EARN
Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET

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ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Communication Strategy

Communication Strategy Paper

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Most importantly, we want to thank the young people and other stakeholders who have taken the time to share their stories, opinions, and dreams with us. Their voices are central to this study, and it is their lived experiences that bring the research to life.

This study was conducted by a dedicated team from Spellbound Communications Limited, in close collaboration with Policy Exchange. We sincerely appreciate the hard work, professionalism, and passion of everyone involved from fieldwork to data analysis and report writing.

We hope the insights presented here will help inspire positive change and contribute to the growth and development of young people across Bangladesh—through accurate, thoughtful, and contextually relevant communication actions at all levels.

Signature _____

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Executive Summary

Bangladesh stands at a decisive demographic juncture, carrying within its youth both the challenge of unrealised potential and the promise of accelerated economic and social transformation. With nearly one-third of the population under the age of twenty-four, young people represent an immense reservoir of energy, creativity, and resilience. Yet, this demographic dividend remains underutilised.

Almost forty per cent of youth between fifteen and twenty-four years of age are currently classified as NEET—Not in Education, Employment, or Training. This figure is nearly double the global average and represents not just a developmental concern but also a profound social and economic risk. The phenomenon is most pronounced among young women, who comprise almost half of the NEET population. Still, it also disproportionately affects persons with disabilities, third-gender communities, and rural youth living on the margins of opportunity.

Young women, in particular, face disproportionate exclusion due to early marriage, limited mobility, caregiving responsibilities, and persistent social stigma. Youth with disabilities and third-gender communities face systemic discrimination, inaccessible infrastructure, and limited institutional support. For rural youth, fragile infrastructure, climate vulnerabilities, and limited access to digital tools reinforce cycles of exclusion. Collectively, these barriers erode trust in institutions, constrain aspirations, and perpetuate disillusionment among Bangladesh's largest-ever working-age cohort.

Despite multiple government and development initiatives, including SEIP, BYETS, BRAC SDP, and the National Service Programme, systemic challenges such as outdated education systems, weak labour market linkages, corruption in recruitment, and urban-centric programming continue to marginalise youth, especially in rural and climate-vulnerable areas.

Recognising this critical challenge, the Government of Bangladesh, through the Department of Youth Development (DYD) with support from the World Bank, launched the Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) Project.

The project aims to empower 900,000 rural NEET youth, with at least 60 per cent women, by providing second-chance education, demand-driven skills training, and pathways to self-employment. Village-Level Training Centres (VLTCs) are equipped with women-centric facilities to ensure inclusivity and safe participation.

The ambition of EARN extends beyond technical training. It seeks to dismantle entrenched socio-cultural barriers, including gender stereotypes, stigma around vocational education, restrictive family attitudes, and lack of visible role models, that limit youth participation. In doing so, the project contributes directly to national development goals outlined in the National Skills Development Policy 2021, the NSDA Act 2018, and Vision 2041, while aligning with broader agendas of gender equity, economic inclusion, and social resilience.

Communication as a Driver of Transformation

EARN places communication at the heart of its design—not as a peripheral tool for information dissemination, but as:

- A driver of social and behavioural change that challenges stigma and stereotypes.

- A mechanism for recognition and legitimacy that elevates vocational training as a dignified, aspirational pathway.

- A vehicle for empowerment that ensures youth, families, and communities see themselves as active participants in transformation.

To ground this communication in evidence, a comprehensive Communication Needs Assessment (CNA) was undertaken, combining multiple streams of inquiry:

1. Literature Review: Situating Bangladesh's NEET challenge in global and national contexts, highlighting systemic inequities and behavioural opportunities.

2. Multi-Stakeholder Consultations: Engaging parents, educators, employers, religious leaders, community

influencers, and civil society to capture diverse perspectives.

3. Key Informant Interviews with DYD officials: Diagnosing institutional challenges in outreach, enrolment, and trust-building.

4. Online Survey with NEET youth: Providing first-hand insights into aspirations, anxieties, preferred channels, and trusted messengers.

5. Life Sketches: Documenting lived experiences—young women curtailed by early marriage, young men burdened by economic pressures, persons with disabilities excluded by barriers, and third-gender youth navigating systemic discrimination yet showing resilience when supported.

This triangulated evidence painted a multidimensional picture of the communication landscape, integrating human depth into statistics and showing how structural, cultural, and emotional factors interact to influence youth decisions.

Key Insights from the Communication Needs Assessment

•   Barriers are not only economic but also behavioural and cultural. Social stigma, gender norms, family restrictions, and weak trust in institutions are as constraining as financial limitations.

•   Gatekeepers matter. Parents, community leaders, and religious figures often act as barriers, but when engaged constructively, they can become powerful enablers of youth participation.

•   Role models build credibility. Success stories and alumni testimonials resonate more deeply than institutional promises.

•   Trust gaps are significant. Many young people distrust official announcements but place strong trust in their peers, alumni, and respected community figures.

•   Channel preferences are hybrid. Urban and semi-urban youth actively engage with social media (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok), whereas rural youth rely heavily on posters, courtyard meetings, mosque announcements, miking, and conversations at tea stalls.

•   Inclusive formats are vital. Persons with disabilities and marginalised groups require accessible, diverse communication tools, including Braille publications, large-print visuals, sign language videos, and activity-based materials.

•   Emotional drivers matter. Hope, dignity, and recognition motivate participation more than purely economic appeals.

The Communication Strategy and Action Plan (CAP)

Drawing from these insights, the CAP was designed as a phased, integrated journey aligned with the youth experience. It envisions communication as a relational, trust-building process rather than a one-way campaign.

Phase 1: Awareness and Trust-Building

•   Establish EARN's visibility and credibility at both national and community levels.

•   Deploy mass media, social media, and grassroots outreach to ensure inclusion of rural, female, and marginalised youth.

•   Highlight safety, accessibility, and family benefits to reassure guardians.

Phase 2: Motivation and Mindset Transformation

•   Challenge stigma and stereotypes by elevating relatable role models.

•   Use storytelling, peer dialogue, and community endorsements to frame training as aspirational and dignified.

- Promote positive gender norms and the dignity of work.

Phase 3: Enrolment Support

- Provide clear, accessible information on registration processes and training pathways.

- Use localised guidance, reminders, and family outreach to overcome hesitations.

- Employ peer educators and alumni ambassadors to bridge credibility gaps.

Phase 4: Retention and Empowerment

- Sustain engagement through mentorship, interactive digital groups, and community recognition.

- Celebrate achievements via walls of fame, community ceremonies, and public murals.

- Reinforce peer networks to maintain motivation and belonging.

Tools and Channels

The CAP integrates a multi-channel ecosystem that combines digital platforms, mass media, and grassroots methods:

- Digital tools: Social media reels, testimonial videos, WhatsApp chatbots, SMS nudges, IVR, youth co-creation labs.

- Traditional outreach Methods Include Mosque announcements, courtyard meetings (Uthan Baithaks), folk songs and theatre, posters, miking, murals, and flipchart/activity books.

- Inclusive formats: Braille, large-print visuals, sign-language content, and gamified tools for low-literacy audiences.

- Interactive spaces: Youth Opportunity Corners, digital hubs, job fairs/expos, sports events, and pop-up booths.

Policy Advocacy Integration

The CAP is synchronised with policy and governance frameworks. Communication supports systemic change by:

- Advocating for TVET reforms aligned with labour market demand.

- Expanding access for rural and female youth.

- Modernising training infrastructure and promoting entrepreneurship pathways.

- Reinforcing governance and accountability through youth-led monitoring, a national NEET database, and results-based financing.

Strategic communication also amplifies policy uptake by shaping public perception, building momentum for reforms, and reinforcing institutional credibility.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

A robust MEL framework ensures adaptive learning and evidence-driven communication.

- Quantitative indicators: media reach, enrollment rates, and retention numbers.

- Qualitative measures: Shifts in attitudes, family support, and community recognition.

- Feedback loops: SMS/WhatsApp polls, youth content labs, community listening sessions.

- Institutionalisation: DYD staff training, digital dashboards, and youth-led monitoring ensure sustainability

beyond the project.

Conclusion

Project EARN reimagines communication not as an auxiliary function but as a transformative instrument for social and economic inclusion. It bridges the distance between opportunity and participation, reshapes entrenched attitudes, and restores dignity to youth who have long been excluded from growth pathways.

By embedding empathy, inclusivity, and co-creation into every phase, the CAP transforms outreach into empowerment and information into inspiration. It positions youth not as passive recipients but as vital partners in building a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous Bangladesh.

For millions of NEET youth, the message is clear: exclusion is not destiny. With recognition, opportunity, and support, Bangladesh's youth can become central actors in shaping the nation's resilience, prosperity, and inclusive future.

INTRODUCTION

Why This Communication Strategy

This communication strategy has been developed to support the successful implementation of the Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) Project by addressing the urgent need for targeted, inclusive, and adaptive outreach efforts.

Rooted in an extensive needs assessment, the strategy aims to ensure that the project reaches its core beneficiaries —youth who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), particularly young women in rural and underserved regions of Bangladesh—in a meaningful way.

The central objective is to design and implement a multi-channel Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) framework that promotes awareness, shifts deep-rooted societal perceptions, and drives active engagement with EARN's alternative education, skills training, and entrepreneurship components.

Through this strategy, EARN aims to raise widespread awareness about the availability and value of second-chance education, market-responsive skills training, and entrepreneurial opportunities. It also seeks to generate demand for these services by overcoming behavioural barriers, such as mobility restrictions, social stigma, and gendered norms that hinder participation, particularly among young women.

Equally important is the aim of encouraging wide-ranging stakeholder involvement, including families, communities, employers, government entities, civil society organisations, and the media, to create a supportive ecosystem for the project's success.

The strategy also plans to develop dynamic and interactive digital platforms to support knowledge capture, storytelling, visibility, and dissemination, both internally among implementing actors and externally among target groups.

These platforms will serve as tools to ensure transparency, celebrate youth achievements, encourage peer-to-peer motivation, and support learning loops throughout the project lifecycle. Ultimately, this communication strategy is designed not only to amplify EARN's visibility and impact but also to catalyse long-term behavioural change and inclusive social development, positioning NEET youth as active contributors to Bangladesh's economic transformation.

Communication Strategy Purpose

Build Awareness:
- Increase visibility of the EARN project and its benifits among stakeholder

Drive Behaviour Change:
- Encourage youth participation in training programs.
- Shift perceptions about vocational and technical professions.

Foster Stakeholder Buy-in:
- Cultivate support from families, community leaders, and employers.

Promote Sustainability:
- Lay the foundation for long-term mindset change and systemic acceptance of skills-based careers.

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN)

The Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) Project is a flagship initiative of the Government of Bangladesh, implemented by the Department of Youth Development (DYD) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports in collaboration with the World Bank.

Aiming to economically engage nearly 900,000 rural youths, 60% of whom are women, the project addresses the country's high NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) rate by expanding access to alternative education, market-relevant skills, and employment opportunities.

Central to EARN is the establishment of Village Level Training Centres (VLTCs), which deliver inclusive, flexible, and locally accessible training programs with a strong focus on women-centric facilities. The project also provides entrepreneurship support, incubation services, and structured pathways to wage employment by enhancing socio-emotional and behavioural (SEB) skills, as well as entrepreneurial development (ED) competencies. By working to shift restrictive social norms and strengthen institutional capacities, EARN aims to build a gender-equitable and resilient workforce.

Its strategic alignment with Sustainable Development Goals; particularly those related to education, gender equality, decent work, and reduced inequalities, positions the project as a transformative effort to empower youth and drive inclusive national development.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The EARN Project has been formulated to achieve the following core objectives:

Reduction of NEET Youth Rate through structured training, re-education, and job market integration.

Expansion of Accessible Skills Development Opportunities via Village Level Training Centres (VLTCs) across underserved areas.

Fostering of Sustainable Livelihoods through entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise support.

Promotion of Gender and Social Inclusion, targeting women, specially-abled individuals, and unmotivated youth.

Behavioural Change and Social Norm Transformation through strategic communication interventions.

Institutional Strengthening of implementing agencies to ensure coordination, efficiency, and scalability.

EARN Project Stakeholder Map

Primary Stakeholder	NEET Youth Families & Peers
Government Stakeholder	MoYS DYD District DDs, PCs Budget Holders Govt Agencies (BIDA, BEZA, etc.)
Community & Social Influencers	Religious Leaders Community Leaders Youth Leaders
Development Sector	NGOs INGOs
Education Sector	Formal Ed. (Schools) Informal Ed. (TVETs)
Specialists	Gender/Env Specialists Psychosocial Experts
Private Sector	Chambers of Commerce Employers
Media & Comms	Media Service Providers Comms Experts

Project Components

Component 1: Access to alternate education and skills development.

Component 2: Support for wage and self-employment.

Component 3: Promoting an enabling environment.

Component 4: Enhancing institutional capacity and project management.

Driving Forces Behind EARN

The Department of Youth Development (DYD), Bangladesh, serves as the primary implementing agency of the EARN Project, spearheading efforts to engage NEET youth across rural areas through education, skill development, and employment facilitation. The World Bank plays a critical role as the project's development partner, providing strategic financing, technical assistance, and global expertise to ensure the initiative's effectiveness and alignment with international best practices. Spellbound Communications Limited (SCL) has been entrusted with designing and executing the project's communication strategy. As the communication conductor, SCL leads the development of behaviour change campaigns, stakeholder engagement frameworks, and visibility initiatives to amplify the project's reach and impact. Policy Exchange Bangladesh (PEB) serves as a knowledge partner to the communication conductor, SCL, helping to ground the communication strategy in data-driven insights and real-world policy dynamics.

যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর
যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয়

Department of Youth Development (DYD), Bangladesh: The Implementer

Established in 1981 under the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Department of Youth Development (DYD) is the government's key agency for empowering youth through skill training, entrepreneurship support, and community engagement. Its core objectives include enhancing employability, promoting self-employment, fostering social inclusion, and encouraging youth participation in nation-building. DYD runs diverse programs in vocational training, IT, agriculture, and manufacturing, alongside offering financial support for young entrepreneurs, job placement services, and international employment assistance. Through regional offices and training centres across all districts, it ensures grassroots outreach. DYD has trained millions of young people, facilitated job creation, and promoted volunteerism. Challenges persist in terms of resource constraints, adapting to technological advancements, and achieving comprehensive rural coverage. To address these, DYD is expanding digital training, deepening private sector partnerships, and scaling financial support to maximise youth potential for inclusive national development.

THE WORLD BANK
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP

The World Bank: The Supporter Of EARN

Established in 1944, the World Bank is a key international financial institution that provides loans, grants, and technical assistance to developing countries, with the goal of reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development. Operating under the World Bank Group, it supports infrastructure, education, healthcare, climate action, and private sector growth in Bangladesh. Its five arms—IBRD, IDA, IFC, MIGA, and ICSID—serve different development needs, from concessional lending to private investment support. Despite criticisms regarding debt, conditionalities, and governance, the World Bank remains central to Bangladesh's development, with an increasingly focused approach on transparency, digital transformation, and climate resilience.

Organisations that develop the Communication Strategy Paper based on the Communication Need Assessment

Spellbound Communications Limited (SCL)

Founded in 2007, Spellbound Communications Limited (SCL) is a prominent Bangladeshi advertising and marketing agency recognised for its creative, strategic, and impactful brand communications. Spellbound Communications Limited is the lead organisation and is responsible for the development of the communication strategy paper of the EARN project.

Headquartered in Dhaka, SCL provides integrated services encompassing advertising, digital marketing, public relations, media planning, and event management.

As the local representative of CNN, SCL combines global expertise with local insight. It collaborates with the EU and various development agencies to run major campaigns that promote economic growth, public awareness, and social change.

With a diverse client base spanning government, corporate, and development sectors, SCL continues to shape Bangladesh's communication landscape through innovation, collaboration, and compelling storytelling.

Policy Exchange Bangladesh (PEB)

Established in 2020, Policy Exchange Bangladesh is a private think tank and advisory firm specialising in economic policy, investment advisory, and market analytics. Policy Exchange Bangladesh is a partner to the lead organisation in the development of the communication strategy paper for the EARN project.

It supports public and private stakeholders with data-driven research, policy advocacy, and strategic guidance across trade, finance, digital economy, and sustainability.

PEB collaborates with global partners, including the World Bank, ADB, FCDO, and JETRO, playing a pivotal role in reforms, investment facilitation, and economic transformation in Bangladesh.

SECONDARY LITERATURE REVIEW

A comprehensive review of **secondary literature** was conducted to contextualise the communication needs of NEET youth in Bangladesh. This review drew on: government reports and policy documents related to youth development, employment, and skills training. National and international statistical databases (e.g., BBS, ILO, UNESCO) highlighted trends in NEET demographics and information consumption patterns. Existing academic and practitioner studies on youth communication barriers, digital inclusion, behavioural insights, and the role of public institutions in social mobilisation were examined. The literature emphasised the digital divide, socio-cultural barriers, and low institutional trust among NEET youth, particularly young women, as key areas of concern. These findings informed the development of the tools and thematic perspectives used in primary data collection.

Before undertaking the communication needs assessment that would inform the development of the EARN Project's communication strategy, a comprehensive desktop-based review of secondary literature was conducted.

This review aimed to contextualise the challenges faced by NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth in Bangladesh, assess the efficacy of existing national and international interventions, and identify communication gaps and behavioural bottlenecks.

By drawing on a wide range of academic studies, policy reports, program evaluations, and global best practices, the literature review provided an evidence-informed foundation for designing a communication strategy that is both context-specific and impact-oriented.

This preparatory phase ensured that the forthcoming Communication Needs Assessment and the development of the Communication Strategy would not be based on assumptions but grounded in data, trends, and insights into youth exclusion, gender-based barriers, rural-urban disparities, institutional bottlenecks, and socio-cultural dynamics.

It also helped map the landscape of existing skills development programs, policy frameworks, and public-private partnerships in Bangladesh, while incorporating global learnings on what works to empower marginalised youth populations. These insights were vital in shaping a nuanced communication framework that addresses not only awareness gaps but also behavioural change, stakeholder coordination, and inclusive messaging strategies.

Bangladesh Contexts: Youth Employability, Poverty, and Skill Development

Bangladesh has implemented several national and NGO-led initiatives to enhance youth employability and address challenges faced by NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) populations. Major programs include the National Human Resource Development Fund (NHRDF), a not-for-profit supporting quality skills training; the Skills for Employment Investment Program (SEIP), funded by the government and ADB to provide market-driven technical training; BRAC's Skills Development Programme (SDP) for marginalized groups; the Skills for Industry Competitiveness and Innovation Program (SICIP) to link workforce readiness with industrial productivity. There are the National Skills Development Council (NSDC), the Ministry of Education, and numerous other ministries and directorates which align national strategies to build a skilled middle-income workforce.

Despite these initiatives, structural and social barriers limit their effectiveness. Many training programs remain outdated and poorly aligned with market demands, especially in rural and underserved areas. Women face additional hurdles due to the lack of gender-sensitive facilities, including childcare and safe learning spaces. Limited access to ICT and digital tools further restricts participation, compounded by low awareness of government and NGO training opportunities in remote communities. Additionally, societal perceptions stigmatise vocational and informal jobs, while rigid cultural norms discourage girls from continuing education or entering the workforce, particularly after puberty. Financial constraints, inflexible learning models, and poor infrastructure—such as transportation and school facilities—further limit access to education and skills training.

Economic Vulnerabilities and Unemployment

Bangladesh has made significant strides in poverty reduction through rural economic expansion, microcredit, and NGO efforts (Hill & Genoni, 2019). However, persistent gender discrimination and unequal economic opportunities hinder the sustainable alleviation of poverty (Khan & Islam, 2015).

Social safety nets have improved rural poverty outcomes but need further strengthening (Hakim, 2021). Poverty in rural areas is closely linked to limited education, agricultural challenges, and gender biases (Sen, 2019). While government interventions and microcredit programs have enhanced rural resilience (Hyder, 2020), unemployment remains driven by population pressures, slow industrialisation, and skill mismatches (Rahman et al., 2020; Abdin, 2014).

Government policies promoting SME growth, agribusiness, digital entrepreneurship, and vocational training (Ali & Islam, 2011; AL Mamun et al., 2022) have helped, yet reliance on public sector jobs and economic vulnerability remain barriers (Sultana, 2020; Mukit et al., 2021).

In rural areas, unemployment is worsened by limited training access, gender discrimination, and infrastructural gaps (Hossain & Hosen, 2018; Rahman et al., 2020). Agribusiness, rural entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and microcredit offer promising pathways to empowerment (Hyder, 2020).

Unemployment and NEET Youth in Bangladesh

The Sample Vital Statistics Report (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2024) reveals a sharp rise in the proportion of Bangladeshi youth who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), now reaching 39.88%. This marks a significant increase from 28.9% reported in the Labour Force Survey 2016–17, highlighting an escalating structural challenge, particularly acute in rural regions. Compared to the global NEET average of 21.7% (ILO, 2023), Bangladesh's rate is alarmingly high.

Gender disparities remain stark: approximately 47% of young women aged 15–29 are NEET, compared to just 11–13% of young men. Socio-cultural norms, including those limiting women's mobility, early marriage, and household expectations, restrict their access to education and formal employment. Young people in rural areas, especially women, face compounded barriers due to poor infrastructure and limited access to institutions.

Despite rising demand for skilled labour, vocational and technical education is often undervalued and stigmatised, deterring young people from pursuing these viable pathways. Census data further shows that 34.26% of individuals aged 15–24—totaling 10,811,404—were not engaged in any form of education, employment, or training at the time of enumeration (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2024).

These findings underscore the pressing need for inclusive, gender-sensitive interventions to re-engage NEET youth and harness their untapped potential.

Working Definition of NEET

NEET stands for "Not in Education, Employment, or Training" and refers to young people—typically aged 15 to 35—who are not engaged in formal education, paid employment, or vocational training. This classification is crucial for identifying and addressing youth who are excluded from productive pathways of learning and earning.

NEET youth often face compounded vulnerabilities such as poverty, social isolation, and limited access to public services and opportunities. Women—especially in rural areas—are disproportionately represented due to gender norms, mobility restrictions, early marriage, and caregiving responsibilities that prevent their participation in education or the workforce.

Other contributing factors include geographical remoteness, disaster-related displacement, structural inequity, social exclusion, the digital divide, and lack of timely and gender responsive information.

NEET is not just a statistical category; it reflects more profound systemic inequalities and serves as a critical lens for youth-centred policy design and development intervention.

Unemployment Scenario in Bangladesh

Bangladesh faces a critical challenge with a persistently high NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth population, reflecting deep structural and socio-economic barriers. As of 2024, over 27% of youth aged 15–29 are NEET, with a stark gender disparity—47% of young women compared to 11–13% of young men. Data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics shows that 10.8 million youth aged 15–24, or 34.26% of that cohort, are not engaged in any form of education, employment, or training.

This disengagement is especially acute in rural areas, where young women face additional hurdles such as early marriage, mobility restrictions, limited institutional access, and gendered labour norms.

Compounding this is the broader employment crisis: the youth unemployment rate is 11.56% (World Bank, 2021), with another 20% underemployed in roles that underutilise their skills or offer unstable, low-paid work.

Compounding the problem is the dominance of the informal sector, which employs nearly 85% of the national workforce. This sector encompasses agriculture, informal enterprises, and unregulated services, offering limited job security, health benefits, and legal protections. Workers, especially the youth, are often trapped in exploitative and unsafe working conditions without pathways for upward mobility. Such precarious employment structures leave youth highly vulnerable to economic shocks, climate-induced disruptions, and limited social protections.

Employment disparities are further evident across geographic and gender lines. According to data from Q3 2024, the national unemployment rate reached 4.49%, but among urban youth, it soared to 10.5%. Within this group, young women faced an unemployment rate of 13.3%, compared to 9.3% among men. In rural areas, youth unemployment stood at 6.4%, with a notable gender disparity. However, this lower female unemployment rate in rural areas often reflects low labour force participation, not better employment outcomes, as many women are excluded from both formal and informal work spheres due to socio-cultural barriers.

Several structural factors contribute to the widespread prevalence of youth unemployment and NEET status. A key issue is the skills mismatch between education and labour market needs. Research indicates that the current education system in Bangladesh often fails to equip graduates with industry-relevant technical and digital skills, leaving many unprepared for employment (Rashid & Islam, 2020; Rahman et al., 2020). Furthermore, limited industrial diversification means that job creation has not kept pace with the growing labour force. Industrial development remains largely urban-centric and has not sufficiently reached rural areas, where most NEET youth live (Abbasi et al., 2017).

Further complicating the landscape is a strong cultural preference for public sector jobs, which diminishes the motivation among young people to pursue entrepreneurial or private-sector opportunities (Sultana, 2020). At the macroeconomic level, volatile conditions—such as inflation, weak foreign direct investment (FDI), and inconsistent GDP growth—limit job creation and economic expansion (Mukit et al., 2021).

Moreover, the ongoing stigma surrounding vocational education and technical training discourages young people from pursuing skill-based careers, despite the increasing demand for such expertise in the job market.

Taken together, these factors present a complex and urgent challenge. The high NEET rate signals not only a waste of demographic potential but also a threat to national development, social stability, and long-term economic resilience.

In response, the Government of Bangladesh, particularly through the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), has recognised the need for targeted efforts to re-engage NEET youth. These include initiatives aimed at increasing access to skills development, education-to-employment pathways, and job readiness programmes—key areas where effective communication strategies under the EARN Project must be employed to inform, motivate, and mobilise marginalised young populations.

Employment Strategy Deployed

The persistently high NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) rate in Bangladesh reflects a multifaceted crisis that not only undermines the nation's demographic dividend but also poses risks to long-term development, economic resilience, and social cohesion. Recognising this, the Government of Bangladesh—particularly through the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS)—has initiated a range of targeted interventions aimed at re-engaging NEET youth. These include expanding access to skills training, building robust education-to-employment pathways, and promoting job readiness among young people, especially those in marginalised and underserved communities. Within this context, the EARN Project plays a critical role, especially in deploying communication strategies that inform, inspire, and mobilise NEET youth to participate in transformative livelihood opportunities.

