10th KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & RIGHTS

SRHR BUSINESS FOR THE GRASSROOTS
Knowledge > Business > Impact

14th DECEMBER, 2025
@ SHERATON DHAKA



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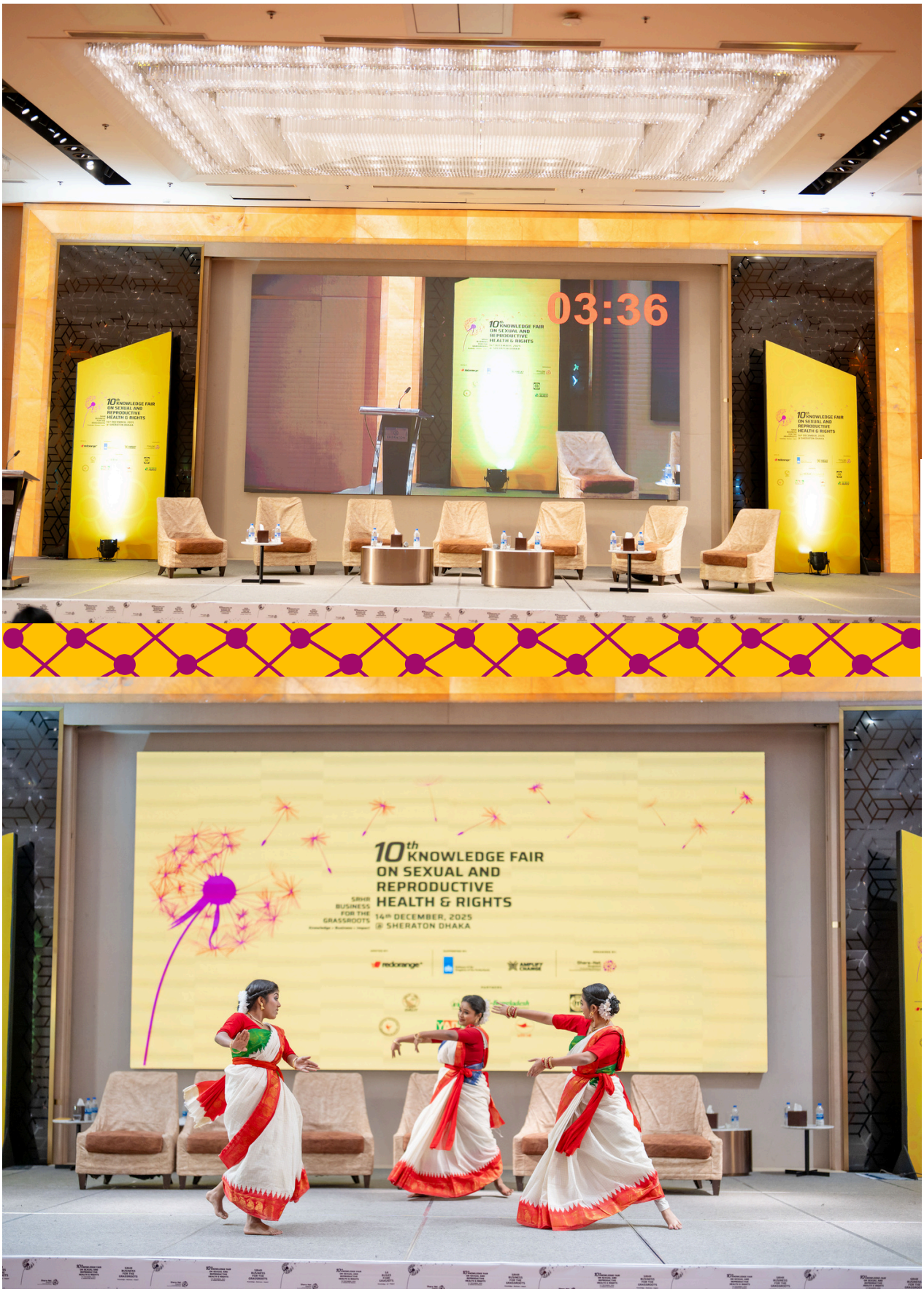

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PREFACE

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 10th Annual Knowledge Fair on SRHR 2025. 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, networks, 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) has, for nearly a decade, served as the country's largest and most inclusive knowledge platform on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). Supported by Share-Net International and funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs until June 2025, SNBD has played a central role in connecting research, policy, and practice, while fostering youth leadership and inclusive dialogue on sensitive SRHR issues.

However, with international funding ending in June 2025, SNBD now stands at a critical transition point. Without renewed support, Bangladesh risks losing its only national SRHR knowledge ecosystem, a platform that has consistently amplified grassroots voices, translated evidence into action, and strengthened collaboration among practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and communities.

The 10th SRHR Knowledge Fair 2025 was made possible through the generous support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN). At this pivotal moment, the Knowledge Fair not only celebrated a decade of collective learning and partnership but also highlighted the urgency of sustaining and reimagining a nationally owned, financially resilient model for SRHR knowledge management.

Today, SNBD brings together more than 2,200 individual members, including development professionals, researchers, academicians, youth leaders, and practitioners, and over 210 organizational members comprising NGOs, INGOs, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector actors. As Bangladesh navigates this transition period, strengthening national ownership and diversified financing has become essential to protect and scale this established and impactful SRHR knowledge platform.

