

SHARE-NET  
BANGLADESH



2023  
September

# 8TH ANNUAL KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON SRHR





# PREFACE

The Knowledge Fair on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is an annual event organised by Share-Net Bangladesh (SNBD) since 2016. Share-Net Bangladesh proudly presents the outcomes of the 8th Annual Knowledge Fair on SRHR 2023. The knowledge fair is a flagship event of Share-Net Bangladesh and has become the largest annual gathering of the SRHR community in Bangladesh. Share-Net Bangladesh is hosted by RedOrange Communications.

Every year more than 300 practitioners, activists, students, academicians, donors, policymakers, media, government officials and other relevant stakeholders working in the field of SRHR gather together to share and exchange their knowledge, network, challenges and best practices. It is the biggest event of knowledge brokering in Bangladesh on SRHR. The theme of the Fair is usually selected under the bigger trajectory of SRHR including an attractive agenda with different sessions, including plenary sessions, scientific paper presentations, poster presentations, stall exhibitions and the annual SRHR awards. All of these activities make the Knowledge Fair a unique and engaging experience.

Share-Net Bangladesh (SNBD) is one of the seven international hubs of ShareNet International (SNI) funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other country hubs are in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Colombia, Ethiopia, Jordan and the Netherlands. Share-Net Burkina Faso, Share-Net Ethiopia, and Share-Net Colombia are the newest country hubs established in 2021 whereas Share-Net Bangladesh, Share-Net Burundi, Share-Net Jordan and Share-Net Netherlands are the oldest ones. The 7 country hubs of this international platform are working together to address the knowledge gaps in SRHR nationally and regionally. Share-Net Bangladesh (SNBD) is the oldest and the largest country hub with more than 1800 practitioners and 168 NGOs as members.

The theme of “8th Knowledge Fair 2023” is “SRHR and Education”; SNBD aims to make SRHR-related knowledge, information and research accessible to the wider community of professionals and to encourage/enable cross-learning/sharing.

Reflecting SDG 3, SDG 4, and SDG 5, “SRHR and Education” is a cornerstone of the Bangladesh government’s commitment to empowering its citizens with essential knowledge about SRHR. The recent NCTB curriculum demonstrates the government’s dedication to providing SRHR education.

As the biggest platform on SRHR in Bangladesh, this knowledge fair provided an opportunity to bring everyone together and have a discussion and open dialogue to take forward the government’s agenda of addressing SRHR issues. The aim is to foster a collaborative environment to ensure that we are not working in silos. By uniting stakeholders, we seek to collaboratively address shortcomings and amplify the overall influence, ensuring a more comprehensive and effective approach towards our shared goals.

# SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS & TO-DO LIST

Drafted by

**Dr. Halida Hanum and Tasnia Ahmed**

Call for commitment SRHR and education for a smart Bangladesh- KF 2023

- 1.** Implementation of the government's existing commitments, including the ministries of health, education, and women and children's affairs, will mandate that civil servants understand the importance of implementing SRHR topics in government initiatives, rules, and regulations.
- 2.** Instructions should be sent to school buildings and all institutional facilities to make proper toilets available and offer sanitary napkins to all female students and teachers.
- 3.** Improve the quality of education by including SRHR in schools.
- 4.** Teachers should get SRHR orientation and be assigned the responsibility of providing thorough or comprehensive sexual education and integrating gender norms into their daily work.
- 5.** SRHR components must be included in the b.ed. or bachelor of education (professional) programme.
- 6.** Teachers and parents are role models for youth and adolescents. They have to show respect to their daughters, students, female colleagues, etc.
- 7.** Parents should be motivated to prevent child marriage and school dropouts, especially for girls.

- 8.** The service providers, including the FWA, FWV will be properly oriented to providing knowledge and information in the school programs.
- 9.** The school will offer sensitisation programmes to the guardians and the parents and will arrange these in the communities to make all understand the priority of SRHR knowledge, quality service, information, and accessibility.
- 10.** Further study regarding SRHR education is needed and will be supported by well-informed data and evidence so that initiatives to promote SRHR will be effective and efficient in Bangladesh.
- 11.** A proper monitoring and evaluation system will inform and help update the implementation of SRHR in different aspects of education.
- 12.** The power of entertainment may make it easier to talk about SRHR and education in many ways, especially through education and also through entertainment.
- 13.** Professionals and students need access to all types of media and computer programmes to update their knowledge of SRHR and better understand lifestyle education and comprehensive sexuality education as well.
- 14.** Participation of inclusive and diversified people such as people with disabilities (PWD), young people, transgender people, indigenous persons, and violence survivors; especially females, particularly need compassion.
- 15.** Effective SRH treatments and proper education about SRHR can thereby increase their well-being and skills.
- 16.** All girls and women need to be respected, and those who are at risk or have experienced gender-based violence (GBV) must be addressed to protect their human rights.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed guests who made the 8th SRHR Knowledge Fair successful with their presence. It was an honour to have distinguished dignitaries, including government officials, NGO and INGO representatives, enrich our event. Special thanks to **Asaduzzaman Noor MP**, Former Minister of Cultural Affairs for being the chief guest of the thematic session 1 and for illuminating the fair with his kind presence, **Mr. Md. Kamal Hossain**, Secretary of the Technical and Madrasah Education Division, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for being the chief guest during the opening session. We also extend our thanks to Mr. **Belayet Hossain Talukder**, Additional Secretary of the Secondary and Higher Education Division at the Ministry of Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, for his enlightening contributions as special guest. We thank **Prof. Dr. Md. Nizamul Karim**, Director General, National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), **Professor Mohammad Farhadul Islam**, Chairman, National Curriculum and Textbook Board, **Mr. Habibur Rahman**, Director General, Directorate Of Madrasah Education for gracing with their valuable remarks as chief guests of different thematic session plenaries. Thanks to **Professor Dr. Sayeda Shahina Subhan**, Director, Centre for Medical Education (CME), Directorate General of Medical Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as Special guest at the closing session.

While talking about SRHR and Education, the **Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE)** plays a crucial role through its curriculum and educational initiatives. We would like to thank DSHE for their valuable guidance In preparation for this event. A heartfelt thanks to **Professor Dr. AQM Shafiul Azam**, Director of the Planning and Development Wing at the Directorate Of Secondary & Higher Education, for sharing his invaluable insights as keynote and guidance at each step of the way.

We would like to thank **Aspire to Innovate (A2i)** of the Cabinet Division and ICT Division, supported by UNDP Bangladesh for being a '**Strategic Partner**' as Aspire to Innovate (a2i) is one of the leading stakeholders and has unlimited contributions to health, education, economics, digitalisation, and other sectors to establish smart Bangladesh.

Our sincere appreciation to **Ms. Kristine Blokhuis**, the Country Representative of UNFPA, whose presence added immense value to our event as special guest at the opening session.

