

# Bangladesh



## REGION: SOUTH ASIA

Also included in this region: India, Pakistan

## PART I: ENROLMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Bangladeshi HE system fits the South Asian model. Over 35% of students were enrolled in university colleges in 2018, with the remainder mostly split between comprehensive universities and semi-HEIs. Enrolments rose by 260% between 2006 and 2018, from a bit over 1 million to nearly 3.6 million. Institutional numbers increased as well, but not by as much, which caused average HEI-size to gradually increase. Just over 65% of students attended public providers in 2018, which was slightly above the average for the rest of South Asia.

TABLE 1 – Types of higher education providers

CATEGORY	INSTITUTIONS	INSTITUTIONS COUNT IN 2018		
		PUB.	PRIV.	TOTAL
<b>Comprehensive universities</b>	General Universities; Universities of science and technology; private universities; Bangladesh Open University in 2017 and 2018	28	103	131
<b>Specialised universities</b>	Agricultural universities, medical universities, engineering and technology universities	14	0	14
<b>University colleges</b>	Master's colleges (public all years, private after 2010)	125	50	175
<b>Hybrids</b>	Teacher education institutions; Professional institutions	457	107	582
<b>Semi-HE</b>	Degree (honors) colleges; Private master's colleges (before 2011); Bangladesh Open University (before 2016)	NA	NA	NA
<b>Secondary Schools</b>	Madrassas; Degree (Pass) colleges	NA	NA	NA

FIGURE 1 – Numbers of institutions by type, 2006-2018

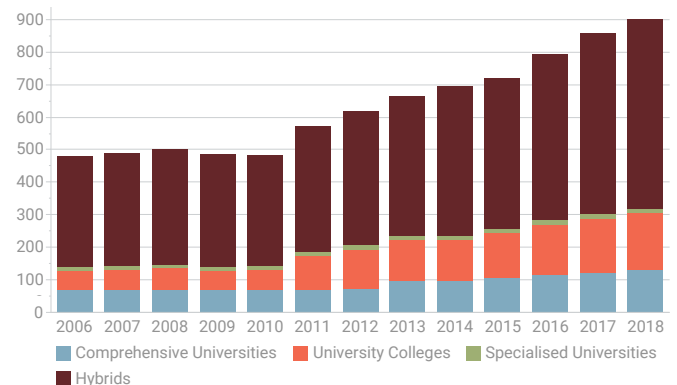
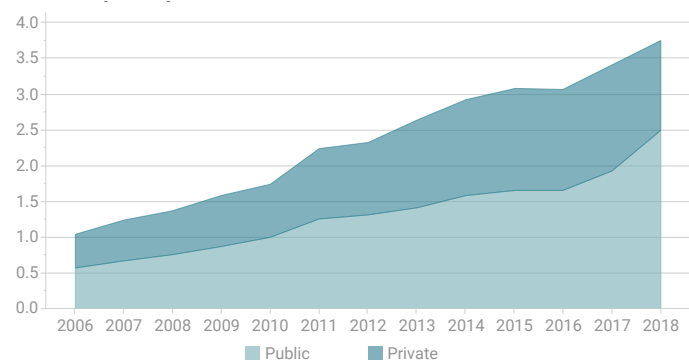
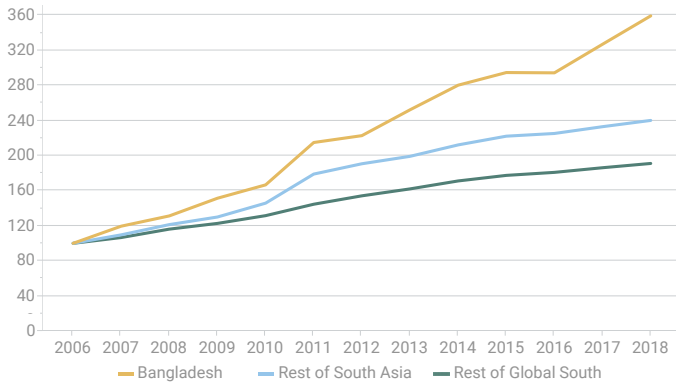


