating solutions.

- At Jagannath University, 76 students sharpened their skills in professional communication, leadership, and project design.
- At the University of Dhaka, 55 changemakers explored democracy, responsibility, and youth leadership with thought leaders.
- Online and across campuses, 250+ students from 19 universities joined virtual workshops, while 52 Campus Ambassadors trained to mobilize their peers.

This campaign culminated in the launch of the Agents of Change National Competition 2025, themed “Creating Sustainable Social Businesses to Battle Education Inequity.” A total of 82 students in 33 teams are competing, with the top three teams set to receive seed funding and mentorship to bring their ideas to life.

Despite shrinking donor space and broader crises, Bangladesh's youth are rising to the challenge. They are not waiting for change to happen —they are becoming the changemakers.

■ CLASSROOMS RISING AMID CHALLENGES

Amid political and economic uncertainty, our Fellows continue to anchor hope inside classrooms. Across Dhaka, Chattogram, Rangpur, and Cox's Bazar, students are learning in contexts shaped by climate shocks, dropout risks, impact of displacements, school closures, and shrinking resources. Fellows are not only teaching—they are leading healing spaces where children feel safe, loved, and inspired to keep learning.

BUILDING RESILIENCE: WINDOW TO THE MIND

In Chattogram, 38 Fellows brought Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to life in their classrooms — and over 60% of them led more than ten SEL sessions this quarter, helping students build empathy, confidence, and emotional awareness. Safe Emotional Spaces are now part of every classroom—where students begin their day with gratitude circles, reflection boards, or yoga sessions. These practices are paying off: 97.4% of students reported improved well-being, a significant rise from 77.5% earlier this year. Fellows facilitated 86 Parents-Teachers meetings, and completed 278 community visits meeting 480 families. The level of trust, mutual respect and shared purpose between Fellows and parents strengthened.

A key driver of this success has been the Window to the Mind (W2M) initiative, which is embedding SEL into 16 partner schools in Chattogram. This regionally contextual intervention focuses on building emotional awareness, empathy, and resilience through daily practices like reflection-based activities, parent circles, and structured emotional check-ins. With nearly all participating students reporting improved confidence and mental health, W2M is not just an add-on program—it is helping make well-being a lasting part of school culture, equipping children to thrive even during crises.



Photo: SEL in the Classroom: The Virtue Tree — Where Values Take Root and Leaders Grow.

CLIMATE EDUCATION: AWARENESS TO AGENCY



Photo: Through hands-on projects and everyday actions, students are learning to understand, protect, and reimagine their environment — turning awareness into leadership for a greener tomorrow.

Through the Climate Education & Leadership (CEL) initiative, Fellows are transforming schools into spaces of climate action. This quarter, a professional development workshop trained 40 Fellows in water conservation, soil health, and renewable energy. They carried this learning into schools through baseline surveys with 550 students, in-house teacher trainings, and student-led activities such as green corners, debates, and tree-planting. The Climate Education Advocacy Forum 2025 brought together over 80 students, Fellows, alumni, and policymakers to champion climate education as a collective responsibility.

STRENGTHENING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: HEAD TEACHER ENGAGEMENT IN RANGPUR & COX'S BAZAR

Our Head Teacher Engagement Programs (HTEPs) this quarter built critical partnerships with School leaders, system teachers, and education officials in two regions.



Photo: From Rangpur to Cox's Bazar, Head Teacher Engagement Program united educators to strengthen collaboration and create safe, inclusive, and resilient classrooms where every child can thrive.

- In Rangpur, 44 participants—including Fellows, teachers, and government officials—came together to explore their role as allies in unlocking students' potential as 21st-century learners. The discussions emphasized co-learning, sharing best practices, and aligning around the vision of excellent education for all children.
- In Cox's Bazar, head teachers and assistant teachers along with District and Upazila Education officers joined Fellows in reflecting on how to keep classrooms safe, inclusive, and resilient amid the pressures of displacement, climate disruptions, and resource shortages. Together, they shared strategies to strengthen student learning and well-being, ensuring schools remain anchors of stability in times of uncertainty.

that addressed climate resilience, dropout prevention, girls' education, digital literacy, and emotional well-being. Under the theme “Roots & Wings – Grounded in Purpose, Soaring with Impact,” these projects became powerful examples of how education can nurture agency and drive lasting change within communities.



