

# Advancing Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health in Bangladesh



Shukhi Jibon

PATHFINDER



## ABOUT SHUKHI JIBON

The Accelerating Universal Access to Family Planning Project, also known as Shukhi Jibon, is funded by USAID and led by Pathfinder International, in partnership with IntraHealth International and with strategic support from the University of Dhaka, Departments of Population Sciences; the Obstetrical and Gynecological Society of Bangladesh (OGSB); and the World Health Organization (WHO). From 2018–2023, across Dhaka, Chattogram, Mymensingh, and Sylhet divisions of Bangladesh, Shukhi Jibon works to improve the health and wellbeing of Bangladeshi people by increasing access to family planning services and strengthening the capacity of health providers to improve the quality of their services. The project's working area covers more than 14.7 million eligible couples and 18 million adolescents in 268 upazilas across 32 districts.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Pathfinder expresses our gratitude to USAID Bangladesh for their generous support. We would also like to acknowledge the dedication and collaboration of partners at the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), the National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT), and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE). Most of all, Shukhi Jibon is grateful to the young people whose dynamism, heart, and engagement make this work possible.

Bangladesh's adolescent and youth population—one of the largest and fastest-growing in the world—has urgent and varied needs for family planning services and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) care. Yet a strong tradition of early marriage and childbearing, set against a backdrop of conservative social and gender norms, means adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights (AYSRHR) have historically been overlooked in national family planning programs. USAID's Accelerating Universal Access to Family Planning Project, popularly known as Shukhi Jibon, is working to change this.

This publication highlights Shukhi Jibon's multi-pronged approach to advancing cost-effective solutions that enhance health providers' skills and responsiveness, facility readiness, community engagement, and young people's service-seeking behavior and contraceptive uptake—all of which can be scaled up across Bangladesh.

**"I appreciate the initiative Shukhi Jibon took. You focus from top to bottom on issues related to adolescent health that will enable us to forge a successful path for the adolescents in our community."**

**Badal Kanti Nath**

Family Planning Inspector (FPI), Rajanagor  
Union Health and Family Welfare Center,  
Chattogram

Adolescents (ages 10–19) made **944,365** visits for sexual and reproductive health services at facilities supported by Shukhi Jibon from October 2018–September 2022.

Photo: Ridwanul Mosrur



A total of **819,631** married adolescents received contraceptive services from Shukhi Jibon-supported facilities or community health workers during 2021.



Photo: Ridwanul Mostur

## Responding to the Urgent Needs of a Dynamic, Growing Population

Bangladesh is home to 36 million adolescents (ages 10–19)—more than one-fifth of the country’s population.<sup>1</sup> At this stage in their lives, Bangladesh’s vast and growing cohort of young people are experiencing rapid social, physical, and emotional changes. Shukhi Jibon recognizes this period as a critical entry point for promoting healthy attitudes, values, and behaviors that can guide young people for the rest of their lives. By investing in the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of Bangladesh’s young people now, we can deliver three times the benefits—to meet their immediate and varied AYSRHR needs, create pathways toward healthy adulthood, and benefit future generations.

The government of Bangladesh (GOB) has demonstrated its strong commitment to the health of young people through its operational plan and the [Adolescent Health Strategy \(2017–2030\)](#), which identifies adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (AYSRH) as one of four priority thematic areas for intervention. To help Bangladesh operationalize its strategy, achieve its Sustainable Development Goals, reap the benefits of a demographic dividend, and reach more young people with the information and services they need to improve their health, avoid unintended pregnancy, and fulfill their aspirations, Shukhi Jibon addresses critical barriers.

<sup>1</sup> MCH Services Unit Directorate General of Family Planning, National Strategy for Adolescent Health 2017-2030.

# Urgent Needs Among Young People in Bangladesh

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**Median age at first marriage**  
among women ages 20–29 is  
**16.3 years old.**

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**Three-fourths** of girls **drop out of school** after marriage.

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Young people have  
**low use of AYSRH services.**

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**59%** of women ages 20–24  
**married before age 18.**

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**28%** of girls ages 15–19  
**have begun childbearing.**

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At 108 births per 1,000 women and girls ages 15–19, Bangladesh has the **highest adolescent fertility rate in South Asia.**

<sup>2</sup> Sources: Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18 and United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects.

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Unmarried adolescents and youth have **limited contact with the formal health care system.**

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**16% unmet need for family planning** is reported among married adolescents ages 15–19.