Figure 1: Proposed target for reducing NEET Population (%) in Bangladesh, 2015-2023
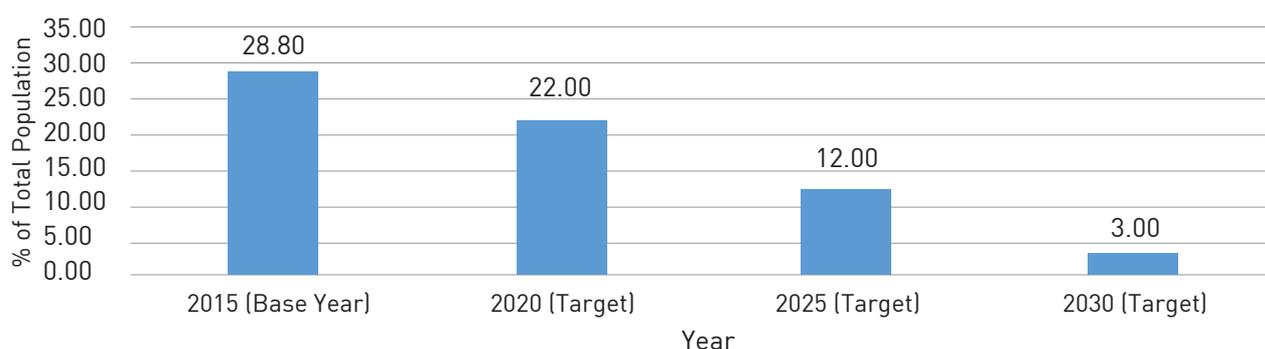
Source; Ministry of Youth and Sports, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, "SDG Action Plan through National Mid-Term and Long-Term Development Plan," pp.6-8.

Recent literature and policy reviews underscore that reducing youth unemployment and lowering the NEET rate requires an integrated and youth-centred employment strategy, addressing both supply-side and demand-side gaps in the labour market.

NEET Population Reduction Targets by Lead, Co-Lead, and Associate Ministries

Ministries/Divisions	Status (Lead/Co-Lead/Associate)	Target Year 2020	Target Year 2025	Target Year 2030
		Projected NEET Population Reduction		
Department of Youth Development (DYD), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS)	Lead	9,98,314	14,29,200	16,44,500
Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE)	Co-Lead	80,000	1,00,000	1,00,000
Ministry of Expartiates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE)	Associate	3,50,000	5,00,000	6,00,000
Ministry of Industries (MoInd)	Associate	3,50,000	5,00,000	6,000,000

A central focus is the reform of technical and vocational education, particularly through the expansion of TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) programs that are aligned with market needs. These reforms aim to bridge the persistent skills mismatch that leaves many graduates unprepared for emerging industries (Rahman et al., 2020).

In parallel, digital and remote work opportunities are increasingly viewed as viable alternatives to traditional employment, particularly with the global surge in demand for IT-enabled services. Bangladesh can leverage this shift by investing in broadband infrastructure, expanding digital literacy, and promoting platforms for freelancing, e-commerce, and digital entrepreneurship (Rustam, 2020; AL-Mamun et al., 2022).

To complement formal employment efforts, youth entrepreneurship is being promoted as a pathway to self-employment and innovation. Enabling factors include access to microcredit, business incubation support, and mentorship programs, which are particularly relevant in rural and peri-urban contexts where formal employment is limited (Abdin, 2017). Alongside this, the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)—especially in agribusiness and value-added agriculture—holds significant potential for creating jobs in rural areas. Enhancing access to finance, market linkages, and capacity development can stimulate local economies and reduce pressure on urban migration flows (Ali & Islam, 2011).

Another strategic avenue is overseas employment, which continues to serve as a critical source of livelihood for millions of Bangladeshis. To strengthen this pathway, there is a need for targeted pre-departure training, language instruction, and skills certification, ensuring that migrants are competitive and protected in international labour markets (Abbasi et al., 2017).

Furthermore, addressing employment challenges requires systemic policy reforms—including the modernisation of labour laws, facilitation of foreign direct investment (FDI), and promotion of public-private partnerships to boost job creation in key sectors such as manufacturing, ICT, and services (Islam, 2012).

Overall, the employment strategy envisioned for Bangladesh must be inclusive, context-specific, and forward-looking. It should bridge educational and economic divides, eliminate stigma associated with informal or vocational careers, and actively involve rural, female, and disadvantaged youth.

Present Scenario of Skill Acquisition and Education in Bangladesh

Skill acquisition and relevant education are essential for addressing youth unemployment and empowering Bangladesh's large NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) population. While the country has made commendable strides in expanding access to education, significant gaps remain in aligning educational and training systems with labour market realities. The existing education framework is constrained by outdated curricula, limited integration with industry, and insufficient emphasis on soft skills such as communication, leadership, and emotional intelligence (Robiul et al., 2023; Helal et al., 2023). These deficiencies limit graduates' employability and their ability to adapt to a dynamic job market.

A recent study by IID, surveying over 3,000 households, highlights this disconnect. The findings reveal that only 4% of parents are employed in the field they studied, while 56% work in unrelated sectors and 40%—mainly housewives—remain off the payroll. Despite this misalignment, over half (54.5%) of respondents believe that educational institutions are adequately preparing their children for future careers, pointing to a significant gap between perceptions and actual employment outcomes (Rahman & Pavel, 2024). This paradox highlights the pressing need for robust career counselling, improved labour market information systems, and increased awareness among families and communities about evolving employment trends.

The prevailing emphasis on university degrees, regardless of their relevance, restricts youth career pathways and fuels an oversupply of graduates in low-demand disciplines. To address this, the education system must expand alternative, skill-based routes after HSC, including vocational training, apprenticeships, and short-term, industry-aligned programs. Furthermore,

societal values need to shift from prioritising academic credentials to recognising the dignity and utility of practical, skill-based employment.

A fundamental transformation requires collaboration among policymakers, educational institutions, industries, and local communities to revise curricula, reform assessment systems, and ensure that training outcomes align with the needs of employers. This would not only improve youth employability but also reduce the dependence on civil service jobs and low-skilled overseas employment, enabling the creation of a more adaptive, inclusive, and productive workforce.

Rural areas face greater educational inequalities due to poor infrastructure, geographical isolation, gender disparities, and low digital literacy (Begum et al., 2018; Rowen et al., 2011). Despite over 76% of educational institutions being located in rural areas, the quality and resources available are considerably lower than in urban centres. Access is further limited by socio-cultural factors such as early marriage, mobility restrictions for women, and poverty, which cause many young people—particularly girls—to drop out early, thereby sustaining cycles of exclusion (Moklesunnahar & Jui, 2023; Hossain & Rahman, 2012).

At the tertiary level, the situation is equally concerning. University graduates face limited employment opportunities that match their academic training, resulting in a phenomenon often described as graduate unemployment or brain waste. A survey conducted by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) reveals that 47% of university graduates remain unemployed for up to five years post-graduation, primarily due to mismatches between their qualifications and market demands.

While vocational and technical education is increasingly recognised as a pathway to employability, it remains underdeveloped and underutilised. Only about 1% of secondary-level students are enrolled in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and access to this education remains particularly low in rural regions (Mahmood & Akhter, 2011). Furthermore, the digital infrastructure in educational institutions is weak, with many schools lacking the necessary tools or personnel to implement e-learning (Shohel, 2020; Mridha et al., 2013).

Teacher shortages, especially in rural areas, continue to limit both the reach and the quality of education (Khandaker, 2021; Khan et al., 2020).

Despite these challenges, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and microfinance institutions have played a catalytic role in advancing rural entrepreneurship and vocational training, particularly for women. Programs supporting soft skills, financial literacy, and small business development have enabled marginalised youth to pursue alternative livelihoods (Islam & Mostafiz, 2024; Hossain & Hosen, 2018). However, systemic and structural barriers continue to limit the full potential of these initiatives.

Strategies for Skill Development and Education Reform

Addressing the gaps in skill acquisition and education requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach that draws on both domestic innovations and international best practices. In response, the Government of Bangladesh has introduced a range of strategies targeting both urban and rural youth, with the Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) Project playing a prominent role. With a $300 million investment, EARN aims to reach 900,000 rural NEET youth, 60% of whom are women, through tailored interventions in skills development, entrepreneurship training, and alternative education pathways.

The government's National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) 2022 provides a strategic framework for cultivating a skilled, inclusive workforce that meets both national and global labour market demands. One primary focus is on reforming TVET systems to incorporate market-relevant curricula, expand outreach in rural areas, and include life skills and soft skills in training modules (Rahman et al., 2020; Robiul et al., 2023). The emphasis is also on strengthening teacher training and improving digital pedagogy to address technological gaps in rural schools (Shohel, 2020).

To expand opportunities beyond traditional employment, promoting entrepreneurship is a critical strategy. Initiatives involving microcredit, business incubation, and mentorship programs have proven effective in empowering rural youth and fostering innovation, particularly among women (Abedin, 2017; Islam & Mostafiz, 2024). Soft skills training for rural women has demonstrated success in enhancing leadership, problem-solving, and confidence, key drivers of enterprise growth and resilience.

Digital and ICT-based education is expanding through e-learning platforms, community ICT centres, and public-private partnerships. Initiatives like the GrameenPhone Community Information Centres provide access to digital tools and skills training, making e-learning more inclusive for rural youth (Akther, 2010). There are also promising outcomes in vocational programmes tailored to sectors such as healthcare, where targeted initiatives for Medical Assistants and rural birth attendants have enhanced health results while creating employment in underserved areas (Rawal et al., 2016; Rowen et al., 2011).

Finally, increased public investment in education is crucial. Bangladesh currently spends approximately 2% of its GDP on education, which is significantly below global benchmarks. Raising this figure is essential to improve infrastructure, develop human capital, and ensure the sustainability of reforms (Shamsi, 2024).

Present Scenario of Women Empowerment and NEET Situation in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has made commendable strides in advancing women's empowerment through expanded access to education, healthcare, microfinance, and political participation. Programs led by institutions like Grameen Bank, BRAC, and other NGOs have facilitated women's financial inclusion, enhanced household decision-making power, and contributed to greater legal awareness (Hossain & Hosen, 2018; Islam, 2011). Educational access, particularly at the secondary level, has been a transformative force, enabling women to achieve economic independence and influence family welfare (Akter et al., 2024). Additionally, empowered women demonstrate better access to maternal and child healthcare services, as shown by improved antenatal and neonatal outcomes (Sen et al., 2023). Political representation has also improved through reserved seats and leadership roles, although disparities in higher decision-making positions persist (Meena, 2019).

However, these advancements are unevenly distributed, with rural women facing persistent structural and social barriers. Patriarchal norms, mobility restrictions, early marriage, and stigma surrounding menstruation continue to undermine women's autonomy, education, and health access in rural areas (Rahman et al., 2018; Habib, 2017). Despite awareness campaigns and targeted NGO interventions, these socio-cultural barriers remain deeply entrenched (Mahmud et al., 2012; Ahasan et al., 2020). The 2021 Time Use Survey by BBS and UN Women reveals a stark gender disparity in labour: women spend 7.3 times more on unpaid domestic and care work than men. While men spend 6.1 hours on paid employment, women spend only 1.2 hours, which limits their economic mobility and reinforces poverty. Women's unpaid caregiving work accounts for 1.2 hours daily, while men contribute only 0.2 hours, revealing an imbalance that restricts women's ability to engage in income-generating or skills training opportunities (Fahad Kaizer, UN Women, 2024).

The NEET rate among women, particularly in rural Bangladesh, reflects these constraints. The rural-urban divide further compounds this disparity, with rural women experiencing greater exclusion from formal education, skill development programs, and employment opportunities due to poor infrastructure, restricted mobility, gender norms and pervasive social stigma. Despite comprising the majority of the workforce in agriculture and informal labour, rural women remain disconnected mainly from skill-based employment tracks and inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystems.

Women's Empowerment through Skill Development, Employment, and Training

To bridge the gender gap in education, employment, and training, Bangladesh has introduced a range of strategic interventions focused on empowering women and girls through skill development, economic participation, and inclusive governance. Microfinance remains a cornerstone of efforts to empower women. Initiatives led by Grameen Bank, BRAC, and other microcredit institutions have played a transformative role in enabling rural women to start small businesses, build savings, and contribute meaningfully to household income (Hossain & Hosen, 2018; Islam, 2011). Self-help groups (SHGs) and women-led entrepreneurship programs have also shown promising outcomes, improving both economic contributions and community standing (Akter et al., 2018).

Education and skill development are central to any sustainable empowerment strategy. However, women's participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) remains low. To address this, Bangladesh is gradually reforming vocational education systems, aligning them with market needs and integrating soft skills such as leadership, communication, and emotional intelligence (Mahmood & Akhter, 2011; Robiul et al., 2023). Programs tailored to rural women, such as those by CMES, have enabled school dropouts to gain livelihood skills, while digital platforms like GrameenPhone Community Information Centres have opened access to e-learning and ICT training in hard-to-reach areas (Akther, 2010; Hossain & Rahman, 2012).

Health and well-being are also closely linked to women's empowerment. Structured healthcare training programs for rural medical assistants and traditional birth attendants have not only improved local health services but also created employment opportunities for women (Rowen et al., 2011; Rawal et al., 2016). Soft skills training focused on rural women has enhanced their entrepreneurial confidence, problem-solving skills, and resilience (Islam & Mostafiz, 2024).

The integration of digital literacy and financial inclusion initiatives into empowerment programs has proven vital in helping women adapt to the digital economy and reduce their dependency.

The initiatives under the sectoral programme, Women's Empowerment for Inclusive Growth (WING) exemplify targeted efforts to expand women's economic participation, especially at the local level., The Eighth Five-Year Plan of Bangladesh explicitly acknowledges intersectional vulnerabilities—such as those of ethnic minorities, women in remote areas, and individuals from extinct occupational groups—and incorporates social protection plans to support their empowerment (Fahad Kaizer, UN Women, 2024).

Global experiences offer additional guidance. UN Women highlights how economic empowerment in rural areas not only increases income but also shifts social norms, enhances food security, and promotes gender-equitable decision-making. These learnings reinforce the importance of designing localised, context-sensitive strategies that build upon Bangladesh's gains while actively dismantling the barriers that continue to hold women back.

Social Stigma and Female NEET in Bangladesh

Despite notable progress in women's rights and gender parity, women and girls in Bangladesh—especially in rural and marginalised communities—continue to face deep-seated social stigmas that restrict their access to education, employment, and healthcare. These stigmas are entrenched in patriarchal social structures, religious and cultural beliefs, and systemic inequalities that marginalise women and gender-diverse individuals from economic and public life. For NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth, such stigmas play a critical role in shaping exclusion, disempowerment, and disengagement from productive opportunities. Understanding these barriers is essential for developing a gender-sensitive communication strategy under the EARN Project.

Education & Technology-Related Stigmas
- Girls are dissuaded from pursuing education or skill training because of patriarchal expectations of domestic roles such as child rearing, caring for family members, and marriage. Many people, particularly males in rural settings, adhere to the norms that women are expected to work domestically and that men are expected to be the breadwinners, working outside the home.

- Most family members believe that investing in their girl child's education and skill development may primarily benefit their in-laws after marriage, rather than themselves, which serves as a deterrent to providing educational and skill training opportunities for the girl child. Furthermore, economically disadvantaged families tend to prioritise education for their boys over their girls.

- Use of digital tools and participation in technical education are viewed as "inappropriate" for girls in many rural areas. Technological exclusion restricts ICT access, widens the digital divide, and decreases women's employability.

Workplace & Economic Stigmas

- Lack of institutional protection against workplace abuse and sexual harassment, lack of safe transport, massive traffic jams in the cities, and unsafe night shifts create hurdles for increased women's employment.

- Gender discrimination in wage disparities, job insecurity, and career progression limits female participation in the workforce.

- Workplaces often become unable to protect jobs after maternal leave or during pregnancy, and in addition, the lack of childcare facilities, safe washrooms, and separate toilets in workplaces discourages women from working.

- Widows and single mothers are excluded from social/economic networks, denied inheritance rights, and restricted from opportunities. Women-headed households face higher poverty risk and labour market discrimination.

Reproductive & Health-Related Stigmas

- Childlessness/Infertility: Women are judged solely on motherhood; non-mothers face ostracism, domestic violence, and economic deprivation.

- Menstrual Taboos: Menstruation is viewed as impure; girls are restricted in mobility, schooling, and social participation; sanitary product access remains a barrier.

- Maternal Healthcare Stigma: Cultural misconceptions and male-dominated decision-making discourage care-seeking during pregnancy and childbirth, harming maternal and infant health.

Social Identity & Family Status Stigmas

- The majority of women are compelled to cease their employment following marriage, as their husbands and families often perceive a woman's employment outside the home as 'unnecessary' or humiliating.

- Widows and single mothers frequently experience social isolation, discrimination in property rights, and diminished access to livelihood opportunities. The loss of marital status often leads to community exclusion and economic marginalisation.

- The economic independence of women is frequently regarded as a reflection of the incapacity of male family members in many instances.

Mental Health Stigma

- Social silence around mental illness, especially postpartum depression, perinatal anxiety, and trauma, also creates hurdles for women to continue education or employment.

- Limited rural healthcare access prevents diagnosis and treatment, leading to isolation and prolonged suffering.

Religious and conservative ideas

- Some families perceive or regard women working outside the home as contrary to religious beliefs and immoral.

- Purdahs and gender-based social restrictions also pose restrictions on females in accessing education and employment.

One of the most prevalent stigmas affecting young women is the exclusion of education and technology. In many rural communities, the use of digital tools and participation in technical education are seen as inappropriate for girls, driven by patriarchal norms, rumours, and superstitions. These perceptions severely limit women's access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), reducing their employability and professional growth (Sultana et al., 2021). This technological exclusion reinforces the digital divide, deepens economic dependency, and isolates women from modern skill-based job markets.

Childlessness and infertility present another powerful stigma in Bangladeshi society. Cultural expectations place immense pressure on women to prove their worth through motherhood. Women who are unable to conceive face social ostracism, emotional trauma, and even domestic violence. They are often subjected to blame, economic deprivation, and psychological distress, which affect their mental health and community standing (Khanam, 2016).

In the workplace, gender discrimination remains rampant, especially in sectors like ready-made garments (RMG), where women are a significant part of the workforce. Female workers frequently encounter wage disparities, job insecurity, and sexual harassment, with limited mechanisms for redress. Despite their essential contribution to the economy, women's advancement is curtailed by systemic bias and a lack of institutional protection (Haque et al., 2020).

Widows and single mothers face intense social stigma, particularly in rural areas. The loss of a husband or separation often results in exclusion from social networks, discrimination in inheritance rights, and restricted access to economic opportunities. These women are vulnerable to extreme poverty, legal marginalisation, and psychological trauma, all of which reduce their chances of reintegrating into productive life or pursuing skill-based employment (Habib, 2017; Hossain, 2016).

Menstrual taboos continue to affect adolescent girls negatively. In many parts of rural Bangladesh, menstruation is viewed as impure, resulting in restrictions on mobility, participation in school, and social interaction. This stigma contributes to low self-esteem, absenteeism in schools, and poor hygiene practices. While awareness campaigns and media initiatives have helped challenge these norms, the affordability and accessibility of sanitary products remain serious barriers (Rahman et al., 2018; Rizwan, 2021).

Maternal healthcare stigma is also a significant concern. Cultural misconceptions, male-dominated household decision-making, and a lack of awareness discourage women from seeking maternal and reproductive healthcare. This results in poor health-seeking behaviour, particularly in pregnancy and childbirth, placing both mothers and infants at heightened risk (Ahmmed & Ahmed, 2014).

Educational and employment stigmas are deeply tied to gender roles. In many rural households, girls are discouraged from pursuing education or paid employment due to societal expectations centred on domestic responsibilities, marriage, and honour. Women-headed households, in particular, experience high levels of economic hardship and discrimination in labour markets (Habib, 2017). These gender norms often go unchallenged, reinforcing generational cycles of poverty and exclusion.

Finally, mental health stigma severely impacts women, especially in contexts of postpartum depression, perinatal anxiety, and trauma from abuse or loss. Social silence around mental illness, coupled with limited rural healthcare access, leaves many women untreated and isolated. Research underscores the role of cultural taboos and inadequate mental health infrastructure in limiting care-seeking among rural women (Dutta et al., 2021). Taken together, these layered stigmas—whether tied to education, reproductive health, widowhood, or mental well-being—construct a powerful barrier for women seeking to transition out of NEET status.

Inclusion of Disabled and Third Gender Populations

People with disabilities face infrastructural and educational barriers, especially in rural Bangladesh, where discrimination intensifies economic exclusion (Torsha et al., 2021; Rahman et al., 2018). Vocational training and microcredit programs can promote economic empowerment for this group (Ferdous & Hossain, 2019).

Despite legal recognition, Bangladesh's third gender population faces significant discrimination and barriers to education, healthcare, and social benefits, worsened by rural patriarchal norms (Hossain et al., 2024; Islam, 2016; Akmam, 2019). Targeted policies are needed to foster their empowerment (Rashid & Abedin, 2022).

Infrastructure and Digital Access

Infrastructure gaps in transportation, energy, and urban planning hinder economic efficiency nationwide, particularly in rural areas (Alam & Rashed, 2019; Haque, 2014). Expanding rural infrastructure and digital

connectivity is vital for inclusive growth and skills development (Mahmud, 2022). Digital illiteracy and limited access to ICT hinder youth participation in modern training and employment.

Social and Cultural Barriers

Cultural norms have a significant influence on the educational and employment trajectories of Bangladeshi youth, particularly those in the NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) status. Deep-rooted societal expectations often stigmatise vocational and informal sector employment, viewing such jobs as inferior or unsuitable for upward social mobility. This stigma discourages many young people—especially those from low-income or rural backgrounds—from pursuing skill-based or non-traditional career paths (Rahman et al., 2018).

Gender norms add further complexity, disproportionately impacting young women. Early marriage, household responsibilities, and strict expectations regarding female propriety often compel girls to discontinue their schooling and limit their access to the workforce. Social stigma also surrounds women who travel alone, work outside the home, or pursue non-traditional jobs, creating barriers to empowerment, healthcare, and economic participation (Hossain, 2016).

For male youth, particularly in rural or conservative communities, cultural ideals of masculinity often discourage engagement in jobs perceived as low status, such as caregiving, tailoring, or hospitality. Many boys are pressured to earn early, usually pushing them into informal or exploitative labour markets without adequate education or training. This early labour force entry, combined with limited access to skill development, restricts their long-term employability and traps them in cycles of low-wage, insecure employment. Moreover, social expectations discourage vulnerability and help-seeking among men, leading many to internalise failure in education or employment as personal shortcomings rather than systemic issues, further contributing to poor mental health and disengagement.

Financial constraints compound these sociocultural barriers for both genders. Inflexible education systems, high dropout rates, and limited access to second-chance or alternative learning options leave many youths without viable paths to re-engagement. Poor infrastructure, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas, limits both physical access to training centres and exposure to diverse opportunities.

Young women face safety and mobility concerns, while young men often lack guidance, mentorship, and institutional support to navigate the changing job market. Job placement services are usually inadequate or urban-centred, and aspiring entrepreneurs—especially those from marginalised groups—struggle with limited access to capital, business literacy, and networks.

In addition, the stigma attached to certain types of employment, particularly in the informal or care economy, further discourages NEET youth from exploring alternative career paths.

Marginalised youth, including ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and those from impoverished communities, often face discrimination during recruitment and selection processes, which leads to a further erosion of self-esteem and motivation.

Overcoming these deep-rooted barriers requires not only targeted policy measures but also a wider societal shift that values all kinds of work, promotes equality of opportunity, and breaks down stereotypes that marginalise both young men and women.

Job Motivation in Bangladesh: Barriers and Strategic Imperatives

Job motivation remains a persistent challenge in Bangladesh despite the country's economic progress. Employees across both urban and rural sectors commonly experience low job satisfaction due to limited career advancement opportunities, inadequate compensation, workplace stress, and poor human resource management (Polas et al., 2021; Abdul et al., 2018; Hosain & Hossain, 2019). These motivational barriers are further intensified in rural contexts, where professionals face social isolation, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of performance-based recognition (Rahman, 2014; Seguchi et al., 2015).

In urban sectors, particularly the garment and banking industries, long working hours, low wages, and poor work-life balance often contribute to burnout and disengagement. Moreover, systemic gaps in training and employee development restrict upward mobility, while ineffective HRM practices and insufficient recognition further diminish motivation (Islam et al., 2013; Majumder, 2012). Although urban centres offer more diverse employment opportunities, many workers remain disillusioned by job insecurity and the absence of meaningful career pathways.

In rural Bangladesh, these challenges are even more evident. Workers—particularly healthcare professionals and educators—often earn lower wages and receive fewer benefits compared to their urban counterparts, which leads to widespread dissatisfaction and high turnover (Angell et al., 2021; Hosain et al., 2013). The absence of career progression opportunities and professional development programmes causes many to feel professionally trapped.

Infrastructure gaps—such as poor transport, unreliable electricity, and substandard housing—further discourage workforce retention in remote areas. Additionally, feelings of social and professional isolation discourage talented individuals from committing to long-term rural service (Seguchi et al., 2015). Improving rural workforce motivation involves enhancing infrastructure, strengthening community support systems, and implementing performance-based incentives that acknowledge and reward achievement (Majumder, 2012; Rahman, 2014).

Efforts such as the Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (EGPP) aim to alleviate rural poverty and increase resilience by providing short-term employment opportunities to enhance local infrastructure. Moreover, training initiatives designed to prepare rural women for urban employment—especially in the garment sector—have created limited but valuable pathways toward upward mobility. Yet these interventions often fail to address the root causes of low motivation, such as insecure working conditions, lack of institutional support, and

Corruption, favouritism, and nepotism are significant barriers to fair employment in Bangladesh, deeply affecting youth across rural and urban areas. In the public sector, recruitment is often plagued by bribery and political patronage. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB, 2023) reports that job seekers are frequently asked to pay bribes for government jobs, especially in education, healthcare, and local government sectors. Such practices exclude qualified candidates from low-income backgrounds and erode trust in public institutions.

The misuse of quota systems, intended to promote equity, further distorts access. At the same time, opportunities for promotion are often based on loyalty or payment rather than merit. These issues are also reflected in the private and not-for-profit sectors, where informal networks, elite connections, and tokenistic hiring practices often prevail, overshadowing fair recruitment. In many cases, jobs are secured through referrals or influence, not open competition, leaving rural and marginalised youth at a disadvantage.

Even development organisations are sometimes complicit, favouring candidates with social capital over those with grassroots experience. This widespread lack of transparency discourages investment in education and skills among young people, who perceive the system as rigged, fueling disengagement, underemployment, and migration. Unless merit-based, transparent hiring is prioritised across all sectors,

To build a motivated and productive workforce, Bangladesh must invest in inclusive HRM policies, meaningful training and career development programs, rural infrastructure improvements, and transparent recruitment practices. Global models that emphasise employee well-being, performance-linked incentives, and community engagement offer practical frameworks for adapting to the Bangladeshi context. Enhancing job motivation, particularly among NEET youth and rural workers, is not only vital for individual empowerment but also for national economic resilience and social equity.

Opportunities at the State and Government Level

The Government of Bangladesh, in collaboration with development partners such as the World Bank, has demonstrated a firm policy commitment and institutional investment to address the rising population of NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth.

The national development agenda is anchored in ambitious frameworks such as the Perspective Plan 2041, the Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041, and the Eighth Five-Year Plan (2021–2025), which specifically aim to reduce the NEET rate from 29% to 15% by 2025. These blueprints emphasise inclusive growth, youth employment, and digital transformation as core strategies.