The theme of "10th SRHR Knowledge Fair 2025" is "SRHR Business for the Grassroots: Knowledge>Business>Impact"; SNBD aims to make SRHR-related knowledge, information and research accessible to the wider community of professionals and to encourage and enable cross-learning and sharing. The 10th SRHR Knowledge Fair 2025 advanced a new national conversation: positioning grassroots SRHR not only as a public service, but as a smart social and economic investment. Moving beyond earlier thematic discussions on education and awareness, this year's Fair explored how knowledge can be transformed into enterprise, innovation, and sustainable business models that generate measurable impact at community level.

The theme "SRHR Business for the Grassroots: Knowledge > Business > Impact" reflects a growing recognition that sustaining SRHR outcomes requires more than policy commitment alone. While the Government of Bangladesh continues to play a critical role in advancing health, education, and gender priorities, long-term progress also depends on the active engagement of private sector actors, social entrepreneurs, youth innovators, development partners, researchers, and grassroots organisations. Ethical businesses, community enterprises, and youth-led initiatives are increasingly demonstrating that SRHR solutions can create livelihoods, expand access, and strengthen agency, particularly for women, adolescents, and marginalised populations.

By fostering cross-sectoral dialogue and partnership, the Fair aimed to move the conversation from isolated projects to sustainable ecosystems — ensuring that SRHR knowledge does not remain confined to reports and workshops, but evolves into products, services, enterprises, and financing pathways that deliver lasting social and economic returns.

SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS & THINGS TO-DO

- **Transition from Charity to Enterprise:** Redefine the operational framework of SRHR programs to focus on sustainable business models and social entrepreneurship rather than relying solely on foreign donations.
- **Incentivise SRHR Startups:** Implement tax holidays for 5-7 years for small SRHR entrepreneurs and ensure easier licensing and procurement assistance to help businesses take off.
- **Local Resource Utilisation:** Encourage the production of affordable menstrual products using local materials like jute and water hyacinth.
- **Scaling and Sustainability:** Focus on the capability to scale up pilot projects into nationwide initiatives, ensuring financial viability is considered from the start.
- **Digital Integration:** Expand "Phygital" models (physical and digital) and AI-integrated health apps to reach rural and underserved populations more effectively.
- **Pharmacy Capacity Building:** Integrate the country's vast network of pharmacies into national SRHR programmes, providing proper training for dispensers and hiring more female pharmacists to increase service delivery to women.
- **Address Ignored Health Issues:** Launch dedicated calls for action regarding often-ignored topics such as infertility and PCOS, which remain undiagnosed in many women.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** Utilise social marketing approaches to make SRHR products like sanitary napkins and micronutrient supplements affordable and accessible.
- **Youth and Digital Literacy:** Mobilise youth groups and leverage their digital literacy to find innovative, culturally rooted solutions for SRHR challenges.
- **Ethical Healthcare Practices:** Establish strict ethical boundaries to curb corruption in the health sector, specifically addressing the rise of unnecessary C-sections driven by healthcare businesses.
- **Gender Inclusivity:** Ensure all business and health solutions are gender-inclusive, involving men and boys in the conversation to support their female counterparts.
- **Innovative Financing:** Explore blended financial models and increased social investment to reduce out-of-pocket (OOP) expenditure for citizens.





Welcome Speech by Arnob Chakrabarty
Project Director, Share-Net Bangladesh
Managing Director, Red Orange Limited

It is both an honour and a joy to welcome you to the 10th Annual Knowledge Fair 2025 of Share-Net Bangladesh, proudly hosted by RedOrange.

Ten years ago, we began with a bold vision: to build an independent, dynamic knowledge platform that would bring together experts from across organisations, disciplines, and sectors. A decade later, that vision has grown into a vibrant community of more than 200 organisational and over 2,000 individual members. This milestone belongs to you. Thank you for your trust, your commitment, and your belief in this platform over the past ten years.

Today, we celebrate not just a number, but a movement. This year's theme, 'SRHR and Business', could not be more timely. Across the globe, funding for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is shrinking at an alarming rate. At the same time, the unmet needs in the health sector continue to grow. The private sector now stands at a critical crossroads.

Can businesses step forward responsibly?
Can they help close the gap while upholding ethical standards and safeguarding human rights?

These are not simple questions, but they are urgent ones. Throughout today's sessions, we will examine whether integrating SRHR and business is not only possible but also sustainable and ethical. Should Bangladesh's healthcare industry be further promoted under current conditions? Where should we draw the ethical boundaries? And how do we ensure that business engagement strengthens, rather than compromises, rights-based approaches?

We have an exciting day ahead: thought-provoking discussions, dynamic sessions, meaningful networking opportunities, and a grand closing ceremony where we will recognise some of our members through special awards. We are also honoured to be joined by distinguished guests who will enrich our conversations.

Today is about thinking boldly, debating honestly, and connecting purposefully. And using this platform to explore whether the integration of SRHR and business is not just an idea but a realistic path forward. Let's begin.



CHIEF GUEST

Dr. Ashrafi Ahmad, ndc
Director General
Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP)
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GoB

"Thank you to all panellists present here, and I'd like to start by wishing well to all intellectuals and July Revolution martyrs for everything they have been through. DGFP has closely collaborated with Share-Net, and it is great to see how Share-Net has flourished in the last decade. The keynote speaker highlighted that there is a lot of data available, but no action is being taken. I am grateful for his presentation, which helped me make my points. The digital sector has significant potential in Bangladesh, and many young people have the potential to do much for the SRHR sector. The point about fertility and PCOS is common in women with lifestyle changes. Cooperation among all required parties will benefit the community more, and DGFP will always strive to collaborate as much as possible. With that, I open today's event."