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**Only 6% of facilities ensure privacy** during family planning counseling.<sup>3</sup>

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Young people express a perceived **lack of respect, privacy, and confidentiality; fear** of stigma and discrimination; and imposition of moral values by health care providers.

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**Limited and inconsistent SRH information** is provided in schools.

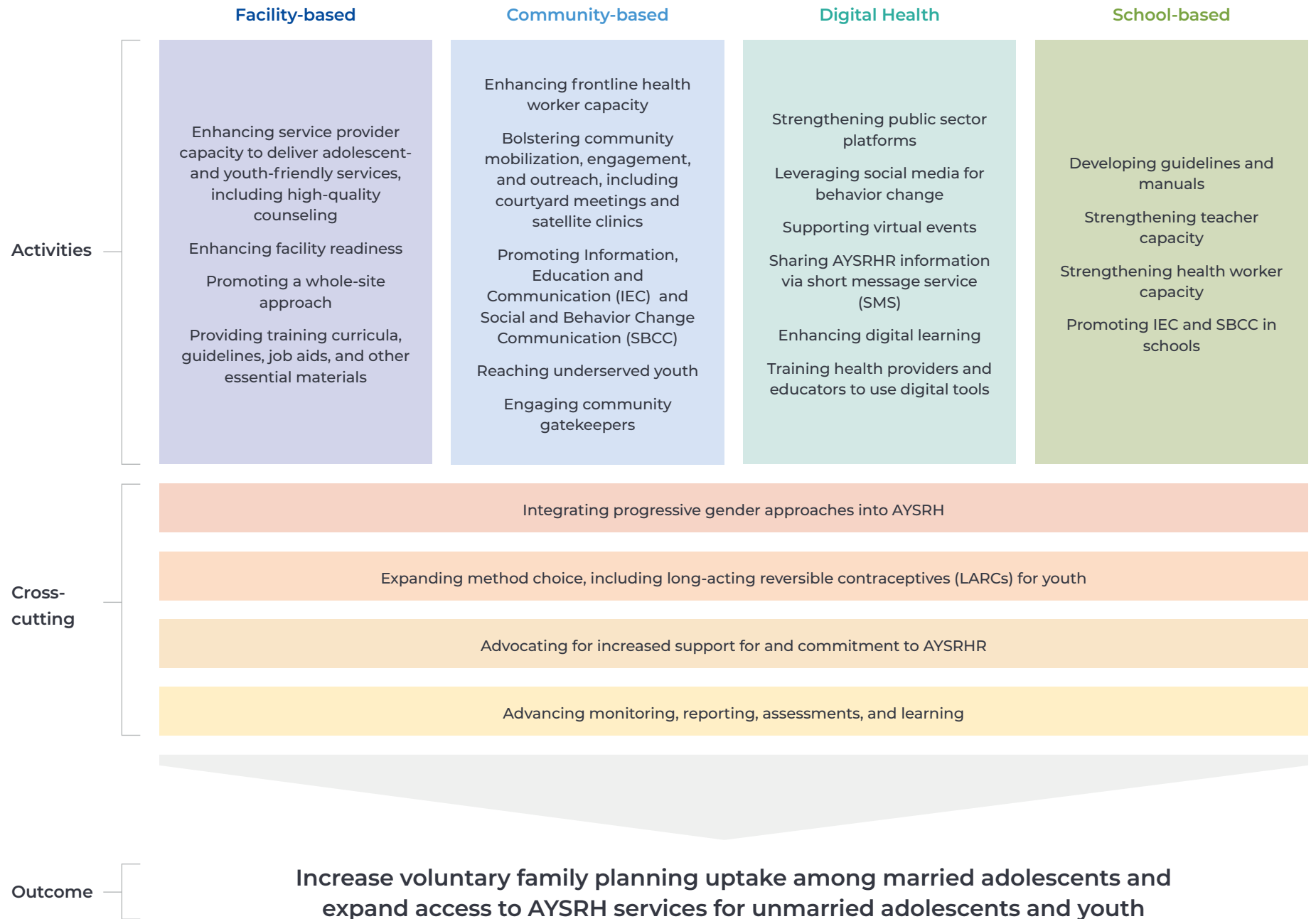
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<sup>3</sup> Among facilities assessed at the start of Shukhi Jibon implementation in the project's intervention areas.