A significant development is the establishment of the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) under the NSDA Act 2018, which centralises the coordination of skills-related projects and enforces quality assurance through the National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF).

The National Skills Development Policy (2011) and its operational roadmap—the National Action Plan for Skills Development (2022–2027)—underscore the importance of governance, training quality, and inclusion. These are directly aligned with the EARN Project's vision of empowering NEET youth, especially women and marginalised groups, through structured skills development.

From a national infrastructure standpoint, the Department of Youth Development (DYD) remains a cornerstone in Bangladesh's youth empowerment landscape. DYD has trained over 6.9 million young people and facilitated the self-employment of 2.38 million through a diverse portfolio of residential, non-residential, institutional, and mobile training programs. As a core governmental body under the Ministry of Youth and Sports, DYD is a key implementing partner for the EARN Project, offering both institutional experience and outreach capacity.

The National Service Programme (NSP), a pilot employment scheme for youth, has now expanded across 64 upazilas. Implemented by DYD, it focuses on skills training and temporary employment. While it has faced governance challenges, including political interference, mismanagement, and corruption, as reported by The Daily Star, the program still represents a valuable channel for engaging unskilled youth in public works and development initiatives, especially in rural areas.

Moreover, the establishment of Village Learning and Training Centres (VLTCs) offers decentralised hubs for e-learning, digital literacy, health services, and entrepreneurial training. These initiatives are supported through joint investments by the government and development partners, which help reduce urban-rural disparities in access to knowledge, information, and digital tools.

Various ministries also play targeted roles. The Ministry of Planning ensures EARN's strategic coherence with macroeconomic priorities and public investment planning. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance manages funding flows, enabling the use of blended finance, public budgets, and donor support. The Ministry of Social Welfare contributes by linking training and employment programs to cash transfer schemes and social safety nets for vulnerable NEET segments, including female-headed households and persons with disabilities. The Ministry of Industries supports enterprise development and links training programs to market demand through collaborations with MSMEs and business chambers. At the grassroots level, the Local Government Division plays a crucial role in implementing community-based training, public works programs, and entrepreneurship promotion initiatives in rural areas.

The ICT Division has advanced digital inclusion by investing in youth info hubs, facilitating e-learning, e-health, and digital entrepreneurship. StartUp Bangladesh and other digital innovation platforms further support youth-led innovation. Policy alignment is further reinforced through initiatives like the Digital Bangladesh Initiative, which promotes ICT-based learning and blended training modalities.

The upcoming Youth Entrepreneurship Policy 2025 emphasises entrepreneurship development, access to finance, professional values, and skill alignment with global labour market demands. The National Youth Policy (2017) and Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 also provide important cross-sectoral entry points, particularly by integrating youth, gender, climate resilience, and rural infrastructure into long-term development goals.

Challenges in the Policy Milieu

Despite these institutional strengths, several systemic challenges continue to undermine the effective implementation of NEET-focused strategies in Bangladesh. A significant concern is the lack of coordination among multiple ministries and implementing agencies, leading to overlapping mandates, fragmented efforts, and diluted accountability. This inter-agency disconnect weakens both vertical (national to local) and horizontal (across ministries) integration.

Institutional and human resource capacity at the local and intermediate levels remains limited, constraining the delivery and monitoring of youth services.

Additionally, Bangladesh suffers from significant data gaps on NEET youth, especially at disaggregated levels (e.g., by gender, location, and disability), impeding evidence-based planning. The absence of robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems further limits the ability to track progress, assess impact, or inform policy refinement.

Cultural resistance—especially towards women's training and employment—remains a deeply entrenched barrier. Although strategic communication and SBCC (social and behaviour change communication) efforts have been launched, national-level campaigns to challenge gender norms still lack sufficient reach and consistency. These cultural barriers uphold early marriage, restrict mobility, and continue to undervalue vocational and technical education, particularly for women and rural youth.

Moreover, infrastructure and connectivity barriers—especially in remote or climate-vulnerable regions—continue to restrict access to institutions and job opportunities. Although the state has invested in road networks, these services are not yet equitably distributed or fully operationalised to meet youth demand.

In sum, while the state has created enabling policies and institutional windows to support NEET youth, the full realisation of these frameworks requires stronger inter-ministerial coordination, investment in local capacity, inclusive infrastructure, comprehensive data systems, and a national-level push to shift societal attitudes toward youth employment and gender equity.

Development Partner, & Private Sector Engagement: Lessons & Leverages

Projects targeting youth empoermrnt in Bangladesh benefits from strong backing by key development partners and donors, including the World Bank, ILO, UNDP, USAID, GIZ, and the Dutch Embassy, each contributing through a combination of financial support, technical assistance, capacity building, and strategic policy engagement. This collaborative landscape has significantly enriched Bangladesh's experience in implementing large-scale youth training and employment programs.

Sustainability in financing is envisioned through a blend of national budget allocations, corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions, and donor grants, enabling a resilient, multi-source funding ecosystem. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are also being encouraged via blended finance models and infrastructure bonds, with additional investment expected from non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs). This diversified funding model is crucial for ensuring the long-term viability of youth training, startup incubation, and employment generation.

Several donor-backed projects offer critical insights and operational models that inform the EARN strategy. Among them, the Skills for Employment Investment Program (SEIP), implemented by the Finance Division in partnership with PKSF, has proven impactful in delivering demand-driven skills training for disadvantaged groups, emphasising both self-employment and wage-based employment. It established one of the largest public-private models for skill development in the country.

Another notable initiative is the Building Youth Employability through Skills (BYETS) project, implemented by Swisscontact with support from the Embassy of the Netherlands. BYETS successfully equipped youth with technical and entrepreneurial skills, focusing on high-potential sectors such as agro-processing and jute, and demonstrated the value of integrating private sector actors directly into training delivery mechanisms.

Save the Children's Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) program further highlights practical vocational training approaches. Operating across 27 trades and reaching nearly 5,000 youth with 6–12-month training courses, EYE also established 100 youth clubs to enhance social capital and peer support, promoting soft skills, leadership, and community participation.

USAID's Bijoyee Project, implemented by the JAAGO Foundation, adopts a comprehensive approach by emphasising soft skills, entrepreneurship, and job readiness. The programme encourages youth-led startups and promotes strong private sector engagement, supporting pathways to employment and innovation.

Private sector engagement is also gaining traction. The Startup Bangladesh platform, under the ICT Division, promotes innovation, incubation, and digital entrepreneurship among young people. Incentives for apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and micro-enterprise development are being offered through partnerships with local SMEs and chambers. These collaborations enable demand-driven skilling, create employment pipelines, and support the growth of youth-led businesses.

> Together, these donor initiatives, past programmatic experiences, and private sector partnerships form an integrated ecosystem that supports the goals of the EARN Project. By leveraging these proven models, aligning efforts with existing infrastructure, and building synergies with both public and private stakeholders, EARN is strategically positioned to deliver high-impact, scalable solutions for NEET youth across Bangladesh.

Global Experiences in Youth Employability, Inclusion and Workforce

The global prevalence of NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth presents a significant socio-economic concern, with rates exceeding 25–30% in regions such as Latin America, Africa, and South Asia, despite being below 10% in several OECD countries. Gender disparities are stark: women consistently face higher

NEET rates due to early marriage, caregiving burdens, and limited access to secure employment, especially in rural, conservative societies (Fahad Kaizer & UN Women, 2024; Sultana et al., 2021). These vulnerabilities are compounded by systemic challenges, including misalignment between education and labour market needs, exclusion of marginalised groups, inadequate access to vocational training, digital literacy, entrepreneurship support, and critical infrastructure (Comyn, 2013; Holte et al., 2015).

To address these intersecting issues, international best practices offer actionable lessons. Singapore's SkillsFuture initiative emphasises lifelong, state-supported upskilling; South Korea has expanded digital learning and STEM education to bridge socio-economic divides. Germany's dual education model aligns classroom learning with on-the-job training, while India's rural skill development programs have demonstrated how localised interventions can generate employment in underserved areas (Robiul et al., 2023; Khandaker, 2021).

Gender-responsive frameworks are essential for achieving sustainable reductions in NEET rates. Institutional reforms in Germany, Scandinavia, and Rwanda promote gender equity through workplace laws, childcare systems, and violence prevention mechanisms. India's Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign exemplifies the importance of behavioural change communication. Simultaneously, legal frameworks such as the United States' ADA, Japan's universal design, Germany's inclusive schooling, and India's Transgender Persons Act (2019) emphasise the need for inclusive design and legal accountability (Rahman et al., 2018; Jalil, 2012; Hossain et al., 2024).

Across the EU, outreach to NEET youth remains a complex challenge due to the group's heterogeneity, legal barriers to data sharing, and weak institutional coordination (Ruth, 2018). Many NEETs remain unregistered with formal systems, limiting early intervention. Effective outreach strategies have relied on structured inter-agency cooperation, mapping and tracking systems, mobile outreach units, and NGOs' ability to build trust with marginalised youth.

Personalised guidance at transition points, like Austria's career counselling and Finland's Career Start programme, supports early identification and engagement. Platforms in Spain, Italy, and Belgium connect NEET youth to employment services, while countries such as Estonia and Malta have utilised data mapping to support the hardest-to-reach groups. Community-based outreach and cultural mediators, such as Roma youth advocates in Bulgaria or gang advisers in the UK, enhance engagement among ethnic minorities and youth facing criminal justice involvement.

Face-to-face peer outreach remains indispensable. Integrated, one-stop centres such as France's Missions Locales and Sweden's UngKOMP teams simplify access to services. Municipal governments play a crucial role—examples include Lithuania's Youth Job Centres and the Netherlands' "Dreamteams" for peer outreach. Sustainability depends on strong governance, institutional commitment, and creative public-private partnerships, such as Portugal's collaboration with McDonald's or Estonia's youth centre-public employment synergies. Countries like Belgium and Slovenia formalise stakeholder collaboration through legal frameworks to ensure long-term coherence and accountability in outreach.

Meanwhile, Canada shows how holistic, multi-sectoral models can support NEET youth through stable funding, mentorship, life stabilisation assistance, and employment readiness services. Provinces like Ontario and British Columbia lead with integrated models, such as the Youth Job Connection programme, which combines digital interventions, community partnerships, and employer engagement to achieve sustainable outcomes (Kutsyuruba et al., 2019).

Complementing these models, the EU's Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) mobilised □8.8 billion (2014–2020) to reach NEET youth in high-unemployment regions, benefiting over 1.7 million youth through outreach, training, and employment subsidies. Its alignment with the European Social Fund further enabled systemic investment in preventing early school leaving and reforming vocational training.

Additional innovations include India's MGNREGA for rural employment guarantees, the Netherlands' climate-resilient infrastructure programmes, and youth retention incentives in countries like Norway, Japan, and Sweden. Vietnam and Mexico emphasise inclusive work cultures, flexible job options, and purpose-driven employment to keep youth engaged. Nepal's YETI and EWPN initiatives support youth through temporary employment, access to services , and the development of rural women's leadership (Ahmmed & Ahmed, 2014; Dutta et al., 2021).

Inclusion policies for persons with disabilities and transgender individuals—seen in Mexico's pension schemes, Vietnam's TVET reforms, and Nepal's third-gender recognition—demonstrate how legal and institutional accountability enhance workforce access and equity.

Bangladesh and The Globe

Aspect	Global Trends	Bangladesh Specifics
Female NEET Rate	Higher than males due to caregiving and social roles.	Exceedingly high; driven by patriachy, mobility restrictions, and domestic duties.
Policy Gaps	Programas are increasingly gender-sensitive.	Programs often lack deep integration of gender-transformative approaches.
Solution Needed	Flexible education, childcare, safe transport.	All the global needs + changing mindsets and norms around woman's work.

Bangladesh: Grounded Change through Community, Culture, and Technology

Bangladesh has seen notable success in leveraging SBCC strategies to promote inclusive, grassroots-led change. For instance, BRAC's "Manusher Jonno" campaign utilised radio dramas, folk theatre, and community meetings to promote human rights and women's empowerment, effectively integrating entertainment with social messaging. Similarly, "Nirapod Gram, Nirapod Jibon" by CAMPE mobilised schools, adolescent clubs, and visual media to raise awareness about the harms of child marriage.

A powerful innovation was Aponjon, an mHealth campaign that delivered SMS and voice messages to educate pregnant women and new mothers on maternal and neonatal health, reaching rural and low-literacy populations with localised content.

A standout example of success comes from Marie Stopes Bangladesh, which conducted peer-led community campaigns on family planning. Leveraging door-to-door counselling, theatre, and health fairs, the campaign contributed significantly to the high contraceptive prevalence rate in Bangladesh, now recognised as a global success story in voluntary birth control.

Over the years, Bangladesh has demonstrated to the world the successes of family planning, which has been made possible through deep-rooted and strategic communication and campaigns.

Comparison in terms of Developing Countries

Corrected Fertility Rate by Age Group and Country (First Child Birth)

Bangladesh Mean Age: 18.3 yrs
Indonesia Mean Age: 22.4 yrs
Malaysia Mean Age: 28.0 yrs
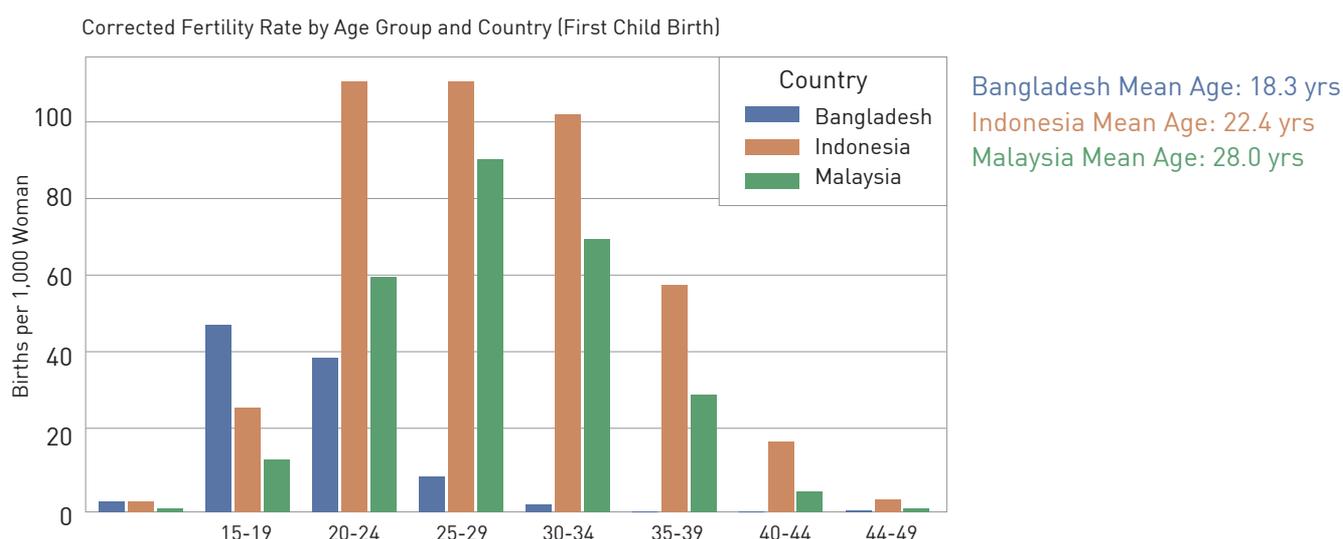
Highlights on Fertility of Bangladesh, 2023

Female Population Aged 10-49 Years by Age at Giving First Birth

Age	Value
10-14	2.38
15-19	47.41
20-24	39.18
25-29	8.86
30-34	1.81
35-49	0.35
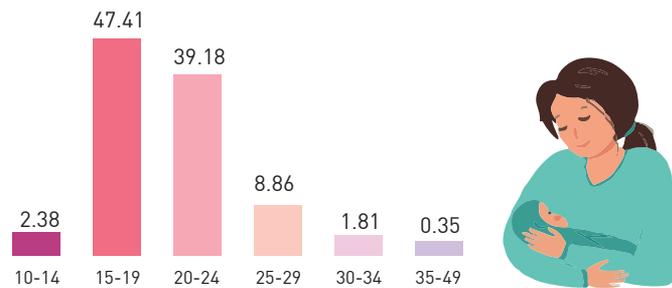
Population and Housing Census 2021 Project
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
Statistics and Informatics Division
Ministry of Planning

The Bangladesh EPI (Expanded Programme on Immunisation) is another milestone in behaviour change communication. Through mass awareness campaigns, health worker outreach, and community-based media, EPI played a pivotal role in transforming vaccine acceptance from suspicion to near-universal compliance in many districts.

Global Inspiration of Communication Actions:
Large-Scale Impact, Local Activation

Globally, SBCC has been a cornerstone of development strategies addressing health, sanitation, education, and employment. India's "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" (Clean India Mission) used massive behavior change media, celebrity influencers, and village-level meetings to battle open defecation. Over 100 million toilets were constructed, with local leaders trained in hygiene promotion. Campaigns emphasised dignity, modernity, and health, transforming public opinion and personal habits.

Another Bollywood-backed initiative, the film "Toilet: Ek Prem Katha", dramatised the cultural and familial obstacles to rural sanitation through a compelling love story, helping normalise the idea of indoor toilets in conservative communities.

PadMan, based on the true story of Arunachalam Muruganantham, is a prime example of SBCC blending entrepreneurship, taboo-breaking, and media influence. Tackling menstrual hygiene, the film used storytelling to dismantle the silence around a stigmatised issue, encouraging social entrepreneurship and empathy-driven design.
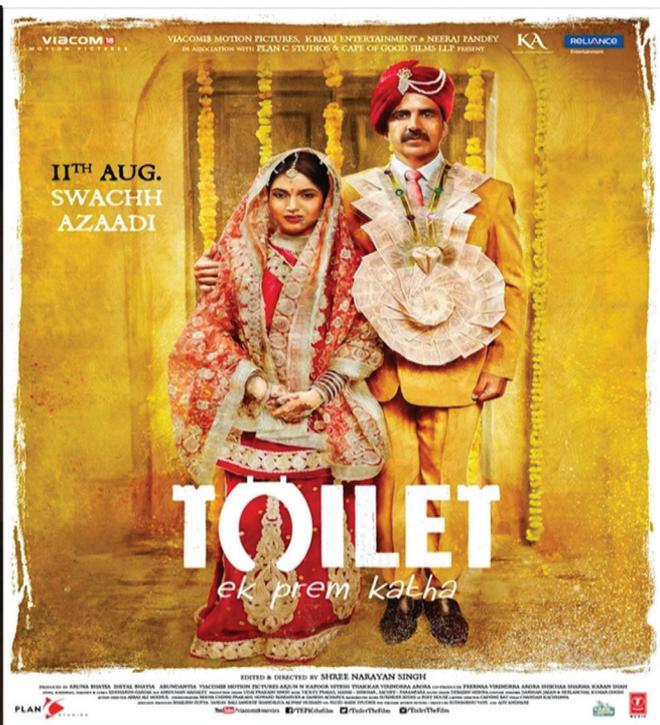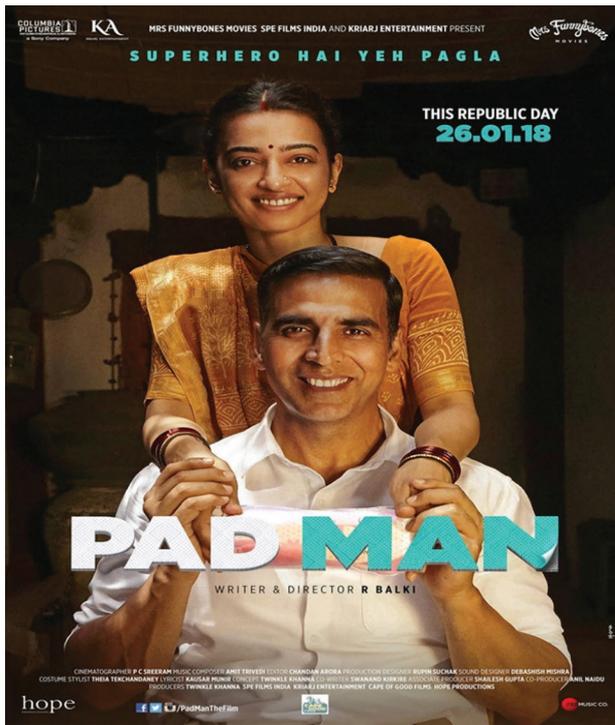
In Rwanda, the "Huguka Dukore Akazi Kanoze" campaign blended radio storytelling and community mentoring to support youth employment and entrepreneurship, linking skills to behavioural aspirations.

Meanwhile, Peru's "Cuna Más" utilised visual tools, caregiver coaching, and home visits to enhance parenting practices, demonstrating how SBCC can empower households with simple, actionable knowledge.

In Nigeria, the USAID-supported "Breakthrough ACTION" used radio talk shows, drama, and engagement with faith leaders to influence behaviours related to malaria prevention and maternal health, demonstrating how trust-building through culturally suited messengers can enhance behavioural change.

Gaps in Secondary Literature: A Synthesis

While national-level datasets and policy documents exist across sectors, the secondary literature on youth development and communication reveals critical gaps in depth, inclusivity, and contextual relevance. Unemployment is often reported in aggregate terms, but detailed disaggregation by age, education, or employment type—particularly between formal and informal sectors—is frequently absent. Underemployment, disguised labour, and unpaid family work, especially in rural areas, are rarely addressed, leaving invisible segments of the labour force unacknowledged. Moreover, unemployment among people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and trans individuals remains significantly under-researched.

The portrayal of women's empowerment in existing literature tends to focus on financial inclusion. Still, it seldom engages with deeper structural barriers such as unpaid care work, gender-based violence, and restricted mobility. These qualitative dimensions—access to justice, leadership opportunities, and cultural constraints—vary sharply across urban and rural contexts and are often overlooked. For instance, empowerment dynamics in the Chittagong Hill Tracts differ vastly from those in Sylhet, yet such regional contrasts remain largely undocumented.

Skill development is a national priority, but reporting on outcomes—such as completion rates, post-training employment, and wage progression—is inconsistent. Analyses lack granular data on sectoral impacts, particularly in fields like agriculture, RMG, and digital technology. Informal apprenticeship systems, which play a vital role in rural skill transfer, remain statistically invisible.

Similarly, literature on poverty reduction tends to centre on income-based indicators, with little attention to multidimensional aspects such as education, nutrition, and health. Urban slum conditions, growing due to rural-urban migration, are insufficiently explored, and seasonal or climate-induced poverty—such as during monga periods—often falls outside the scope of conventional metrics.

Infrastructure development reports tend to emphasise large-scale national or donor-funded projects, yet overlook local-level implementation, quality control, and sustainability. There is limited visibility into disparities between major cities and smaller towns or rural areas, particularly in sectors such as healthcare access, digital connectivity, and climate resilience infrastructure, including cyclone shelters.

Education and training development is an evolving field, but analysis often misses the diverse ecosystem of actors—NGOs, madrasas, private institutions, and technical centres—that shape learning experiences regionally. Local language inclusion, dropout trends by district, and access barriers across marginalised communities are not sufficiently detailed.

Youth job motivation, a critical determinant of engagement, is shaped by complex factors including gender norms, local economic opportunities, migration patterns, and sector-specific realities. However, youth aspirations, entrepreneurial culture, and pathways for social mobility receive minimal analytical attention in most policy and research documents.

Finally, while national policies for disability inclusion and third gender rights exist, their implementation is uneven and under-documented. Access to education, employment, and public infrastructure remains a symbol of hope for many, especially those outside urban centres. Social stigmas—ranging from domestic violence and menstruation taboos to workplace harassment and mental health concerns—intersect with class, religion, and geography, yet are typically treated in isolation, if at all.

Altogether, these gaps suggest a pressing need for more inclusive, disaggregated, and context-sensitive research that reflects the lived realities of Bangladesh's diverse youth population and their communication ecosystems.

Key Insights from the Literature Review

The literature emphasises the multidimensional challenges faced by NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth in Bangladesh, highlighting the importance of targeted, inclusive, and context-aware communication strategies for the EARN Project. These strategies must do more than just raise awareness; they should aim to change attitudes and behaviours through relatable storytelling, the promotion of practical skills, and clear explanations of career pathways. Communication should be integrated within wider policy and programme investments to turn disengaged youth into empowered participants in the labour market and unlock Bangladesh's demographic potential.

Extreme poverty remains a critical barrier, with many youth—especially from economically disadvantaged families—unable to access skills training, employment, or self-employment opportunities due to resource constraints. For rural youth, geographical remoteness exacerbates this disadvantage, as weak infrastructure, limited transportation, irregular electricity, and poor digital connectivity hinder access to both education and employment, often compounded by climate-induced disruptions. Social exclusion is also pervasive.

Young women face cultural restrictions, early marriage, gender-based stigma, and restricted mobility. Youth with disabilities and those from third-gender communities experience structural marginalisation, limiting their access to training, employment, and public services.

The digital divide adds another layer of exclusion, as rural youth often lack access to modern tools and digital literacy, isolating them from emerging sectors of the economy. Meanwhile, many existing training programs fail to reflect local labour market needs, leading to disillusionment and reduced employability.

Outdated curricula, inflexible education systems, and weak industry-academia linkages exacerbate this misalignment, while vocational training remains stigmatised and underutilised.

While Bangladesh has made progress in expanding education, vocational training, and launching youth-focused initiatives, such as EARN, significant challenges persist. As of 2024, the NEET rate has reached 39.88%, nearly double the global average of 21.7% (ILO, 2023), with women accounting for almost half of the total NEET population (BBS, 2024). Young women face systemic disadvantages due to social norms, early marriage, and mobility restrictions, while infrastructure deficits and lack of institutional access further burden rural youth. Despite some progress, the education system continues to suffer from poor labour market alignment, outdated pedagogies, and limited motivation among students.

Addressing these intertwined barriers requires communication approaches that are not only informative but also transformative campaigns that foster trust, reduce stigma, and inspire young people to pursue new opportunities. Culturally sensitive and emotionally resonant SBCC (social and behaviour change communication) campaigns have proven effective globally by leveraging storytelling, gender-sensitive visuals, peer champions, and digital tools such as IVR and mobile-based content. Such tools must be localised and embedded in community outreach to activate participation among marginalised youth and shift social norms around gender roles, education, and work.

For the EARN Project, communication strategies must explicitly address the behavioural norms and structural constraints that hinder young women's empowerment and mobility. Drawing on international best practices, these strategies aim to elevate local female role models, challenge negative stereotypes, promote the dignity of all types of work, and connect youth with supportive services such as childcare, financial literacy, and job placement.