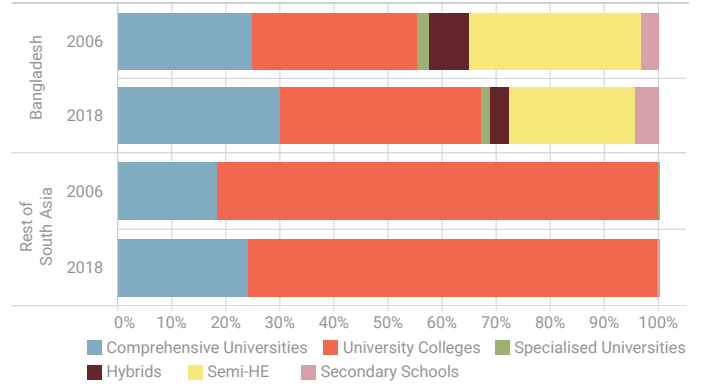
FIGURE 2 – Total enrolments with public and private higher education providers, 2006-2018 (Millions)



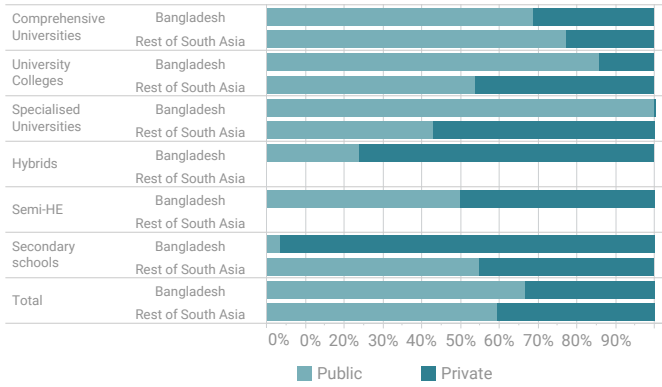
**FIGURE 3** – Changes in enrolment, in Bangladesh, the rest of South Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



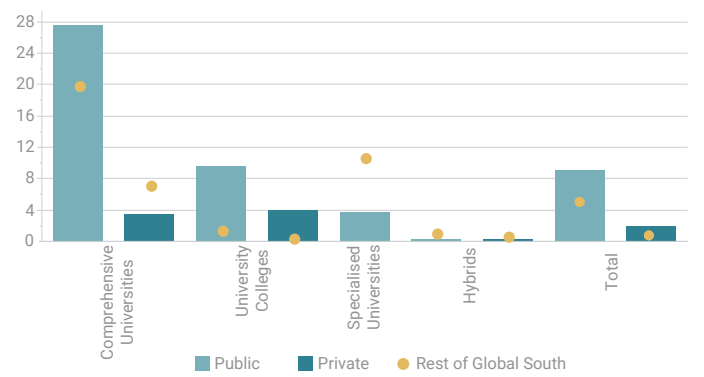
**FIGURE 4** – Share of enrolments by institution type in Bangladesh and the rest of the Global South, 2006 and 2018 (2006=100)



**FIGURE 5** – Share of enrolments in public and private institutions, by institution type, in Bangladesh and the rest of South Asia, 2018



**FIGURE 6** – Average institution-size by institution type in Bangladesh and the rest of the Global South, 2018 (Thousands)



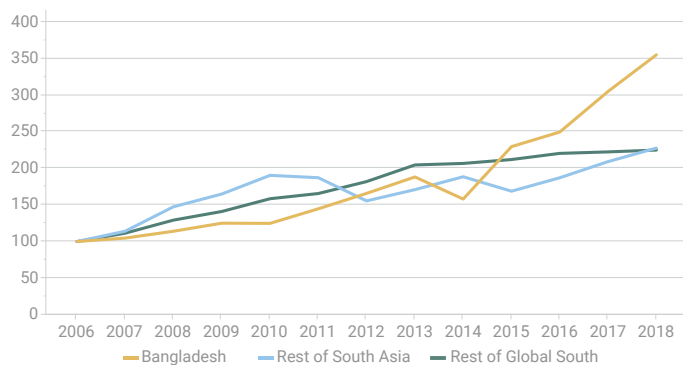
**University of Chittagong, Chittagong, Bangladesh**