**Shukhi Jibon implements a constellation of activities, in close collaboration with the GOB and other local partners, to address demand and supply for family planning and AYSRH, and to create an enabling environment at the facility, community, and policy levels. Through the following efforts, Shukhi Jibon is increasing voluntary family planning uptake among married adolescents and expanding access to AYSRHR services for unmarried adolescents and youth within public-sector health facilities.**



# Shukhi Jibon's Adolescent and Youth Strategic Framework



At **1,659** public-sector health facilities, Shukhi Jibon teams up with the government and other local partners to ensure young people can access accurate, unbiased AYSRH information and services.

Photo: Shukhi Jibon





Photo: Shukhi Jibon

## Strengthening Facility-Based Services

Shukhi Jibon partners with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) to grow and strengthen its cadre of skilled, responsive, and respectful adolescent- and youth-friendly health service (AYFHS)<sup>4</sup> providers and to make facilities adolescent-friendly and gender-sensitive, with the ability to serve as models for replication.

<sup>4</sup> Note: Shukhi Jibon uses the term adolescent- and youth-friendly health services (AYFHS) to refer to its work in this area. The GOB uses the term adolescent-friendly health services (AFHS).

“We observe fresh enthusiasm among the service providers following the cascade training on counseling adolescents on sexual and reproductive health. This is a great initiative to make the providers skilled and at the same keeping them motivated. Many thanks to USAID Shukhi Jibon.”

**Md. Mozammel Haque**

Deputy Director of Family Planning (DDFP),  
Faridpur, Dhaka



Photo: Shukhi Jibon

**Enhancing the Skills and Counseling of Bangladesh’s AYFHS Workforce**

Shukhi Jibon has bolstered Bangladesh’s AYFHS Training Package by developing a new, complementary counseling manual that addresses key topics, such as provider bias, which translate—advertently or inadvertently—into obstacles for young people who want to access SRH services, including family planning counseling and services. Shukhi Jibon also complements and builds upon the GOB’s four-day AYFHS training with a three-day training session to enhance providers’ skills in counseling AYSRH and their full range of family planning options, including long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs).

To date, **275** trainers from the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), and the National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT) have been trained on AYFHS by Shukhi Jibon. These trainers have trained **3,671** health providers, such as paramedics, medical staff, and others, on AYFHS.



Training materials, job aids, and other resources developed by Shukhi Jibon, in partnership with Bangladesh's MOHFW, to enhance the skills and counseling of providers in AFHS.

“I had no idea that adolescents required additional care before this training. Now I can confidently give assistance while maintaining privacy. Additionally, this training will assist me in altering my own behavior and approach to adolescents.”

**Taslima Jahan**

Family Welfare Assistant (FWA), Shariatpur, Dhaka

# ইউনিয়ন স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার

জালালাবাদ, সদর, সিলেট



ক্র.সং.	নাম	জন্ম তারিখ	স্বাস্থ্য কার্ড	পরিবার পরিকল্পনা	অন্যান্য
1	মুসাফির হোসেন	15/05/2010	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
2	সায়মা বেগম	22/08/2012	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
3	আব্দুল্লাহ আল-মামুন	03/11/2008	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
4	সুমিয়ারা বেগম	18/02/2015	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
5	আব্দুল্লাহ আল-মামুন	05/07/2011	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
6	সায়মা বেগম	22/08/2012	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
7	আব্দুল্লাহ আল-মামুন	03/11/2008	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
8	সুমিয়ারা বেগম	18/02/2015	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
9	আব্দুল্লাহ আল-মামুন	05/07/2011	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	
10	সায়মা বেগম	22/08/2012	হ্যাঁ	হ্যাঁ	

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## Readying Facilities to Meet Young People's Needs

Shukhi Jibon, in partnership with DGFP, supports public health facilities to increase young people's use of voluntary family planning by providing high-quality AYFHS. To this end, the project conducted an assessment of family planning service delivery at selected public health facilities, including Mother and Child Welfare Centers (MCWCs), Upazila Health Complexes (UHCs), and Union Family Welfare Centers (UH&FWCs). The project based its assessment on criteria modified from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Bangladesh's DGFP, which have aided in the development of action plans to ensure facilities meet the standards for providing AYFHS.

**1,372** facilities have been visited for readiness assessments on AYFHS through Shukhi Jibon from July 2018–September 2022.

