

TEACHERS' DAY 2023

# A never-ending LOVE FOR TEACHING



**Farzana Hossain in her classroom**

"I was affected by polio at a very young age. When my classmates' parents discussed my physical issues, I felt an inferiority complex about myself," says Farzana Hossain, a school teacher in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

After taking physiotherapy, Farzana's body stiffness was reduced, but her confidence was always low. However, her family members and friends were always her greatest strength. In university, her friends pushed her to interact with people, which helped her gain confidence. She completed her graduation from Jahangirnagar University but her lack of confidence made her think that a job was not her cup of tea.

Farzana was very fortunate to have a supportive husband and mother-in-law who pushed her to get a job. When she started her career as a teacher, that's when her story began to change.

Being a trainer in her department, Farzana got the opportunity to take the exam for the Training of Master Trainers in English (TMTE) project at the British Council. With the guidance and support of the British Council, she was selected for the project.

TMTE is a 13-month-long English training project with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), working initially in 15 Primary Training Institutes (PTIs) across Bangladesh.

By participating in this project, Farzana learned the best practices of teaching English. She has built a strong network of English teachers throughout the country who are working together and sharing experiences. This incredible network is relentlessly working to innovate English teaching skills in low-resource classrooms. They have also created an online continuous professional development (CPD) group where they are connected 24/7.

After completing TMTE training, Farzana is now a regular participant of English Connects, the British Council's digital programme for all teachers and

teacher educators of English worldwide, delivered through their global Teaching English platforms and regional/country and partner platforms. She has joined the Facebook Live sessions as a speaker as well. She believes English Connects is a timely and efficient pathway to keep English language professionals connected and provide for continuous professional development. In Bangladesh, the English Connects programme had an online reach of 900,000 in 2023.

"Age is just a number, and anyone can do anything if they want to. I could never imagine coming this far, but I overcame my fear with determination and hard work. I aspire to reach every corner of the country through my online learning platforms to improve teachers' and students' knowledge, skills, and expertise through the continuous support of my family, friends, society, and the British Council," Farzana said about her experience.

Expert teacher trainers like Andrew Michael Rochford, Amie Caroline Dodd, Maja Catlak, and Wendy Naylor train Bangladeshi teachers on different topics through English Connects and have shared their experiences of working on the project.



**Andrew Michael Rochford**  
Trainer from the United Kingdom

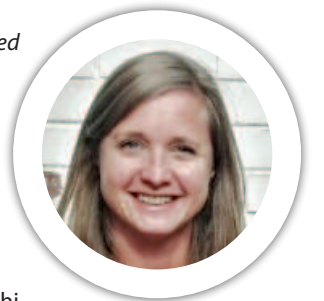
"English Connects is a lovely triangular experience as the teachers discuss issues with each other and the teacher trainer, and they also have a guest local teacher to share their experience. The teacher trainers always make sure that they do a webinar that's relevant to the teachers. The advantage of the webinar is that it stays online, and because they are recorded, the

teachers can refer back to them as part of their own training and development. Teachers need to take more responsibility for their learning and reflect on their actions to become more autonomous in their development. If the teachers' training and development continue, it won't take much time to make their teaching more effective."

**Wendy Naylor**

Teacher trainer, Warrington, United Kingdom

"I have learned many things from Bangladeshi teachers, like how to manage large classes. I also learned perseverance from Bangladeshi teachers. Reading skills are an area of focus that I want to pursue with Bangladeshi teachers. One area that needs to change is logistics; many of the teachers are assigned a lot of administrative work, which distracts them from educating children, which is their highest-priority work. All the teachers everywhere in the world should be paid fairly."



**Amie Caroline Dodd**

Teacher trainer in Colchester, United Kingdom



"We're trying to create an online community to keep many ideas flowing and get many practical solutions for the teachers. It is a really good space for all the teacher trainers to discuss different ideas and different solutions to

teaching, so everyone can work on and motivate each other to work on their professional development and self-development and try to improve themselves. Bangladeshi teachers are very willing to learn and adapt to new things. I suggest Bangladeshi teachers focus on how they can use everyone's best skills to their own advantage."

**Maja Catlak**

Teacher trainer, Croatia

"I appreciate the commitment of the Bangladeshi teachers. So many teachers in Bangladesh work under challenging conditions but remain committed to their students' education. The ability of Bangladeshi teachers to work with limited resources efficiently and creatively is much appreciated. One of the greatest benefits of working for Bangladesh and working on a project such as TMTE is that, by the end of the project, after several months, I can see the programme's impact. The teachers' salary, the training, the curriculum, and the infrastructure should all be there for successful teaching because those are the prerequisites for a teacher to be successful."