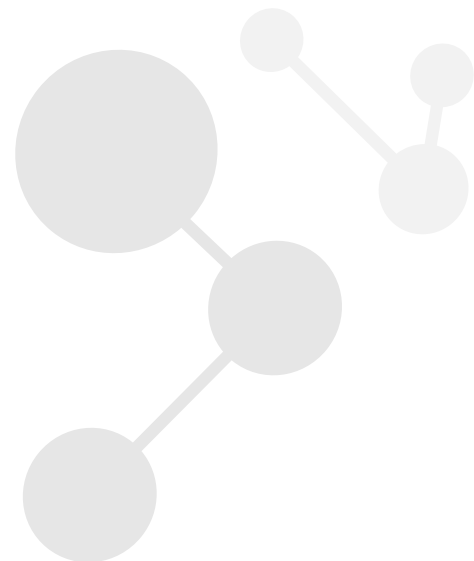
The closing session was privileged to **Thijs Woudstra**, Deputy Head of the Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Embassy as chief guest and to **Dr. Bernd Spanier**, Deputy Ambassador of the European Union (EU) as special guest.

Thanks to **Asia Pacific Alliance (APA), News 24, SERAC Bangladesh and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** for their wonderful moderation and facilitation of different plenaries. Thanks to the **Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), University of Dhaka and SERAC Bangladesh** for chairing valuable plenary sessions. Thanks to **RTM Al-Kabir Technical University, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, University of Dhaka, Plan International, Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation (IWF), Population Services and Training Center (PSTC), Disabled Rehabilitation and Research Association (DRRA)** to join as guest speakers in different sessions.

Thanks to our vibrant presenters from **A2i, Icddr'b, Cybernetic Systems Ltd, Share-Net Bangladesh Young Research Fellows of 2023 and RedOrange Communications.**

Special thanks to **Dr. Halida Hanum**, MBBS, MPH. Dr. PH. Senior Associate, Center for Human Nutrition, Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Health and Gender Advisor, RedOrange Communications and **Tasnia Ahmed**, Program Manager, SERAC Bangladesh for preparing the conference narrative and guiding document of the whole session.

More than **150 organisations and 350 individuals** joined the knowledge fair **physically** and more than **100 participants** joined **online**. We would like to thank the heart of Share Net Bangladesh, and **our members** and We are also deeply appreciative of the active participation in our vibrant parallel sessions, particularly the Regional Session and Youth Sessions, which hosted more than 50 engaged participants in each. Furthermore, we express our gratitude for the dedication and commitment displayed by individuals in the fields of SRHR and Education, acknowledged through the presentation of awards in three significant categories. The 8th SRHR Knowledge Fair served as a dynamic platform, fostering insightful discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among stakeholders dedicated to advancing SRHR and education in Bangladesh. Share-Net Bangladesh remains steadfast in its commitment to nurturing partnerships and driving positive change, leading towards a smarter and more informed society.



# WELCOME SPEECH

**Arnob Chakrabarty (Chair)**  
**Managing Director**  
**RedOrange Communications.**  
**Project Director**  
**Share-Net Bangladesh.**



The Knowledge Fair, organised by Share-Net, has become the largest event of its kind in Bangladesh and has become a vital platform for the SRHR community.

The fair aims to contribute to policy and practice for better sexual reproductive health and rights in Bangladesh, working closely with the government. The theme of the Knowledge Fair is “SRHR and Education for SMART BANGLADESH,” and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DISHE) of the Ministry of Education guided the preparation.

Bangladesh, once the most prosperous region in the subcontinent, is now facing severe challenges in SRHR,

including the high rate of child marriage, unwanted pregnancies, and violence by intimate partners. Intervention from health services or law enforcement alone is insufficient.

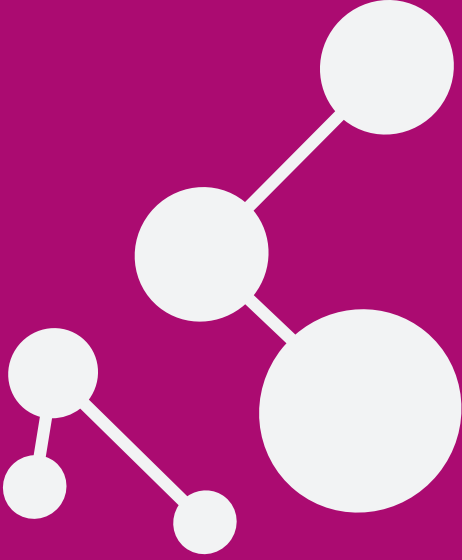
The role of education in addressing these challenges is being explored, and the future generation’s education programme may be appropriate for addressing these issues. The Knowledge Fair aims to help find answers to these questions.

He concluded with a few lines from Tagore-

**“Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high;  
Where knowledge is free;  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;  
Where words come out, from the depth of truth.”**

“চিত্ত যেথা ভয়শূন্য, উচ্চ যেথা শির;  
জ্ঞান যেথা মুক্ত; যেথা গৃহের প্রাচীর;  
আপন প্রাঙ্গণতলে দিবসশর্বরী  
বসুধারে রাখে নাই থগু ক্ষুদ্র করি;  
যেথা বাক্য হৃদয়ের উৎসমুখ হতে.  
উচ্ছসিয়া উঠে, যেথা নির্বারিত স্রোতে।”





**Dorine Thomissen  
(Share-Net International  
Representative)  
SRHR Advisor at KIT Royal  
Tropical Institute & Coordinator  
of Share-Net International.**

Share-Net International, an SRHR knowledge platform hosted by KIT Royal Tropical Institute in the Netherlands, is promoting knowledge sharing on SRHR within countries and among hubs. The event is a collaboration between Share-Net Bangladesh, A2i (Aspire to Innovate), and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE). The fair aims to make it a successful event, with the support of the government. Adolescents spend a significant portion of their lives in schools, and when SRHR is part of education, they can gain proper knowledge about child marriage, side effects of early pregnancy, menstrual hygiene management, gender-based violence (GBV), reproductive health rights, sexual health, and other components of SRHR.



Share-Net International and other country hubs take rights seriously and invite everyone to share and disseminate knowledge through a rights-based approach. The event is expected to provide an opportunity for discussions and presentations on the activities of SRHR activities at the grassroots level. The 8th SRHR Knowledge Fair organised by Share-Net Bangladesh focuses on 'SRHR and Education' for Smart Bangladesh, with the theme 'SRHR and Education'.

# OPENING SESSION



**Md. Kamal Hossain  
(Chief Guest)**  
**Senior Secretary, Technical  
and Madrasah Education  
Division, Ministry of Education,  
Government of the People's  
Republic of Bangladesh.**

---

Mr. Kamal Hossain stressed the importance of considering our social context, where discussing SRHR, especially topics related to sexuality, is often seen as taboo. He recognised the uniqueness of every society but expressed the belief that initiatives like the Knowledge Fair could help break this taboo.

Government is working on newly designed curriculum, including SRHR-related chapters, will be implemented starting in grade 6, emphasising the importance of age-appropriate education.



**Belayet Hossain Talukder**  
**(Special guest)**  
**Additional Secretary, Secondary**  
**and Higher Education Division,**  
**Ministry of Education,**  
**Government of the People’s**  
**Republic of Bangladesh.**

He discussed the challenges posed by our social, historical, and religious context, acknowledging the complexity of addressing SRHR issues within this backdrop. Achieving our goal of establishing strong SRHR practices may prove to be a challenging endeavour.