**673** facilities have been found to be ready, while action plans have been developed for facilities that have not yet met the criteria.



Photo: Shukhi Jibon

As part of its effort to enhance facility readiness, Shukhi Jibon provides signage indicating an AYFHS center, adolescent health registers, job aids, FAQ booklet on AYFHS, citizen charter for AYFHS, a poster about early marriage, and other materials.

## Facilities Must Meet These Criteria to be Considered Ready to Provide AYFHS

### Availability of logistics and supplies

- ✓ Signage identifying the facility as an adolescent-friendly health services center
- ✓ Information, education, and communication (IEC) materials
- ✓ Adolescent health register
- ✓ List of available services for the adolescents

### Providers' knowledge and skills

- ✓ Training on AYFHS
- ✓ Training on counseling adolescents on SRH
- ✓ Job aid on AYFHS
- ✓ Training on gender-integrated family planning services

### Enabling environment

- ✓ Whole-site orientation on AYFHS (*see page 16*)
- ✓ Frontline health workers linked with facility

“I’m also counted! It is a very good feeling. Previously, I was not aware of my behavior towards adolescent clients. From now on, I will receive them with a smile and patience.”

Night guard and office assistant who took part in whole-site orientation, Bara Chatul UH&FWC, Kanaighat, Sylhet



Photo: Shukhi Jibon

## Promoting a Whole-Site Approach

Shukhi jibon works to ensure that as many staff as possible are ready to direct, counsel, and provide AYSRH information and services appropriately to young people as soon as they walk in a health facility's door. Shukhi jibon's whole-site orientation is a two-hour, in-person session for clinical and nonclinical facility staff who have contact with young people, including sub assistant community medical officers (SACMOs), family welfare visitors (FWVs), support staff, pharmacists, and associated field staff—family planning inspectors (FPIs) and family welfare assistants (FWAs). The project's whole-site orientation offers flexibility—to tailor the timing and content to the needs and preferences of each health facility.

**3,125** clinical and nonclinical facility staff from a total of 642 facilities have participated in whole-site orientations supported by Shukhi Jibon from July 2018–September 2022.



## Strengthening Monitoring and Reporting Systems

To ensure adolescents and youth get the health care they need, tracking service patterns using client statistics is critical. To this end, Shukhi Jibon supports government partners to monitor, keep records, and strengthen reporting systems related to AYSRH services. With support from the project, the GOB is taking steps to close a significant gap—limited data on adolescent clients within Bangladesh’s national health management information system (HMIS) system. Shukhi Jibon delivered paper-based adolescent health registers to project-supported facilities and provided support to ensure facility staff can use them. The adolescent reporting system, which was initially launched with six indicators, has expanded; providers now report on thirteen indicators, capturing a more holistic picture of the needs and services for young people.



## Advancing Learning

To better understand how a multi-pronged approach improves Bangladesh’s health system’s responsiveness to the SRH needs of adolescents and youth, in 2019, Shukhi Jibon used a Learning Lab approach, based on USAID’s Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) framework. Learning Lab activities included implementation of interventions in facilities, communities, and educational institutes with the intention to test, learn, adapt, and scale up.

Learn more about this Learning Lab [www.pathfinder.org/BD-Learning-AY](http://www.pathfinder.org/BD-Learning-AY)

“In this training, we not only received some knowledge on AYSRH, but also how to make the facility ready for adolescents and youth and proper documentation of AFHS services. Previously, we had no idea about reporting. We used to report on estimates, but, today, we are clear on reporting and documentation.”

**Sultana Razia**

FWV, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram

“The methodology of this training is very interesting. I participated actively in all sessions and learned many new things, including gender-sensitive communication with adolescents and youth. This training will help me provide AFHS services with quality.”

**S.M. Goolzar Hosain**

SACMO



Photo: Ridwanul Mosrur

## Integrating Progressive Gender Approaches into AYFHS

Shukhi Jibon assists facilities that offer AYSRH services to become gender-responsive by meeting the following criteria:

- At least one provider has been trained to provide gender-integrated family planning services (GIFPS).
- Visual and auditory privacy and confidentiality are ensured at the point of service delivery.
- Gender-equal services are offered.
- Gender-equal educational materials, posters, and job aids are available on site.
- There is a system for keeping records on gender-based violence.