Global experience also reaffirms the value of early intervention, community-rooted outreach, cross-sector partnerships, and stable funding. For EARN, success lies in integrating these lessons into a culturally grounded, behaviorally informed communication strategy that responds to the needs of women, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and rural youth. Such a multidimensional approach will be essential in building a resilient, empowered, and future-ready generation of young people in Bangladesh.
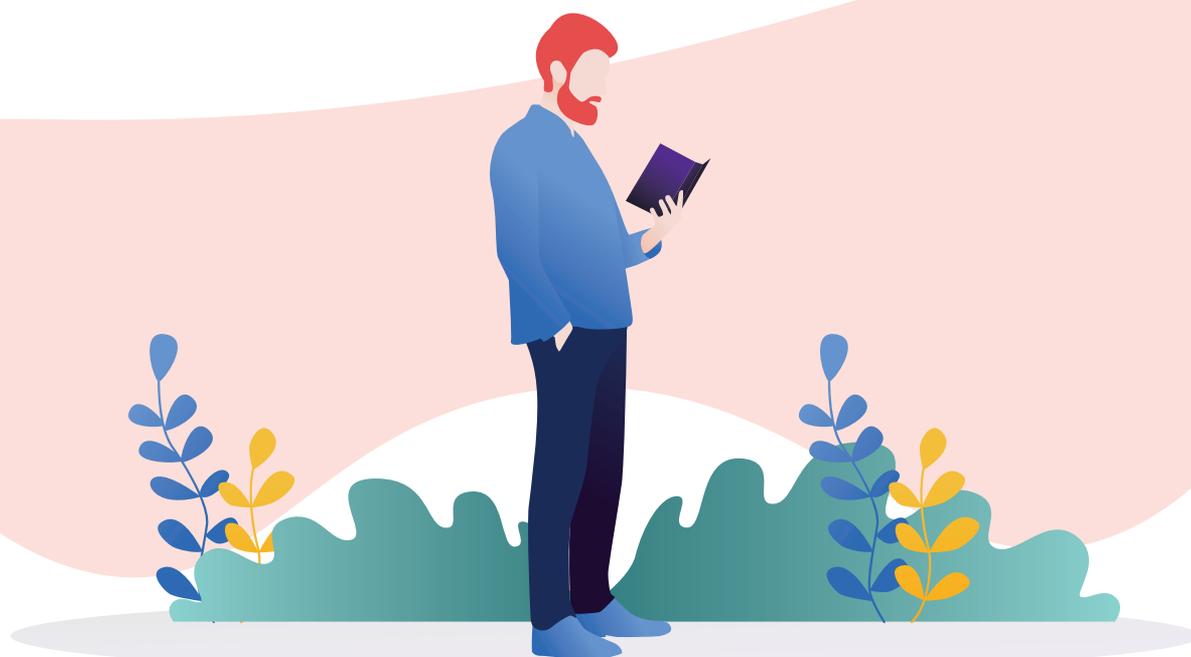
COMMUNICATION NEED ASSESSMENTS (CNA)

A Communication Needs Assessment (CNA) is a vital first step in creating an effective and inclusive communication strategy, especially for initiatives aimed at diverse and often marginalised groups such as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth. It provides a deeper understanding of what different target audiences know, believe, and need to be informed, motivated, and engaged.
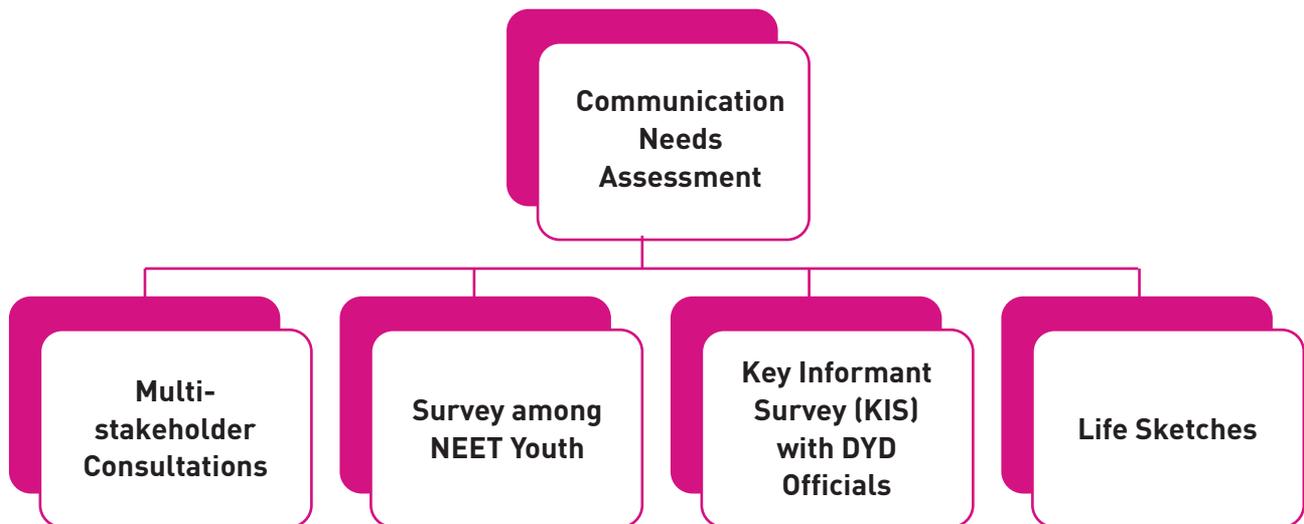
By pinpointing specific gaps in knowledge and perception, the CNA helps identify what information young people, their guardians, employers, and community leaders are missing, misunderstanding, or need to clarify further. It also assists in defining communication objectives—whether the goal is to raise awareness, change behaviours, boost motivation, or correct misinformation.

Moreover, the assessment maps the communication channels already in use, such as television, social media, radio, or community outreach and evaluates their effectiveness. It supports audience segmentation by distinguishing between different groups (e.g., youth, parents, employers, policymakers), allowing messages to be customised accordingly.

A CNA also identifies cultural, linguistic, and social barriers to communication. This ensures that messages are inclusive, contextually appropriate, and sensitive to the realities of rural and marginalised populations.

Ultimately, the assessment lays the groundwork for a results-based communication strategy by establishing a baseline for monitoring and evaluating its impact over time. In short, a CNA guarantees that the approach is rooted in genuine needs—not assumptions—making communication more targeted, efficient, and transformative.