Keynote presentation on SRHR Business for the Grassroot in Bangladesh



Professor Dr Muhammad Wasif Alam
Head, Department of Public Health,
American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB)

The opening keynote, *"From Knowledge to Business — Rethinking SRHR Sustainability,"* set a strategic and forward-looking tone for the Knowledge Fair by redefining how sustainability in SRHR should be understood. Moving beyond the traditional donor-dependent model, the speaker framed SRHR as a dynamic ecosystem where knowledge, innovation, and enterprise can generate long-term social and economic impact.

Reflecting on the SRHR business scenario in Bangladesh, the keynote acknowledged the critical role of foreign aid in advancing SRHR, while also highlighting the structural vulnerabilities created by prolonged dependency. Early social marketing and enterprise efforts were noted as important foundations, but insufficient for systemic sustainability.

Examining the present landscape, the speaker pointed to emerging trends such as youth-led enterprises, community-driven service models, digital health platforms, and knowledge-to-product innovations. These approaches demonstrate how grassroots evidence and local innovation can evolve into scalable, inclusive business opportunities.

Looking to the future, the keynote outlined a roadmap for a self-sustaining SRHR ecosystem supported by blended finance, social businesses, cooperatives, and impact investment. Emphasising cross-sector collaboration, it called for a shift from projects to enterprises and positioning SRHR knowledge not just as information, but as a catalyst for sustainable impact.

SPECIAL GUEST

Toslim Uddin Khan
Managing Director and CEO,
Social Marketing Company (SMC)



The speaker highlighted persistent and urgent reproductive health challenges in Bangladesh, noting that despite over 50 years of independence, child marriage remains widespread, with nearly two-thirds of girls married before 18 becoming pregnant at an inappropriate age. Declining use of family planning, rising concerns around reproductive health, and recent increases in HIV/AIDS cases were identified as major risks, compounded by a reduction in foreign funding. The speaker emphasised the need to shift from donor dependency toward sustainable social marketing and non-profit models, citing successful examples such as affordable sanitary napkins and micronutrient supplementation for pregnant women. Greater engagement of the private sector and coordinated collaboration among government, businesses, and communities were stressed as essential, as these complex issues cannot be addressed by the government alone.



SPECIAL GUEST

Dr. Mohammad Zahirul Islam
Health Advisor, Development Cooperation Section,
Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh

The speaker expressed appreciation for the timely theme of the event, emphasising that while knowledge alone is insufficient, the effective movement and application of knowledge is critical. Highlighting Share-Net's decade-long contribution to improving sexual and reproductive health and rights in Bangladesh, the speaker acknowledged its role in supporting people across life stages. The importance of sustainability through domestic financing and innovation, rather than reliance on foreign funding, was underscored, alongside the value of global social models that demonstrate the compatibility of SRHR and sustainable development. The speaker stressed investing in the younger generation, ensuring equity and gender-inclusive solutions, and fostering collaboration among public, private, development partners, and civil society. The remarks concluded with a reaffirmation of the Dutch Embassy's continued support for SRHR and best wishes for the initiative.

SPECIAL GUEST



Shireen Huq
Chairperson, Women's Affairs Reform Commission
Founder, Naripokkho

The speaker emphasised the urgency of addressing investment in SRHR, noting that funding does not need to come solely from government sources, while cautioning that entrepreneurship and commercialisation are not the same and that rights-based approaches for beneficiaries must not be neglected. Concerns were raised over the sharp rise in unnecessary caesarean sections, the commercialisation of healthcare, and long-standing corruption within the health sector, with particular attention to the lack of action to make home deliveries safer despite being preferred by over 60 per cent of women. The remarks concluded by urging stakeholders to examine women's lived conditions before proposing solutions and to consult the report for detailed recommendations.

CHIEF GUEST



Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter
Chairperson, Steering Committee,
Share-Net Bangladesh
Chairman of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
Member, Women's Affairs Reform Commission

The speaker reflected on the historical foundations of sexual and reproductive health and rights by recalling Bangladesh's participation in the 1994 Cairo Conference, where the country co-signed the SRHR proclamation and contributed to Chapter 7 through international collaboration.

Emphasising the importance of this legacy, the speaker noted that women remain the primary victims of SRHR challenges due to early marriage and pregnancy-related deaths. Drawing on experience with the Family Planning Association, the speaker highlighted a shift from merely referring communities to clinics toward empowering them with basic health screening skills, stating that "instead of doing that, we suggested teaching them basic tests like diabetes, blood pressure, and urine albumen," which proved more effective. The remarks concluded with a call to expand such practical, community-based approaches and to invest more in engaging the younger generation.

Summary of the Recommendations

Professor Dr. Muhammad Wasif Alam (AIUB)

- Emphasised shifting SRHR initiatives from foreign donor dependence to sustainable, locally financed enterprise models.
- Highlighted major service gaps for youth and the 45 million people of reproductive age, especially at the grassroots level.
- Proposed empowering small entrepreneurs and cooperatives, including local production of sanitary pads and phygital SRHR service delivery.
- Stressed the need for enabling policies such as tax incentives, simplified licensing, and procurement support.

Toslim Uddin Khan

- Highlighted persistent SRHR challenges including child marriage, early pregnancy, declining family planning, and rising HIV/AIDS cases.
- Noted that nearly two-thirds of girls married before 18 become pregnant prematurely.
- Advocated for social marketing and non-profit models to reduce donor dependency.
- Emphasised private sector engagement and multi-stakeholder collaboration beyond government action alone.