**284** trainers have been trained on GIFP by Shukhi Jibon from July 2018–September 2022. These trainers have trained **3,125** providers to deliver GIFPS.

করবে:

- অতিরিক্ত পর্জননের মুক্তি পাবে না
- পুষ্টি সমস্যার সাথে কনসাক পুষ্টি করে খিচি বা আর কোনো সমস্যা না হিচি সহজত করে, ফলে না ও পিতা উভয়েই সুস্থ থাকে।

কোন পানীয় পানীয় এবং না ও পিতা সুস্থ থাকা।

USAID

মাসের হাতি



কল্যাণ কেন্দ্রের  
দুলা মুহিত

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কোন পানীয় পানীয় এবং না ও পিতা সুস্থ থাকা।

USAID

মাসের হাতি



Photo: Khadim Nagar



Photo: Shukhi Jibon

## Focusing on Communities

Lasting change starts in communities. Recognizing the complex interplay between individual, interpersonal, household, and community factors on AYSRH outcomes, Shukhi Jibon works collaboratively with local leaders—religious leaders, youth leaders, and the government’s massive cadre of frontline health workers, among others—to engage communities, build a groundswell of support for AYSRHR, expand contraceptive choice, and deliver family planning information and services to young people where they live.

## Supporting a Powerful Cadre of Frontline Health Workers

Adolescents in Bangladesh, regardless of marital status, do not regularly visit health facilities. To close this gap, Shukhi Jibon enhances the capacity of frontline health workers from Bangladesh's DGFP who play a pivotal role in reaching young people in their communities. With the project's support, Bangladesh's frontline health workers share AYSRH information, provide family planning counseling, and convey messages about postpartum family planning and healthy timing and spacing of pregnancy to adolescents and youth, including newlywed adolescents, first-time parents, and unmarried adolescents.

To date, **1,783** DGFP frontline health workers from **32** districts have participated in orientations on AYSRH through Shukhi Jibon.

## Bolstering Community Mobilization, Engagement, and Outreach

Through a satellite clinic initiative and structured courtyard meetings, supported and strengthened by Shukhi Jibon, adolescents and youth receive targeted messages, counseling, community-level services, and referrals for higher-level care on a variety of topics, such as healthy timing and spacing of pregnancy and their full range of contraceptive options, including LARCs. To help rejuvenate and advance these critical community-based activities, Shukhi Jibon played a key role in the development of a new Courtyard Meeting Guideline, which was shared nationally by the DGFP and rolled out by Shukhi Jibon during orientations with frontline service providers in 118 upazilas across 28 districts.

To date, **75** courtyard meetings have been conducted with **2,600+** community members.

**206** satellite clinic visits have been organized, reaching **2,420+** community members.

“Courtyard sessions with specific groups bring the participants together, so they can talk to each other about their needs. It also helps us to concentrate and deliver the right information according to their needs.”

—**Sujon Chandra**

FPI, Shariatpur, Dhaka



Photo: Ridwanul Mosrur

## Leveraging the Power of Local Partnerships to Reach Young People

To foster a healthy social environment for rights-based AYSRH programs and services, and to ensure young people can expand their AYSRH knowledge, practices, skills, and attitudes, Shukhi Jibon teams up with partner organizations at the district level. The project provides focused grants to local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to drive new and innovative initiatives, gender-responsive solutions, technology-based approaches, and ongoing AYSRH programs. Complementing Shukhi Jibon's public-sector efforts, these NGO partnerships specifically encourage new approaches that are inclusive and integrate diverse populations, including transgender communities; young people in rural, urban, semi-urban, urban slums, and other hard-to-reach areas; and out-of-school and working adolescents.

Using resources developed through Shukhi Jibon, including customized training modules and guidelines as well as information, education, and communication (IEC) and social and behavior change communication (SBCC) materials, our local partners reach young people and the adults who influence their health-seeking behavior with information about the availability of AYSRH services, address myths and misconceptions, and build community support for AYSRH services.

### Activity Spotlight

Here is just a small selection of Shukhi Jibon's expansive work with leading local partners:

#### Focusing on Young Couples

Engaging married adolescents and youth (ages 19–24) in 'Couple Focused Group Sessions,' where five couples—including both husbands and wives—come together to discuss family planning and SRHR.

Partner: **Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO)**

#### Reaching Ethnic Communities

Recruiting and supporting volunteers from ethnic communities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, who conduct information-sharing sessions in household yards in their own language.