CNA components

```
                    Communication
                       Needs
                    Assessment
   ┌──────────────┬──────────────┼──────────────┬──────────────┐
Multi-          Survey among   Key Informant   Life Sketches
stakeholder     NEET Youth     Survey (KIS)
Consultations                  with DYD
                               Officials
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Eight (8) FGDs were conducted with NEET youth, one in each of the eight selected districts (Narsingdi, Sherpur, Bhola, Sreemangal, Satkhira, Bogura, Kurigram, and Cox's Bazar). Each FGD involved approximately 15 participants (totaling 120), with an emphasis on maintaining gender balance to explore the nuanced experiences and barriers faced by young men and women. In each FGD, there were eight (8) female NEET, four (4) male NEET, three (3) parents or guardians, one (1) DYD official, and five (5) community members or opinion leaders.

The discussions were semi-structured, enabling guided conversations while providing space for participants to share lived experiences, aspirations, and grievances related to employment, training, and public messaging. Case scenarios were introduced to gather responses that reveal deeper psychological and attitudinal dynamics, such as trust in public institutions or emotional reactions to government campaigns. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns related to media preferences, trust in information sources, language barriers, and cultural sensitivities.

NEET Youth Survey

A structured survey was conducted with four hundred (400) NEET individuals across eight (8) districts (50 per district) using Android tablets and Google Forms. The study aimed to gather demographic profiles, digital access, preferred communication channels, and perceptions of DYD programmes.

The instrument combined: Closed-ended and multiple-choice questions (e.g., preferred media, frequency of information access); Likert scale items (e.g., trust in government information, satisfaction with outreach efforts), and Open-ended questions (e.g., suggestions for improving communication). The structured data enabled cross-tabulation of communication preferences by gender, education, rural/urban context, and employment status, offering quantitative evidence for tailoring outreach strategies.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

To assess institutional perspectives, structured Key Informant Interviews were conducted with two hundred fifty (250) DYD officials across the central, divisional, and upazila levels. These digital but indirect interviews provided valuable insights into the implementation of communication campaigns, identified perceived challenges in engaging NEET youth, and offered suggestions for enhancing message delivery and feedback mechanisms.

Interview themes included:

• Assessment of current communication strategies and tools,

• Institutional bottlenecks in outreach and follow-up,

• Reflections on audience segmentation and content localisation.

Responses were recorded through Google Forms and subjected to content analysis, which helped identify recurring operational and structural issues, such as a lack of communication training, limited localisation of content, or an insufficient budget for outreach activities.

Methodological Considerations of CNA

The methodology rests on several foundational assumptions:

• Respondents, both youth and officials, provided honest and accurate information.

• The sample of NEET youth is representative of broader regional and gendered dynamics.

• All participants understood the tools and questions used in the data collection process.

• The thematic models and communication frameworks used were valid for the Bangladeshi socio-cultural context.

Despite its strengths, the methodology faces certain limitations:

• Sampling Diversity: Although balanced across districts, the relatively small sample size may not fully reflect the heterogeneity of the national NEET population.

- Response Bias: Participants might have given socially acceptable answers, particularly in group discussions like FGDs or during interviews with government officials.

- Time and Resource Constraints: Data collection was time-bound, which limited longitudinal tracking and repeated validation.

- Technological Barriers: Although digital tools were utilised, occasional connectivity issues or limited digital literacy might have influenced some survey responses.

- Ethical Constraints: Due to moral guidelines, deeper psychological probing (especially around trauma or mental health) was avoided to protect participants' well-being.

The methodology used in this Communication Needs Assessment is both robust and adaptable to the complexity of the NEET context in Bangladesh. By integrating quantitative measures with qualitative insights and grounding the design in both literature and practical realities, the research offers credible evidence for developing effective communication strategies under the EARN initiative. Acknowledging the assumptions and limitations of this framework promotes transparency and sets the stage for future improvements in participatory communication research.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGDs)

INTRODUCTION

As part of the broader effort to develop an inclusive and evidence-based Communication Needs Assessment and Communication Strategy under the EARN Project, this report segment presents findings from a series of multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) held across all eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh. The consultations were designed to centre the voices of those most affected by socio-economic exclusion, particularly NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth and to inform the development of a sustainable and responsive communication strategy in a meaningful way.

Conducted between 20 February and 9 March 2025, the FGDs involved a total of 120 participants, comprising 48 NEET youth (32 female, 16 male), 24 parents or guardians, 8 officials from the Department of Youth Development (DYD), and 40 community members and opinion leaders. This diverse group of stakeholders, ranging from NEET youth and their families to local influencers, service providers, and community-based organisations, offered a broad range of insights on communication preferences, behavioural norms, trust dynamics, and access to information.
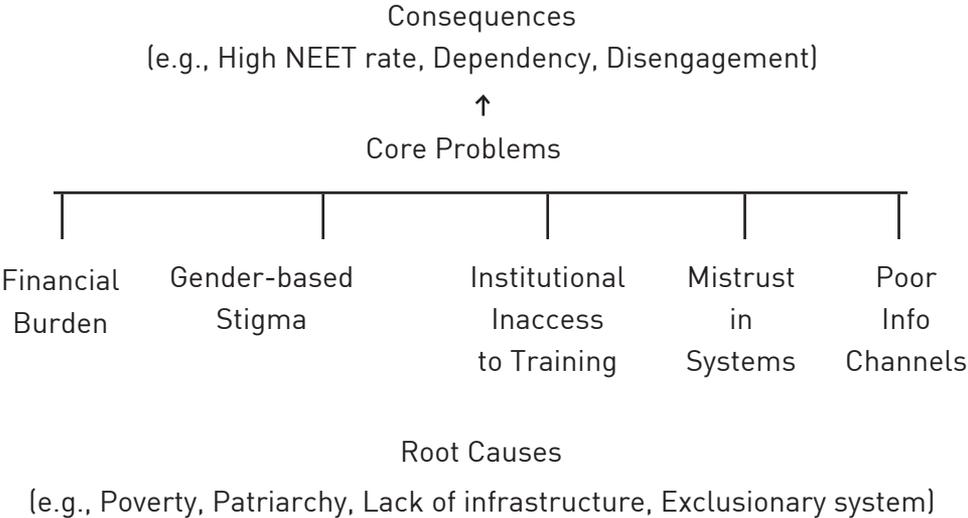
Each FGD followed a semi-structured discussion format, enabling open and participatory dialogues that explored a range of interconnected themes: barriers to education, skills development, and employment; social norms and gender-based restrictions; youth aspirations, motivation, and psychosocial realities; and perceptions of communication channels & trust in institutions.

Real-life case studies and scenario-based activities were included to reveal emotional and psychological reactions to everyday challenges. This method enabled participants to consider structural issues (such as poverty and lack of access to services) as well as internalised and socialised barriers (like low self-confidence or restrictive gender roles). Special focus was given to gender dynamics, rural-urban divides, and community-specific vulnerabilities that influence youth engagement and access to information.

The discussions took place in carefully chosen regions that showcase the geographic and cultural diversity of Bangladesh: Bhola (a remote, riverine island), Ukhiya (a host community near displaced populations - Rohingya), Narshingdi (an area characterised by a deep-rooted NEET culture), Satkhira (a climate-affected district in the southwest), Sherpur (a region with some of the lowest education rates), Bogura (a district rich in tourism and heritage), Kurigram (severely impacted by disaster vulnerability), and Sreemangal (an ethnically diverse area in the northeast).

A comprehensive thematic analysis of the FGDs was conducted to extract key insights into both the socio-economic conditions and behavioural factors affecting NEET youth and their communities.

Common issues raised include:

Consequences
(e.g., High NEET rate, Dependency, Disengagement)

↑

Core Problems

| Financial Burden | Gender-based Stigma | Institutional Inaccess to Training | Mistrust in Systems | Poor Info Channels |

Root Causes
(e.g., Poverty, Patriarchy, Lack of infrastructure, Exclusionary system)

These findings not only inform what needs to be communicated, but also how and through whom it should be communicateduiyfzz. Participants expressed strong preferences for interpersonal engagement, locally grounded messengers, visual storytelling, and community-driven platforms, especially in areas with limited digital access. In turn, these insights are crucial for designing culturally appropriate, gender-sensitive, inclusive, and effective communication interventions.

In sum, this segment synthesises the patterns, voices, and recommendations that emerged from the multi-stakeholder FGDs. It highlights the indispensable role of community engagement in shaping the EARN Project's communication approach. It affirms that those most at risk of being left behind are also vital contributors to a more accessible, participatory, and empowering communication ecosystem.

Key Findings from Multi-Stakeholder Focus Group Discussions

FGDs revealed a complex and deeply interconnected set of challenges faced by NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth, particularly those from rural and marginalised backgrounds. These discussions, forming a central component of the Communication Needs Assessment under the EARN Project, provided nuanced insight into the educational, economic, psychosocial, and cultural barriers that inhibit youth participation in the country's socio-economic transformation.

One of the most notable findings concerns barriers to education and skills development. NEET youth, especially young women, reported that financial hardship and caregiving responsibilities for their families , limited access to flexible or women-oriented training, and a lack of awareness about existing programmes significantly hindered their access to vocational educational opportunities. Parents expressed concerns about the affordability and perceived effectiveness of current training programmes, while community leaders highlighted the need for stronger links between academic institutions and market stakeholders. These issues are exacerbated by the mismatch between current training curricula and emerging market demands, resulting in low participation and limited impact.

> **Early marriage, especially for girls, continues to be a significant barrier, often cutting short their access to education or vocational training.**

Employment-related challenges also became very evident in all discussions. Participants repeatedly pointed out a gap between their skills and those required by the labour market. **This was especially noticeable in rural areas, where job opportunities are often limited, and young people, particularly women, face cultural and familial restrictions that hinder their efforts to find employment. Parents usually hesitate to allow their daughters to seek employment due to concerns about safety, social norms, and the reputational risks associated with non-traditional roles.**

Meanwhile, employers were seen as reluctant to hire first-time job seekers or to offer entry-level positions suited to local skill levels. The introduction of part-time job opportunities for students, like community-based services, was viewed as a practical step to integrate education with real-world experience. These jobs can help young people earn a modest income while also developing responsibility and work discipline.

> **In many households, there is still a strong preference for government jobs over entrepreneurship or self-employment, with government service perceived as the most secure and prestigious option, even when it means more extended periods of joblessness. This mindset often undermines youth efforts to become self-sufficient through skills-based or informal sector work.**

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a promising aspiration among many young people, particularly those with limited access to formal employment. However, most aspiring entrepreneurs lacked the necessary financial capital, mentorship, or foundational business literacy to initiate or sustain ventures.

Youth from **climate-affected or geographically remote areas** showed specific interest in **agriculture-based or digital service businesses.** Still, they struggled to access information about market feasibility, business matching opportunities, or localised support services. While some parents viewed entrepreneurial pursuits positively, others were wary of financial risks and the absence of safety nets.

> Some participants emphasised the need for protective local economic policies. They suggested that youth-led businesses—particularly those rooted in innovation—should be safeguarded from immediate replication, helping young entrepreneurs maintain a competitive edge. To meaningfully expand the scope of employment, the government and private sectors should stimulate the creation of new job sectors through targeted investment, innovation-friendly policies, and inclusive financing.

The FGDs also uncovered substantial **psychosocial issues that** impact youth motivation and involvement. Numerous young participants reported experiencing low self-esteem, psychological distress, and a fear of failure, issues that are frequently exacerbated by prolonged unemployment or societal stigma associated with certain occupations. Current institutional structures frequently fail to address these emotional hurdles.

Parents and community leaders recognised the importance of youth **mental health** but pointed out a lack of access to affordable or community-based counselling services as a significant support gap. Deep-seated cultural norms also reinforce gendered expectations, further restricting young women's participation in both training and employment.

Gender disparities were evident across all thematic areas. Deep-rooted social norms continue to restrict women's mobility, participation in the workforce, and decision-making power regarding education and employment. These norms are often reinforced within families and communities, creating a feedback loop of exclusion that is difficult to break without targeted interventions.

> The **physical location of training centres** also plays a critical role in youth participation. If centres are situated far from villages, the interest among potential trainees, particularly girls, tends to decline sharply due to transportation difficulties, safety concerns, and time constraints. There is a strong demand for decentralised, community-based training facilities that are more accessible and tailored to local realities.

Another critical finding was the widespread **lack of awareness** among youth, parents, and community members **about existing support programs** offered by government and non-government actors. In rural areas, this informational gap is particularly severe, primarily due to limited access to digital infrastructure, low media penetration, and ineffective outreach strategies. Many families were unaware of programs that could support skill development, job placement, or entrepreneurship, which further contributes to disengagement and missed opportunities.

Digital literacy and soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, are widely recognised as essential but are underemphasised in formal education. Many young people lack access to digital tools and training, and parents are either unaware of or sceptical about online learning. Community leaders advocate for the **integration of digital education into local institutions** and call for the establishment of public-private partnerships to expand access.

> While **online education** holds promise, it comes with concerns. Guardians and community members noted that without proper monitoring, online access can lead to distractions or even harmful digital engagement rather than productive learning. Still, with the right design and oversight, online learning platforms can serve as a complementary tool, especially for those unable to travel.

Drug abuse, particularly among male youth, was another recurring theme that emerged in discussion. Many young people affected by substance abuse were found to have lost motivation for both work and education, creating a cycle of disengagement that is difficult for families to break without structured interventions.

Institutional and operational limitations were also noted. While the Department of Youth Development (DYD) and its affiliated partners play a key role in supporting youth, their effectiveness is often constrained by inadequate resources, limited infrastructure, and **a lack of inter-agency coordination.**

Training initiatives are frequently fragmented and not **tailored to the specific needs of different regions or demographic groups,** resulting in reduced impact and uptake. The absence of integrated, multi-sectoral approaches has led to siloed service delivery, weakening the ecosystem needed to support NEET youth holistically.

Expectations from Policy and Institutions

Participants called for accessible, job-oriented training programs, increased awareness of support mechanisms, and (government) policies that promote safe, inclusive workplaces, especially for women. There were repeated calls for financial aid or stipends to support training, along with stronger private sector engagement to create viable employment pathways. Long-term, coordinated action from government, NGOs, and industry actors was seen as essential to achieving sustained impact.

Integrated Recommendations on Core Issues

In light of the insights gathered from the multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), it is evident that the success of the EARN Project hinges on the development of a context-responsive, youth-centred, and gender-sensitive communication strategy. The recommendations presented below aim to address the identified gaps in information access, institutional support, and behavioural engagement, with a special emphasis on promoting gender inclusion, building psychosocial resilience, and strengthening community participation.

To promote greater inclusion of young women in skill development and livelihood opportunities, communication and outreach efforts must be based on a **women-friendly approach.** This includes creating enabling infrastructure and designing flexible, gender-sensitive training models that feature female trainers, childcare facilities, part-time learning options, and safe, welcoming spaces. These measures would not only enhance access but also tackle mobility and cultural barriers that disproportionately impact female NEET youth.

Simultaneously, it is urgent to e**xpand outreach efforts** at the grassroots level. Union-led campaigns, the activation of peer networks, and community awareness initiatives can play a vital role in bridging the communication gap between institutions and their intended beneficiaries. These efforts should be localised, inclusive, and designed to reflect the linguistic, cultural, and geographical diversity of the target populations.

An integrated communication platform must be developed to support awareness, behaviour change, and long-term engagement. This platform should go beyond information dissemination and instead serve as a space for building confidence, fostering motivation, offering career counselling, and linking youth to credible training and employment pathways. Through coordinated messaging and human-centred design, such a platform can inspire young people to pursue relevant skills and seek dignified livelihoods.

Recognising the profound psychological challenges that many young people encounter, training programmes should incorporate **embedded psychosocial support.** This might include group confidence-building activities, access to basic counselling services, and fostering emotional resilience within the training setting. Equipping youth with the skills to cope with rejection, conquer fear of failure, and enhance self-esteem is just as important as providing them with technical knowledge.

Entrepreneurship must be actively promoted as a viable pathway for **self-employment and economic independence.** This requires a combination of practical support mechanisms, including access to seed funding, mentorship, localised business literacy modules, and the showcasing of relatable success stories through mass communication channels. Simultaneously, expanding digital and soft skill development through local centres and partnerships with tech providers will equip youth with essential competencies for modern workplaces. Storytelling that highlights real-life examples can help reshape community perceptions and inspire confidence among aspiring youth entrepreneurs.

The **role of families and community leaders** must be strategically integrated into the communication process. Many of the behavioural and social barriers identified are reinforced within household and community settings. Actively engaging parents, guardians, and local influencers through sensitisation campaigns, dialogue forums, and community engagement strategies can help shift prevailing attitudes and build collective support for youth participation in training and employment initiatives. Awareness campaigns, delivered through community channels and digital platforms, can bridge information gaps and reshape social attitudes.

A recurring recommendation was that all government departments involved in training and employment should coordinate more closely to promote vocational education aligned with real market needs. This would require rigorous and continuous market analysis to ensure that skills being taught are in demand, enabling better job placement and entrepreneurial success for NEET youth. Inter-agency coordination must be strengthened. **Collaborations** between the government, the private sector, and educational institutions should be institutionalised to create structured employment pathways, foster internship and apprenticeship opportunities, and ensure the long-term sustainability of youth empowerment efforts.

Together, these interconnected recommendations present **a roadmap for developing a comprehensive, inclusive, and impactful communication strategy** under the EARN Project—one that not only informs but also empowers NEET youth to realise their full potential and contribute meaningfully to Bangladesh's economic and social development.

Outreach efforts must be based on a woman-friendly approach

Expand outreach efforts at the grassroots level

An integrated communication platform must be developed

Embed psychosocial support as a tool for communication

Successful self-employment is possible through communication actions including mentorship & awareness

The role of families and community leaders must be strategically integrated into the communication processes

Inter-agency coordination must be strengthened in strategic communications

Key Perspectives from Guardians and Opinion Leaders

During the Focus Group Discussions conducted under the EARN Project, guardians and opinion leaders shared nuanced views about the realities, challenges, and aspirations surrounding NEET youth. Many parents expressed concern over the growing disinterest of young people in conventional jobs. Some noted that their children are increasingly drawn toward business ventures rather than salaried employment, often seeking greater independence than their job-holding parents had. In several cases, an apparent disconnect emerged between parental expectations and youth aspirations—while a guardian might hope for a professional career such as law, the youth may be more passionate about hands-on vocations like cooking or tailoring. This mismatch sometimes leads to friction or disengagement.

Several parents acknowledged that pressuring their children to pursue education or employment often results in resistance or withdrawal. Instead, they emphasised the importance of creating a supportive environment where young people feel encouraged but not forced. However, **many guardians admitted they were not well-informed about available training or employment programs and had little to no awareness of the services offered** by the Department of Youth Development. They suggested that better communication through social media, local miking, posters, and community engagement could help bridge this information gap, particularly in remote villages.

Opinion leaders raised concerns about systemic issues in the **education system,** criticising it for being **overly reliant on rote learning rather than cultivating analytical thinking, vocational skills, or real-world readiness.** This disconnect between education and employment has, in their view, contributed significantly to youth disillusionment.

Girls face additional barriers: conservative social norms, religious sensitivities, and frequent incidents of eve-teasing have made many parents reluctant to allow their daughters to pursue further education or training outside the home. Safety concerns and the lack of flexible, community-based options were cited as deterrents.

Drug use among male youth was repeatedly mentioned as a pressing issue. Guardians observed that idle time, peer pressure, and lack of constructive engagement contributed to this growing problem. Some parents have attempted to address this issue by limiting pocket money, reducing unsupervised socialising, and ensuring that their children are consistently engaged in productive activities or learning. They also emphasised the importance of not meeting every demand made by young people, suggesting that structure and discipline are essential for building responsibility.

Beyond the household, several structural barriers were discussed. Parents pointed to nepotism in local recruitment, especially in NGO programs, which often favours relatives of existing staff over 'qualified' youth. Additionally, short-term training programs run by NGOs were perceived as ineffective due to their lack of continuity and certification.

Limited seats in local educational institutions and the **high cost of travelling to distant colleges have also resulted in high dropout rates, particularly in areas like Ukhiya and Teknaf.**