**Ms. Kristine Blokhuis**  
**(Special guest)**  
**Country Representative, UNFPA.**

The situation in Bangladesh regarding SRHR has improved. However, there are still numerous areas where significant efforts are needed. For instance, many girls still lack access to SRHR services.

The fertility rate remains high in South Asia, and Bangladesh is no exception. Adolescents are often compelled to become pregnant to demonstrate their fertility, which can lead to serious consequences, including domestic violence.

Bangladesh is making commendable efforts in this sector, aligning with the 'Vision 2041' initiative. Furthermore, the government is open to collaboration with like-minded organisations.

UNFPA will continue its support for the government in addressing SRHR issues.



**Professor Dr. AQM Shafiul Azam  
(Keynote presenter)  
Director, Planning and  
Development Wing, Directorate Of  
Secondary & Higher Education.**

The fundamental premise for advocating for SRHR lies in recognising SRH as a fundamental human right. To advance public health, we must, in turn, advance human rights. Beyond this, promoting SRHR is crucial for achieving gender equality, empowering individuals, reducing poverty, and enhancing economic productivity.

In this context, the inclusion of SRHR education in the national curriculum holds significant potential for raising awareness among adolescents at the right stage of their development.

The event is a collaboration between Share-Net Bangladesh, A2i (Aspire to Innovate), and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE). The fair aims to make it a successful event, with the government’s support.

Adolescents spend a significant portion of their lives in schools, and when SRHR is part of education, they can gain proper knowledge about child marriage, early pregnancy side effects, menstrual hygiene management, gender-based violence, reproductive health rights, sexual health, and other components.

A Share-Net International and other country hubs take rights seriously and invite everyone to share and disseminate knowledge with a rights-based approach.

The event is expected to provide an opportunity for discussions and presentations on grassroots SRHR activities. The 8th SRHR Knowledge Fair by Share-Net Bangladesh focuses on ‘SRHR and Education’ for Smart Bangladesh, with the theme ‘SRHR and Education’.

The government has also initiated a helpline app called “Alapon,” which provides SRHR-related services via phone calls.

Government of Bangladesh has taken various steps. Such as implementing National Population Policy, Youth-friendly Health Services, Family Planning Programmes, Awareness Raising Campaigns, Maternal and Child-Friendly Programmes, Policy Development and Advocacy, Providing Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

The Government of Bangladesh has embarked on a transformative initiative known as Generation Breakthrough (2014–2022), aimed at educating adolescents about SRHR and gender-based violence (GBV). This initiative has reached over 150,000 adolescent boys and girls in 300 schools and 50 madrasas.

The National Adolescent Health Strategy 2017–2030 outlines four strategic directions and two cross-cutting issues (Social and Behaviour Change Communication, and Strengthening Health Systems) as part of the comprehensive effort to improve SRHR in Bangladesh.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Md. Kamal Hossain (Chief Guest)**

- Providing Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) to more Madrasas.
- Sensitising Mothers /Parents
- Implementing 'Generation Breakthrough' through various games and publications, aiming to engage and educate young people effectively on SRHR topics.

## **Professor Dr. AQM Shafiu Azam (Keynote presenter)**

- Taking more initiatives to ensure the active involvement of the Ministry of Education.
- Adding essential topics related to adolescent health to the grade 8–9 curriculum, such as adolescent nutrition, HIV and STIs, peer pressure, consent, drug addiction, and pubertal stigma.
- Facilitating proper coordination and collaboration among the stakeholders.

## **Ms. Kristine Blokhuis (Special guest)**

- Focusing on the Safety of Girls both in the physical and virtual realms. This includes safeguarding their well-being in matters related to their sexuality.
- Ensuring access to quality education to prevent child marriages.

## **Belayet Hossain Talukder (Special guest)**

- Creating more Collaboration and Sharing more Knowledge. It is imperative that various domestic and international NGOs and CSOs, including UNFPA, UNICEF, Share-Net, and others, work together collaboratively.



# CONFERENCE NARRATIVE:

## SITUATION OF SRHR AND EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH



**Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter  
(Presenter)**  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg  
School of Public Health, and  
Gender Advisor, RedOrange  
Communications.

---

Recognising that progress is being made, it's clear that the rate of progress in addressing SRHR issues is currently too slow.



**Tasnia Ahmed  
(Presenter)**  
Program Manager, SERAC  
Bangladesh.

---

Nowadays, we discuss gender equality a lot. But in a simple scenario, where we can think of an adolescent girl who cannot attend her classes due to her menstruation, would the school authority allow her absence? In most cases, the answer would be “no”.



The word "sexuality" is a taboo in Bangladesh

'child sexual education' is a widely unacceptable phrase in our society

'National Adolescent Health Strategy', some chapters have been added to the textbooks. However, teachers do not discuss the topics in classrooms.

So eventually, the addition of the chapters goes in vain..

3 Crores adolescents in Bangladesh.

50% girls and 50% boys.

43% of female adolescents experience violence from their partners. (BBS 2015)

Potential mortality rate for adolescents who conceive under the age of 18 is twice as high as that for those who conceive later

It increases fivefold when the mother's age is under 16.



**Prof. Dr. Md. Nizamul Karim  
(Chief guest)**

---

Director General, National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM).



**Dr. Abu Naser Zafar Ullah  
(Guest speaker)**

---

Vice Chancellor, RTM Al-Kabir Technical University.



**Mushfiqua Zaman Satiar  
(Guest speaker)**

---

Senior Policy Advisor-Social Sector, Focal Person for SRHR, Gender and Youth, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



**Ella de Voogd  
(Moderator/Chair)**

---

Senior Advisor, RedOrange, Former First Secretary, SRHR and Gender Bangladesh, The Kingdom of the Netherlands to Bangladesh.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter (Presenter)**

- Spreading proper knowledge in a proper way. It is crucial because abundant knowledge and various projects are available, but they often exist in scattered forms.
- Encouraging teachers to overcome any stigma that makes them uncomfortable discussing SRHR in the classroom.
- Running open and informed discussions that are essential for the well-being of adolescents.
- Accelerating our efforts in this regard.

## **Prof. Dr. Md. Nizamul Karim (Chief guest)**

- Providing training to teachers to make them aware of their responsibility in teaching SRHR topics properly.
- Including SRHR in the teacher training module which is comprised of five modules. Facilitating proper coordination and collaboration among the stakeholders.

## **Mushfiqa Zaman Satiar (Guest speaker)**

- Engaging men and boys in SRHR issues as we generally consider that the issue of SRHR is only for girls, but we should not exclude boys from the issue.

## **Tasnia Ahmed (Presenter)**

- Providing training on how to talk about SRHR in classrooms while they are obtaining their B.Ed. degree.
- Finding alternative but acceptable words to use in Bangladesh so that we can talk about SRHR more comfortably.

# “SRHR AND EDUCATION” THROUGH THE POWER OF ENTERTAINMENT

## THEMATIC SESSION 1



**Imdadul Hoque Hridoy  
(Comedian)**

Many of us lack substantial knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Furthermore, we often struggle with the term ‘sexuality’, which should ideally have a more open and accepting connotation.

Despite our discomfort with the concept of sexuality, we carry an underlying fear about our own sexual prowess.

At times, we question our ability to engage in intercourse confidently. As a result, some of us may find ourselves discreetly drawn to street vendors selling purported sexual performance-enhancing medicines, even though many of these products are, in fact, fraudulent.