Photo: At the Capstone Symposium 2025, 20 projects took center stage — from the 79 Fellow-supported and student-led innovations that engaged 20,130 students and reached 132,650 people nationwide. Each project reflected the creativity, resilience, and leadership driving Bangladesh toward educational equity and lasting change.

CAPSTONE SYMPOSIUM: AWARENESS TO AGENCY

This year's Capstone Symposium celebrated the power of student leadership across Bangladesh's diverse communities. Each community faces its own challenges to help students thrive—and when students identify these issues themselves and work together to solve them, true leadership takes root. Guided by Fellows as allies and mentors, students designed and led 79 impactful projects

ALUMNI LEADING SHIFTS

CREATING IMPACT THROUGH COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

The global humanitarian sector is facing an unprecedented funding crisis in 2025. With major donor governments cutting aid budgets, millions of vulnerable people are left without essential support. At the same time, many professionals in the sector have lost their jobs. This shortage of resources challenges us to rethink how we work and how we can continue making an impact without depending solely on external funds.

At Grow Your Reader Foundation (GYRF), we believe the answer lies in shifting from community engagement to community ownership. Engagement can be shown in photos and reports, but true ownership is deeper when communities see themselves not as beneficiaries of aid, but as leaders of their own development.

Our greatest resources are not a continuous pipeline of grants and donations. They are our community. Communities hold knowledge, resilience, and creativity. When people recognize their own strength, they are capable of extraordinary change.

Since November 2023, GYRF has been collaborating with the Global Fund for Children under the ARC (Addressing Root Causes) initiative. This partnership is guided by a powerful belief: communities are not problems to be fixed, but powerhouses of wisdom and solutions. True development starts when people identify their own challenges and take ownership of solving them. Through the CLCP-SALT approach, we listen to stories, uncover strengths, and appreciate resilience. Instead of asking, "What can we give you?", we facilitate communities to ask:

What can I do? How can I solve this problem with my own strengths?

This transformation does not happen overnight. Mobilizing communities is a continuous journey, but small steps create big shifts. Too often, development work is top-down, with outside actors prescribing solutions. But charity alone cannot create sustainability, ownership does. When communities begin to see themselves as co-creators of change, transformation becomes lasting. From our work on the ground, five key lessons guide us:

- Listen more, talk less – When people feel heard, they lead.
- Partner, don't patronize – Walk alongside, not ahead.



Photo: Our Alumna, Sadia Jafrin Khan.

- Appreciate, don't teach – Value existing knowledge.
- Co-create, don't impose – Locally designed solutions endure.
- Be patient – Real change is slow but meaningful

One of the biggest barriers is the belief that NGOs survive by keeping problems alive. To break this cycle, NGOs must shift from being solution providers to enablers, helping communities to dream, decide, and act for themselves. Immediate needs like food and clothing matter, but dignity, agency, and self-reliance are the foundations of long-term change. When funding ends, communities can carry forward the work as a habit, creating sustainable transformation. No external resources are needed here to continue the work.

At GYRF, we are committed to this vision. Even in times of crisis, we believe communities themselves hold the keys to lasting change. In Mymensingh, the Phulbaria community built a school named Pahariapara Agamir School for their children, and we chose to collaborate with them rather than deliver a ready-made solution. Through SALT facilitation, the community recognized its own strengths and took the lead, using local resources such as mud, bamboo, and wood. This approach reduced infrastructure costs by 70% and cut carbon emissions by 2,000 tons. We are also equipping community teachers to operate the school independently, while parents contribute to their salaries to ensure accountability. Our goal is to make the school fully self-sustainable by the end of 2026, as we do not want the school or the community to remain dependent on external resources.