Guardians and community leaders strongly advocated for improvements in training delivery, recommending that programs be long-term, certified, and run by credible institutions, such as the Department of Youth Development or the Bangladesh Technical Education Board. They called for **increased parental awareness sessions,** primarily to address misconceptions around girls' participation in training. Ensuring safe and accessible facilities for female participants, particularly those from remote areas, was also deemed essential.

Ultimately, the discussions revealed that while most parents are deeply concerned about their children's futures, they often lack the tools, information, or supportive ecosystem to guide them effectively. Addressing both the attitudinal and structural barriers through targeted communication, community engagement, and transparent project implementation will be vital in enabling NEET youth to access meaningful education, training, and livelihood opportunities.

Discussions on the Details of Communication Actions

Participants in the multistakeholder FGDs offered a comprehensive set of ideas. They provided recommendations for how communication with NEET youth, their families, peers, and communities should be designed, delivered, and localised to be effective.

There was a shared consensus that communication must not be treated merely as a tool for delivering information, but rather as a powerful means of transformation, capable of shifting social norms, reawakening aspirations, challenging long-held stereotypes, and making opportunities both visible and believable to those who have been left behind for a long time.

A key message that came across clearly was the need for communication to be hyper-local and rooted deeply in the social, cultural, and emotional landscapes of the people it seeks to reach. Participants emphasised that messages aimed at NEET youth should be delivered in their language, in their idioms, and through voices they trust.

Community dialogue was highlighted as an irreplaceable channel. Courtyard meetings, neighbourhood gatherings, and school-yard discussions, especially those led by familiar local faces such as female youth ambassadors, respected elders, mothers, teachers, and religious leaders, were recommended as the most effective forums for connecting with both youth and their guardians. These forums should not simply promote programs but engage in value-centred conversations about aspirations, identity, economic resilience, and gender roles. Storytelling in these settings, particularly those showcasing women and marginalised individuals overcoming hardship through training and employment, was seen as especially powerful.

Participants also stressed the importance of peer influence and word-of-mouth motivation. Successful trainees, local entrepreneurs, and graduates of the skill program were identified as ideal peer role models whose stories could resonate far more deeply than institutional advertising. Using them as mobilizers, primarily through the snowball approach in rural and hard-to-reach communities, was seen as both cost-effective and authentic.

Communication should also be crafted to reach gatekeepers—fathers, brothers, and in-laws—who often decide whether a young woman can step out for training or accept a job. Rather than confront resistance directly, the approach should softly reframe women's participation in terms of family honor, economic contribution, and community respect.

Recognising that many NEET youth struggle with self-doubt, trauma, and fear of failure, participants recommended that communication also focus on inner transformation, building self-confidence, encouraging positive identity, and helping youth visualise their potential. This could take the form of confidence-building workshops, aspirational storytelling, and youth-hosted events where NEET individuals are recognised for progress, not perfection.

Participants suggested integrating communication into everyday spaces. They suggest considering the placement of colourful, culturally resonant posters and banners in schools, madrasas, tea stalls, markets, union parishad offices, and religious institutions. Audio-based methods, such as miking in local bazaars and announcements during mosque prayers, were seen as necessary complements, especially in areas with low literacy rates. Simultaneously, creative approaches such as mobile bioscopes, puppet shows, and folk song performances were recommended for their ability to blend entertainment with subtle social messaging during fairs or village events.

Online and digital communication is the key to grabbing the attention of the youth. Digital platforms were recognised as increasingly relevant, especially for youth, but there was caution about over-reliance on online channels given unequal internet access and digital literacy. Hence, participants recommended a dual-track approach. On the one hand, short, emotionally engaging reels, testimonial videos, and motivational skits should be circulated via Facebook, YouTube, and messaging apps, leveraging rural micro-influencers and youth content creators who already have established followings. On the other hand, offline options—such as preloaded content on shared devices, IVR call systems, missed-call response lines, and printed guides at local youth information centres—can be used to reach disconnected groups.

Across all media, the message must be clear, credible, and connected to tangible benefits. Instead of abstract development jargon, communication should focus on how participation in training can lead to income, recognition, stability, or self-worth. Messages should be framed with hope and dignity, never pity.

On a national level, participants supported the idea of a unified communication identity for the project. A consistent logo, tagline, and design language would be applied uniformly across all channels and regions. This approach would enhance visibility and trust while signaling seriousness and cohesion. Promotional materials on national TV and radio, as well as partnerships with national influencers, were recommended to complement community-level outreach and ensure that the message of opportunity reaches youth from all backgrounds and regions. Simultaneously, participants emphasised that national messages should always reflect the lived experiences of local youth, using characters, dialects, settings, and examples that feel authentic.

Ultimately, the collective insight from the FGDs points to a communication strategy that is relational rather than transactional, participatory rather than prescriptive, and adaptive rather than one-size-fits-all. By combining localised storytelling, visual creativity, institutional trust-building, digital innovation, and face-to-face human connection, the communication efforts under the EARN Project can become a catalyst—not only for increased participation in training programs but for long-term shifts in how young people, their families, and their communities perceive education, employment, and their power to change their future.

NEET LIFE SKETCHES

STUPID

LAZY

Stories of NEET Youth from the Field

From focus group discussions conducted across the region, a rich tapestry of narratives emerged, stories of NEET youth (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), whose journeys reflect the intersecting impacts of poverty, gender norms, disability, and lack of social support. Here are some of their stories.

The Boy Who Wanted to Drive

After completing his Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC), Rahim hoped to continue his education. But when his father's small business collapsed, dreams gave way to responsibility. Rahim now spends his days doing odd jobs, trying to support his family. "I want to be a driver," he says with quiet confidence. But without formal driving training or a license, he remains excluded from the job market. His story is not unique—many young men like him teeter on the edge of opportunity, held back by structural neglect.

The Girl with the Sewing Machine

Sharmin, once an honours student in English literature, had to leave university after her family could no longer afford tuition. Determined to earn a living, she learned the basics of sewing. But without advanced tailoring skills or business literacy, she has been unable to find stable employment. "I know how to stitch, but I don't know how to sell," she shared. Her story is one of interrupted potential, yearning for vocational training and support for self-employment.

Lost Card, Lost Chance

Rina couldn't sit for her HSC exams because she had lost her registration card, a minor administrative mishap with significant consequences. Later, she had the opportunity to work at a nursing training institute. However, fees for nurse training again stood in her way. "I wanted to serve people," she says, "but how do I serve if I can't even learn?" Rina's story highlights the need for both financial and systemic support to ensure education continuity.

Motherhood and Missed Opportunities

After becoming a young mother, Mousumi stepped away from education. Now she wants to return. But with a toddler and no childcare support, the classroom feels far away. "I can't even think about a classroom when my baby needs me 24/7," she shared. Like her, many young women are caught in a loop of caregiving, with no structured way back to learning or livelihood.

The Independent Poultry Farmer

Habib, unlike many of his peers, found a way forward. With prior training, he started his small poultry farm. "I want others to become self-reliant too," he said, proud of his journey. His story is a testament to the power of skills training when properly implemented and supported.

The Student Dreaming of Completion

Nazma, still a student, wants to complete her education before pursuing a career. Her focus and clarity stand out. However, the fragility of her circumstances, financial pressure and gendered expectations could disrupt this trajectory at any time. She represents the youth who remain on the cusp, vulnerable to becoming NEET due to systemic failures.

The Forgotten and Abandoned

In Bogura, cases of women abandoned by husbands are alarmingly common. Salma, a single mother, wants to enrol in a training program to achieve financial independence. But without childcare facilities, she's forced to stay home. Divorce, abandonment, and social stigma haunt many women, further pushing them out of education and work. Her locality lacks special support systems, yet the demand is urgent and real.

The Girl Who Couldn't Speak Up

In another case, a young woman recounted how provocative comments and mental abuse from family members drove her into a shell. She dropped out of school and ceased seeking employment. "Words hurt more than actions," she murmured. Her story emphasises the importance of counselling—not only for women but also for their families and communities.

Barriers Built at Home

Jannat, an educated woman, had to leave her job after marriage. Her in-laws objected to her working outside the home. "They think a woman's place is in the kitchen," she said bitterly. Her story mirrors that of many others. Family resistance, particularly from in-laws, continues to hinder women's workforce participation even after they have invested in education.

The Youth with Disabilities

Many youths with physical disabilities expressed their desire to participate in training programs. Mehedi, wheelchair-bound, wanted to learn digital marketing. But inaccessible training centres and a lack of home-based alternatives left him excluded. "Even getting to the training centre is a struggle," he shared. Their stories call for an inclusive training infrastructure, home-based learning options, and ongoing support and encouragement.

Third Gender, Third-Class Treatment

Members of the transgender community are often seen on the streets collecting money or, worse, feared for their supposed criminal behaviour. Yet, when given opportunities, they want change. Tuli, a transgender youth, expressed interest in learning tailoring. "We are not born criminals. We are made into this by rejection," she said. Her voice echoes the need for reserved quotas, inclusive training, and societal acceptance.

Children in Crisis

Parents fighting. Homes filled with anger. Many NEET youth recall childhood trauma. One story stood out—a 17-year-old boy who ran away from home after years of witnessing domestic violence. The psychological scars never left. Training parents on child mental health and reducing household violence emerged as a core need across many FGDs.

Mental Health on the Margins

Several young people spoke about the stress of admission exams. Some even hinted at suicidal thoughts. "Everyone expects me to succeed. But what if I fail?" one boy asked. Their narratives point to the need for mental health consultation and early emotional support systems during this critical period.

A few in-depth life sketches

Afsana, 18 – Caught Between Fear and Aspiration

Afsana is an 18-year-old girl living in a peri-urban area. She dreams of continuing her education and eventually earning a stable income to support herself and her family. However, her ambition is overshadowed by a constant sense of vulnerability. Local perceptions about girls who travel for education or work are steeped in suspicion and conservatism. Her parents worry about her safety, especially after recent incidents of harassment in nearby markets and on the roads. The family cannot afford additional security measures, such as private transportation.

Though Afsana has completed her SSC and wants to enroll in a skills training course, the lack of clear career pathways leaves her confused. She often asks, "What happens after the training? Will I get a job or just a certificate?" Her parents, influenced by neighbours and relatives, question the utility of training altogether. Without proper guidance or community support, Afsana's dreams teeter on uncertainty, caught between her aspirations and the invisible fence of fear and cultural constraints.

Sumon, 20 – Urgency Without a Roadmap

Sumon is 20 years old, the eldest son of a low-income household in a rural district. His father can no longer work due to illness, and Sumon is under immense pressure to start earning immediately. He's completed his HSC, but there are no clear job opportunities nearby. He enrolled in a local vocational training center, but the curriculum felt disconnected from the realities of the job market.

The only factory that was hiring near his area required prior experience and refused to take interns. Sumon also noticed that employers were reluctant to hire young men from his village, citing concerns about their reliability. Meanwhile, his mother hints at marriage, thinking it will bring him "stability." Transport costs to training centres and the need to contribute to household expenses make it harder for Sumon to continue any unpaid internships or further training. His urgency to earn is real, but the system isn't designed to meet it.

<u>Nasima, 22 – A Mother's Dilemma</u>

Nasima is a 22-year-old mother of a two-year-old boy. She completed her HSC before getting married and has always dreamt of contributing to the household income. Her husband and in-laws support her wish to work, but practical constraints make it nearly impossible.

Training centres nearby do not offer childcare, and leaving her son alone at home is out of the question. Her day begins at dawn, filled with cooking, cleaning, and caring for her child. By the time she's done with household responsibilities, there's little time or energy left to pursue skill development. Even if she manages to complete a training course, finding a job that accommodates her childcare needs seems like a distant fantasy. Nasima doesn't lack motivation; she lacks the infrastructure and support to turn that motivation into action.

<u>Jannat, 25 – Trapped by Traditions</u>

Jannat, a 25-year-old woman from a conservative rural community, got married at 18. Now with two young children, she finds herself restricted by the same societal rules that shaped her early life. Her in-laws believe a woman's place is in the home, and even though she once dreamed of becoming a schoolteacher, those dreams have faded with each passing year. When she hears about other women joining training programs or starting small businesses, she feels a quiet longing—but quickly reminds herself, "People here talk too much. My family would never allow it." Negative social perceptions, deeply rooted gender roles, and a lack of mobility have kept Jannat isolated. Despite internal motivation, her environment offers little space for self-growth. Her story is one of quiet resignation—a poignant reminder that personal ambition often succumbs to societal pressures.

<u>Imran, 21 – Aiming High, Stuck Low</u>

Imran is 21 years old, unmarried, and lives in a small town. From a young age, he was told that a government job is the only secure future. That belief shaped his educational choices and aspirations. But now, out of college and unemployed, Imran realises that government jobs are few and fiercely competitive. He doesn't see many part-time job options around, and the private sector feels alien to him.

His family needs financial assistance, but he struggles to identify a realistic path forward. He briefly considered starting a small business but was discouraged by friends who claimed business success was only for the rich. He enrolled in a training program but soon found that the content was generic and didn't connect with real-world job requirements. Imran's confusion is compounded by societal pressure, conflicting expectations, and lack of role models. His dream is to be self-sufficient, but no one has shown him how.

Key Insights: What Life Sketches Tell Us

The lived experiences of NEET youth, reflected through personal life sketches and participatory discussions, offer deep, nuanced insights into the complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and institutional barriers that shape youth exclusion from education, employment, and training. These narratives illuminate the following critical themes:

Financial Hardship Is a Crosscutting Barrier

Across all personas, financial insecurity emerges as a primary deterrent to both education and employment. Female participants reported dropping out of school due to unaffordable tuition, early marriage driven by economic desperation, and the pressure to support household income. Male youth, especially in rural areas, often forego education to become breadwinners, sacrificing long-term goals for immediate survival.

Family and Social Constraints Intensify Gender Inequality

Restrictive gender norms and caregiving expectations disproportionately affect women. Many young women, especially those who are divorced or single mothers, face not only logistical barriers such as the lack of childcare, but also emotional and psychological barriers rooted in societal judgment and discouragement from male relatives. Fear of harassment and unsafe training environments further discourages female participation.

Infrastructure Deficits Exclude the Most Marginalised

From inaccessible transport and outdated training curricula to the absence of gender-sensitive or disability-inclusive facilities, poor infrastructure severely limits the ability of marginalised groups, including persons with disabilities and third-gender individuals, to engage in education or livelihoods. These systemic failures perpetuate cycles of exclusion.

Youth Mental Health and Motivation Are Undermined

Low self-esteem, fear of failure, and trauma from domestic or societal pressures contribute to an internalised sense of inadequacy among youth. Many express skepticisms about the value of education, especially when they see few real-life examples of success in their communities. The lack of role models and career guidance erodes motivation and aspiration.

Information Gaps and Irrelevant Training Block Progress

A lack of accessible, clear, and relatable information about available opportunities creates confusion and exclusion. Youth often rely on hearsay and local networks, which may not reflect actual programs or career paths. Additionally, many training centres offer outdated or irrelevant curricula, especially in digital and technical skills, with limited internet access making online alternatives impractical.

Stigma Limits Occupational Mobility and Dignity

Societal stigma remains a powerful barrier, particularly for certain professions (e.g., beauty work, tailoring, caregiving) and marginalised groups. Third-gender individuals and persons with disabilities often face explicit rejection in both training and employment sectors, limiting their dignity and choices.

Interest in Self-Employment Exists—But Support Doesn't

Many young people express interest in becoming self-reliant through activities like tailoring, livestock rearing, or small-scale farming. However, the absence of mentorship, start-up capital, financial literacy, or accessible financial services makes this ambition difficult to realise. Formal employment is often seen as dependent on higher education, while self-employment is viewed as an option for those without formal credentials—but one without structural support.

High dropout rates among female participants due to financial hardships, early marriage, and conservative family norms

Unsafe campus conditions and lack of female-friendly environments

Challenges for divorced or single mothers and discouragement by male relatives

Pressure on rural males to provide for their families early

Low self-esteem, fear of failure, and skepticism about education

TRAINING CENTER

Outdated curricula and lack of relevant technical training in training centers

Social stigma against certain professions

Barriers to self-employment, including lack of capital and mentorship

Perception of employment requiring higher education

These life sketches reveal that NEET youth are not apathetic.

They are navigating complex, often invisible systems of exclusion.

Their stories emphasise the need for holistic, inclusive, and empathetic approaches that go beyond technical solutions and address the emotional, social, and structural dimensions of youth development.

Communication strategies, policies, and programs must be grounded in these lived realities to be effective.

KEY INFORMANT SURVEY (KIS)

The respondents represented various administrative levels and regions across the country. The survey was conducted online via Google Forms from March 10 to March 20, 2025, and aimed to gather institutional insights into how DYD programs are being implemented and how effectively they communicate with and reach NEET youth.

The questionnaire covered a broad range of topics, including:

- Relevance and accessibility of DYD programs for NEET youth
- Effectiveness of outreach and communication efforts
- Alignment of curricula with market needs
- Inclusivity, particularly regarding gender-friendly facilities
- Monitoring systems and feedback mechanisms
- Inter-agency coordination and collaboration

Officials were also asked to reflect on:

- Strategic communication practices currently in use
- Local success stories and innovative approaches
- Ideas for engaging community leaders and promoting positive youth role models

The perspectives shared by DYD officials provide valuable insights that complement findings from the online youth survey and multi-stakeholder focus group discussions.

Together, these sources provide a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape, challenges, and opportunities, enabling the EARN Project to design more effective, inclusive, and responsive communication strategies that address the genuine needs of NEET youth across Bangladesh.

Interest of Unemployed Youth in Training Programs

Interest Level
- Very Interested: 60.7%
- Somewhat Interested: 35.6%
- Somewhat Reluctant: 1.5%
- Interested Or Uninterested, Neither.: 1.1%
- Very Reluctant: 0.4%
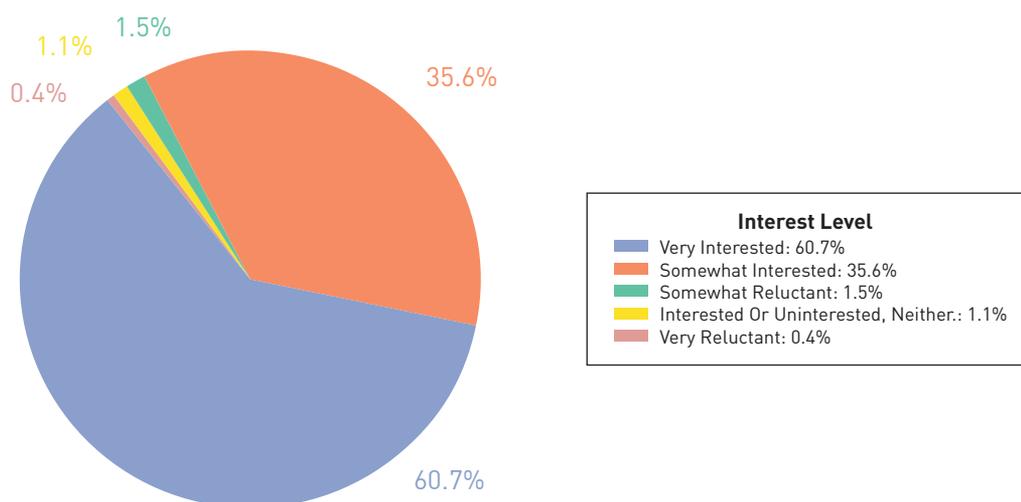
Strong Youth Demand for Skills Training

The findings in the above graph from the Key Informant Survey (KIS) reveal that DYD officials overwhelmingly perceive a high interest among unemployed youth in vocational skills training. On average, officials estimate that approximately 96% of youth are eager to enroll in structured training programmes to enhance their employability and livelihood prospects. Only a small minority (approximately 3%) are perceived as being reluctant or indifferent. This strong perceived demand presents a valuable opportunity to expand skills development efforts if training programs remain relevant, accessible, and well-communicated to the target audience.

■ Financial Stability   ■ Personal Dignity & Growth
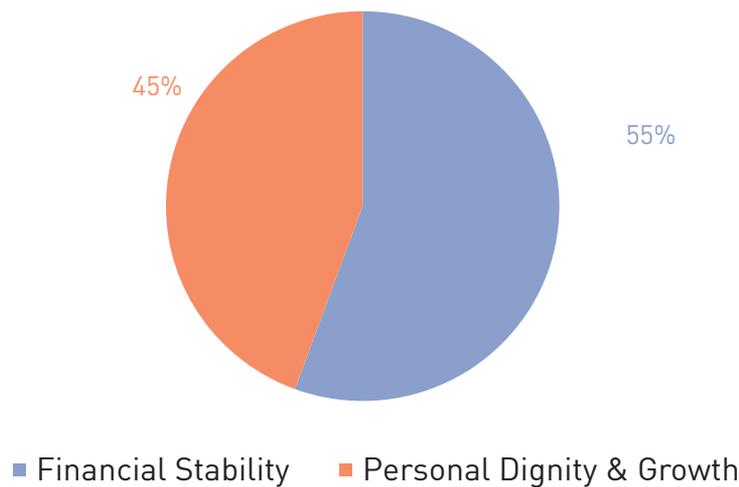
Motivations Behind Training Initiatives

According to government officials surveyed in the Key Informant Survey (KIS), the primary motivators driving NEET youth to enrol in skills training programs are the pursuit of financial stability and personal growth. An overwhelming 55% of officials identified financial well-being and economic solvency as key factors, reflecting young people's desire to become self-reliant, increase their earning potential, and contribute to their families' financial security. In addition, 45% of respondents pointed to personal development and dignity as significant motivators, suggesting that many youths view training as a pathway to improve their social standing, gain self-respect, and build long-term opportunities for a better future.

These insights highlight the importance of aligning skills programs with youth aspirations—not only for economic advancement but also for a sense of purpose and empowerment.

Barriers Faced by NEET YOuth in Accessing Training - (Score)
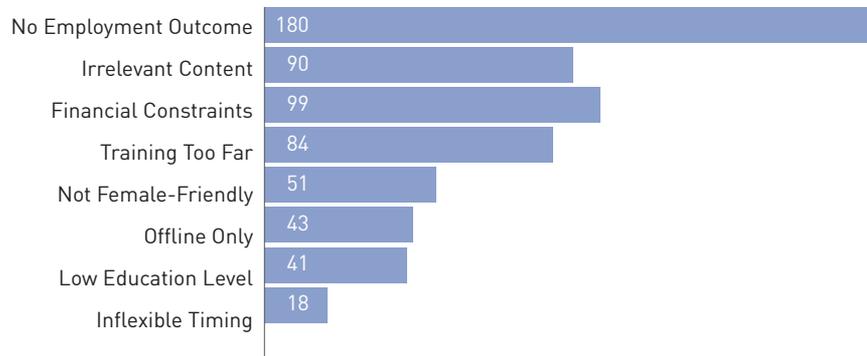
Barriers Faced by the NEET Youth in Accessing Training

The Key Informant Survey (KIS) reveals a range of barriers that DYD officials believe prevent NEET youth from participating in skills training programs. The most frequently cited obstacle, scoring 180, was the perception that training does not lead to meaningful employment, indicating a significant disconnect between training outcomes and job opportunities. Financial constraints (99) and irrelevant training content (90) followed closely, suggesting that affordability and curriculum alignment are also significant concerns for youth.

Distance to training centres (84) was another common barrier, highlighting accessibility issues, especially for those in rural areas.

Gender-related concerns were also notable, with 51 responses citing that training environments are not sufficiently female-friendly. Additionally, the lack of online or flexible learning options (43) and low educational qualifications among youth (41) further limit participation. Finally, inflexible training schedules, with a score of just 18, appeared to be a lesser but still relevant concern.