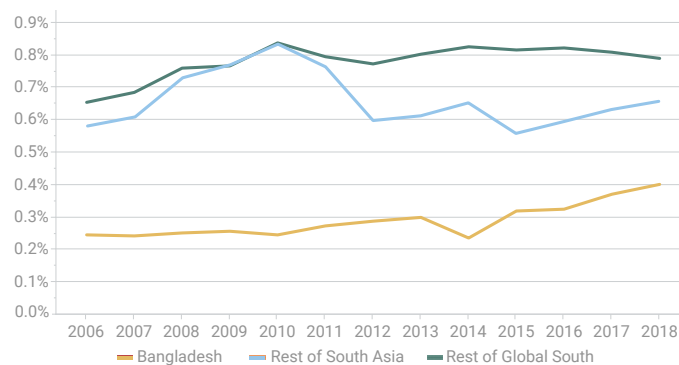
## PART II: HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING

Public HE spending in Bangladesh increased by just over 250% from 2006 to 2018, with most of that growth occurring after 2014. This spending growth roughly tracked enrolment growth, so per-student expenditures remained relatively similar in 2006 and 2018. Transfers to universities reflect this pattern except that the reclassification of the low-cost Bangladesh Open University caused a drop in transfers per student in 2017. Relative to GDP, public HE spending rose from 0.25% in 2006 to just under 0.4% in 2018. This growth was significant, but still left Bangladesh trailing the rest of South Asia and the Global South.

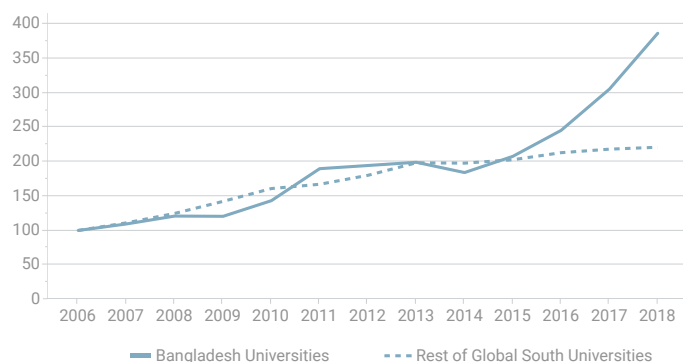
**FIGURE 7** – Change in real total public spending on higher education in Bangladesh, the rest of South Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)



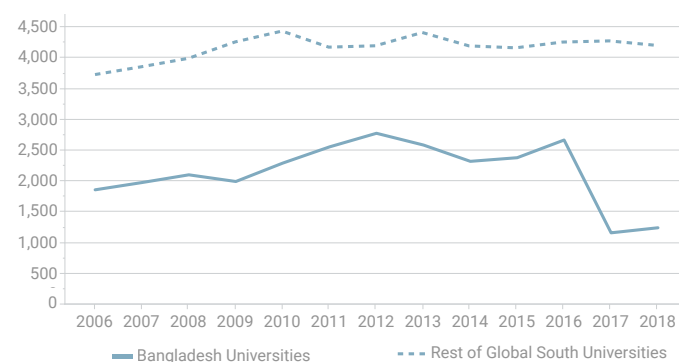
**FIGURE 8** – Total public spending on higher education relative to GDP in Bangladesh, the rest of South Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



**FIGURE 9** – Change in real government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in Bangladesh and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)



**FIGURE 10** – Per-student government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in real PPP, in Bangladesh and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



## PART III: STUDENT FEES

We classify the Bangladeshi HE system as combining characteristics of the token fee-charging and privileged publics models. All students are charged fees at public HEIs, but these are generally modest. Data are insufficient to further analyze student fees in Bangladesh.

