

In-Service Professional Development (PD) in Bangladesh: A 10-Year Evidence Synthesis

Urban • Public & Private • Classroom-Facing Implications

Executive Summary

Urban Bangladesh has expanded access to in-service PD through national platforms and the 2023 curriculum rollout, yet the modal PD experience remains workshop-heavy, focused on delivering a “perfect lesson” with limited evidence of student learning [1]. Teachers consistently ask for peer mentoring, co-planning and PLCs, but time, incentives and school culture constrain collaboration [2]. Bright spots—Teachers’ Portal (Shikkhok Batayon) communities and curriculum-linked online orientation via Muktopaath—are building capacity, though uptake and design frictions persist [3][4][7]. The pathway forward: PD organised around core teaching routines, rehearsal with feedback, short-cycle coaching, PLCs, and simple evidence checks—approaches that can improve student outcomes and reduce workload.

What Most In-Service PD Looks Like (and Why)

- Workshop-heavy, “perfect lesson” focus: Programs emphasise modelling tidy lessons over measuring whether pupils learned—creating a gap between curriculum intent and classroom reality [1].
- Weak transfer into practice: Evaluations around large initiatives (e.g., English in Action) show limited sustained change; teachers revert to lecture methods under exam pressure and norms [1].

What Teachers Say They Want (But Struggle to Get)

Teachers welcome peer support—co-planning, observation and feedback—but routine collaboration is scarce. Workload, curriculum pacing and school social structures limit embedded PLCs and mentoring [2].

Emerging Models That Buck the Trend

- Teachers’ Portal (Shikkhok Batayon): A national platform where teachers share lessons and seek feedback; survey data (N≈410) report gains in pedagogy, presentation and ICT skills, though time/connectivity limit fuller use [3].
- New curriculum rollout (since 2023): NCTB introduced online orientation at scale (EU/UNICEF-supported) to supplement face-to-face training, with plans to expand peer networking, mentoring and coaching via Teachers’ Portal + Muktopaath [4][5]. Government mid-term review indicates ~400,000 secondary teachers in transition training [6]. Barriers remain around course variety, incentives and motivation—classic OPD challenges [7].

So What’s Actually Happening in Classrooms?

The modal experience remains short courses that model delivery of a “model” lesson, light on student-learning evidence and with limited follow-up coaching. Teachers value collaborative supports but rarely get structured time or systems. The bright spots are expanding networks and access, but infrastructure, incentives and culture still mediate classroom change [3][4][5].

Implications for PD Design (Evidence-Aligned)

1) Re-balance goals: Specify learner outcome measures for every module (e.g., % mastering a 2-item exit ticket) and build simple assessment into PD tasks [1]. 2) Make collaboration routine: Weekly school-based PLC cycles (plan-teach-evidence-reflect) tied to the new curriculum; use Portal groups to surface artefacts [3][5]. 3) Coach, don’t just train: Pair online orientation with short coaching cycles (brief observation + one feedback target) for 4–6 weeks post-course [5]. 4) Lower friction to OPD: Micro-credentials linked to appraisal; short, classroom-ready Muktopaath strands to fit teacher time realities [7]. 5) Data back to teachers: Quick exit tickets, participation tallies and reteach prompts so classroom decisions are evidence-led—not performance-led.

Evidence Table (Claims → Sources)

Claim (short)	Source(s)
Modal PD emphasises “perfect lesson” over learning evidence	[1]
Limited transfer; reversion to lecture under pressure	[1]
Teachers want PLCs/mentoring; collaboration constrained	[2]
Teachers’ Portal improves pedagogy/ICT; time/connectivity limit use	[3]
Online orientation scaled via Muktopaath; mentoring ambitions	[4][5]
~400,000 secondary teachers in transition training	[6]
OPD barriers: course variety, incentives, motivation	[7]

References (click to open)

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[2] Alam & others (2020). — Teacher collaboration in Bangladesh: gaps, constraints and opportunities.

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[4] EdTech Hub (2023). — Technology-enabled teacher professional development in Bangladesh—lessons learned.

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[5] World Bank (2023). — Bangladesh curriculum reform support: orientation, mentoring and coaching ambitions.

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[6] Government of Bangladesh (2024). — Mid-term Implementation Review of the Eighth Five Year Plan: teacher training counts.

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[7] ResearchGate (2023). — Implementation status of the Master Plan for ICT in Education for secondary teachers’ PD.

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