Partner: **Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB)**

#### Raising Awareness in Urban Slums

Forming a 'Youth Brigade,' of young volunteers who carry out various social awareness activities among high-risk adolescents in urban slums and connect their peers to facility-based AYSRH services.

Partner: **Light House**

#### Hitting the Airwaves

Developing AYSRH-related content with local dialect and broadcast through Palli Kontho, a community radio station.

Partner: **Partners in Health and Development (PHD)**

#### Pulling from Tradition to Shape the Future

Incorporating rhythmic Puthi reading, a long-held tradition evolving from oral storytelling traditions, into SBCC activities targeting youth populations in rural Bangladesh, that feature SRH messages.

Partner: **SERAC-Bangladesh.**

#### Engaging Gatekeepers

Conducting community dialogues with gatekeepers, religious leaders, and community leaders to promote gender equity and reduce barriers to adolescent and youth access to SRH services and information.

Partner: **Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)**



Photo: Shukhi Jibon

## Reaching Newlyweds

In 2017, the DGFP piloted a small program in the Brahmanbaria district, where information boxes containing a suite of information on family planning, including how to access family planning services, how to use family planning, and how to connect with local providers, were given to newlywed couples. The pilot was a real success; 73 percent of the young couples who received the information chose to delay their first pregnancy. Shukhi Jibon has ramped up this intervention, reaching newlywed couples in 15 upazilas with diverse demographics. The box is part of a much larger effort from Shukhi Jibon to meet young people where they are, collaborating with trusted community members and leaders to create a supportive environment for young married couples to use family planning.

To date, **1,017** newlywed boxes have been distributed through Shukhi Jibon.

**7,574** individuals, including newlyweds and influential opinion leaders, have participated in the program.

“I want to continue my study, but I am a newlywed. I got a box through my wedding program where I found information about reproductive wellbeing and getting access to a temporary [family planning] method. I met my service provider on my wedding day and, according to her suggestion, I decided to take a temporary method to delay my pregnancy until I am 20.”

### Joya Rani

Young client, Gouripur, Mymensingh

## Gaining the Support of Influential Opinion Leaders

Shukhi Jibon organizes union-based awareness-raising sessions, facilitated primarily by Islamic Foundation representatives in partnership with DGFP officers who have participated in Shukhi Jibon trainings of trainers. These events offer a critical opportunity to engage community stakeholders, such as health assistants, health inspectors, union parishad members, union and upazila chair persons, social welfare department representatives, religious leaders, and marriage registers who have the power to build community support for the newlywed program.

“I believe change is needed. If we can all contribute to raising awareness, I believe people will also start believing and start changing.”

### **Monowara Begum**

Union Parishad Member - Sonakani Union,  
Satkania, Chattogram

“This is a tremendous initiative from our government to provide an information box to our newlywed couples. I went to the marriage ceremony. I advised the new couple to read the information booklet and follow the guideline and information as well as to communicate with the local FWA and others for a better understanding of family planning. I am committed to discussing [these issues] at the mosque—information from the government about SRH and the importance of family planning for adolescents to prevent early pregnancy, maternal death, and enrich happy families.”

### **Md. Abul Bashar**

Imam from Lunapara Jame Mosque, Gouripur,  
Mymensingh







Photo: Hafiz Shishir

## Reaching Young People in Schools

Schools provide a valuable platform for reaching adolescents in their early years with the critical SRH information they need to improve their health and futures. Shukhi Jibon brings together and supports stakeholders from DGFP, DGHS, and Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), as well as local partner NGOs, to enhance coordination, identify gaps, and strengthen activities to promote adolescent health through school health programs. At the same time, Shukhi Jibon works to ensure students can get accurate AYSRHR information from health providers and their teachers in classrooms, and connects them to health facilities for AYFHS services.

## Promoting Adolescent Health in Classrooms

Shukhi Jibon trains health providers and secondary school teachers to share information with students on a variety of topics, including puberty, gender, rights, nutrition, menstrual hygiene management (MHM), and life skills, and to refer students for services at nearby health facilities. To support these efforts, Shukhi Jibon helped create several new resources, developed through formal processes led by DGHS, including a guideline for SACMOs to use when conducting adolescent health sessions in schools, a guideline on referral mechanisms between schools and health facilities, flyers for peer leaders, a training manual on adolescent-responsive parenting for parents, and an orientation manual for community gatekeepers.