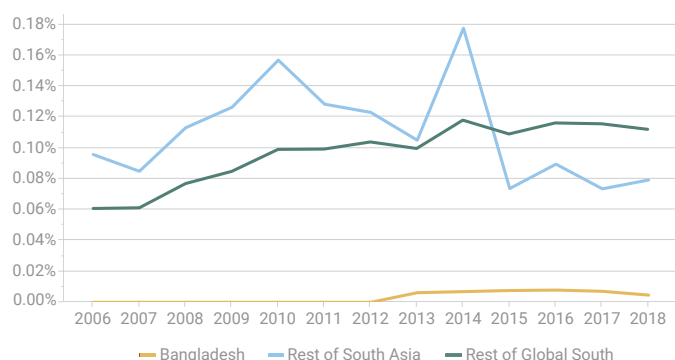
### PART IV: STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Government student financial aid in Bangladesh is grant-only, and to our knowledge the country did not operate any government student financial aid programs before 2013. About 6% of students received grants in 2018. Total disbursements in 2018 were equivalent to less than 0.01% of GDP, much lower than the averages across the rest of South Asia and the Global South.

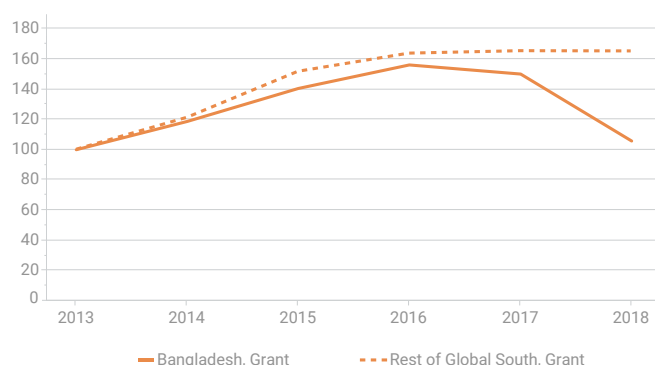
**TABLE 2** – Student financial aid regime, including recipients and amounts disbursed in 2018

CATEGORY	PROGRAMS	BASIS OF ALLOCATION	RECIPIENTS	AMOUNTS DISBURSED (USD)
Grants	Prime Minister's Education Assistance Trust Stipends	Need and merit based	209,681	34,118,202

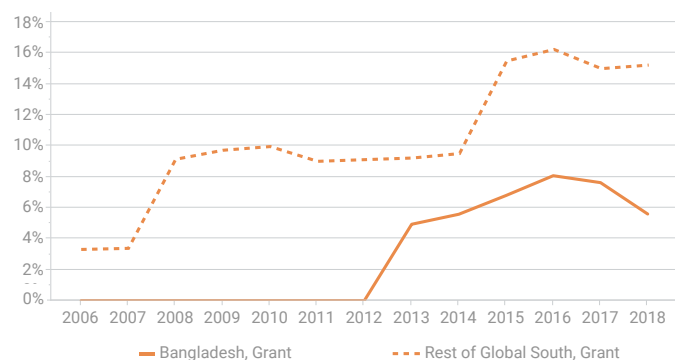
**FIGURE 11** – Total disbursements to students in financial aid relative to gross domestic product, in Bangladesh, the rest of South Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



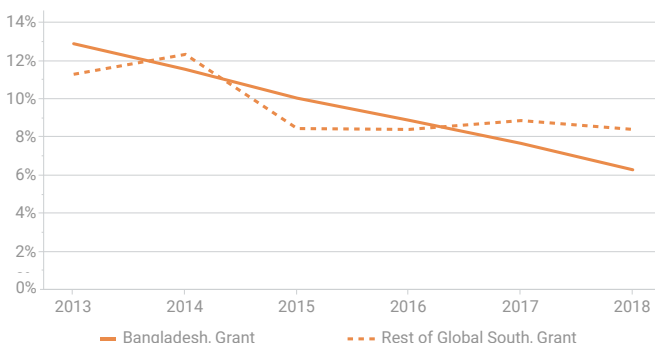
**FIGURE 12** – Change in amounts disbursed to students by form of financial aid in Bangladesh and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018 (2006=100)



**FIGURE 13** – Share of higher education students receiving student financial aid by type in Bangladesh and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018



**FIGURE 14** – Financial aid per recipient relative to GDP per capita by form of financial aid in Bangladesh and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018



\*Note: For more on methodology and data quality please see [Appendices A and B](#).