Dr. Mohammad Zahirul Islam

- Emphasised that knowledge must be effectively mobilised, not just generated, to create impact.
- Acknowledged Share-Net's decade-long contribution to advancing SRHR across life stages.
- Stressed sustainability through domestic financing and innovation rather than reliance on foreign aid.
- Called for youth investment, gender-inclusive solutions, and cross-sector collaboration.

Shireen Huq

- Emphasised the need for SRHR investment beyond government funding while maintaining a rights-based approach.
- Raised concerns over the rise of unnecessary caesarean sections and the commercialisation of healthcare.
- Highlighted the neglect of safer home delivery options despite being preferred by over 60 percent of women.
- Urged policymakers to prioritise women's lived realities before proposing solutions.

Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter

- Reflected on Bangladesh's role in the 1994 Cairo Conference and the historical foundation of SRHR commitments.
- Highlighted women as primary victims of SRHR challenges due to early marriage and pregnancy-related deaths.
- Advocated for community empowerment through basic health screening skills rather than only clinic referrals.
- Called for greater investment in youth engagement and practical, community-based SRHR interventions.

THEMATIC SESSION 1

Grassroots Innovation Marketplace

Ideas that Earn, Empower, and End Inequality





Asma Hasan
Deputy Director, (FP-FSD)
Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP)
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Toslim Uddin Khan
Managing Director and CEO,
Social Marketing Company (SMC)



Arnob Chakrabarty
Project Director, Share-Net Bangladesh
Managing Director, Red Orange Limited



PANELLISTS



MODERATOR

Alok Kumar Majumder
Director, Programme & Operations
Red Orange Limited



CHAIRPERSON

Swapon Kumar Das
Executive Director
Dalit



Nishat Anjum Palka

The speaker, CEO of MommyKidz, highlighted the significant gaps in SRHR services in Bangladesh, noting that despite a population of 87 million mothers, women, and children, access to care remains limited due to severe shortages of gynaecologists. MommyKidz was presented as a community-based digital platform supporting women across all stages of womanhood through peer communities, anonymous Q&A, educational content, and self-care and self-assessment tools aimed at early disease prevention. The platform operates on a premium revenue model, has generated approximately USD 88,000 in revenue, and has reached over 45,000 users across Bangladesh, the USA, and other countries, with strong user engagement. Looking ahead, the company plans to introduce referral commissions, mobilise community advocates, integrate AI, and further digitise healthcare services to improve societal health outcomes.



Dina Afsana

The speaker shared a personal perspective on period poverty, noting that stigma and taboos around menstruation had affected her own access to sanitary products until recent years. To address this issue, she introduced a hybrid digital and physical solution that combines a mobile app with IoT-enabled, touchless and cashless vending machines for sanitary pads. With over 500 machines deployed across 38 districts, strategically placed in women's washrooms and common rooms, the initiative enables women to access menstrual products privately and independently, reducing stigma and reliance on others. Operating through B2B, B2C, and B2B2C models, the initiative has reached approximately 250,000 women, with 32,500 unique users, demonstrating its impact in breaking barriers around menstrual health and access.



Mahmuda Naznin

The speaker, a graduate student from the Department of Development Studies at the University of Dhaka, presented research on micro-enterprise hubs for SRHR in Bangladesh, highlighting persistent and urgent challenges identified through background studies and literature reviews. The findings show that rural populations, adolescents, and older, less educated women face the greatest barriers to accessing SRHR services, which remain critical for achieving Vision 2041. The speaker noted that the existing centralised, top-down service delivery system is ineffective due to infrastructural and access limitations, underscoring the need for alternative delivery models. To address these gaps, the proposed MEH-SRHR model includes five key components: commodity retail, adolescent and community outreach, micro-insurance for obstetric emergencies, performance-based public–private partnerships, and a continuous feedback mechanism to ensure ongoing improvement.

Team Nirbhoya



Team Nirbhoya highlighted severe menstrual health challenges in Sreemangal, noting that 92 percent of women lack adequate menstrual knowledge and that low daily wages make sanitary products largely unaffordable, contributing to serious health risks such as cervical cancer. To address this, the team introduced a community-led social enterprise that empowers women to locally produce affordable sanitary pads using low-cost methods. The initiative is complemented by an AI-enabled SRHR app that simplifies knowledge dissemination and provides access to professional doctor consultations. The presentation concluded with an intention to showcase a video package to further illustrate the impact and approach of the initiative.

Md. Mashrur Wahid

The speaker outlined research aimed at bridging the gap between SRHR research and field-level implementation in Bangladesh, noting that despite producing high-quality research, much of it remains underutilised in practice while community health workers continue to rely on outdated methods. The study identified three critical dimensions of investment, with particular emphasis on ensuring content validity. An execution roadmap was presented, outlining stakeholder mapping by the first quarter and completion of the application by the fourth quarter. To mitigate risks, the speaker emphasised the development of sustainable, evidence-based design and implementation plans, concluding with appreciation for the opportunity to present the research.