**Sirajul Hossain  
(Presenter)  
Managing Director & CEO,  
Cybernetic Systems Ltd.**

Like other speakers, Mr. Sirajul Hossain acknowledged the difficulty of discussing SRHR openly in Bangladesh, despite the issue’s significance in breaking taboos. He emphasised that the entertainment sector was expected to play a key role in addressing these problems, but he voiced worry that it might not be moving in the correct direction.



**Asaduzzaman Noor MP  
(Chief guest)**

Former Minister of Cultural Affairs.

**MS Monira Rahman  
(Guest speaker)**

Country Lead at Mental Health First Aid Bangladesh  
Founder & Executive Director - Innovation for  
Wellbeing Foundation (IWF).

**Dr. Sayed Saikh Imtiaz  
(Guest speaker)**

Professor at the Department of Women and Gender  
Studies, University of Dhaka.

**Syed Nuruddin Shakhawat  
(Guest speaker)**

CSE Advisor, Plan International.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Asaduzzaman Noor MP (Chief guest)**

- Adopting co-education from the nursery grade.
- Following an innovative approach, saying, “Similar to Sisimpur, we can introduce programmes designed to scientifically educate children and adolescents about SRHR.
- Collaborating and working unitedly to address SRHR through the entertainment industry
- Organising dialogues among diverse stakeholders, including actors, directors, artists, NGOs, and others, would be a constructive step in this direction.”

## **Syed Nuruddin Shakhawat (Guest speaker)**

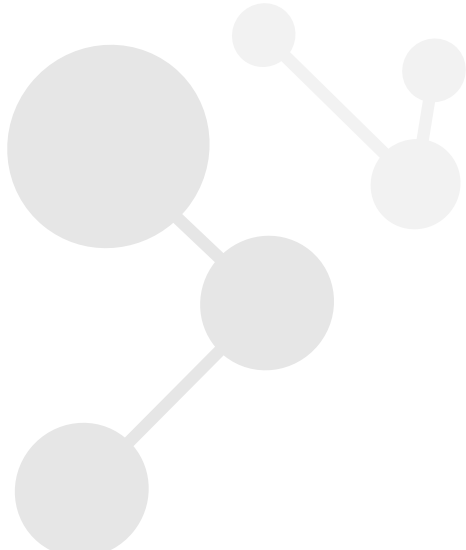
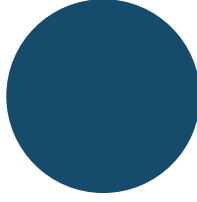

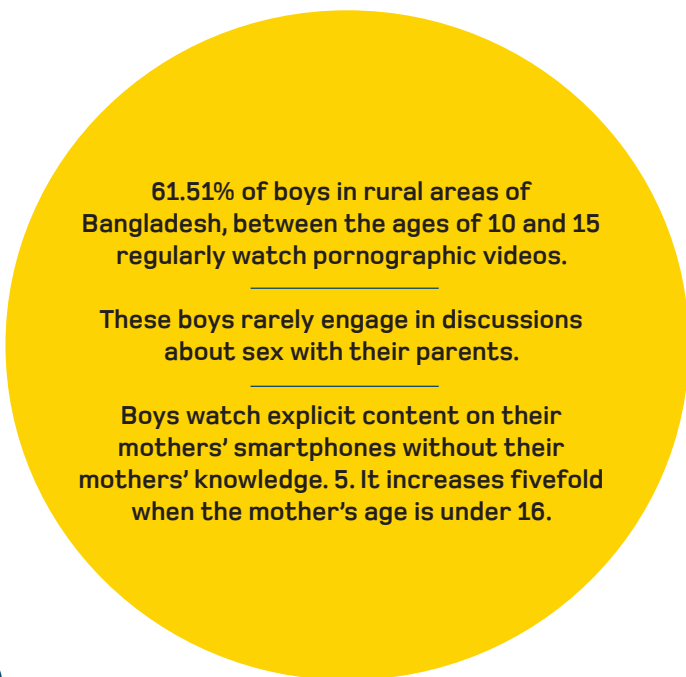
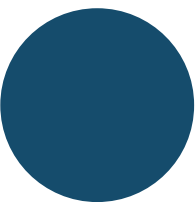
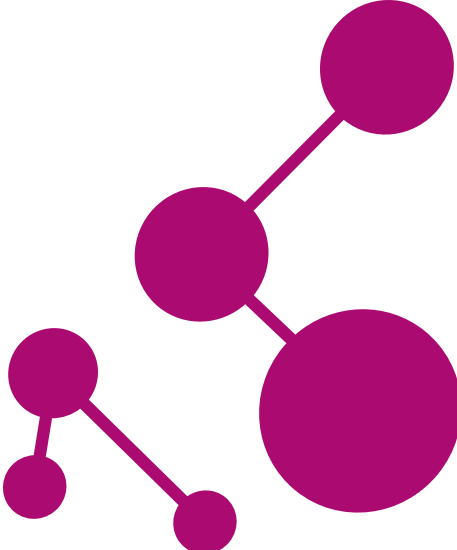
- Building a rich repository of SRHR-related knowledge.
- Making hubs to gather age-appropriate information to help individuals make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.
- Running education and awareness campaigns can contribute to fostering healthy relationships and behaviours, ensuring that individuals do not resort to aggression towards their partners.

## **MS Monira Rahman (Guest speaker)**

- Providing Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) to the students to stop the exploitation of females to promote healthy and respectful relationships.
- Providing age-appropriate and accurate information to young people is essential to helping them navigate this stage of development.

## **Dr. Sayed Saikh Imtiaz (Guest speaker)**

- Developing a comprehensive educational ecosystem to provide adolescents with accurate and healthy information about SRHR.



**61.51% of boys in rural areas of Bangladesh, between the ages of 10 and 15 regularly watch pornographic videos.**

**These boys rarely engage in discussions about sex with their parents.**

**Boys watch explicit content on their mothers' smartphones without their mothers' knowledge. 5. It increases fivefold when the mother's age is under 16.**

# SRHR AND EDUCATION: HOW TO ACHIEVE QUALITY

## THEMATIC SESSION 2



**Samiul Islam (Presenter)**  
**Senior Manager**  
**(Strategic Communications),**  
**RedOrange Communications**

Presentation on Best School for Girls (A successful model for improving SRHR in schools)  
This presentation highlighted the main focus of SRHR in entertainment first and information second for best practice of SRHR. Although SRHR is also overloaded with information that comes through infotainment and edutainment the presenter emphasized the point that the message through entertainment eventually leads the information to a mass audience.



**Sarana Chowdhury and**  
**Abdullah Rifat**  
**MA Student, Department of**  
**Anthropology, SUST,**  
**SNBD Young Researcher**  
**Fellowship Winner 2023.**

The presentation was on Access and Contribution of Male Adolescents in Influencing the Female Adolescents About “SRHR: a Qualitative Study in Urban Slum: Sylhet”.

The presentation’s main focus was to emphasise SRHR education for both genders about SRHR education. Increasing SRHR knowledge is crucial to both genders as this awareness and knowledge allows female adolescents and adults to get support from their male counterparts.