These insights emphasise the need for training programs that are not only accessible and affordable but also practically linked to employment, gender-inclusive, and responsive to the diverse realities of NEET youth.

Barriers for Woman to Access Skill Training
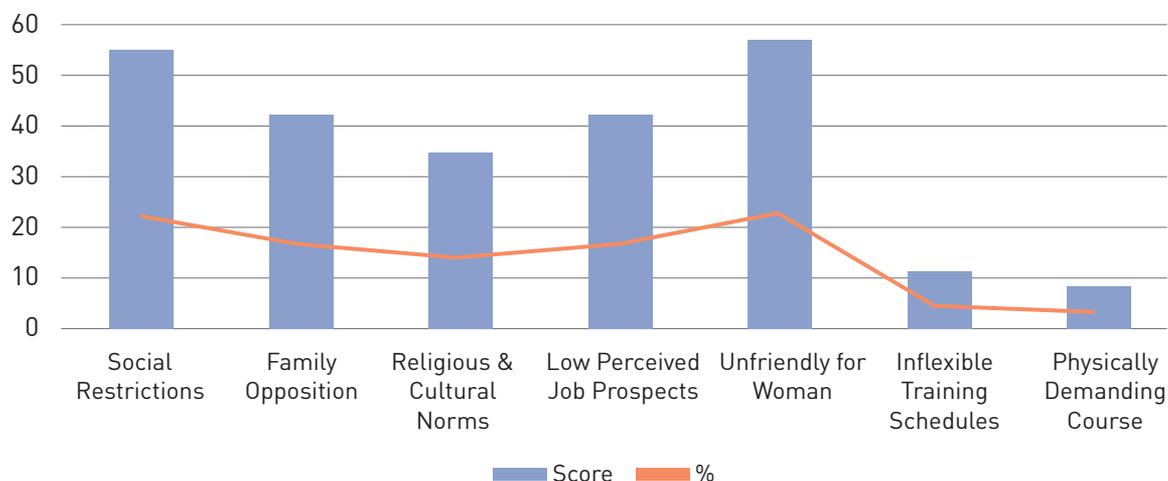
Barriers for Women in Participating in & Seizing the Opportunities

According to the Key Informant Survey (KIS) responses from DYD officials, several critical barriers were identified that limit the participation of female NEET youth in skills training programs. The most prominent barriers are unfriendly training environments for women (22.8%) and social restrictions (22%), indicating that safety, comfort, and societal norms are major deterrents. These findings reflect how entrenched gender norms and insufficiently gender-responsive training facilities discourage women from engaging in such opportunities.

Family opposition (16.8%) and low perceived job prospects (16.8%) also scored significantly, revealing a double burden of limited familial support and scepticism about economic returns, which further constrains young women's participation. In many cases, families may not perceive training as a worthwhile investment for their daughters, especially when job placement outcomes are uncertain. Religious and cultural norms (14%) also play a considerable role, restricting women's public mobility or engagement in mixed-gender settings. Though slightly less emphasised, these barriers continue to shape decision-making in more conservative regions.

On the other end of the spectrum, inflexible training schedules (4.4%) and physically demanding course requirements (3.2%) were the least cited challenges. Although these issues occur infrequently, they nonetheless underscore significant structural challenges, including the absence of evening or part-time opportunities and the training in physically demanding fields, which may exclude women with caregiving responsibilities or physical limitations.

Barriers for Woman - in brief (%)

16.8

38.94

30.4

- ■ Social, Family, Region & Cultural Opposition & restrictions
- ■ Unfriendly, Inflexible and Improper Training Initiatives
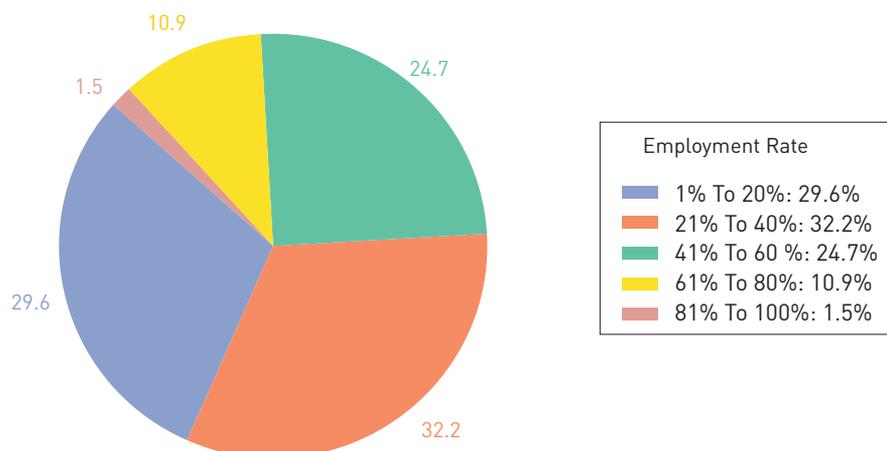- ■ Low Perceived job Prospects
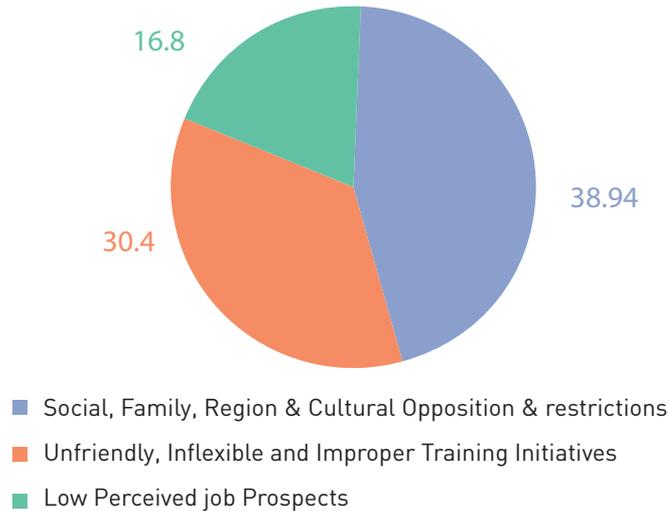
The data indicate that social, familial, and environmental barriers outweigh logistical or curriculum-based obstacles.

This suggests that addressing gender disparity in skill development requires more than just offering courses; it demands inclusive design, community sensitisation, family engagement, and the creation of safe, welcoming training spaces for women. Without addressing these root causes, female NEET youth will continue to be underserved by training initiatives.

In response to another survey question on overcoming social and systemic barriers to women's participation in training and employment, DYD officials identified women's self-reliance (50.4%) as the most effective solution, underscoring the importance of empowerment and independence. Interestingly, a significant portion of respondents (23.5%) suggested promoting training in professions that are traditionally seen as "feminine", revealing a stereotyped perspective that may inadvertently reinforce gender norms rather than challenge them. Meanwhile, preserving women's social honour (8.3%) was the least cited solution, though still acknowledged by some officials.

Overall, the findings reflect a mix of progressive and traditional views, highlighting the urgent need to empower women through self-agency while actively addressing the socio-economic structures that limit their choices, as well as the need to change the attitudes and perspectives of service providers.

Employment Rate of Youth After Training

10.9

1.5

24.7

29.6

32.2

Employment Rate

- ■ 1% To 20%: 29.6%
- ■ 21% To 40%: 32.2%
- ■ 41% To 60 %: 24.7%
- ■ 61% To 80%: 10.9%
- ■ 81% To 100%: 1.5%

Employment Rate After Training

According to the Key Informant Survey (KIS), most DYD officials perceive youth employment outcomes after training to be modest at best. The most significant proportion, 32.2% of respondents, estimated the employment rate to fall between 21% and 40%, suggesting that while some youth do find jobs after training, many stay unemployed. Another 29.6% reported even lower employment outcomes, within the 1% to 20% range, indicating limited success in converting training into livelihoods. A smaller group, 24.7%, estimated a moderate employment rate of 41% to 60%, while only 10.9% observed higher success rates between 61% and 80%. Notably, just 1.5% of respondents believed that employment rates exceed 80%, reflecting sporadic instances of high job placement rates after training.

This overall trend suggests that most NEET youth do not achieve strong employment outcomes after completing training, with over 60% of officials reporting employment rates below 40%. These findings underscore a crucial need to enhance the quality, market relevance, and job linkage of training programs to achieve more meaningful and measurable outcomes.

Communication Challenges in Promoting Training (%)
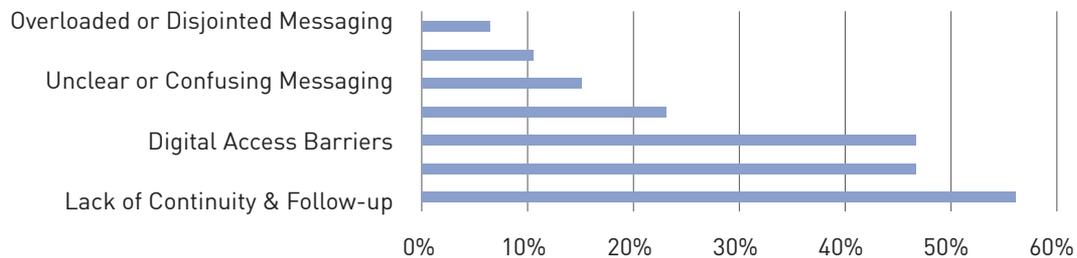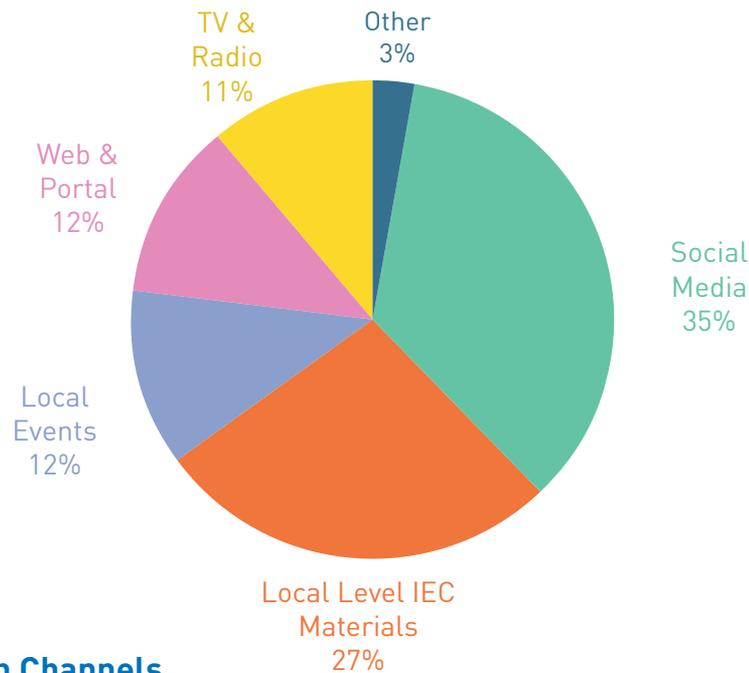

Communication Challenges in Promoting Training

The Key Informant Survey (KIS) highlights several critical communication challenges faced in promoting training opportunities to NEET youth. The most frequently cited issue, reported by 56% of DYD officials, was the lack of continuity and follow-up, indicating a gap in sustained communication efforts throughout the training engagement process.

Both limited communication channels and digital access barriers were identified by 46% of respondents, pointing to infrastructural and technological constraints that hinder effective outreach, particularly in remote or underserved areas. An additional 23% of officials cited uneven and inadequate outreach, indicating that communication efforts are not consistently reaching all target groups.

Furthermore, 15% cited unclear or confusing messaging, which can impact how well information is understood and trusted by young people. Low audience engagement was noted in 11% of responses, indicating challenges in capturing and maintaining the attention and interest of young people. Lastly, 6% of respondents reported that messaging is often overloaded or fragmented, which can dilute key messages and reduce overall effectiveness.

Together, these insights underscore the need for more strategic, consistent, and inclusive communication approaches to better connect with NEET youth and effectively promote training initiatives.

Communication Channels (%)

- TV & Radio 11%
- Other 3%
- Web & Portal 12%
- Social Media 35%
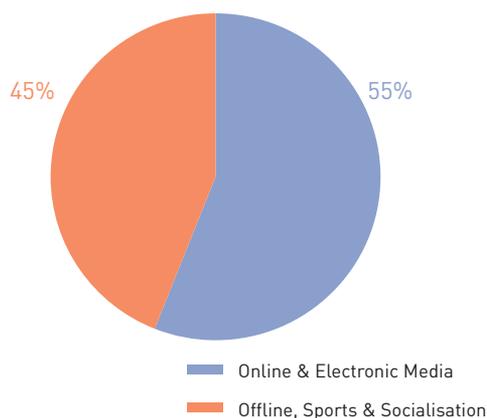- Local Events 12%
- Local Level IEC Materials 27%

Suggested Communication Channels

According to the Key Informant Survey (KIS), DYD officials consider social media (35%) to be the most effective communication channel for reaching and engaging NEET youth. Platforms like Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, along with influencer posts and local video-sharing apps like Imu, are seen as having the highest potential for visibility and influence among young audiences.

Local-level Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, such as posters, leaflets, flyers, wall writing, miking, and branded giveaways like calendars and diaries are the second most preferred method, cited by 27% of respondents, highlighting the continued relevance of offline communication in grassroots settings. In contrast, local events, including community and religious gatherings, as well as web portals and official websites, were each selected by only 12% of officials, suggesting that they are perceived as having a more limited reach or less frequent application. TV and radio were rated slightly lower at 11%, reflecting a potential decline in their popularity or accessibility among the target youth demographic. A small proportion (3%) mentioned other channels.

Overall, these responses suggest a clear shift toward digital-first engagement, particularly through interactive and socially driven web or app platforms, while also acknowledging the enduring value of traditional, community-based materials, and events, especially in areas where digital access remains uneven.

## NEET Spending Time (Broader Areas) %

- 45%
- 55%
- Online & Electronic Media
- Offline, Sports & Socialisation

NEET Spending Time Doing What (%)

- Watching the news
- Watching...
- Playing sports
- Watching TV
- Roaming around
- in person gatherings
- Social media

(0, 5, 10, 15, 20)
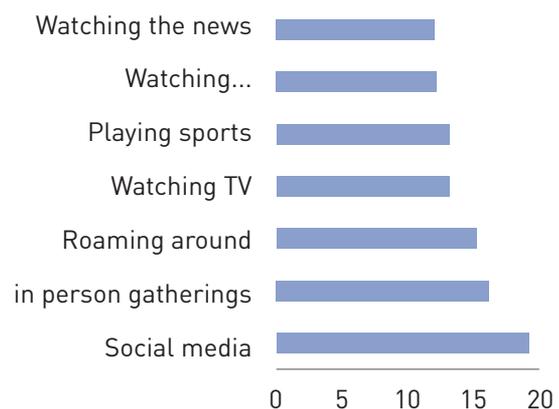
NEET Spending Time Doing What

The data on how NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth spend their time reveals a clear division between online/electronic media consumption and offline, social, or physical activities. A majority, 56% of their time is spent on online and electronic media, including social media (19%), watching TV (13%), movies or dramas (12%), and news (12%). This indicates a strong engagement with digital content, suggesting that digital platforms are not just sources of entertainment but also central to how NEET youth stay informed and connected. On the other hand, 44% of their time is devoted to offline, social, and physical activities, such as in-person gatherings (16%), roaming around (15%), and playing sports (13%). These activities reflect their continued interest in community interaction and physical engagement, both of which are essential for social development and emotional well-being.

This division underscores the importance of designing youth engagement strategies that blend both digital outreach and community-based interactions, leveraging the reach of online platforms while also creating meaningful offline spaces for participation, connection, and learning.
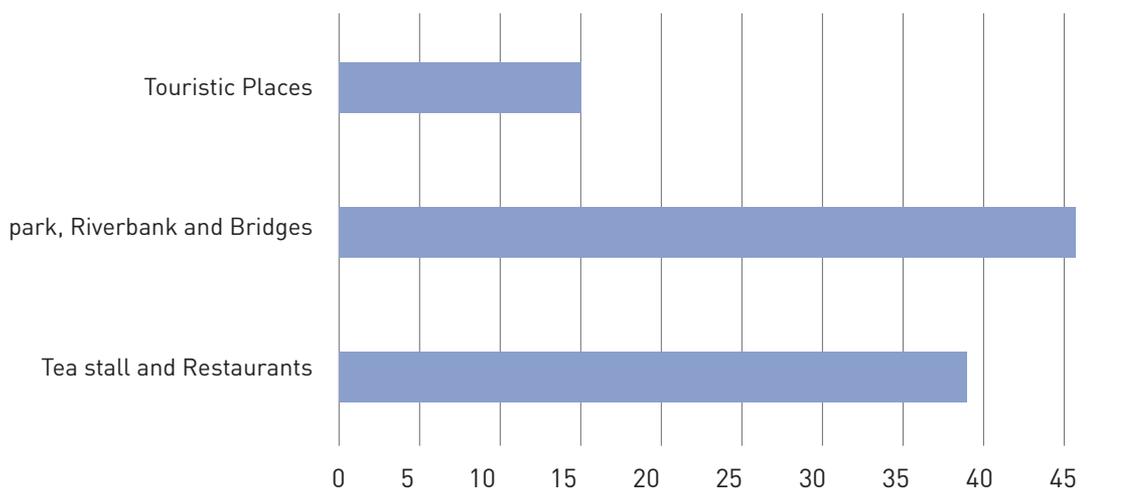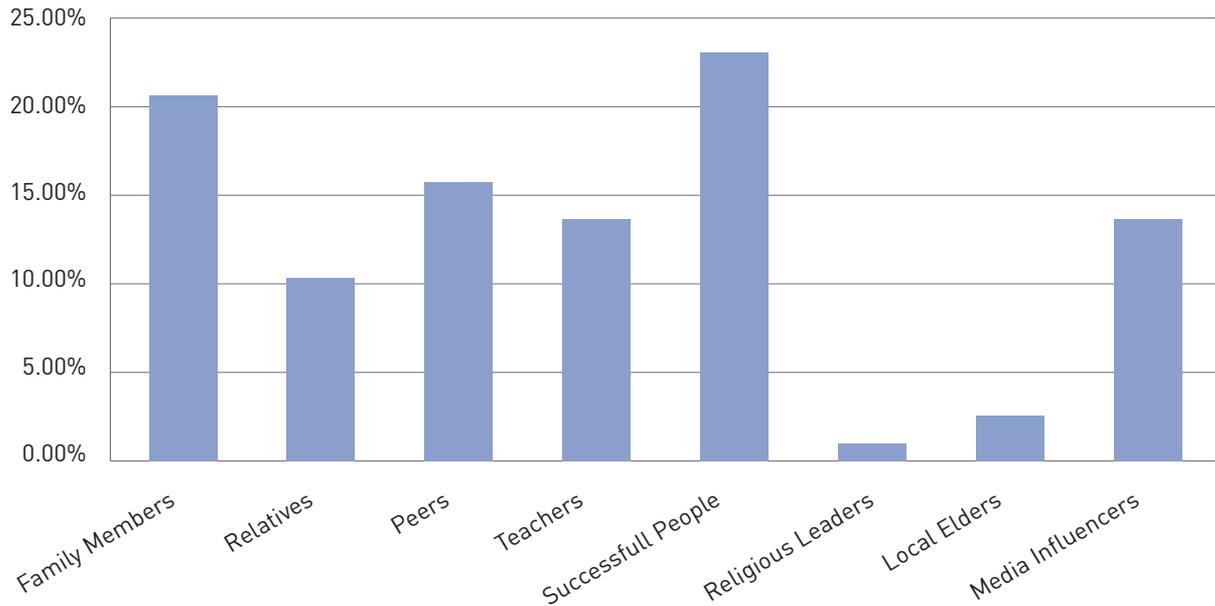

Youth spend their time at!

According to the Key Informant Survey (KIS), DYD officials identified parks, riverbanks, and bridges (46%) as the most common leisure spaces for NEET youth, followed by tea stalls and restaurants (39%), and touristic or recreational places (15%). These responses suggest that NEET youth are perceived to spend much of their free time in open, informal public settings.

However, this perception may primarily reflect the behaviours of male NEET youth, as female youth often face social and mobility restrictions that limit their presence in such public spaces.

The relatively low mention of indoor or home-based locations may indicate an institutional bias or assumption that doesn't fully capture the realities of young women.

# People Who Influnce NEET (%)

People who influence NEET youth

DYD officials identified a range of individuals who influence NEET youth in making decisions related to their careers, education, and life goals. The most influential group, cited by 23.1% of respondents, is successful people, suggesting that visible role models, whether public figures or locally recognised achievers, play a significant role in shaping youth aspirations. Family members were also seen as major influencers (20.7%), followed by peers (15.7%) and media influencers (13.6%), indicating the substantial impact of both personal relationships and digital media in guiding youth decisions. Teachers (13.5%) and relatives (10.0%) were recognised as moderate influencers, contributing through mentorship and family expectations. In contrast, local elders (2.6%) and religious leaders (0.8%) were perceived to have minimal influence, reflecting a generational and cultural shift away from traditional authority figures.

These insights underline the importance of leveraging aspirational role models and close social networks—both offline and online—when designing communication and engagement strategies for NEET youth.

Role of Outreach and Communication in Youth Participation
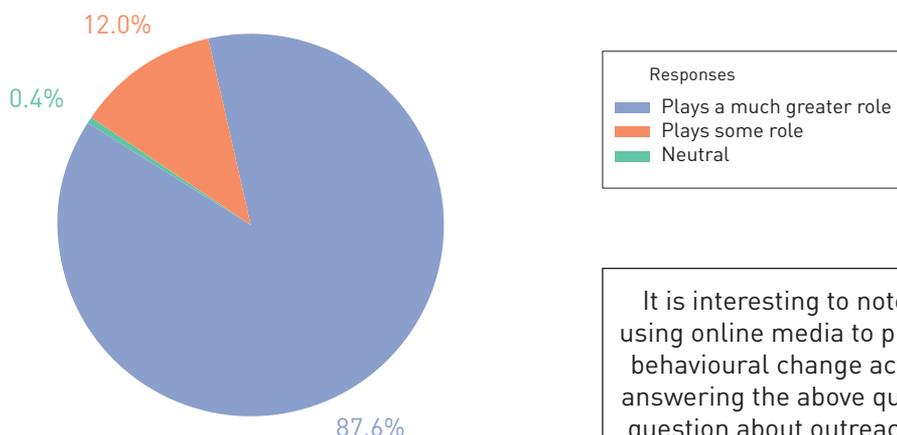
It is interesting to note that DYD officials suggest using online media to promote awareness and social behavioural change activities targeting NEET while answering the above questions. However, in another question about outreach activities at the local level, they emphasise the great importance of outreach and local-level activities.
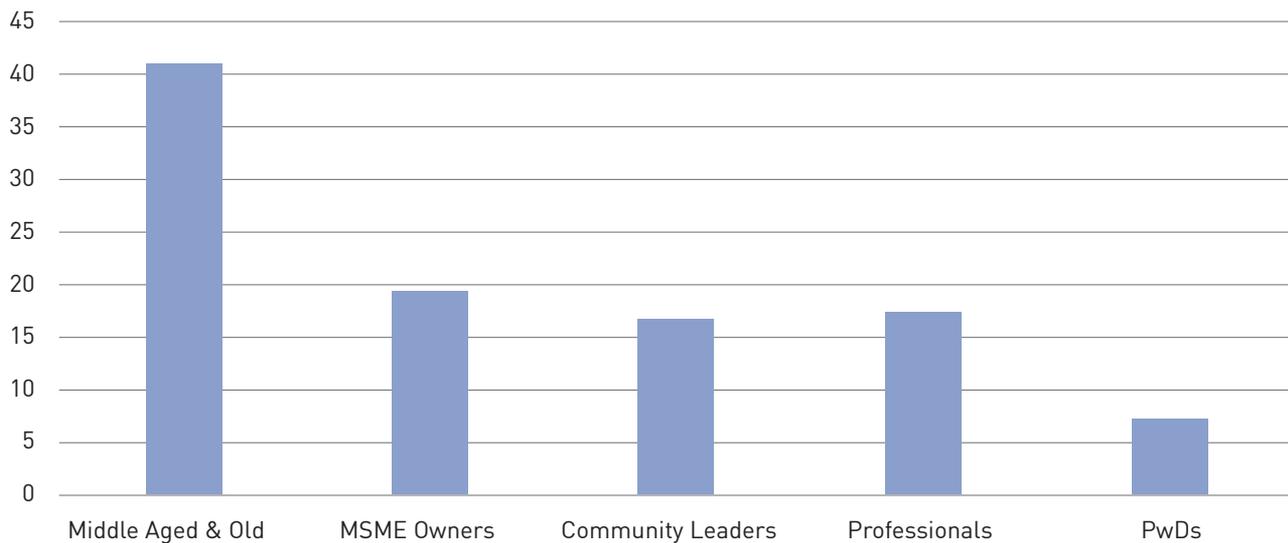
Other than NEET youth, who should be targeted to Promote Training Initiatives

According to DYD officials, in addition to NEET youth, middle-aged and older individuals (40.7% are seen as the most important secondary target group for promoting training initiatives. This suggests that older age groups play a critical role, either as caregivers, influencers, or potential beneficiaries of lifelong learning and upskilling.

MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) owners (19.1%) and professionals (17.4%) are also considered key stakeholders, likely due to their potential role in creating employment opportunities and collaborating in training delivery. Community leaders (16.8%) are viewed as influential figures who can help mobilise local support and raise awareness around training programs. Persons with disabilities (PwDs) were mentioned by 6% of respondents, indicating some recognition of the importance of inclusive targeting, although this group appears to be under-prioritised compared to others.   These insights highlight the need for a multi-stakeholder communication strategy that engages not only youth but also the broader ecosystem that can support or influence training participation and outcomes.

Middle Aged & Old
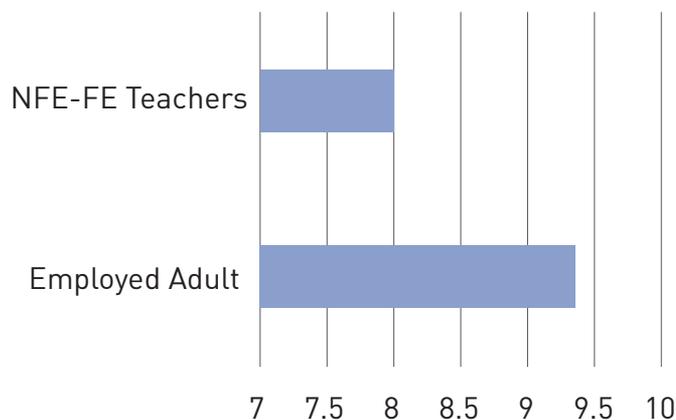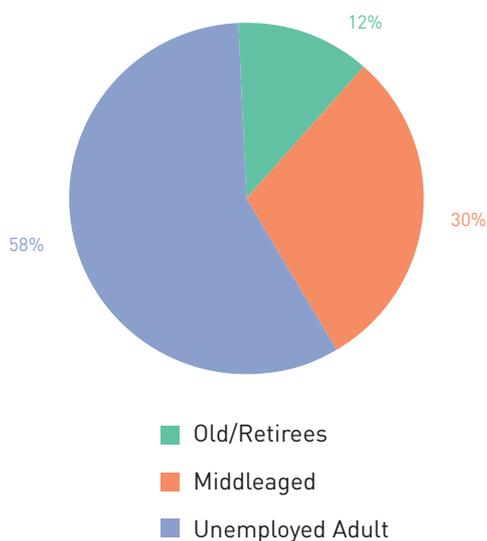
Within the broader group of non-NEET individuals identified as key targets for promoting training initiatives, professionals account for 17.4%, as reported by DYD officials. This category includes employed adults (9.4%) and teachers of non-formal/formal education (NFE-FE) (8%).

The inclusion of employed adults suggests a recognition of their potential role in mentoring, peer motivation, or even sharing successful reskilling stories. Meanwhile, teachers—particularly those engaged in non-formal or formal education, are valued as facilitators and advocates, capable of promoting training programs within educational and community settings. These insights reinforce the importance of engaging working professionals and educators as enablers, connectors, and communicators, whose support could broaden the reach and credibility of youth-focused training campaigns.

Suggested Content Types For Communication
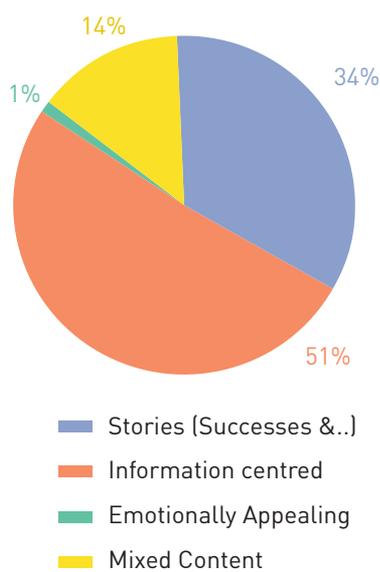
Suggested Content Styles
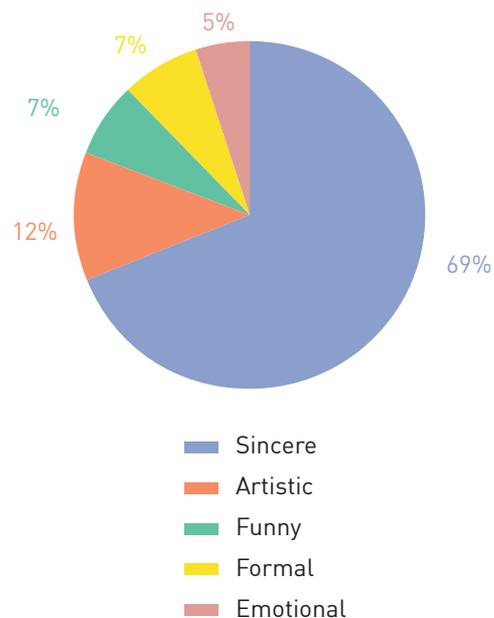
Suggested Content Types and Styles for Communicating NEET Youth

According to DYD officials, effective communication strategies for engaging NEET youth and promoting skills training should prioritise both content type and tone carefully. In terms of content, story-based approaches, particularly those highlighting success stories, were the top recommendation, chosen by 34.4% of respondents, reflecting the belief that real-life examples of youth who have benefited from training can inspire others.

Information-centred content (50.9%) was also emphasised as essential, ensuring that youth clearly understand what training opportunities are available, how to access them, and what the benefits are. A smaller proportion of officials (13.5%) suggested mixed-content approaches that combine storytelling with practical information, while emotionally appealing (1.2%) and funny content (7.3%) were considered less effective, possibly due to concerns about credibility or cultural fit.

When it comes to tone or style, sincerity is paramount, with 68.7% of officials emphasising the need for honest and straightforward messaging. This suggests that trust-building is central to reaching disengaged youth. Artistic styles (11.6%), such as creative visuals or dramatisations, were seen as having some value, especially for capturing attention, while formal (6.9%) or humorous (7.3%) tones were considered less relevant.

The strong preference for sincerity and real-life storytelling underscores the importance of authentic, relatable, and informative content that respects the realities of NEET youth, rather than relying solely on entertainment or polished promotion.

Personalites From Sectos Influences NEET Mostly %
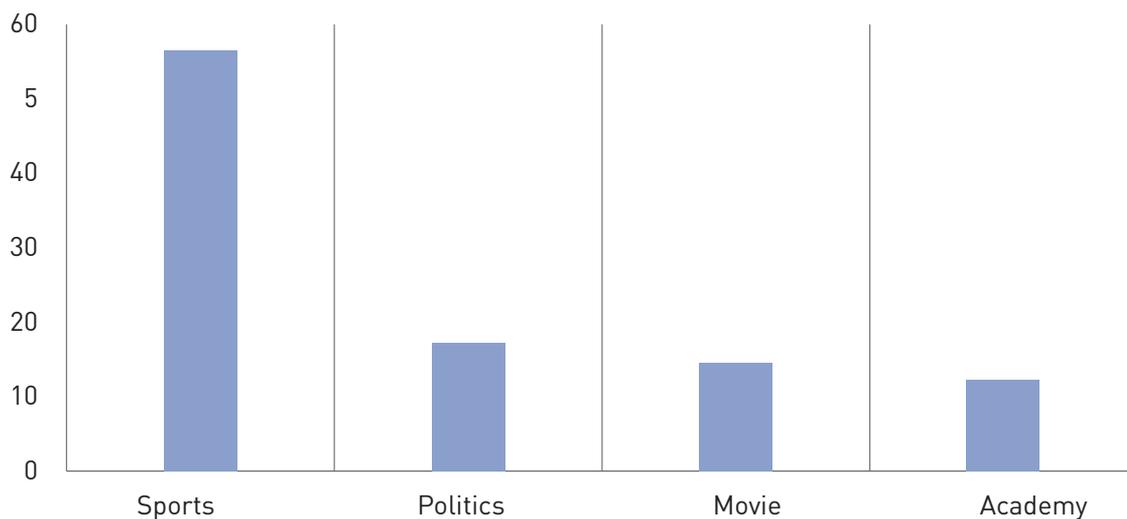
Influencers from Broad Sectors

According to DYD officials, sports personalities (56.6%) are perceived as the most influential figures for NEET youth, far surpassing other sectors. Political figures (17%), movie stars (14.4%), and academic leaders (12%) follow closely behind. This trend suggests that youth are most inspired by public figures associated with achievement, visibility, and aspirational success, particularly in sports, which may reflect both the popularity of sports culture and the visibility of athletes as relatable role models.

From the KIS with DYD Officials

Key Findings

NEET youth show strong interest in skills training, primarily to improve their financial situation and self-worth.

Major barriers include limited job outcomes from training, financial constraints, and inaccessible locations.

Female participation is especially restricted by social norms, family opposition, and non-inclusive training environments.

Post-training employment rates remain low, pointing to weak alignment between training programs and actual job opportunities.

The Key Informant Survey with DYD officials reveals a strong willingness among NEET youth in Bangladesh to participate in vocational training, motivated by the desire for financial independence and a more dignified life. However, this enthusiasm is tempered by persistent barriers that limit access and have a significant impact. Officials highlight a fundamental mismatch between training and employment outcomes, which undermines the perceived value of such programs. Other challenges, such as cost, distance, outdated content, and rigid formats,

further limit participation, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. These issues are especially acute for young women, who face additional hurdles rooted in family expectations, social norms, and gender-insensitive environments. Despite increasing awareness of these challenges, training programs often remain structurally unresponsive to the lived realities of their target audience.

Key Recommendations

Make	Create	Empower	Improve
Make training relevant, job-linked and easily accessible, especially in rural areas.	Design inclusive, gender-responsive training environments, childcare support, and safe transport to enable inclusive participation of women and girls.	Empower women and girls through tailored support and active community engagement.	Improve service provider's mindsets and program design to better reflect labor market demands and youth aspirations.

Officials see empowerment, particularly for women, as central to overcoming constraints. However, some also rely on traditional views that risk reinforcing stereotypes rather than breaking them. While there is consensus on the potential of training as a transformative tool, the lack of meaningful employment outcomes following training raises doubts about its current effectiveness. To unlock the full promise of skills development, training programs must be redesigned to reflect labour market needs better, offer inclusive learning environments, and actively challenge social and structural barriers. Only then can these initiatives truly support NEET youth in building secure, self-directed futures.

Takeaways to develop a Communication Strategy and Action Plan

The Key Informant Survey (KIS) with DYD officials offers valuable insights for designing an effective communication strategy and action plan to engage NEET youth in skills training. The findings highlight a strong need for communication that is consistent, accessible, and relatable.

A significant barrier is the lack of sustained communication and follow-up, compounded by limited digital access and infrastructure, particularly in rural or underserved areas. Messaging often fails due to unclear content, fragmented delivery, and low engagement. To address these challenges, officials recommend prioritising sincerity and real-life success stories, combining information-rich content with emotional resonance.

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, are considered the most effective tools. At the same time, traditional IEC materials, including posters and local events, remain vital in areas with limited digital penetration.

Understanding the spaces and social dynamics of NEET youth is equally important. Officials see male youth frequent public areas like parks and tea stalls, while recognising that female youth may be excluded from such spaces because of social norms. Therefore, inclusive outreach strategies must consider gendered differences in mobility and visibility.

Influencers play a key role; sports personalities are the most trusted by young people, followed by successful individuals, family, peers, and media influencers. These figures can be strategically used to create aspirational narratives and encourage young people to act.

The communication strategy should also target secondary audiences such as middle-aged adults, educators, professionals, and MSME owners, who can influence youth participation, provide employment opportunities, or act as advocates for training.

Altogether, an integrated communication plan grounded in trust, visibility, local context, and multi-stakeholder engagement is essential for effectively promoting skill development among NEET youth and transforming their aspirations into action.

Takeaways to develop the Strategic Communication Action Plan

The Strategic Communication Action Plan for promoting NEET youth training may focus on a streamlined, inclusive approach that blends behavioural insights with practical outreach tools. The primary audience should be the NEET youth, with a particular focus on tailoring approaches to suit their diverse needs, including gender, geography, and socioeconomic background. Secondary audiences can include parents and caregivers, educators, small business owners, local influencers, and persons with disabilities, recognising that these groups significantly influence youth decision-making and access to opportunities.

The core objective of the messaging strategy is to build awareness, trust, and motivation among young people to participate in training programs. Communication should be clear, sincere, and relatable, emphasising the real, tangible benefits of the training, such as employment opportunities, income generation, and empowerment.

Showcasing stories of relatable youth through videos, testimonials, and infographics will be central, supported by regular reminders and visually engaging content to reinforce key dates and program details. In terms of communication channels, a hybrid approach may be used. Digital platforms, including Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, and messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Messenger, will target urban and connected youth.

Engaging influencers, especially sports personalities and micro-influencers, can boost credibility and emotional bonds. Influencers are vital for building trust. Sports figures are the most influential, followed by successful alumni, family members, peers, and teachers. Their participation, whether through digital testimonials, community events, or interactive sessions, can generate a ripple effect that enhances credibility and enthusiasm for the training programmes.

In rural or digitally disconnected communities, traditional methods such as posters, wall writing, branded merchandise, and local miking will remain vital. TV and radio, especially on youth-oriented programming, will extend the campaign's reach. A hybrid solution, such as QR-coded posters and mobile registration booths, will help bridge the gap between offline and online interactions, particularly at community events and local fairs.

Female NEET youth, who are often underrepresented in public spaces and online environments, will require targeted and culturally sensitive outreach. This includes featuring female success stories and role models, engaging with local female networks such as schoolteachers, mothers' groups, and health workers, and utilising indoor-friendly media like radio or small, home-based gatherings (uthan baithak type) to reach them safely, respectfully and meaningfully.

The communication timeline can include several phases: an awareness-raising phase, a motivation phase involving storytelling and community engagement, an intensive enrollment drive utilising SMS, WhatsApp, and help desks, and a retention phase aimed at keeping youth inspired and connected throughout their training journey. This continuity ensures that communication does not stop once a youth enrolls but supports them throughout the learning cycle.
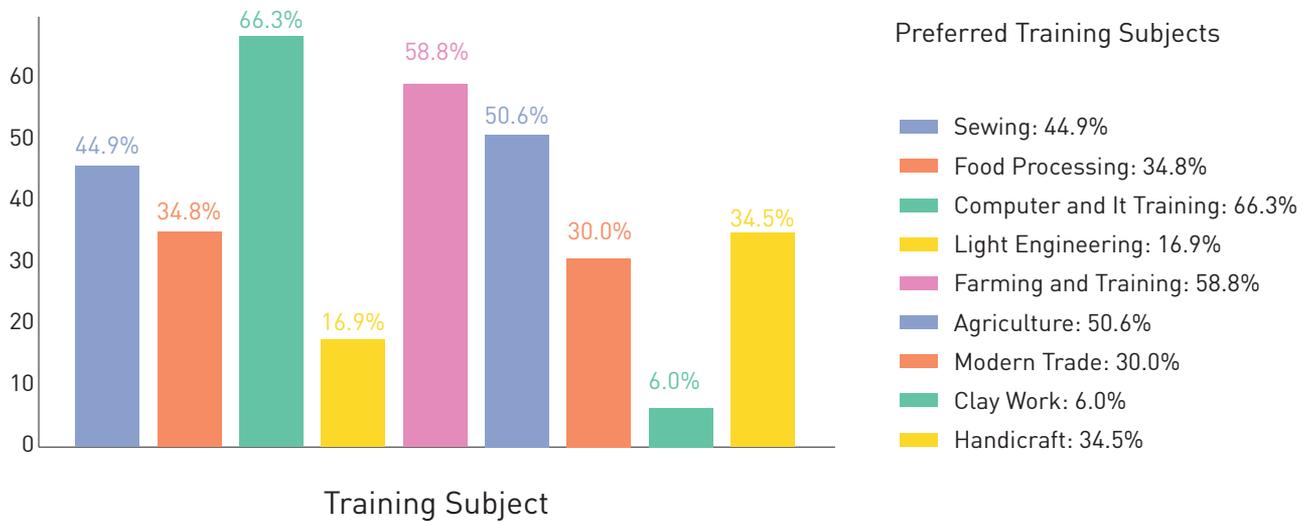
By weaving together digital innovation with community-driven outreach and gender-sensitive storytelling, this communication strategy can position itself not only to raise awareness but also to create genuine motivation and inclusive participation in NEET training programs. The Key Informant Survey highlights that NEET youth engagement is hindered by fragmented communication, limited digital access, and unclear messaging. DYD officials cite poor outreach and lack of continuity as significant barriers, especially in underserved areas. Youth, particularly males, are often found in informal public spaces, while female mobility remains limited. Influential figures include family, peers, alumni, and sports personalities, with social media being the most effective means of communication. To address this, a multi-channel, gender-sensitive strategy is recommended. Messaging should be clear, relatable, and focused on real-life benefits, using success stories across both digital platforms (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok) and traditional media (posters, miking, local events). A four-phase plan—awareness, motivation, enrollment, and retention will guide outreach, supported by ongoing feedback and staff capacity building.

Preferences of Career (%)
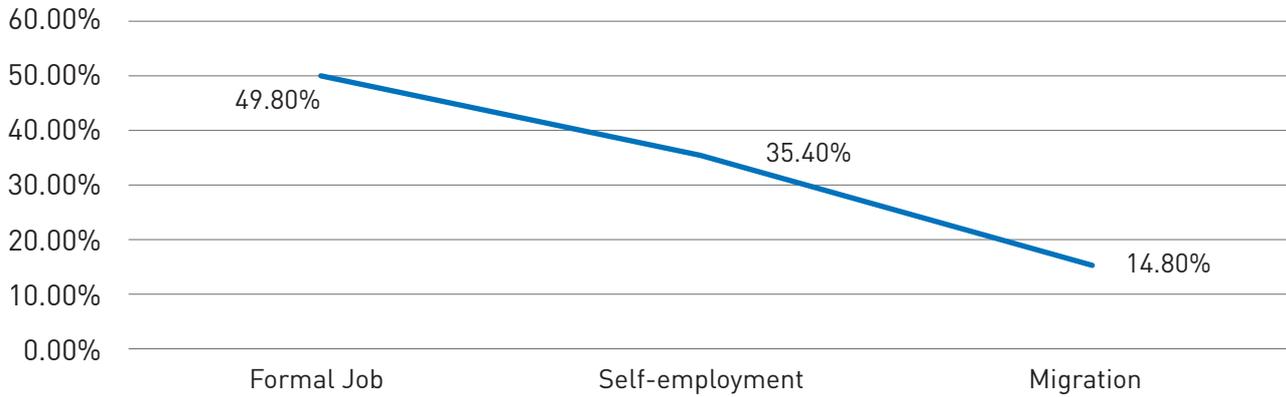