Sadia Jafrin

Alumna, TFB 2016 cohort
Founder & CEO, Grow Your Reader Foundation

■ PARTNERSHIPS & RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

PARTNERS IN PURPOSE: BUILDING A JUST FUTURE TOGETHER

This quarter, Teach For Bangladesh strengthened its partnerships with key supporters who continue to stand by our mission of educational equity. Among many partners, last quarter we strengthened our collaborations and want to give a special shout-out to the Hempel Foundation, BSRM, the Commercial Bank of Ceylon, and our ongoing work with Teach For All's Climate Education Initiatives. Each of these partners plays a vital role in fueling our programs—from Fellowship placements to climate education—ensuring that children in underserved communities are not left behind.

CLIMATE EDUCATION ADVOCACY FORUM 2025



Photo: At the Climate Education Advocacy Forum 2025, students, educators, and leaders came together to showcase how climate-focused learning can build a greener, more resilient Bangladesh.

On July 5, 2025, Teach For Bangladesh hosted the Climate Education Advocacy Forum, gathering over 80 students, Fellows, alumni, educators, policymakers, and private sector leaders. The event highlighted the Climate Education & Leadership (CEL) initiative, with students presenting projects such as rooftop gardening and waste segregation. A dynamic panel, “Classrooms as Climate Catalysts,” emphasized the urgency of making climate education essential.

Special Guest Harun Ortac, CEO of United Ayzaz, emphasized that TFB's work is not just about education but about shaping the nation's future through unity and collective action. Chief Guest Professor Robiul Kabir Chowdhury, Chairman of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), reaffirmed that climate education must be embedded in every subject from Classes 1–10, calling it essential, not optional. In her closing remarks,

Munia Islam Mozumder, CEO of Teach For Bangladesh, reminded, “Education cannot change the world directly, but it changes people — and people change the world.” The forum became a vibrant platform for frontline voices to show how classrooms can transform into hubs of climate action and resilience.

DHL WORKPLACE VISIT



Photo: Bridging classrooms and careers — students explored real-world learning at DHL Bangladesh, gaining the skills and confidence to thrive in the 21st century.

On July 22, 2025, students from Khan Hassan Adarsha GPS experienced their first corporate immersion at the DHL Global Forwarding facility in Tongi. Through this collaboration with DHL Bangladesh, students observed real-world teamwork, problem-solving, and logistics operations. The visit helped them connect classroom learning with employability skills, nurturing the confidence and asset-based mindset they need to thrive in the 21st century. This partnership continues to equip underserved students with both access and aspirations for brighter futures.

CLIMATE FELLOWS CAPACITY BUILDING

On August 3, 2025, an Onboarding Workshop for the newly selected Climate Education & Leadership (CEL) Fellows marked the start of another new chapter in climate-focused teaching. Fellows were guided through designing initiatives tailored to their school and community contexts, with training on practical strategies, collaborative planning, and student engagement. This capacity-building session ensured that each Fellow was equipped with the knowledge and confidence to plan lessons to boost academic outcomes, facilitate conversations in building mindset and celebrate micro-practices with the students for a future with climate sensitive minds.

“The development sector is facing many challenges, especially with the funding crisis in education that has tested strategists and fundraisers across the field. In the midst of this, I feel truly fortunate to have been able to contribute my energy, time, and passion at Teach For Bangladesh. Here, I have witnessed the power of collective effort as we work tirelessly every day, with laser focus, to serve students and create lasting impact in the education sector.”

Rajasree Guha

Deputy Manager,
Partnerships & Resource Mobilization,
Teach For Bangladesh



**With only 5 years left
to achieve SDG 4, the
time to act is Now.**

**Are you ready to champion SDG 4 with us?
Join our movement.**

Together, let's ensure every child in Bangladesh has access to quality education.



TEACH FOR BANGLADESH

We know that the power and **potential** of all people are without limit. We take **bold action** to create **the future** that we truly want.

OUR SUPPORTERS OVER THE YEARS, LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL



HOW WE PRIORITIZE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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