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# Navigating challenges: Lesson learned from managing a longitudinal cross-country study

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### ABSTRACT

A cross-country study conducted since May 2019 to November 2024 funded by IDRC, Canada led by the Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh team. The study aimed to develop and implement evidence-based, gender- and inclusion-focused teacher professional development approaches to enhance equity in classroom teaching and learning, thereby strengthening students' participation and learning achievement. This paper identified the key challenges and lessons learned from this five-year longitudinal study on Gender and Inclusive Pedagogy (GIP) in secondary schools across Bangladesh, Bhutan, Vietnam, and Timor-Leste. The research employed a mixed-methods design, including experimental interventions, document reviews, consultations, and workshops. It focused on co-designing GIP approaches based on existing practices in the participating countries. The study aimed to develop advocacy frameworks for national and regional gender-inclusive teacher education, with the expectation of scaling up these approaches to policy and decision-making stakeholders in each country and regionally. Findings indicate that implementing GIP in diverse educational contexts requires addressing systemic barriers such as gender stereotypes in curricula, school session in country context, lack of teacher training in gender-sensitive pedagogies, and inadequate technological capacities. The study underscores the importance of collaborative efforts among educators, policymakers, and communities to foster inclusive and equitable learning environments. This article contributes to the discourse on identifying challenges and key lessons learned by highlighting the complexities and necessities of implementing a cross-country study across different cultural and socio-economic contexts. It offers recommendations from experiences for policymakers, educators, and researchers committed to managing a longitudinal cross-country study in education.

**Keywords:** Collaborative study, Contextual experience, Gender and Inclusive Pedagogy, Identified learning, Key challenges