**21% of adolescents in risk STIs or  
unplanned pregnancy  
(WHO-Euro 2017)**

**Adolescents are ill-prepared for  
SRHR (UNFPA,2015)**

**52% male adolescents never  
heard STD (BRAC, 2021)**



## Professor Mohammad Farhadul Islam (Chief Guest)

Chairman, National Curriculum and Textbook Board.

## Muhammad Munir Hussain (Moderator)

(National Program Officer-Adolescent & Youth, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

## Mr. Abdul Latif Mollah (Chair)

Line Director, Information Education, Motivation (IEM), Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP).

## Julia Ahmed (Guest Speaker)

Independent Consultant and SRHR expert

## Muhammad Rokon Uddin

Deputy Program Manager (FP-FSD), DGFP  
Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP)

## Dr. Noor Mohammad (Guest Speaker)

Executive Director, Population Services and Training Center (PSTC)



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Professor Mohammad Farhadul Islam, (Chief Guest)**

- Revising the study, focusing on SRHR and eradicating the myth of social understanding.
- Emphasising mental health support services for school children for SRHR quality education.

## **Muhammad Rokon Uddin (Guest speaker)**

- Updating adolescent health strategy with sufficient training modules for successful implementation of SRHR and education.
- Digitalising training modules to reach a wide audience.
- Collaborating between the education sector and the health sector through curriculum content and focused assessment of the health skills of students in the year-end final evaluation.

## **Dr Julia Ahmed (Guest Speakers)**

- Accurating and making available thorough information about SRHR.
- Adopting collaborative approaches from ministries and other stakeholders to contribute to SRHR quality education

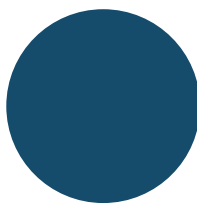

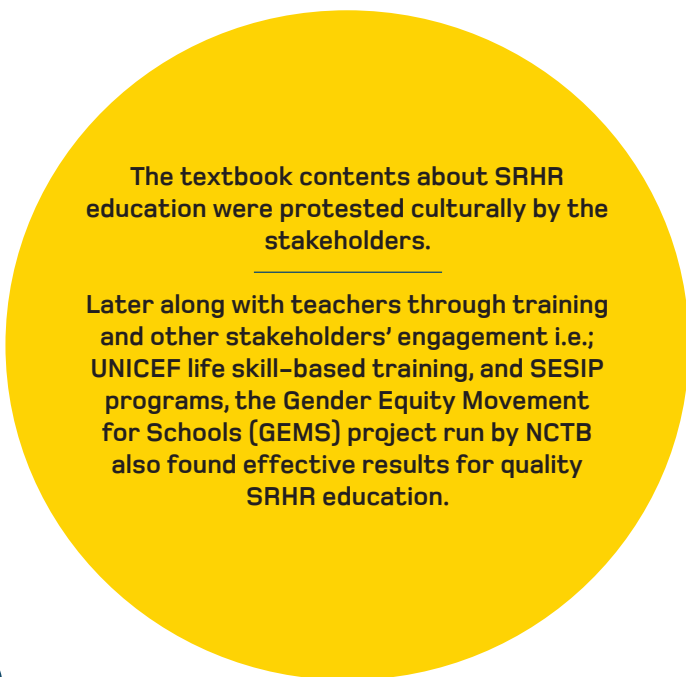
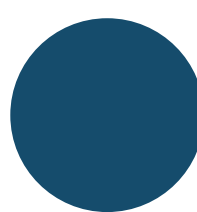
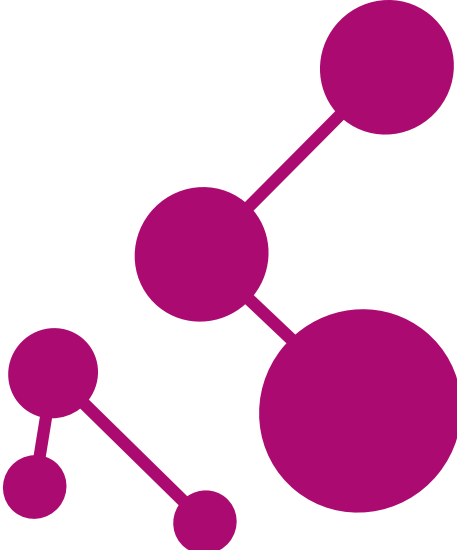
## **Dr. Noor Mohammad, (Guest speaker)**

- Selecting topics for better study results to direct the SRHR program strategies in a more effective way.
- Coordinating all sectors of government and nongovernment stakeholders involved with SRHR Education.
- Utilising institutional knowledge from previous works for better quality achievement.
- Preparing the teachers to teach students about SRHR content with appropriate presentation based on the social and country context.

## **Mr. Abdul Latif Mollah (Chair) Line Director**

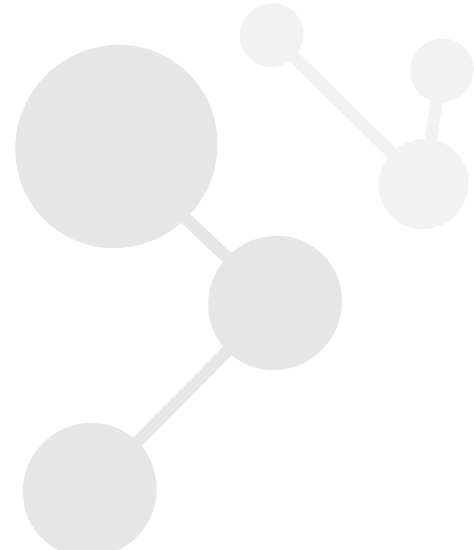
- Including CSE in the final evaluation/ exams system
- Developing an app that will be introduced to the target audiences.
- Increasing quality through media and field-level mass communication.
- Introducing to co-education system to contribute to attitude and social changes for quality SRHR education.





The textbook contents about SRHR education were protested culturally by the stakeholders.

Later along with teachers through training and other stakeholders' engagement i.e.; UNICEF life skill-based training, and SESIP programs, the Gender Equity Movement for Schools (GEMS) project run by NCTB also found effective results for quality SRHR education.