To date, across 28 districts, a total of **784** service providers have attended trainings on sharing adolescent health information, including AYSRHR, in schools.

“We were grateful to the service provider (SACMO) for providing the sanitary napkin and the MHM information. Now that we can properly manage our period. We will also motivate other students and female family members to use sanitary napkins.”

### **Khadizatul Kubra**

15-year-old student, Kaomi Mohila Madrasa, Mymensingh

## Adapting During COVID-19 Shutdowns

Starting in March 2020, when COVID-19 forced schools to close, many adolescents lost a critical point of access to the AYSRH information they received through school health sessions conducted by SACMOs. For girls in Madrasa, who face significant challenges addressing their AYSRH needs in their communities, Shukhi Jibon helped create adolescent and youth virtual groups. SACMOs in Mymensingh, with the project's support, established a virtual space to host interactive sessions where young female Madrasa students could ask questions about a variety of health topics, such as MHM, and get the answers they needed, even during a pandemic.


## Creating New Materials to Promote Behavior Change and Generate Demand for AYSRH Services

Through Shukhi Jibon, local NGO partners have created IEC and SBCC materials customized to young students. These materials range from posters displayed on the walls of schools to a music video featuring SRH-related messages for youth, written in traditional and unique lyrics, used as part of a school- and community-based campaign. The full scope of Shukhi Jibon's IEC and SBCC materials to promote AYSRH extend beyond the school grounds—to communities, health facilities, and homes (*see more on page 22*).

# Advancing Digital Health

In close collaboration with various government and NGO partners, Shukhi Jibon bridges physical distances and connects young people—who are frequent users and early adopters of technology—to the quality SRH information and services they need. The project's expansive digital health initiatives accelerate progress by (1) increasing public-sector family planning outreach, (2) expanding health workers' use of age-appropriate communication technology, (3) enhancing the knowledge and skills of health providers to support digital AYSRH services, and (4) increasing community mobilization and support for AYFHS.

To date, **6,000,000+** young people have received SRH information through Shukhi Jibon's expansive digital health initiatives.



Learn more about Shukhi Jibon's work to advance digital health to improve AYSRHR

[www.pathfinder.org/BD-digital-youth](http://www.pathfinder.org/BD-digital-youth)

## Strengthening Public Sector Digital Platforms

Shukhi Jibon supports the GOB's Aspire to Innovation (a2i) program and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) to enhance its Kishore Batayan - Konnect platform by incorporating a special focus on SRH and family planning for adolescents. Through the website's new Virtual Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Corner and Facebook Live shows, young visitors to the sites, as well as the people who influence their decisions and access to services, can engage in discussions about and foster supportive environments for AYSRH.

“Our [Facebook] page was not very rich before. The contents are now rich ... Pathfinder has shown us the way. Now we just have to walk on the path in more modern way.”

### Israt Zabin

Assistant Director, Information, Education, and Motivation (IEM) Unit, DGFP



Photo: Ridwanul Mosfur

## Leveraging Social Media for Behavior Change

Shukhi Jibon provides technical assistance to the Information, Education, and Motivation (IEM) Unit of the DGFP to advance its SBCC approaches and resources and increase adolescent and youth traffic to IEM's Facebook page. New initiatives and content include live discussions, in-app ad placement, animation, character-based videos, comic strips, quiz competitions, experience sharing platforms, and opportunities for young people to directly engage with providers who answer their AYSRH-related questions and provide referrals for services.

Results to date:

**12,400,000+** impressions (the number of times the content is displayed to users)

**6,600,000+** people reached with content

**469,000+** engagement (user interactions, such as “like,” share, and comment)



## Supporting Virtual Groups and Events

Shukhi Jibon supports regional and local stakeholders, including family planning district managers, to organize virtual seminars with young people and their influencers to discuss a range of AYSRH topics covered by Bangladesh's National Adolescent Health Strategy.

## Sharing AYSRH Information via Mobile Devices

Through Shukhi Jibon's subgrantee support, voluntarily enrolled adolescent married couples in the project area receive voice messages and SMS focused on SRH and family planning needs. Parents of adolescents also receive SMS messages, raising awareness on the physical and mental health issues commonly faced by young people.

To date, **54,000+** adolescents, youth, parents, teachers, and community gatekeepers in 15 districts have been reached by Shukhi Jibon's six local NGO partners through its subgrant program.



