
Forum on Faith and Education in Bangladesh: Pathways to Pluralism. January 7, 2020

SUMMARY

The Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ), BRAC University, and the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) at Georgetown University are jointly convening this forum under the collaborative project on *Bangladesh Religious Dimensions of Development and Social Cohesion*.

The forum will bring together scholars, faith actors, development practitioners and policymakers, to reflect on faith-inspired education in Bangladesh and globally, and to deliberate on the key challenges and prospects for pursuing pathways to pluralism through education.

BACKGROUND

Faith is an intrinsic part of Bangladeshi society, embedded across a plethora of social institutions. This fundamental undergirding has a profound influence on education, as manifested visibly in the structure of the education system and expressed latently, though no less powerfully, in the values that are embedded in curricula and in their direct roles in education-delivery. However, the appropriate place of religion in education is a hotly debated issue, dividing civil society into polarized camps, notably of traditionalists versus secularists. Such divides are often unhelpful and obscure the ground realities of why and how religion remains relevant and how its presence in education will materially shape possible futures and especially the vital goal of ensuring mutual respect among diverse communities, and particularly religious communities. These questions retain a prominent place in the social and political imaginary.

The forum examines specific roles that religion currently plays in education, both in terms of existing institutions as well as the pertinent curricula, notably in languages, social sciences, humanities, and religious studies. It explores both contemporary realities in Bangladesh and international experience, notably in addressing the central issues of preparing citizens to live and thrive within diverse societies. By putting Bangladeshi realities and experiences in conversation with similar realities elsewhere, the forum seeks to foster joint learning, build regional and global networks of common ideas and sharing of experiences to work towards sustainable solutions.

PROGRAMME

Date: January 7, 2020

Time: 9.30 AM to 5.30 PM

Venue: Eden Ballroom, Amari Hotel, House 47, Road 41, Gulshan 2, Dhaka

Time	Session
9.30 am to 10 am	Registration
10.00 am to 10.10 am	Barrister Manzoor Hasan, <i>Welcome Speech</i>
10.10 am to 10.30 am	Chief Guest, <i>Special Address</i>
10.30 am to 10. 45 am	Professor Katherine Marshall, <i>Inauguration of Forum</i>
10.45 am to 11.00 am	Dr. Samia Huq, <i>Project Overview</i>
11.00 am to 11:20 am	Dr. Sudipta Roy, <i>Research Findings from Bangladesh</i>
11.20 am to 11.40 am	Q & A
11.40 am to 12.00 pm	Tea & refreshments
12.00 am to 12.20 pm	Dr. Steve Heyneman (<i>Title TBC</i>)
12.20 pm to 12.40 pm	Dr. Jamhari Makruf (<i>Title TBC</i>)
12.40 pm to 1.00 pm	Q & A
1.40 pm to 2.40 pm	Lunch
2.40 pm to 3.40 pm	Reflections from the ground - Islamic Foundation - Caritas - ISKCON - Rama Krishna Mission
3.40 pm to 4.00 pm	Q & A
4.00 pm to 4.20 pm	Tea & refreshments
4.20 pm to 4.50 pm	Policy exercise
4.50 pm to 5.20	Discussion
5.20 pm to 5.30 pm	Closing

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Dr. Stephen Heyneman is Professor Emeritus of International Education Policy, Department of Leadership, Policy, and Organizations, Vanderbilt University, USA. Dr. Heyneman received his doctoral degree in comparative education from the University of Chicago in 1976. He served the World Bank for 22 years. Between 1976 and 1984 he helped research education quality and design policies to support educational effectiveness. Between 1984 and 1989 he was in charge of external training for senior officials worldwide in education policy. And between 1989 and 1998, he was responsible for education policy and lending strategy, first for the Middle East and North Africa and later for the 27 countries of Europe and Central Asia. In July, 2000 he was appointed professor of International Education Policy at Vanderbilt University. His current interests include the impact of higher education on social cohesion, the international trade in education services and the economic and social cost to higher

education corruption. Professor Heyneman has over 200 publications in his areas of expertise.



Katherine Marshall is a professor of the practice of development, conflict, and religion in the School of Foreign Service, senior fellow at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, and the executive director of the World Faiths Development Dialogue. She joined the Georgetown faculty in 2006. Professor Marshall worked at the World Bank from 1971-2006 in a variety of leadership positions on development issues in Africa, Latin America, East Asia, and the Middle East, particularly those facing the world's poorest countries. Additionally, she has led the World Bank's faith and ethics initiative between 2000 and 2006. She currently serves on the boards of several NGOs, including AVINA Americas, the Niwano Peace Prize, and the Opus Prize Foundation, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Professor Marshall has authored or co-authored seven books on global development issues, including *Global Institutions of Religion: Ancient Movers,*

Modern Shakers (2013) and *Interfaith Journeys: An exploration of history, ideas, and future directions* (2017).

Centre for Peace and Justice



Professor Jamhari Makruf is lecturer and Deputy Rector (Academic) at the Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta. He obtained his PhD in Anthropology from the Australian National University in 2000, after completing a Masters there in 1996. His undergraduate degree in Islamic Theology was obtained from the State Islamic Institute in Jakarta in 1990. In addition to two AusAID scholarships, Professor Makruf won a Fulbright Scholarship to Boston University in 2004. He was selected for an Asian Leaders Fellowship by the Japan Foundation (2008) and has received significant research grants from the Japan Science Research Program (2005-08) and the Japan ASEAN Integrative Fund (2008-11). In 2008, he was a finalist in the Australian Embassy's 'Best Australian Alumni' Awards. In 2013, Professor Makruf was appointed to head Indonesia's National Islamic

Tertiary Education Reform Taskforce. In 2014, he was a Miegunyah Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Professor Jamhari is a reputed researcher on Islamic studies with a focus on the installation of democracy in Islamic society and Muslim's compatibility with civil society. Among his current interests and concerns is the aggravated poverty in rural areas as an underlying root cause for the upsurge of religious fundamentalism. Professor Jamhari facilitates the interdisciplinary research activities of PPIMUIN Jakarta, which are designed to enhance mutual understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims. He grapples with injustice against Muslim communities due to misperceptions and explores the contemporary significance of Islam through the linkage with Western value systems. He is the author of numerous publications on Islamic education, including *Islamic Contemporary Movement: The Rise of Islamic Radicalism*.



Dr. Sudipta Roy is a Faculty Fellow in Education at Colby College, a private liberal arts college in Maine, USA. He is also the Director of American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS), a consortium of higher education institutions in the United States and Bangladesh. Dr. Roy is currently co-leading a three year-long collaborative research program between the World Faiths Development Dialogue at Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University and the Center for Peace and Justice at Brac University on faith and religious dimensions of development in Bangladesh. He received his PhD in Education Policy Studies and a Masters of Science in Education in International and Comparative Education from Indiana University Bloomington. Previously, he obtained his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in English from the University of Dhaka. His broad research interests include localized and embodied understanding of

risks and hazards, religious and cultural dimensions of risk perception and praxis, sustainability and development, and participatory socio-cultural education policy analysis. Dr. Roy has secured numerous awards and grants such as the Mellon Innovating International Research, Teaching, and Collaboration (MIIRT) Dissertation Research Award, Fulbright Language Teaching Assistantship (FLTA), School of Education Fellowship at IU, Santosh Jain Memorial award, and numerous travel grants. Dr. Roy has years of college teaching experience both in Bangladesh and in the United States. He has presented papers, organized, and chaired at numerous sessions in national and international conferences on international and comparative education and global environmental change issues.