THEMATIC SESSION 2

Building the SRHR Business Case





Syed Rashed Al-Zayed
Senior Economist, Education Global Practice,
The World Bank Group



Md. Azmal Hossain
Programme Analyst - Urban Health,
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Mohua Ali
Student Counsellor,
Amjad Khan Chowdhury Nursing College
PRAN RFL Group



PANELLISTS



MODERATOR

Jannatul Munia
Director Strategy, Red Orange Limited
Knowledge Management Expert,
Share-Net Bangladesh



CHAIRPERSON

Dr. Mohammed Arifur Rahman
Chief Executive,
Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)

BUSINESS CASE PRESENTATIONS



Social Marketing Company
A Sustainable Business Model of SRHR Portfolio

Md Moshiur Rahman
General Manager – Program Implementation,
Social Marketing Company

SMC began its journey in 1975 to address rapid population growth in Bangladesh, initially introducing the oral contraceptive pill Maya and the condom Raja. Over time, SMC expanded its portfolio to include a wide range of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) products distributed nationwide. Through initiatives such as the STAR network, SMC has strengthened private-sector engagement and built a robust distribution system. Today, over 50% of couples in Bangladesh rely on SMC products for their SRHR needs, and in the last fiscal year alone, 872,000 people were reached with reproductive health awareness. As a non-profit organisation, SMC benefits from strong product branding, effective price segmentation, and demand-generation activities. However, key challenges remain, particularly inadequate monitoring systems and limited availability of SRHR products in underserved areas. To address these gaps, SMC emphasises the need for a unified SRHR platform at the grassroots level, alongside increased government support for awareness-raising efforts.

Komlaphul Pharmacy Intervention
A Business Model for Women and Girls' SRHR Services in Bangladesh

Mohammed Zainol Abedin
Assistant Director, FP-FSD,
Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP)

The speaker congratulated Share-Net on hosting its 10th Annual Knowledge Fair and highlighted the critical role of pharmacies in delivering SRHR services in Bangladesh. Of nearly 200,000 registered and unregistered pharmacies, 69% are operated by a single dispenser, many of whom lack the government-mandated SRHR training. Since 2022, a KAP study led to the introduction of SRHR information and services in 418 pharmacies across Bagerhat and Gaibandha, though only 177 remained engaged the following year. The initiative revealed that female pharmacists provided twice as many SRHR services as their male counterparts, leading to their increased selection and placement as pharmacy entrepreneurs. The presentation emphasised the need to formally integrate pharmacies into the national SRHR programme, supported by robust monitoring, capacity building, and structured referral hubs to ensure clients receive appropriate and timely care.



Discussion Highlights

- **Syed Rashed Al-Zayed (World Bank Group)** emphasised that SRHR holds strong economic investment potential. Drawing parallels with private-sector success in Bangladesh's education sector, he argued that when social returns are visible, sustainable financing follows. He encouraged positioning SRHR as a credible social investment opportunity rather than a charity-driven sector.

- **Md. Azmal Hossain (UNFPA)** stressed that the definition of "business" must extend beyond profit to measurable social impact. He highlighted the female pharmacist model as a sustainable approach and underlined the importance of awareness-building initiatives to address taboo SRHR issues and prevent early child marriage.

- **Mohua Ali (Amjad Khan Chowdhury Nursing College, PRAN-RFL Group)** shared how PRAN's CSR initiative tackles nurse shortages and student dropout caused by early marriage. She noted that supportive interventions—such as computer training and menstrual hygiene promotion—help retain students and strengthen trust in health services.

- **Md. Moshiur Rahman (Social Marketing Company)** outlined SMC's evolution into a nationwide SRHR portfolio, serving over half of Bangladesh's couples. He highlighted branding, price segmentation, and demand generation as key strengths, while calling for better monitoring systems and stronger grassroots platforms.

- **Mohammed Zainol Abedin (DGFP)** underscored the strategic role of pharmacies, noting that female pharmacists provided twice as many SRHR services. He recommended formal integration of pharmacies into the national SRHR programme with structured training, monitoring, and referral systems.

- **Dr. Mohammed Arifur Rahman (YPSA)** concluded by encouraging sustained research, innovation, and long-term commitment to building socially responsible SRHR enterprises.










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THEMATIC SESSION 3

Where Knowledge Meets Business

Sustainable Social Enterprises for Economic Empowerment





Dr. Md. Sarwar Bari
Former Secretary,
Medical Education and Family Welfare Division,
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), GoB



Dr. Md. Aminul Haque
Professor
Department of Population Sciences,
University of Dhaka

Waliullah Bhuiyan
Founder & Chairman
Light of Hope Ltd.



Dr. Ikhtiar Uddin Khandaker
Chief of Party,
Momentum Country and Global Leadership Project,
Jhpiego Bangladesh

PANELLISTS





MODERATOR

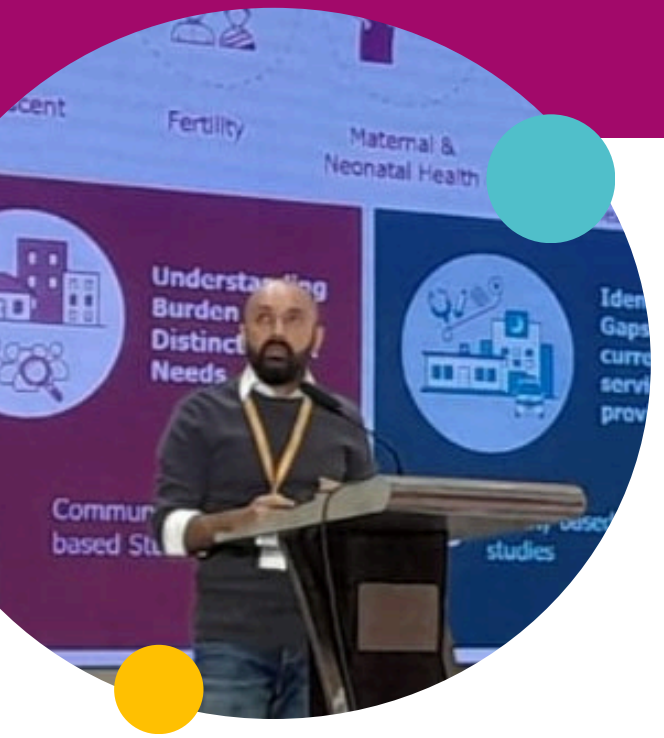
Dr. Sanzida Akhter
Professor
Department of Women and Gender Studies
University of Dhaka