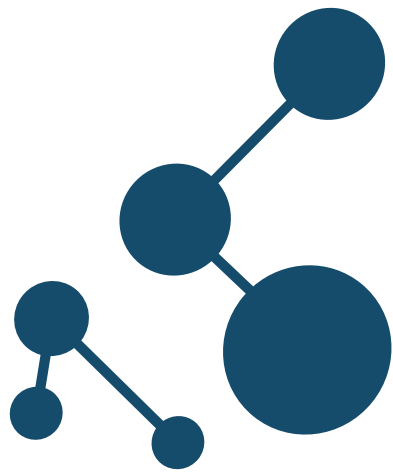
# PARALLEL REGIONAL SESSION: EXPERIENCE ON SRHR AND EDUCATION FROM THE REGION



**Alexandra Johns (Facilitator)**  
**Executive Director,**  
**Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and**  
**Reproductive Health and Rights**

## **Regional Advocacy for SRHR & Education: Alexandra Johns**

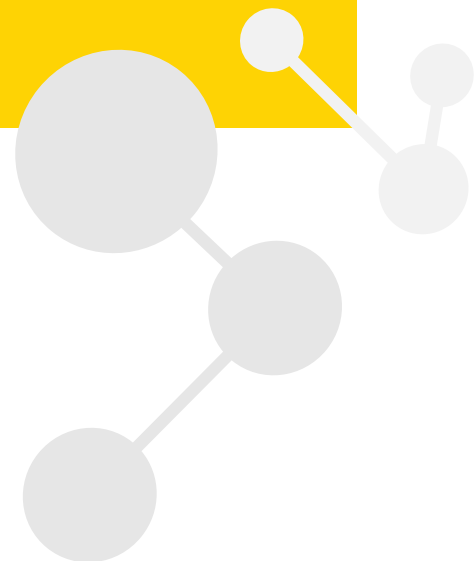
- In the context of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in the Asia Pacific, there are several key advocacy entry-points.
- These include leveraging international frameworks like the ICPD Programme of Action, Agenda 2030 (SDGs), and engaging with Human Rights Council mechanisms.
- A 2021 UNESCO survey revealed that while most countries have SRHR-related policies, the quality and comprehensiveness of CSE vary.
- Notably, CSE often lacks a clear monitoring system, with information from peers and the internet becoming more influential than schools.
- A Nepal case study further highlighted the need for improved teacher training and curriculum development to enhance CSE delivery and ensure comprehensive education on SRHR.



**SM Shaikat (Facilitator)**  
**Executive Director,**  
**SERAC–Bangladesh**

#### **SRHR Evidence Generation – Mini–Pilot Result: SM Shaikat**

- Teachers, including the formal and non-formal (religious leaders and madrasa’s teachers), should be provided training/knowledge in CSE facilitation skills.
- The government should prioritize setting up sufficient numbers of UHSCs and provide information to adolescents on how to access services.
- An urgent need to provide and improve access to youth-friendly SRH services that are confidential, non-judgmental, non-discriminatory, and affordable.
- Adolescent girls should be empowered and educated on the preventative steps to encounter gender-based violence.



# LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: INCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO SRHR EDUCATION

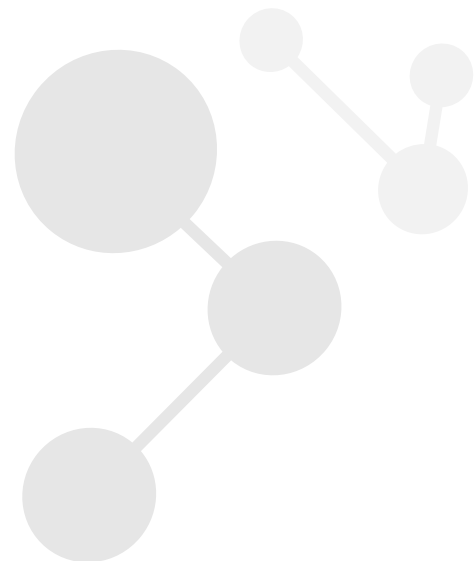
## THEMATIC SESSION 3

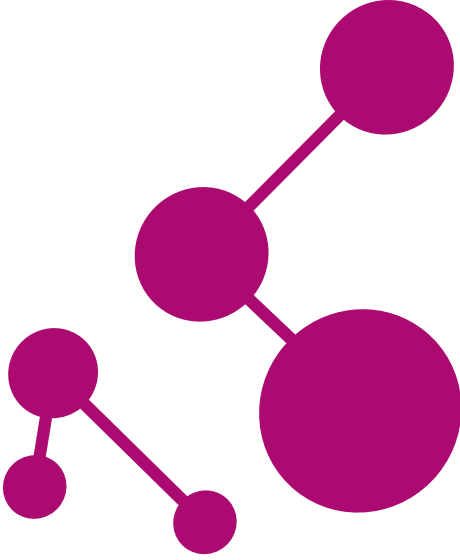
**Sabiha Jannat, Abu Raihan and Ahmadullah Omeel**  
**(Presenter)**  
**MA Student,**  
**Department of Sociology, DU,**  
**SNBD Young Researcher Fellowship Winner 2023**

---

Topic of presentation: Exploring SRHR Education for Adolescents in Qaumi and Alia Madrasahs: A Study in Brahmanbaria District

This presentation highlighted SRHR education status and challenges in the Qaumi and alia madrasa of Bangladesh. The study was conducted in a qualitative method where the study team found that madrasa students have very limited knowledge about sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, and other health hygiene problems. Whereas SRHR educational content is fully aligned with Islamic values and cultures which is also a philosophy of madrasa education in Islamic schools.





SRHR-related topics are sometimes ignored in the classroom

Teachers do not discuss the SRHR-related topics elaborately

Questions about SRHR-related topics are included in the question paper

No assignments are given to the students on SRHR-related topics.





**Dr. Hassan Rushekh Mahmood  
(Presenter)**

**Senior Research Investigator at  
the Maternal and Child Health,  
Division, icddr,b.**

The presentation was on an SRHR app named “Mukhorito” to reach school students about increasing SRHR awareness through piloting in school amongst teachers and students to increase peer interaction for SRHR knowledge. The main concern of the app was to facilitate teachers to teach SRHR education to adolescent students. This app will support the government in health programs, food and nutrition for adolescents, preventing violence against adolescents, and the mental health of school adolescents. This app will facilitate the school adolescents to communicate and share their school culture to circulate awareness and knowledge. The presenter expects the knowledge fair activities will accelerate the positive changes in SRHR education.

**Adolescent Physical and Mental Changes**

**Adolescent Food and Nutrition**

**Menstruation and Wet Dreams**

**Gender and Gender-Based Violence**

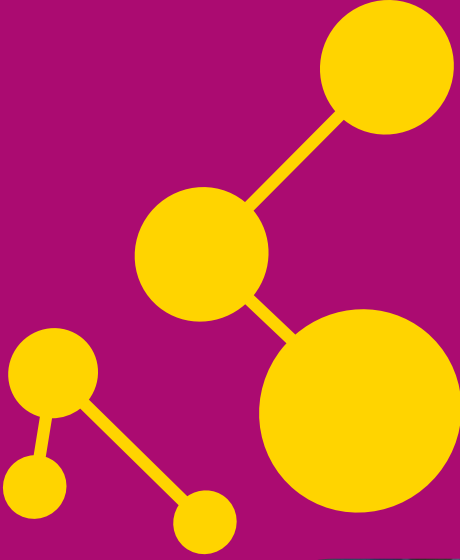
**Reproductive Healthcare**

**Child Marriage**

**Safe Pregnancy and Motherhood**

**Adolescent Dangerous Behaviour and  
Sexually Transmitted Illness**





**Md Shefatul Islam (Presenter)  
Education Technology Expert,  
Aspire to Innovate of the ICT  
Division and the Cabinet Division  
supported by UNDP**

---

This presentation was focused on the SRHR education spreading program through an online platform named “KONNECT”. The concept of the initiative is to address the challenges of reaching most adolescents of 13-18 years old. The contents of this platform included several types of government programs which address SRHR issues such as the newly introduced subjects to the curriculum etc. This platform also collects information from the students. Lastly, the presenter invited all the participants of the fair to share if they have any printed or digital content to via this online platform.

