Government to Launch Nationwide Digital Transformation Project for Medical, Population, and Nursing Education

The government is preparing to roll out a major new initiative designed to modernize and streamline the country's medical, population, and nursing education systems. The project, titled **"Integrated Improvement in the Management of Activities of DGME, NIPORT and DGNM,"** has been taken up by the *Health Education and Family Welfare Division* under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. With an estimated budget of **Tk 211.90 crore**, the programme is scheduled for implementation from **July 2025 to June 2026**.

This ambitious initiative aims to overhaul long-standing challenges in health-education governance, strengthen digital infrastructure, and enhance the quality of medical and nursing training institutions nationwide. It marks an important policy shift toward institutionalizing key health-education activities that were previously carried out under the **Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Programme (HPNSP)**, which completed its fourth phase in June 2024.

Why the New Project Is Needed

For more than two decades, HPNSP served as the backbone of Bangladesh's health service delivery improvements. Since 1998, it played a central role in expanding healthcare access, improving maternal and child health indicators, and building training capacity across medical and nursing institutions.

However, internal reviews identified several structural weaknesses, including:

- Overlapping responsibilities across operational plans

- Duplication of tasks among directorates

- Fragmented data systems

- Gaps in long-term budget stability

- Limited integration of digital tools in education and administration

As HPNSP came to an end, the need to transition essential activities into a more stable and institution-based framework became a priority. The new project intends to fill this gap by mainstreaming important functions within the regular organizational structure of DGME, NIPORT, and DGNM.

Core Objectives of the Digitization Project

The proposed initiative focuses on establishing a unified, technology-driven system that enhances administrative efficiency, teaching quality, training coverage, and overall service delivery. Key objectives include:

1. Modernizing Medical, Nursing, and Midwifery Training

To enhance clinical education and competency-based learning, the project will introduce:

- Advanced **simulation laboratories** in five government medical colleges

- Hands-on training programmes for faculty members in both medical and dental colleges

- A set of **ten custom-developed software modules** to support academic and administrative management

These investments aim to create a more practical and technology-supported learning environment for future doctors, nurses and midwives.

2. Building a Unified Digital Information System

A major component of the project is to streamline data management across DGME, NIPORT, and DGNM. This will include:

- Digitizing student academic records

- Developing an integrated **digital registry** for trainees and health professionals

- Enhancing the **Performance Management Information System (PMIS)**

- Improving access to online learning through upgraded **e-library services**

By centralizing data on a unified platform, the Ministry aims to reduce administrative delays, minimize errors, and ensure transparency.

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3. Improving Administrative and Facility Management

Many institutions under the three directorates still rely on manual processes, including hostel management, fee collection, and staff allocation. To modernize these systems, the project will:

- Automate hostel seat allocation and fee processing

- Upgrade utility and administrative systems across medical, nursing and population training institutions

- Standardize digital tools for human resource and facility management

This is expected to improve institutional governance and reduce operational inefficiencies.

Procurement of Essential Equipment

To address longstanding shortages in educational materials and clinical tools, the project includes an extensive procurement plan. The government will purchase:

- **3,030 units of medical and surgical equipment**

- **145 computers** and IT accessories

- **2,397 educational tools** for training institutions

- **2,696 furniture items** including desks, chairs, and lab furniture

- **600 bedding sets** for student hostels

- **96 office equipment items** to enhance workplace conditions

These upgrades are essential for improving the teaching environment and supporting modern, practical training.

Large-Scale Training Programmes to Be Rolled Out

A significant portion of the project focuses on human resource development through training. NIPORT and DGNM will take the lead in executing extensive capacity-building initiatives.

NIPORT's training responsibilities include:

- Conducting **600 training batches**

- Training **15,000 participants** across 35 institutions

- Updating **three major training curricula**

- Completing **twelve unfinished studies** carried over from the fourth phase of HPNSP

- Conducting two major national surveys:

    - **Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS)**

    - **Bangladesh Health Facility Survey (BHFS)**

These evidence-based studies are critical for future policy-making, especially in areas of population planning, maternal health, and nutrition.

DGNM will conduct:

- **320 training batches**

- Benefiting **9,600 nurses and midwives**

The training programmes aim to strengthen clinical skills, enhance workforce readiness, and improve the delivery of nursing services in hospitals across Bangladesh.

Geographical Coverage of the Project

The project has been designed to reflect the operational jurisdictions of the three key agencies:

- **DGME** will cover all government medical and dental colleges, Institutes of Health Technology (IHTs), and Medical Assistant Training Schools (MATS) in every division.

- **NIPORT's coverage** includes its Dhaka headquarters, fourteen Regional Population Training Institutes at the district level, and twenty-one Regional Training Centres at the upazila level.

- **DGNM activities** will include all nursing and midwifery institutions along with government hospitals that employ nursing staff.

This nationwide reach ensures that the benefits of the project extend to the grassroots level, impacting students, educators, healthcare workers, and patients across rural and urban settings.

Project Evaluation and Policy Alignment

A pre-appraisal assessment reviewed the previous operational plans and verified the technical specifications needed for the new initiative. On **8 September 2025**, the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) recommended approval with necessary modifications. The ministry has already agreed to revise the Development Project Proposal (DPP) accordingly.

The Planning Commission emphasized that the project will significantly strengthen medical, nursing and midwifery education while improving family planning services. It noted that the initiative is aligned with:

- **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3** – Good Health and Wellbeing

- **Bangladesh Population Policy 2025**

- **Objectives of the Health Education and Family Welfare Division**

By integrating digital tools, standardizing training, and improving institutional management, the project supports the long-term vision of accessible, high-quality health education and family planning services for all.

Expected Impact of the Project

Once fully implemented, the project is expected to:

- Modernize competency-based clinical education

- Strengthen digital transformation across training institutions

- Enhance transparency in academic and administrative activities

- Improve human resource and facility management

- Build a skilled and technologically capable health workforce

- Boost overall efficiency in health service delivery

Officials believe this initiative will contribute significantly to developing a robust, future-ready healthcare education system capable of addressing emerging national and global health challenges.