CHAIRPERSON

SM Shaikat
Executive Director,
SERAC-Bangladesh

BUSINESS CASE PRESENTATIONS



Evidence meeting Knowledge: Advancing SRHR innovations through AdSEARCH by icddr,b

Anubhab Chakraborty
Communication Specialist
icddr,b

A study was undertaken to connect evidence with practical knowledge in SRHR, leading to the development of 27 well-received innovations aimed at expanding regular service delivery. Supported by funding from the Government of Canada, the AdSearch project functions as a backend platform that integrates SRHR incidents with context-specific response mechanisms, including upcoming initiatives such as HPV self-sampling.



From Needs to Markets: How SRHR Business Models Could Thrive for Community Upliftment

Nayem Ahmed Siddik
Senior Associate – Gender & Basic Services Portfolio
Innovision Consulting Private Limited

The SRHR sector has long been underutilised due to low public awareness and limited early adoption, requiring mindset shifts to build acceptance. Research by InnoVision Consulting revealed unmet needs and clear opportunities for sustainable business models that can deliver social impact while remaining financially viable, positioning SRHR enterprises as key drivers of community upliftment.



The Ritu Project

Samiul Islam
Deputy Director Strategy
Red Orange Limited

Project Ritu, initiated in 2016 with Dutch funding, developed a biodegradable sanitary pad, which was later taken to market by Square after further R&D. However, delays between project completion and product launch revealed gaps that limited market success, highlighting that sustaining SRHR products requires translating knowledge beyond the lab to consumer awareness, affordability, and acceptance.

Discussion Highlights

- **Dr. Md. Sarwar Bari,** underscored that sustainable SRHR social enterprises must complement public health systems, not replace them. Reflecting on his long-standing support for Share-Net Bangladesh, he emphasised institutionalising evidence, strengthening regulatory pathways, and fostering ethical entrepreneurship to ensure that knowledge-driven SRHR businesses contribute to equitable access, national priorities, and long-term economic empowerment.

- **Dr. Md. Aminul Haque** emphasised that SRHR innovation must be grounded in demographic realities. He noted that evidence-based planning is critical to ensure that business models address real population needs rather than assumed market gaps.

- **Dr. Sanzida Akhter** highlighted the gendered dimensions of SRHR markets. She stressed that without addressing social norms, stigma, and power relations, even well-designed innovations may fail to reach women and marginalised communities.

- **Waliullah Bhuiyan** argued that storytelling, awareness-building, and behavioural change communication are essential to turn SRHR knowledge into accepted products and services. He suggested that market trust must be built alongside product development.

- **Dr. Ikhtiar Uddin Khandaker** underscored the importance of implementation science and leadership. He recommended integrating innovations into existing health systems to ensure scale, quality assurance, and long-term sustainability.

- **Anubhab Chakraborty** presented the AdSEARCH platform by icddr,b, explaining how 27 evidence-driven innovations were developed. He proposed stronger backend data integration and scaling of initiatives such as HPV self-sampling.

- **Nayem Ahmed Siddik** shared findings from InnoVision Consulting, pointing to clear unmet SRHR market needs. He recommended reframing SRHR enterprises as viable social businesses capable of financial sustainability.

- **Samiul Islam** reflected on the Ritu Project experience, stressing that research must connect to consumer demand, pricing strategy, and sustained awareness to avoid post-project market gaps.

- Chairperson **SM Shaikat** concluded by calling for stronger collaboration between researchers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to transform evidence into scalable, community-driven SRHR enterprises.


SRHR
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POSITIVITY
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PARALLEL REGIONAL SESSION

Business Beyond Boundaries

Regional SRHR Business for the Grassroots



The regional session highlighted how grassroots SRHR initiatives can grow into sustainable business and service models through regional learning, cross-border partnerships, and shared market understanding across South Asia.

The session was chaired by Mr Mukit Anis, Faculty Lead at Uddami Ami and Uddokta 101, Women Empowerment Cell, and Lecturer in Marketing at BRAC Business School, and moderated by Ms Lamea Tanjin Tanha, Founder of TransEnd and Lecturer at the Department of Law and International Cooperation, Daffodil International University. Both speakers set the tone for a discussion that connected sustainability, access, affordability, and regional collaboration in SRHR.

CHAIRPERSON



Mukit Anis

Faculty Lead at Uddami Ami and Uddokta 101,
Women Empowerment Cell,
Lecturer in Marketing at BRAC Business School

In his remark as the Chair, Mr. Anis reflected on how the session demonstrated that SRHR solutions become sustainable when they consider affordability, behaviour, systems, and partnerships. He emphasised that knowledge must go beyond awareness and connect with markets and long-term planning. He encouraged greater regional collaboration so that such grassroots models can inspire wider change across South Asia.