**Safe Online platform for reaching the  
last mile**

---

**Bridging with Experts**

---

**Online & Offline content for learning**

---

**Face to face facilitation with the help of  
National & International stakeholders**

# PARALLEL YOUTH SESSION: NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US



**SM Shaikat**  
Executive Director  
SERAC Bangladesh

**Md Sahariar Hasan Jiisun**  
Founder, Bloodman  
National Consultant for a2i, ICT division



**Sakib Bin Rashid**  
Consultant  
10 Minute School

**Ayesha Rahman Chowdhury**  
Senior Research Assistant  
Maternal and Child Health Division, icddr,b





### Women Of The Future: A Reflection on Sexual And Reproductive Health And Rights Of Adolescent Girls

- Every two minutes, a preventable pregnancy-related death occurs, according to the UN (2020).
- 95% of adolescent births happen in developing nations, with Bangladesh's adolescent birth rate at 74 per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 in 2023.
- The maternal mortality ratio in Bangladesh was 123 per 100,000 live births in 2020, highlighting the urgent need for improved sexual and reproductive health and rights for adolescent girls.

### HopeBox: A Contribution for the Adolescent Orphan Girls to Claim their Choices to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Knowledge

- The project involves designing age-appropriate and context-specific resources for SRHR, including visually-stimulating booklets and interactive workshops.
- The first Co-design workshop, conducted on May 21, 2023, involved key stakeholders from government agencies, NGOs, and research organizations.
- The government expressed interest in integrating research findings into policy, and discussions highlighted the social and gender-related challenges in implementing SRHR knowledge and practices among orphaned adolescent girls.





**Dr Farhana Huq**  
**(Moderator)**  
SRHR Expert



**Mr. Habibur Rahman**  
**(Chief Guest)**  
Director General, Directorate Of Madrasah Education.



**Farida Yesmin,**  
**(Guest Speaker)**  
Executive Director, Disabled Rehabilitation and  
Research Association (DRRA).

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Mr. Habibur Rahman (Chief Guest)

- Making SRHR education more generalized to all levels of adolescents and establishing collaboration and coordination amongst the governmental, nongovernmental, and International organisational activities.
- Prioritising SRHR education for other nonformal education systems to reach marginalised groups.

## Farida Yesmin (Guest Speaker)

- Maximising usage of existing platforms to reach the target adolescents as per their capacity and also easily accessible and reachable.
- Diverting attitude and budget focus to SRHR education from the top level.

The situation was that the students could respond but the master trainer could not due to shame, social norms, and even because of their overloaded information.



# KNOWLEDGE FAIR FINALE AND AWARD GIVING

**Professor Dr. Sayeda Shahina Subhan  
(Special guest)**  
Director, Centre for Medical  
Education (CME), Directorate General  
of Medical Education, Ministry of  
Health and Family Welfare.

Started with the popular quote of Napoleon Bonaparte, “Give me an educated mother, and I shall promise you the birth of a civilised, educated nation”, Professor Shahina expressed how important it is for SRHR to build up a better nation in her speech. She said that SRHR is one of the pivotal keys to a country’s progress by improving health services, economic development, and the well-being of the people. To attain the SDGs, universal health coverage, and the 2041 smart Bangladesh plan, addressing SRHR properly is so important.



She ended her speech with part of a poem by Kazi Nazrul Islam.

**“All that is great in the world, eternal and benevolent,  
Half of it is created by women, and half by men.  
All the sins, sufferings, and tears that the world has seen,  
Half of them are brought by men, and half by women.”**

“বিশ্বের যা কিছু মহান সৃষ্টি চির কল্যাণকর  
অর্ধেক তার করিয়াছে নারী, অর্ধেক তার নর।  
বিশ্বে যা কিছু এল পাপ তাপ বেদনা অশ্রুবারি,  
অর্ধেক তার আনিয়াছে নর অর্ধেক তার নারী”

Around 30 million women do not have  
access to safe delivery systems in  
developing countries.

Around 200 million women do not know how  
to use modern contraceptives  
(Lancet Commission report for 2018)



**Thijs Woudstra**  
**(Chief guest)**  
**Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of**  
**the Kingdom of the Netherlands.**

Helping and sharing experiences with each other is the best way to learn about SRHR. Many literature reviews show that comprehensive sex education promotes healthy sexual behaviours, reduces sexual activity, reduces the number of sexual partners, and increases the use of contraceptives.

He ended his speech by applauding the government and CSOs' restless efforts in empowering women and by thanking government officials, the Dutch Embassy, a2i, Share-Net Bangladesh, and RedOrange Communications.



**Dr Bernd Spanier**  
**(Special guest)**  
**Deputy Head of Delegation, EU**  
**Delegation to Bangladesh.**

SRHR is not just a matter of knowledge; it's a cornerstone of individual well-being, ensuring gender equality, and attaining the SDGs. It plays an instrumental role in decreasing the death rate of pregnant women and infants. Investing in SRHR is actually investing to shape a brighter future for Bangladesh. The EU aims to support Bangladesh in creating a more equitable society, particularly at all levels of education—primary, secondary, and non-formal education. Additionally, they want to increase access to education, enhance teachers' qualifications, and improve the completion rate of school education.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is supporting Bangladesh in ensuring everyone's access to CSE, wherein children and adolescents can have appropriate access to evidence-based knowledge about SRHR.

Especially, they want the girls to make wise decisions regarding building relationships and making safe and positive choices about sexuality and health.

The EU aims to support Bangladesh in creating a more equitable society,

# SHARE-NET BANGLADESH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNITION

## Dr. Ubaidur Rob

Dr. Ubaidur Rob, an esteemed professional renowned for his exceptional contributions to the field of population planning and reproductive health, stands as a paragon of dedication and expertise. With a wealth of experience spanning three decades, Dr. Rob has played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of family planning and reproductive health operations research projects in Bangladesh.

Dr. Rob's illustrious career is underscored by his unwavering commitment to advancing the cause of population and health in Bangladesh. His extensive involvement as a dedicated member of the Bangladesh National Population Council speaks volumes about his commitment to the nation's well-being.

His journey commenced in 1977 while he was engaged with icddr,b, marking the inception of a transformative career. At that time, Bangladesh grappled with a fertility rate of 6, coupled with a contraceptive use rate of merely 10%.

Dr. Rob's academic journey reflects his relentless pursuit of knowledge and excellence. He holds a PhD in population planning from the prestigious University of Michigan, a testament to his scholarly achievements. Additionally, he has earned an MS in applied statistics from the esteemed University of London and an MSc in statistics from Chittagong University in Bangladesh, further solidifying his expertise in the field.



In recognition of his outstanding contributions, Ubaidur Rob was honored with the Share-Net Bangladesh Lifetime Achievement Recognition, a testament to his enduring dedication, exemplary leadership, and profound impact on the field of population planning and reproductive health. His remarkable journey continues to inspire, leaving an indelible mark on the lives of countless individuals and the future trajectory of Bangladesh's population and health sectors.