Photo: Shukhi Jibon

## Enhancing Digital Learning

Shukhi Jibon is in the process of producing interactive, engaging online content based on the AYSRH information within the government's approved textbook. Outreach agents, such as teachers, peer educators, and SACMOs, will be able to use these dynamic resources to complement their work.

## Orienting Educators

During hands-on sessions, Shukhi Jibon has oriented secondary school teachers on how they can encourage positive SRH practices for adolescents and youth by leveraging reliable digital health resources and platforms.

## Training Health Providers to Use Digital Tools

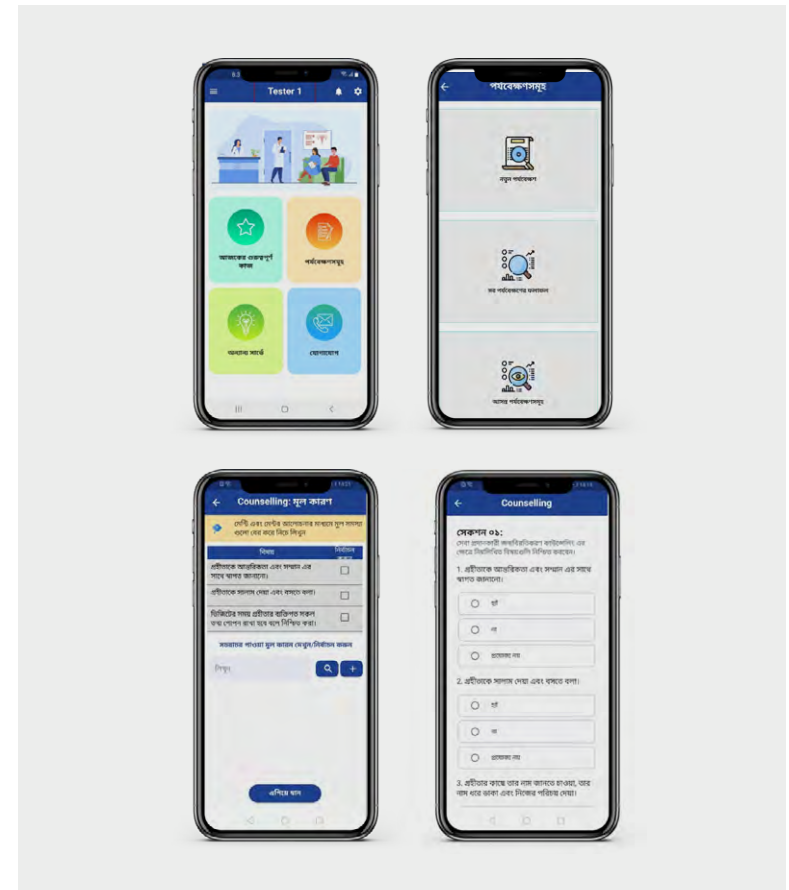
Shukhi Jibon enhances the capacity of health providers and managers to use android smartphones, social media, and video sharing sites to access multimedia resources and up-to-date communication material for counseling and information sharing, particularly for adolescents and youth.

To date, **1,125** service providers have been trained by Shukhi Jibon to use digital tools to serve adolescents and youth.

“I liked the session. The center where I work is between a school and college, so we get a lot of young girls as clients. They are quite smart. When I talked to them about the online pages, they showed interest. I think they now follow the page.”

**Sayara Mukta**

FWV, Sunamgonj, Sylhet



## Introducing a New Digital App to Improve the Quality of Services

Shukhi Jibon developed and began pilot testing a new digital mentorship application in 2021 in Faridpur, Chattogram, Sylhet, Mymensingh, and Rangamati districts. The app enables users to follow family planning checklists to facilitate clinical mentoring, capture data from their mentorship in a timely manner; promotes data-driven decision-making and assessment of service providers' skills; makes it easier for all parties—mentors, mentees, supervisors, managers, etc.—to organize and communicate data effectively, and aids in action-planning and follow-up.

“This is the tenth year of my professional life. But it is the first time I’ve had an adolescent- and youth-focused orientation. I believe this is true for most of the participants. Now, I will regularly follow up with the local family welfare visitors I work with to ensure discussions of sexual and reproductive health issues and information specific to adolescents.”

## Family Planning Inspector trained by Shukhi Jibon

This document is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the sole responsibility of Pathfinder International and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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