MODERATOR

Lamea Tanjin Tanha

Founder of TransEnd
Lecturer, Department of Law & International Cooperation,
Daffodil International University

Ms Tanha welcomed the audience by highlighting that SRHR discussions must now move beyond awareness and enter the space of sustainability and practical solutions. She noted that the session would showcase how community-driven ideas from Pakistan, Nepal, and India are becoming long-term, self-sustaining models. She encouraged participants to listen with curiosity and think about how these models can connect across borders for greater regional impact.



From Nepal

Durga Sapkota

Co-Founder, Youth Led SRHR Advocacy Nepal (YoSHAN)

Durga Sapkota shared how YoSHAN views sustainability as a form of resistance. The initiative operates youth clinics from 5 pm to 8 pm across Nepal, providing free services from gynaecologists, counsellors, and sociologists. These clinics are trusted safe spaces for young people.
The long-term goal is to make these clinics self-sustaining while maintaining quality SRHR services based on trust, autonomy, and continuity of care.



From India

Leena Uppal

Senior Assistant Director, Programs and Innovations,
Mamta – Health Institute for Mother and Child

Leena Uppal presented the journey of MAMTA, founded in 1990 and reaching over 70 million people. MAMTA bridges gaps between knowledge, policy, and practice in health service delivery through partnerships and learning platforms across India and neighbouring countries.
Ms Leena said, "Health services work best when knowledge, policy, and community action come together through strong partnerships." She highlighted the Friends Centre in a Delhi slum, which offers counselling and health support to adolescents and youth, as an example of community-rooted service delivery that can be scaled through collaboration.



From Pakistan

Salman Tariq

Chief Executive Officer, DAVAAM Life

"Access is not only about availability, but it is also about affordability. Small changes in retail systems can create big improvements in SRHR access."

Salman Tariq introduced DAVAAM Life, a retail initiative addressing two major gaps: excess and access. He explained that nearly 50% of consumer product prices go into packaging, increasing both costs and plastic waste. At the same time, low-income communities struggle to afford essential products.
DAVAAM responded by introducing refill stations, where consumers bring their own containers and pay only for the quantity they need. This approach was extended to sanitary napkin refill stations in partnership with Pakistan's largest sanitary napkin brand. The initiative reduces waste while improving affordable access to menstrual products.



CLOSING CEREMONY









REMARKS FROM THE CLOSING CEREMONY

SPECIAL GUESTS



Felix Helgesson
Second Secretary and Programme Officer for Health and SRHR,
Embassy of Sweden in Dhaka

Felix Helgesson highlighted the global decline in foreign funding for SRHR and emphasised the urgency of adopting sustainable financing models. Drawing on Sweden's experience, he shared an example of an SRHR organisation that successfully transitioned into selling contraceptives to sustain its work. Felix emphasised the need for culturally rooted, innovative solutions, stronger private sector engagement, and blended financing models to reduce out-of-pocket expenditures. He reaffirmed Sweden's alignment with the conference's objectives and expressed commitment to a cooperative approach to build a more resilient and just SRHR ecosystem in Bangladesh.



Md. Saidur Rahman Khan
Director General (Additional Secretary),
Department of Social Services,
Ministry of Social Welfare, GoB

Md. Saidur Rahman Khan emphasised the importance of collaboration between government and non-government stakeholders to expand SRHR service delivery across Bangladesh. He encouraged organisations to register and formalise their SRHR service provision to strengthen national coverage. He highlighted the government's commitment to supporting SRHR initiatives, noting differentiated levels of public support in urban and rural areas. Despite political and electoral transitions slowing some activities, he reaffirmed the government's continued engagement and stressed that collective action remains essential for achieving social welfare goals.



Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter
Chairperson, Steering Committee, Share-Net Bangladesh
Chairman of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
Member, Women's Affairs Reform Commission

Dr Halida focused on the persistent gaps in SRHR access despite notable progress. She emphasised the need to address unfinished agendas, particularly gender-based violence, child marriage, and adolescent pregnancy. She stressed that pilot projects often fail due to a lack of scaling strategies and urged stakeholders to prioritise scalability from the outset. Highlighting the importance of reaching marginalised and hard-to-reach populations, she called for greater youth mobilisation, enhanced digital engagement, and stronger government leadership. She also pointed to ongoing challenges such as high rates of home deliveries and the need for better training and service accessibility.

CHAIRPERSON

Mushfiqua Zaman Satiar
Senior Policy Adviser - Social Sector
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



Mushfiqua Zaman Satiar reflected on the evolution of SRHR discourse in Bangladesh, noting how previously taboo topics have become openly discussed. She highlighted Share-Net's role in building a strong knowledge-sharing platform with a large and active national membership. She emphasised the necessity of moving beyond aid dependency by fostering business-led approaches to SRHR. Key priorities included evidence generation, financial viability, and scalability to build sustainable SRHR enterprises that empower women and youth at the grassroots level.



CHIEF GUEST

Dr. Nazneen Kawshar Chowdhury
Executive Chairman (Secretary),
National Skills Development Authority (NSDA)

Dr Nazneen Kawsar Chowdhury emphasised the link between SRHR and Bangladesh's broader human capital development. She noted that youth skills alone are insufficient without ensuring health, safety, and security, positioning SRHR as a foundational pillar for national progress. She highlighted persistent challenges such as child marriage, early pregnancy, poor menstrual health, and limited SRHR awareness, particularly in rural areas. She underscored the role of communities as agents of change and advocated for integrating SRHR knowledge with women's entrepreneurship and private sector collaboration to create inclusive, sustainable development pathways.