# SHARE-NET BANGLADESH COMMUNITY CHAMPIONSHIP AWARD

## Mr. Amzad Hossain Chowdhury

In heartfelt appreciation of his unwavering dedication and steadfast commitment to the cause of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Mr. Amzad Hossain Chowdhury, a revered teacher from Muktijoddha Smriti University in Netrokona, stands as a beacon of inspiration. Amidst numerous challenges, he tirelessly championed the rights of female students, offering vital support and understanding. Despite being a teacher of social sciences, Mr. Amzad Hossain Chowdhury, has shown remarkable commitment to ensuring proper menstrual hygiene management for girls within his school.

Mr. Chowdhury's passion for this cause started when he got training under the Ritu project by DORP. Since then, he has become a vocal advocate for menstrual hygiene management in schools. His proactive efforts have not only empowered young girls but have also contributed significantly to fostering a more supportive and inclusive learning environment. In the face of challenges, from missing classes due to menstruation. Mr. Chowdhury's relentless efforts and compassionate approach have not gone unnoticed. His invaluable contributions have left an indelible mark on the lives of the students he has mentored.



Share-Net Bangladesh is deeply grateful for his exceptional dedication and is honored to recognize his significant role in nurturing a supportive educational environment for young women, ensuring their well-being and empowering them with knowledge and confidence.

Share-Net Bangladesh commends Mr. Chowdhury's dedication to this essential cause and appreciates his invaluable contribution to the betterment of the educational experience for all students.

# SHARE-NET BANGLADESH YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

## Robin Mia

Robin Mia, a youth and adolescent health advocate, stands as a beacon of inspiration in the field. His commitment and expertise have earned him the prestigious Youth Leadership Award from Share-Net Bangladesh.

Robin Mia is a dedicated youth activist, currently serving as a Volunteer Peer Leader at Ma o Shishu Kollan Kendro, Sadar Mymensingh, under the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP). With a passion for adolescent health, menstrual hygiene management, mental health, SRHR, gender-based violence, and community mobilization, Robin embarked on his journey in 2017. His expertise blossomed as a core volunteer with SERAC, where he conducted numerous sessions on SRHR and gender-based violence, enlightening both adolescents and guardians.

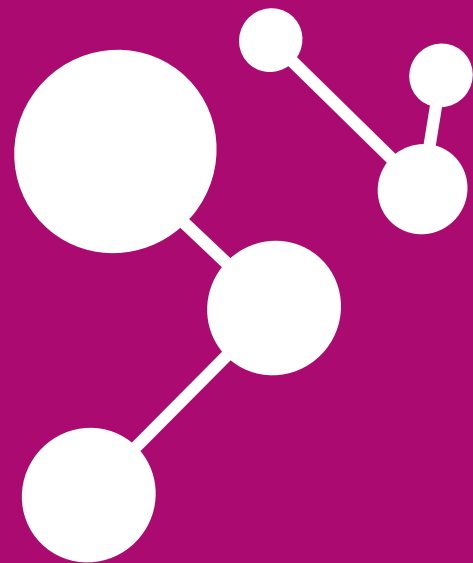
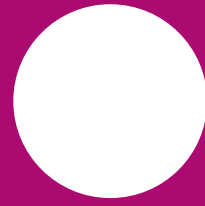
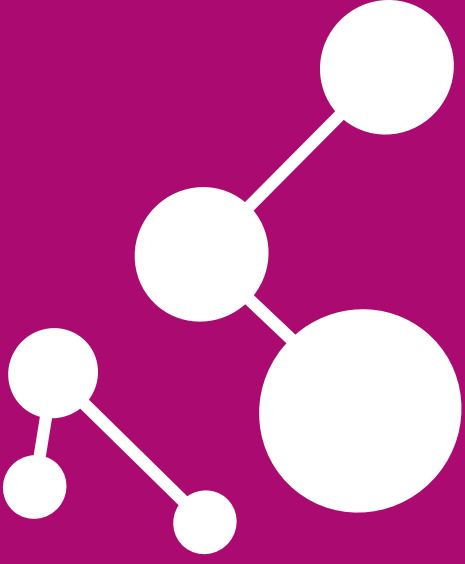
Leading impactful campaigns under the Shukhi Jibon project, Robin orchestrated 40 school and community outreach initiatives, addressing adolescent puberty changes, sexual and reproductive health, and rights. His efforts mobilized over 24,000 adolescents, parents, and community members. Collaborating with medical officers, SACMO, and health professionals in various Union Shastho Kendro, he extended his



influence.

His commitment led him to participate in significant programs such as the Bangladesh National Youth Conference on Family Planning, SMART advocacy training by Marie Stopes Bangladesh, and the Asia Pacific Safe Abortion Training Program by ASAP and YouthAid.





# CLOSING SPEECH

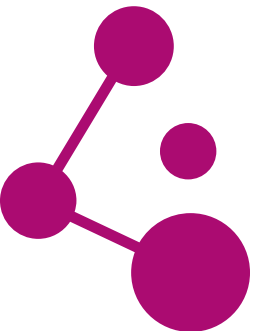
**Md Afzal Hossain Sarwar**  
**Policy Analyst**  
**(Educational Innovation Lead,**  
**Future of Education).**

---

Mr. Afzal paid his deep gratitude to former minister of Cultural Affairs Asaduzzaman Nur MP, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, UNFPA European Union, Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands, Director of Secondary and Higher Education, Director of Technology and Madrasa Education, National Academy for Educational Management, National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Plan International, Pathfinder, icddr,b, SERAC Bangladesh, Dhaka University Centre of Human Nutrition, teachers, students, other participants, Share-Net Bangladesh, a2i, and Redorange Communications.



He pledged to work together for the sector in the future too. To build a smart Bangladesh, he asked to take the call for commitments seriously.



**Arnob Chakrabarty**  
**Managing Director, RedOrange**  
**Communications, Project Director,**  
**Share-Net Bangladesh.**

---

He added a few more names whom he wants to thank, especially Dr. Halida Hanum, Ms. Tasnia Ahmed, Ms. Dorine Thomissen, Ms. Alexandra Johns, Ms. Jannatul Munia and Team a2i RedOrange Team.



**Jannatul Munia,**  
**Country Coordinator, Share-Net**  
**Bangladesh General Manager,**  
**RedOrange Communications**

---

Jannatul Munia moderated the overall programme and thanked everyone for working for the betterment of SRHR and linking it with Education.

# WAY FORWARD

In a world where sectors often operate in silos, Share-Net Bangladesh stands out as a beacon of collaboration, bridging the gaps between research, policy, and practice. At the heart of Share-Net's mandate is the vital task of assembling the diverse pieces of the puzzle. By bringing together stakeholders from various backgrounds, Share-Net creates a unique space where collaboration thrives, resources are shared, and collective advocacy efforts are amplified. The annual Knowledge Fair serves as a cornerstone, providing a platform for sharing invaluable insights and recommendations. This

gathering not only showcases ongoing initiatives but also helps everyone understand who is doing what in the community. By doing so, Share-Net reduces the possibility of reinventing the wheel and maximises the impact of collective knowledge. As we conclude this event, Share-Net Bangladesh extends a call to action. To all our members and participants, we urge you to carry these recommendations forward. Let us transform shared knowledge into meaningful advocacy initiatives, driving positive change and shaping a smarter, more informed society together.



2023  
September



# SHARE-NET BANGLADESH | 8TH ANNUAL KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON SRHR