

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Share-Net Bangladesh Young Researcher Fellowship Grant 2022

Research Focusing on “Access to Information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)”

Share-Net Bangladesh Young Researcher Fellowship Grant

Share-Net Bangladesh is the country hub of Share-Net International, a Knowledge Platform focusing on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). It aims to build a vibrant SRHR community connecting practitioners, activists, policy makers, social and medical researchers, development practitioners, government officials, students, and young people. As part of the knowledge generation and capacity development initiative, each year SNBD provides two special grants for Young Researchers in the form of a fellowship. SNBD encourages Bangladeshi students of Masters or PhD programmes to apply for this grant. In 2022, the focus of SNBD is **Access to Information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)**. More specifically, **access to accurate quality information on SRHR for people in particular youth in urban and rural areas** to improve policy and practice in this area. Keeping this objective in mind, SNBD is asking for research proposals from Bangladeshi students for a Young Researcher Fellowship Grant.

Theme breakdown: Access to information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

In this information age, which began in the 20th century, information is a basic need to survive. Though Bangladesh has made tremendous progress in digitization and information dissemination, SRHR is barely considered a necessary element of life skill information. SRHR is still a taboo subject in Bangladesh. To talk about SRHR issues is very difficult for many who should talk about it such as parents, teachers, medical service providers, policymakers and researchers, and government officials. Each Government has a responsibility to improve public health and inform the people on how prevention is better than cure, on how to indulge in a healthy lifestyle. Due to the unavailability of the right and accessible information on family planning and contraceptives for instance and due to not having proper information about where to get these (Mostafa Kamal, 2012) many women get unwanted pregnancies. People in both urban and rural areas including youth and adolescents in Bangladesh face problems such as child marriage, dropping out of school, illegal abortion, maternal health problems, such as fistula, mental health problems etc. In other words, proper and accessible knowledge on SRHR issues could bring men, women, girls and boys positive, healthy and happy lives.

- **Access to SRHR information for adolescents**

Bangladesh has approximately 52 million adolescent and youth population, amounting to one-third of the country's total population (UNFPA, 2015). Essential information about SRHR is often not provided to them while they desperately need it. Bangladesh has the highest adolescent fertility rate in South Asia. 1 girl in 10 has given birth to a child before the age of 15 whereas 1 in 3 adolescents becomes a mother by the age of 19 (Islam et al., 2017). Sexuality education, and access to sexual health and rights services, remain taboo and is rarely taught in educational institutions, while some progress has been made. Among others, the Ministry of Education recently included comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) at the SSC level.

- **The need for accurate quality information on SRHR**

It has been found (Ahmed et al., 2015) that a low level of knowledge about SRHR, often is the result of the unavailability of accurate information. This may be due to the high acceptance rate of taking services from traditional healers, for example, kabiraj (traditional practitioners and these persons do not have any institutional education), and quacks (religious leaders of the community) (Rafei & Roy Chaudhury, 2002). On the other hand, unmarried adolescents and youth in rural and urban areas, get sometimes wrong information from their friends or families which may make them sensitive to risky sexual behaviour (resulting in GBV and unwanted pregnancies) and vulnerable to different diseases like HIV/AIDS, sexual transmitted infections (STIs) (*NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2017*).

- **The wide audience we want to reach:**

For the previous Knowledge Fairs, the audience has originated from urban organizations, but this time it will include rural participants too because these areas are more backdated and accurate information is less available and many traditional practices are applied in rural areas.

Access to accurate quality information on SRHR is a crucial need for people, in particular young people in urban as well as in rural areas. This need should be addressed properly in the first place by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as well as the Ministry of Education. But also traditional media such as Newspapers, television shows and websites should feel responsible for the accuracy of their information. They could make difficult situations and concepts understandable for a wide audience and provide a stage for different opinions and open debates.

Objectives of the researches

- to find evidence connecting 'Access to SRHR Information' in Bangladesh and set out recommendations for the improvement of policy and practice.
- Promote young researchers to be involved in hard-core research and to contribute to the work of knowledge through evidence.

Thematic topics for proposals

The theme 'Access to SRHR Information' has a broad perspective, however for the 2022 Young Researcher Fellowship Grant, we are requesting young students to submit innovative proposals connecting the above thematic areas. The following thematic topics are mentioned as examples and we encourage young researchers to submit new ideas that we could address as a knowledge gap.

1. *Access to information on MR and MRM for adolescents in urban slums*
2. *Access to information about contraceptives for adolescents in rural areas*
3. *Access to Information on sexual abuse for university students*
4. *Access to Information on gender identities for transgender youth*

Conditions to be applied

The to be submitted proposal must follow the conditions given below:

- You may apply as an individual, or as a team (maximum 4 researchers in a team)
- The Proposal must be connected to the above mentioned thematic topics
- The Research method must be based on **primary data collection (qualitative method is preferred)**
- The Proposal must include a dissemination plan of the research findings.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants (and team members) have to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- You Must be a Bangladeshi national
- Your Age must be 30 years or less by 31st December 2022
- You Must be currently pursuing Masters or PhD or have completed this not more than one year ago, in areas such as Social Science/Public Health/Development Studies/Gender Studies/Anthropology or any relevant discipline from any university in Bangladesh
- All applicants (and team members) must be a member of Share-Net Bangladesh. [Click here](#) to become a member.

Research Grant and duration

Share-Net Bangladesh will fund two proposals for the period of May 2022 - July 2022. Each grant is limited to 2,00,000 BDT (including VAT and TAX).

30% payment will be made upon signing the contract.

20% payment will be made upon receiving the first draft research paper.

50% payment will be made upon receiving the final research paper.

Deliverables

Following are the deliverables:

- The young researchers submit a first progress report after collecting data
- The young researchers present the draft paper to Share-Net Bangladesh secretariat
- The young researchers deliver the final paper after incorporating feedback from Share-Net Bangladesh secretariat and the main report should be not more than 30 pages excluding annexes

- The young researchers submit the final report including a one-pager summary
- The young researchers present the paper during the Knowledge Fair 2022 in September
- The young researchers must disseminate their findings (presentation/publication)

The research will be guided and supervised by the Share-Net Bangladesh secretariat.

Timeline

- The last date to submit the proposal is on the **15th April 2022**.
- Share-Net Bangladesh will announce and contact the winner on **25th April 2022**.
- The contract will be signed by **30th April, 2022**.
- The final research report must be delivered by **15th August, 2022**.

Requirements for application submission

- Completed application form (proposal) in a pdf format ([click here](#) to download the form)
- Scan copy of national ID card (NID) or passport in pdf or jpg format
- Recommendation letter from your supervisor or head of the department

Submission and Contact details

Application form (proposal) must be submitted via [this link](#) in pdf format (size should not be more than 5 MB)

For any query please contact (before 15th April, 2022)

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** Share-Net Bangladesh will have the copyright to publish and circulate the research through the platform. Without written permission from the Share-Net Bangladesh secretariat, the young researchers will refrain from publishing and presenting the paper to any national and international platform or conferences.