Closing and Vote of Thanks



Arnob Chakrabarty
Project Director, Share-Net Bangladesh
Managing Director, Red Orange Limited

Arnab Chakrabarty concluded the session by acknowledging the collective efforts of stakeholders and partners in organising the Knowledge Fair. He expressed appreciation for the continued support of the Swedish Embassy, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Bangladesh, AmplifyChange and highlighted Share-Net's commitment to future strategic planning. He invited participants to the next Knowledge Fair and reaffirmed the organisation's dedication to strengthening collaboration and knowledge exchange to advance SRHR outcomes in Bangladesh.

LEARNINGS & WAY FORWARD

What we gained from KF2025

- **Shift** from donor dependency to sustainable enterprise models. Future SRHR programming should integrate financial sustainability from the outset, reducing reliance on external aid and strengthening locally driven systems.
- **Build** a nationally owned SRHR knowledge ecosystem. Institutionalising the Knowledge Fair outcomes into continuous learning platforms, research networks, and policy dialogues will ensure long-term relevance and continuity.
- **Create** enabling policy incentives for grassroots SRHR entrepreneurs. Tax benefits, simplified licensing, and public procurement access can encourage youth-led and community-based SRHR businesses to grow responsibly.
- **Scale** proven pilot initiatives into structured national models. Successful grassroots innovations should be documented, refined, and expanded through clear business planning and investment pathways.

"My journey in child rights and SRHR has taught me that sustainable change begins with awareness, dignity, and opportunity. Platforms like Share-Net Bangladesh ensure that knowledge reaches the grassroots, where it matters most."



Mahmudul Kabir
Former Country Director
TdH Netherlands
(SRHR Lifetime Achievement Award 2025 Winner)

"Knowledge Fair 2025 helped us understand one clear message: My health, My right. I believe that, through SRHR knowledge, Dalit and marginalised communities can protect their dignity, reduce risks, and claim informed choices for life."



Laxmi Das
Advocacy Officer
Dalit NGO

- **Expand** digital service delivery models. Integrating digital platforms with on-ground service providers can increase reach, improve confidentiality, and ensure quality SRHR care in underserved areas.
- **Strengthen** the role of pharmacies within the national SRHR ecosystem. Community pharmacies should be formally recognised, trained, and linked to referral systems to improve frontline access to essential SRHR services.

- **Promote** female pharmacy and health entrepreneurship. Women-led service points have demonstrated higher trust and accessibility among female clients, and targeted support can expand their impact.
- **Encourage** sustainable local production of menstrual products. Community-based manufacturing using environmentally friendly materials can reduce costs, improve access, and generate income opportunities.

Participating in the 10th SRHR Knowledge Fair was an inspiring experience. The theme 'SRHR Business for the Grassroots' powerfully demonstrated how knowledge can be transformed into sustainable business models that create real community impact."



Shahrukh Karim
Founder and Executive Coordinator
JYDA Bangladesh

LEARNINGS & WAY FORWARD

What we gained from KF2025

"Participating in the 10th Knowledge Fair of Share-Net was a deeply enriching academic experience for me, as it offered a platform for critical dialogue, evidence-based exchange, and collaborative reflection on SRHR."



Mahmuda Naznin
Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka

- **Address** neglected and emerging SRHR issues. Greater focus is needed on infertility, PCOS, unnecessary C-sections, and other under-discussed reproductive health challenges through awareness, screening, and ethical regulation.
- **Strengthen** youth leadership in SRHR innovation. Young people should be supported not only as beneficiaries but as designers, entrepreneurs, and advocates shaping the SRHR marketplace.
- **Deepen** private sector and social marketing partnerships. Strategic collaboration with businesses can expand affordable access to SRHR commodities while maintaining rights-based standards.
- **Invest** in community-level capacity building. Training community actors in basic SRHR literacy, screening awareness, and referral mechanisms can decentralise access and empower households.
- **Ensure** ethical safeguards in SRHR commercialisation. While promoting enterprise models, clear standards must protect equity, informed choice, and rights-based principles.

"This honour has made me even more responsible to ensure positive and sustainable SRHR change through youth empowerment and awareness."



Md. Yasin Arafat Rabby
Youth Action For Development (SRHR Youth Champion Award 2025 Winner)

"At the heart of the SRHR Knowledge Fair vision, SRHR Lifeline turns commitment into action and compassion, ensuring every voice is heard, every right is respected, and every life is protected."



Shawrin Kadir Ena
Bangladesh Medical Students' Society (BMSS)

- **Strengthen** monitoring, data, and evidence-to-action systems. Translating knowledge into measurable impact requires improved data tracking, & documentation of best practices.
- **Advance** blended financing and social investment models. Combining public funds, impact investment, and community contributions can diversify funding sources.
- **Institutionalise** the Knowledge Fair as a policy-influencing platform. Future fairs should produce actionable policy briefs, investment roadmaps, and strategic commitments to sustain momentum beyond the event.


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10th KNOWLEDGE FAIR ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & RIGHTS

SRHR BUSINESS FOR THE GRASSROOTS

Knowledge > Business > Impact

14th DECEMBER, 2025
@ SHERATON DHAKA



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ORGANISED BY: Share-Net Bangladesh — The Knowledge Platform on Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights

PARTNERS

DALIT; SERAC-Bangladesh (A youth focused rights and development organization); YPSA; PRANTOSE FOUNDATION; YAD Youth Action For Development; WITH SHE; আভাস AVAS