Two more additional issues were addressed in the KIS, where DYD officials identified the broader streams of youth aspirations, revealing that almost half of the NEET population may seek jobs mainly in the formal sector; and, nearly 15% still intend to migrate. A positive aspect is that approximately 35% of students may desire to be self-employed, and they also suggested preferred training subjects for the NEET, which can be found below.

Preferred Training Subject of NEET Population

Preferred Training Subjects

- Sewing: 44.9%
- Food Processing: 34.8%
- Computer and It Training: 66.3%
- Light Engineering: 16.9%
- Farming and Training: 58.8%
- Agriculture: 50.6%
- Modern Trade: 30.0%
- Clay Work: 6.0%
- Handicraft: 34.5%
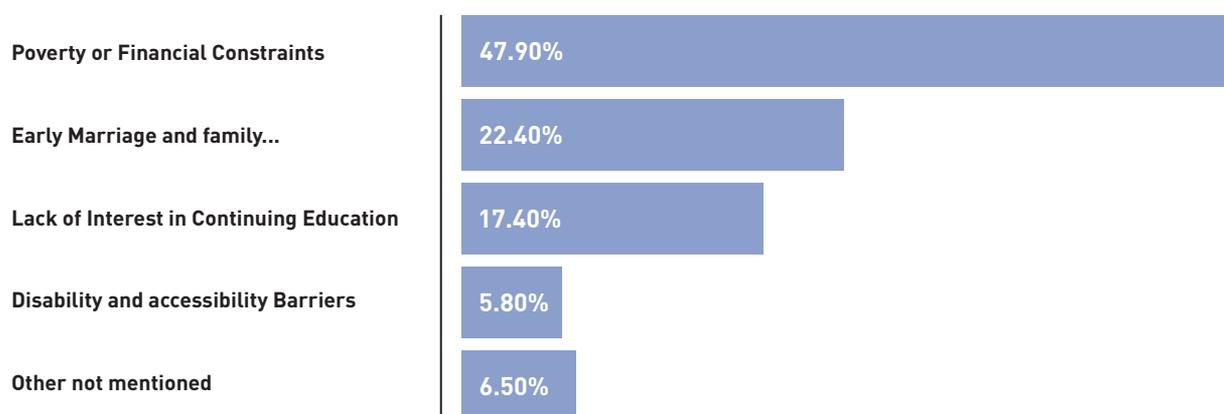
ONLINE SURVEY AMONG NEET YOUTH

Between 20 February and 9 March 2025, a structured online survey was carried out as part of the Communication Needs Assessment for Project EARN, implemented by the Department of Youth Development (DYD) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Government of Bangladesh, with support from the World Bank.

The survey engaged four hundred (400) NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youths across all eight (8) administrative divisions of Bangladesh. Using Android-based tablets and Google Forms, the survey collected quantitative data on barriers to education and employment, awareness of training opportunities, aspirations, and social perceptions. The questionnaire included closed-ended, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions to provide a nuanced understanding of the target group's realities.

Among the 400 respondents, 53.7% identified as male and 46.3% as female. In terms of their current engagement, 55.2 per cent reported not being involved in education, employment, or training, 34.9 per cent identified as students, and 9.9 per cent were engaged in some form of professional activity. The largest age group was 21–25 years (38.9%), followed by the 26–30 years age group (26.7%), reflecting a concentration of young adults in early adulthood. Only 1.5 per cent of respondents reported having physical disabilities.

Findings from this assessment directly guide the development of the communication strategy and action plan for Project EARN, ensuring that outreach efforts are evidence-based, inclusive, and responsive to the specific needs and perceptions of the target youth demographic.

Top Reasons for Dropping Out of Education Among NEET Youth

Reason	Percentage
Poverty or Financial Constraints	47.90%
Early Marriage and family...	22.40%
Lack of Interest in Continuing Education	17.40%
Disability and accessibility Barriers	5.80%
Other not mentioned	6.50%

Top Reasons for Dropping Out of Education Among NEET Youth

The online survey responses reveal that poverty and financial constraints are the most significant factors driving NEET youth to drop out of education, cited by 47.9% of respondents.
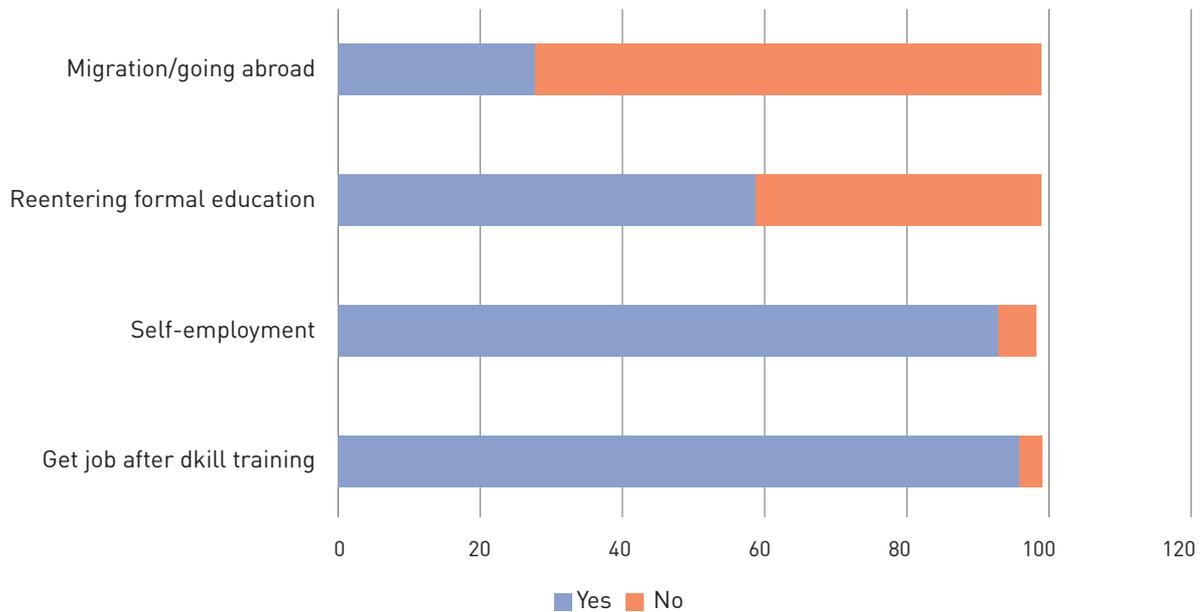
This highlights the crucial need for financial support mechanisms, such as scholarships, stipends, or free vocational training, to mitigate dropout before being prepared for jobs.

The second most reported reason, selected by 22.4%, was early marriage and family responsibilities, highlighting the disproportionate impact of social norms and caregiving burdens, particularly on young women.

Lack of interest in continuing education was noted by 17.4%, indicating a need to make learning more relevant, engaging, and linked to real-life opportunities. Meanwhile, 5.8% identified disability and accessibility barriers as the main reason for dropping out, emphasising the importance of inclusive education infrastructure and support services. Additionally, 6.5% of respondents mentioned other reasons, which may include factors such as school environment, peer pressure, or (local) migration.

These findings point to the complex interplay of economic, social, and systemic barriers that must be addressed through targeted policies, interventions and communication strategies to re-engage NEET youth in education.

Plan/Desire of NEET youth (%)

Legend: ■ Yes ■ No

(Horizontal axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120)

Categories (top to bottom):
- Migration/going abroad
- Reentering formal education
- Self-employment
- Get job after dkill training

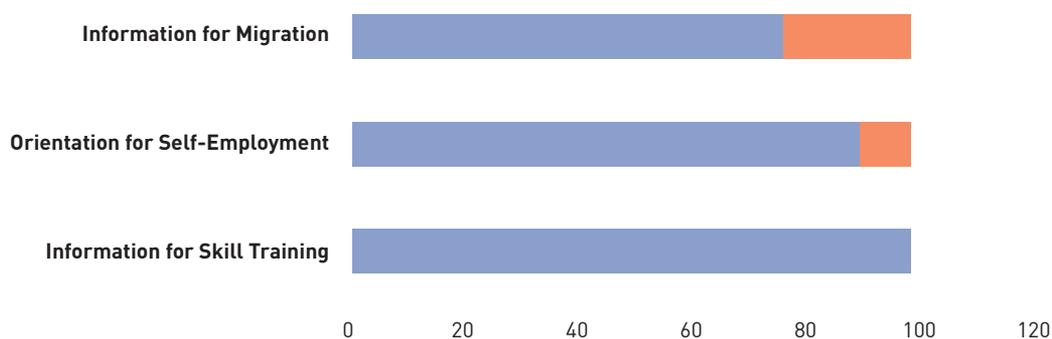## Perceived Outcomes and Current Aspirations of NEET Youth

The assessment revealed that NEET youth overwhelmingly recognise the value of skill development and training in improving their livelihoods. A significant 96.6% believe that skill training can lead to employment, while 94.1% view it as a pathway to self-employment. These findings reflect a strong aspiration for economic independence and practical, results-oriented interventions.

However, only 59.9% showed interest in reentering formal education, suggesting that traditional academic pathways may not align with the immediate needs or preferences of many in this group. Migration or overseas opportunities were even less appealing, with only 27.7% expressing interest, indicating that most youth prefer local or national options for work and livelihood.

Notably, 13% of respondents indicated no current interest in pursuing education, training, or self-employment. A closer look at this group reveals that many are women and married, and their reluctance may stem from immediate personal or socio-cultural constraints rather than a lack of ambition. This insight was echoed also during focus group discussions, where contextual barriers, such as household responsibilities, childcare, mobility restrictions, or societal expectations, were identified as key hindrances.

These findings emphasise the importance of creating communication strategies that are not only motivating and focused on opportunities but also compassionate towards the real experiences of young people, particularly young women, who may require extra support or different pathways to participation.

Perceived Need of Information (%)

Categories (top to bottom):
- Information for Migration
- Orientation for Self-Employment
- Information for Skill Training

(Horizontal axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120)

High Demand for Information and Support Services Among NEET Youth

The assessment reveals a strong and consistent demand among NEET youth for targeted information and support services that align with their aspirations and practical needs. All respondents (100%) indicated a clear interest in receiving information on skill training opportunities, underscoring the foundational role that upskilling plays in their future planning. Additionally, 91.6% expressed a need for orientation or training to pursue self-employment, highlighting a significant interest in entrepreneurial pathways as a means of sustainable livelihood.

Furthermore, while migration is not the top priority, a notable 77.2% of respondents still expressed the need for reliable information on migration opportunities, reflecting a broader interest in exploring diverse livelihood options, both locally and abroad.

These findings emphasize the importance of designing communication and outreach strategies that not only inform but also empower NEET youth to take informed action toward skill development, self-employment, and mobility.

### Value of Training Certificates and its Role in Getting a Job
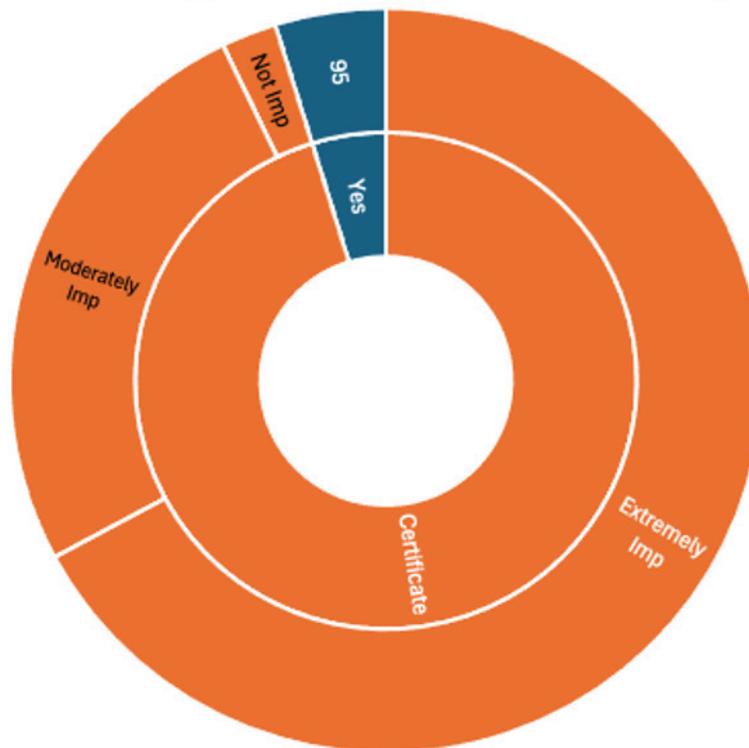
Perceptions on Training Certificates.

The importance placed on training certification is equally significant. A complete 95% of respondents affirmed that receiving a certificate after training is vital to them. When explicitly asked about the role of certificates in securing employment, 70.5% considered them extremely important, while 27% viewed them as moderately necessary, and only 2.5% regarded them as not important. These findings suggest that certification not only adds credibility to training programmes but also acts as a vital asset in improving employability.

Collectively, these insights reflect the importance of offering skill development initiatives that are accompanied by formal recognition (certificates), along with tailored guidance for both self-employment and potential migration. Communication strategies should emphasise the availability, credibility, and practical value of such services to build trust and encourage participation among NEET youth.

Time Spent on Social Media Daily (%)

Legend:
- 0 hour
- (-1) hour
- 1-3 hour
- 4-5 hour
- 5 hour+

(Pie chart values: 6%, 19%, 10%, 49%, 16%)
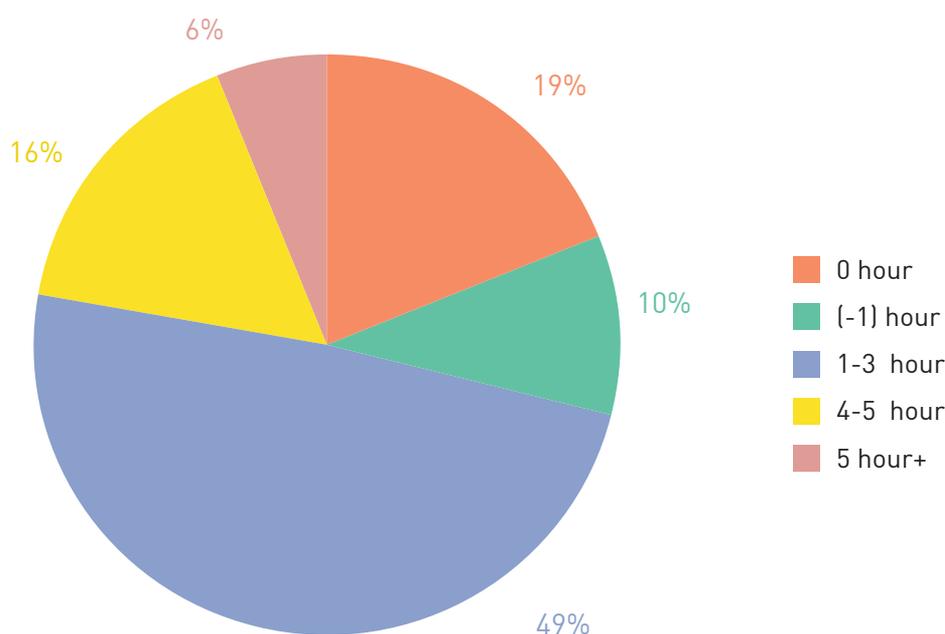
Social Media Use and Other Media Engagement among NEET Youth

Analysis of daily social media usage among NEET youth reveals a clear concentration of moderate engagement, with 49.2 per cent of respondents spending 1–3 hours per day on social media. This is the most common usage pattern, indicating that while social media is a regular part of daily life for many, it does not consume a significant portion of their time.

Additionally, 19.4 per cent reported no usage at all, which may reflect limited access, personal preference, or lack of digital literacy. Interestingly, 9.5 per cent indicated less than one hour of daily use, suggesting a small group with minimal but consistent interaction with social platforms.

Meanwhile, 15.7 per cent reported spending 4–5 hours on social media each day, and 6.2 per cent exceeded five hours daily, indicating a minority with high dependency or significant digital engagement.

These insights suggest that while a majority maintain moderate usage, a noteworthy portion is either disengaged or highly active. This distribution is essential for shaping Project EARN's communication strategy—balancing offline and online outreach methods, tailoring content formats and platforms, and ensuring inclusivity across varying levels of digital access and habits.

The survey findings reveal distinct patterns in social media usage among NEET youth, segmented by gender and occupation. In the 2–3 hours per day usage bracket, the most common level of engagement, males (85) reported significantly higher activity than females (49). Among occupations, students (61) were the most active users, followed by professionals (9), indicating that youth in learning environments are more consistently online. At the other end of the spectrum, zero usage was more prevalent among females (59) than males (19), suggesting possible restrictions related to access, cultural norms, or digital literacy. Interestingly, professionals (13) and students (10) also appeared in the non-user group, possibly reflecting time constraints or intentional avoidance. The category of heavy users (5+ hours/day) was dominated by males (20), with students (16) again leading as the most frequent long-duration users.

These findings highlight the importance of tailoring digital outreach strategies, particularly through social media, to target male students, while also exploring alternative channels to reach offline or low-usage groups, especially among females and specific professional segments.

Online-offline Engagement At Home (%)

Online engagement
only
17%

Offline engagement at
home
83%
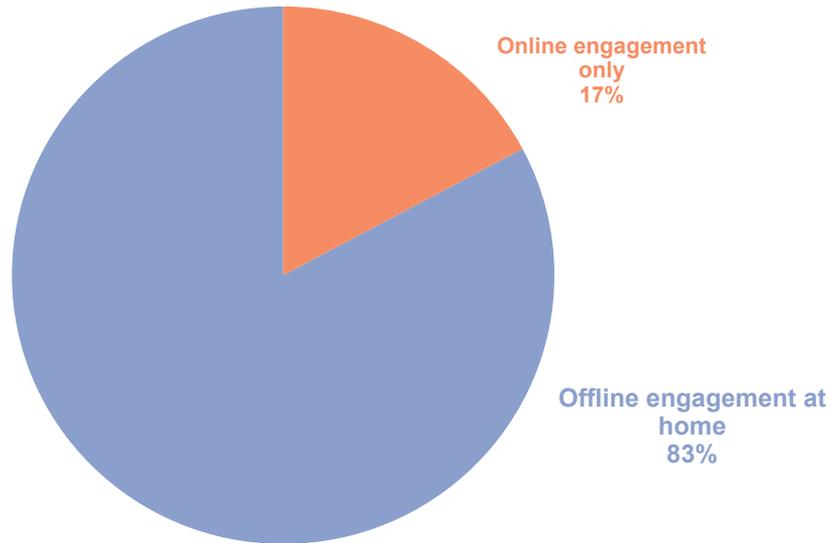
In response to whether they engage in any offline activities at home, excluding online use, phone conversations, social media, reading newspapers, watching TV, or listening to the radio, a majority of 82.7 percent of NEET youth reported that they do participate in such activities, while only 17.3 percent said they do not. This indicates that, despite high levels of digital media consumption, most NEET youth still find time for other forms of offline engagement during their free time, which may include activities like drawing, journaling, crafting, helping with household tasks, or pursuing informal learning. This finding presents a valuable opportunity for Project EARN to build on existing offline habits by integrating communication and outreach through community-based or home-centred activities. Encouraging and recognising these forms of engagement can help promote self-motivation, skill development, and readiness for further learning or work-related opportunities.

Read Newspaper (%)

27%   73%   73%

■ Yes ■ No
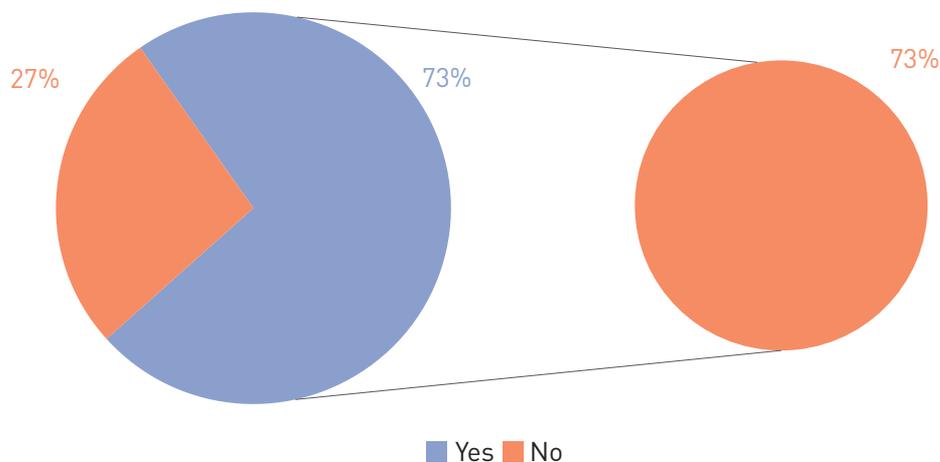
The survey findings indicate that only 27 per cent of NEET youth reported reading newspapers, while a significant 73 per cent do not engage with this traditional media source. This low level of newspaper readership suggests that print media has limited reach and influence within this demographic. The preference for alternative sources of information, likely digital and social platforms, underscores the need for Project EARN's communication strategy to prioritise more accessible and engaging channels.

This trend also indicates broader shifts in media consumption habits among young people, particularly those who are disconnected from formal education or employment. As such, the project's outreach efforts should emphasise digital media, visual storytelling, and mobile-based communication to effectively reach and engage NEET youth across Bangladesh.

Participation in Events (trends) in Last 1 Year

Yes ■ No ■
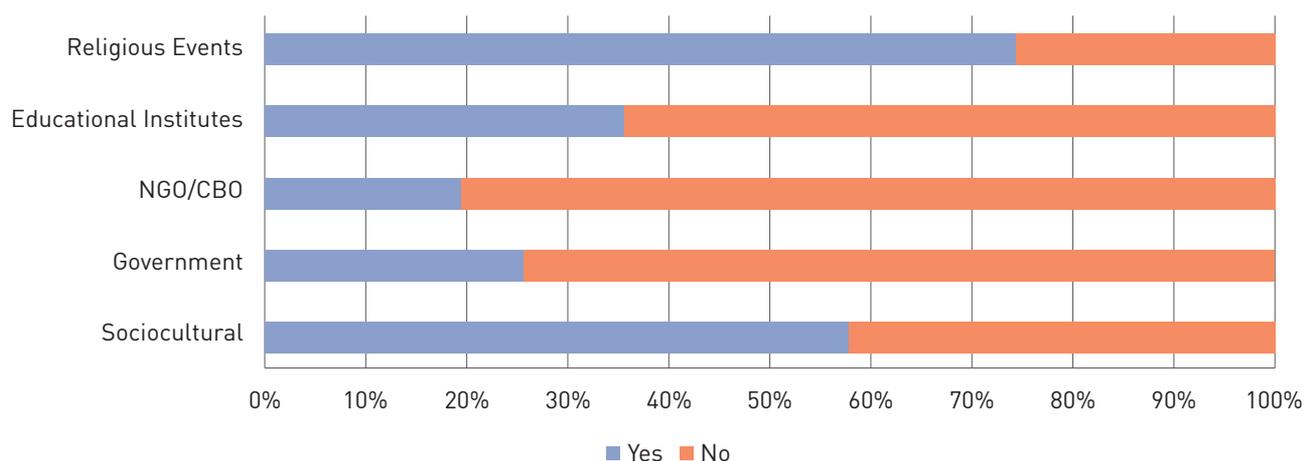
Participation in Events (trends) over the Last Year

The survey findings on NEET youth participation in events organised by different types of institutions offer a clear picture of current engagement dynamics and inform strategic directions for Project EARN's communication approach.

Participation is highest in religious events, with 74.3% of respondents reporting some level of involvement. This reflects the strong influence and trust placed in religious institutions, making them a critical communication channel for reaching NEET youth. These platforms can be leveraged to deliver value-based messages that promote self-development, social responsibility, and community belonging.

Sociocultural events also show relatively high engagement, with 57.7 per cent of youth participating in these community-based activities. These settings provide natural opportunities for informal learning and collective expression. Project EARN can use such platforms to deliver engaging, localised messaging through formats such as street performances, interactive booths, or storytelling that resonates with cultural traditions and local identity.

In contrast, participation in events organised by educational institutions stands at 35.4 per cent, reflecting the NEET status of the respondents and their disconnection from formal education systems. However, this also presents an opportunity to reintroduce education and training pathways through open events, skills demonstrations, or motivational sessions co-hosted with schools and colleges.

Participation in government-organised events is even lower at 25.7 percent, indicating a lack of visibility, relevance, or trust in official outreach among the NEET demographic. This gap emphasises the need for the project to humanise government efforts, simplify communication, and make programmes more youth-friendly and accessible. Partnering with local government youth officers, using mobile information units, and showcasing relatable success .

The lowest reported participation occurs in events organised by NGOs or community-based organisations, with only 19.3 percent of respondents indicating involvement. This indicates weak connections between NEET youth andcommunity-based and civil society actors. Building stronger collaboration with grassroots-level organisations, youth clubs, and informal peer groups will be crucial. Project EARN can assist in capacity-building for these actors to better align with the interests and communication styles of youth.

These findings suggest that, although formal institutions currently have limited reach among NEET youth, community-based platforms, particularly religious and sociocultural spaces, offer immediate and trusted avenues for engagement. Project EARN's communication strategy should concentrate on integrating these community anchors into its outreach efforts, while gradually establishing stronger, more responsive touchpoints through government, education, and civil society.

Associated with Voluntary Organisations/Group/Institutions (%)


18%

82%

- Yes
- No
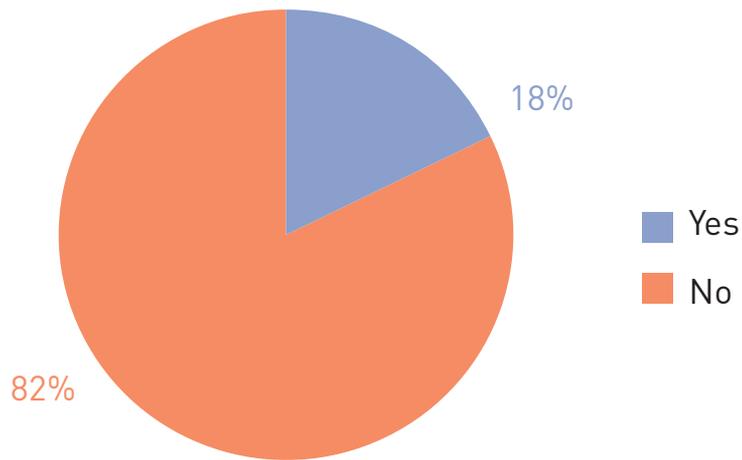
Reduced volunteerism at the local level and disengaged youth

Only 18.1 per cent of NEET youth reported being associated with any voluntary organisations, groups, or institutions, while 81.9 per cent said they are not. This is an alarming indicator of social disengagement, as it limits their access to support networks, mentorship, and skill-building opportunities. This highlights the need to promote accessible and appealing entry points into community involvement. Communication efforts should focus on fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. Partnerships with local youth groups, cultural forums, and informal networks will be key to reaching and re-engaging this largely disconnected demographic.

Recieve or learn about educational opportunities, training information, or job-related information from Events or Online(%)

Events   Digital Platforms
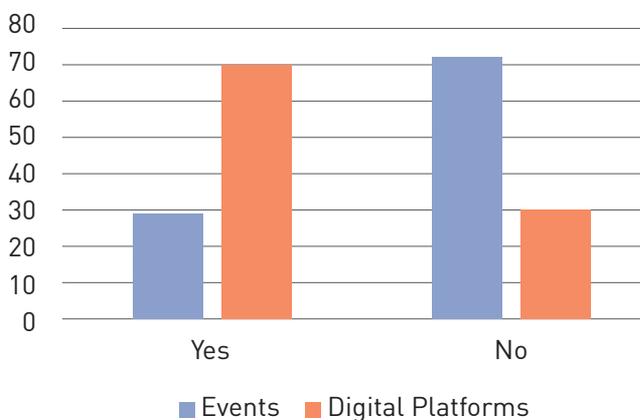
Percieved Effectiveness of Approaches in Raising Awareness Among NEET Youth

Yes   No
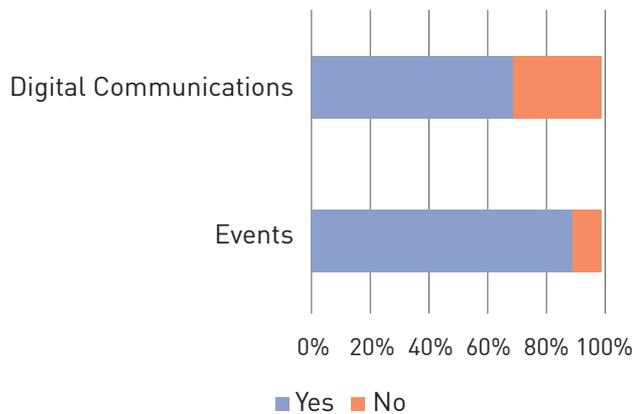
Information and awareness: NEET youth experiences

The data reveal significant differences in how NEET youth access information about education, training, and job opportunities. In 2024, only 28.7% of respondents reported receiving such information through social, cultural, entertainment, or sports events, while 71.3% did not. This suggests a missed opportunity to leverage these well-attended offline events as effective communication platforms.

Conversely, 69.8% of respondents accessed relevant information through digital platforms, underscoring the strong role of digital media in reaching this demographic. However, this contrasts with the earlier finding that many

NEET youth still participate in offline activities, indicating a gap between event attendance and information exposure.

Despite fewer reporting information access through events, an overwhelming 91.1% of NEET youth considered these events effective in communicating educational and employment opportunities. Meanwhile, digital platforms were deemed effective by 69.8%, with 30.2% finding them insufficient for raising awareness.

These insights point to the need for a blended communication strategy for Project EARN. While digital platforms remain critical and should continue to be prioritised, offline events represent a powerful yet underutilised channel. Integrating information booths, interactive workshops, or youth-led storytelling into community gatherings can enhance outreach—especially to those who are less engaged online. By combining the trust and influence of in-person events with the reach and convenience of digital tools, Project EARN can ensure more inclusive, accessible, and impactful communication with NEET youth.

Ket Message Themes for Promotional Content Targeting NEET Yourh (%)
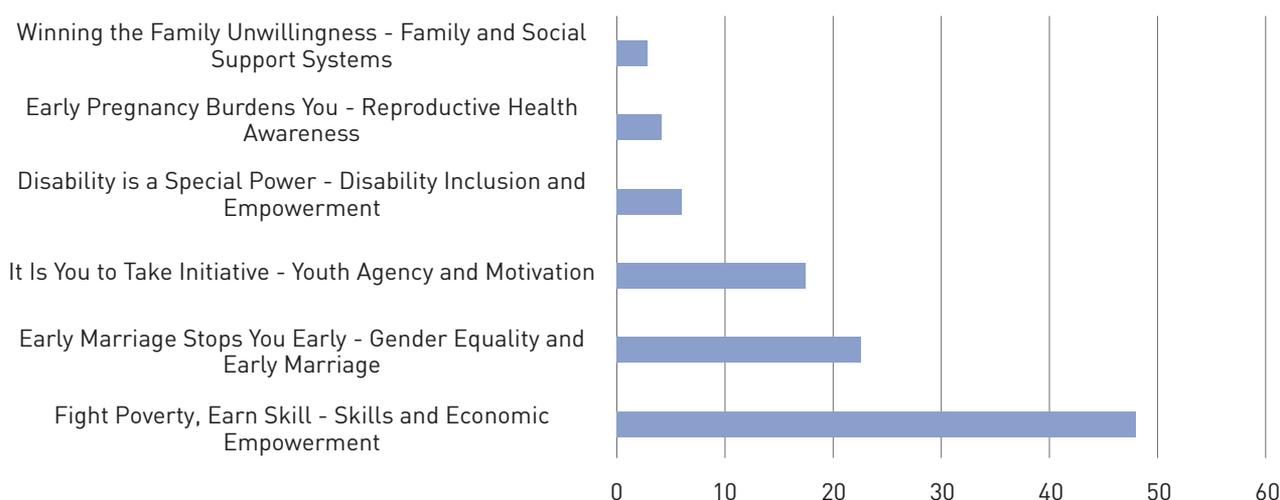
Suggested Key Message Themes Based on NEET Youth Responses

During the assessment, NEET youth offered insightful suggestions on the types of messages that would resonate most with them in promotional content. A key theme was skills and economic empowerment, supported by the finding that 96.6% of respondents believed skill training could lead to employment, and 94.1% saw it as a pathway to self-employment.
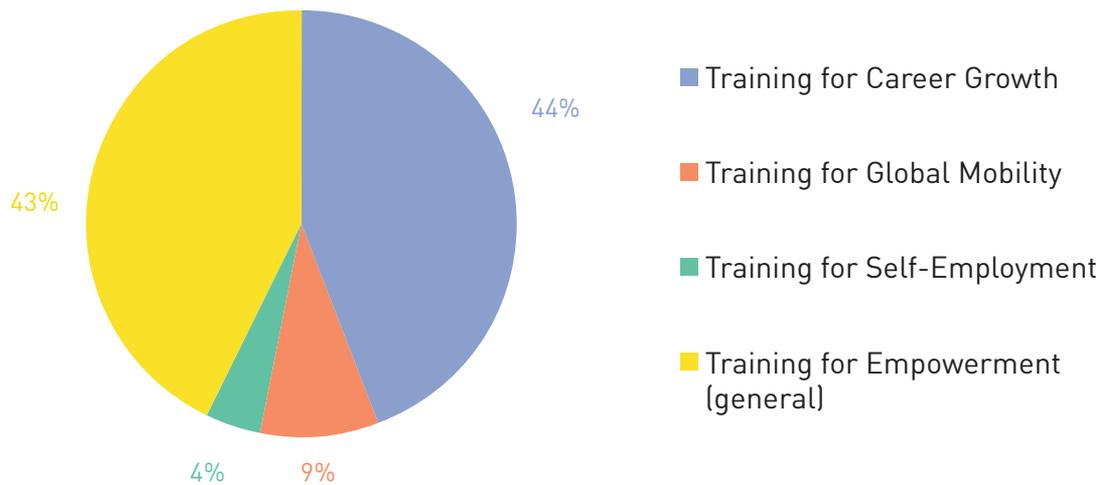
Messages that frame training as a pathway to "combat poverty and acquire skills" resonate deeply with the target audience. The concept of youth empowerment and self-motivation emerged as a critical theme, with an impressive 87% of survey respondents indicating a strong desire to engage in training, education, or entrepreneurial ventures. This enthusiasm is further illustrated by suggestions for impactful slogans such as "It is you who must take the initiative," which encapsulate the spirit of personal agency and the proactive mindset necessary for overcoming barriers and seizing opportunities. Gender-specific concerns were equally significant. Thirteen per cent (13%) of youth, mostly married women, reported that they were currently not interested or unable to pursue such opportunities, mainly due to socio-cultural constraints. This underscores the relevance of messaging on early marriage and early pregnancy, with suggestions such as "Early Marriage Stops You Early" and "Early Pregnancy Burdens You."

In addition, themes of disability inclusion were raised, with empowering messages like "Disability is a Special Power" reflecting a desire for content that celebrates abilities rather than limitations.

Lastly, many respondents cited family pressure and social resistance as barriers, emphasising the need for messages like "Winning the Family Unwillingness" to promote understanding and support within households.

Together, these youth-driven themes offer a grounded, evidence-based framework for designing promotional content that informs, inspires, and empowers.

Key Message Themes for Promoting Skill Training Among NEET Youth

- Training for Career Growth
- Training for Global Mobility
- Training for Self-Employment
- Training for Empowerment (general)

44%
43%
4%
9%

Key Message Themes for Promoting Skill Training Among NEET Youth

The assessment results indicate that NEET youth strongly associate skill training with both long-term growth and personal empowerment. The most prominent message theme was "Training for Career Growth," selected by 43.6% of respondents, highlighting a desire not merely for jobs, but for sustainable careers with advancement opportunities.

Close behind, 42.9% emphasized "Training for Empowerment," reflecting the belief that training builds confidence, autonomy, and life skills. In contrast, only 4.2% prioritised "Training for Self-Employment," suggesting that while entrepreneurship is valued, it may require more targeted promotion or support to be seen as accessible. Notably, 9.3%identified "Training for Global Mobility", opportunities for migration or international work, as a motivating theme, indicating a modest but essential interest in global labour pathways.

These insights provide a clear direction for tailoring promotional content that connects with youth aspirations, especially by focusing on training as a gateway to empowerment and long-term career success.

Motivational Message Themes for Engaging NEET Youth in Training, Employment, and Education

56%
56%
56%

- Self-Reliance & Preparedness
- Poverty Graduation
- Crisis Support & Stability
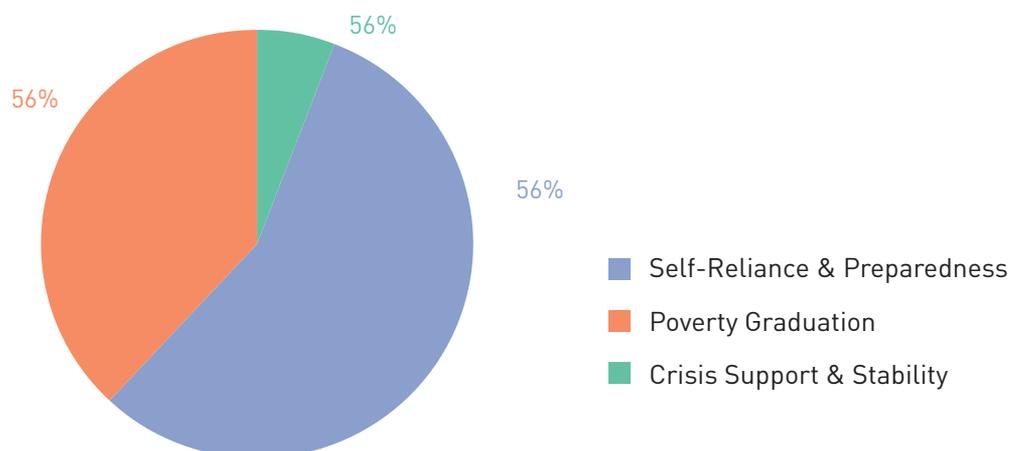
Motivational Message Themes for Engaging NEET Youth

The assessment identified key motivational themes that resonate most with NEET youth when promoting engagement in training, employment, and education initiatives. The most compelling message theme was "Poverty Graduation," selected by 56.3% of respondents, who were strongly motivated by the idea that training and

employment can lift both themselves and their families out of poverty. This indicates that framing skill-building opportunities as a pathway to financial independence and improved family well-being is highly effective. "Crisis Support & Stability" was selected by 37.5%, suggesting that many youth value programs that can provide security and resilience during life challenges, such as health emergencies or financial shocks. In contrast, only 6.2% identified "Self-Reliance & Preparedness" as their primary motivator, indicating that while personal growth and independence are valued, they may not be the most immediate drivers for action.

Communication Strategy Note for Engaging NEET Youth

The Survey, as part of the Communication Needs Assessment conducted under Project EARN, provides essential insights into the lives, motivations, and media behaviours of NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth in Bangladesh. These young people, although often excluded from mainstream education and economic opportunities, are not devoid of hope or ambition. The findings highlight a generation that is acutely aware of its restrictions but equally eager for avenues toward self-reliance and social dignity.

Many NEET youth report being forced out of education not because of a lack of ability, but due to entrenched structural challenges. Nearly half of all respondents (47.9%) identified poverty and financial hardship as the main reason for leaving school. This was followed by early marriage and family responsibilities (22.4%), which disproportionately impact young women. A smaller yet notable proportion dropped out because of disinterest in formal education (17.4%) or due to disabilities and accessibility issues (5.8%). These responses present a sobering view of how personal agency is often limited by broader socio-economic forces.

Despite these challenges, the survey uncovers a strong undercurrent of aspiration. Nearly all respondents expressed trust in the transformative power of skill training, with 96.6% viewing it as a route to employment and 94.1% linking it to opportunities for self-employment. This widespread enthusiasm for gaining practical skills stands in contrast to a much lower interest in returning to formal education (59.9%), indicating that future-focused communication should highlight alternative and applied learning pathways rather than academic re-entry only. Migration, often regarded in development discourse as a sign of mobility, attracted relatively little interest (27.7%), further emphasising that NEET youth seek local and realistic routes to self-sufficiency. However, it is notable that a significant minority,13% of respondents, mostly married women, expressed no current interest in training or employment. In many of these cases, the reason was not a lack of ambition, but social and cultural restrictions that limit their mobility and choices.

The demand for information is universal across the NEET youth population. Every respondent indicated a need for access to information on skill training opportunities, while 91.6% expressed a desire for orientation on self-employment, and 77.2% showed interest in learning about migration. Certification emerged as a critical component, with 95% noting it as necessary for improving employability and 70.5% identifying it as essential for securing jobs. These figures suggest that communication campaigns must not only present the availability of programs but also clarify their outcomes, such as certification, job placement, and entrepreneurial potential.

Access to this information, however, is highly uneven. A large portion (69.8%) relies on digital platforms to get updates about education and training, yet this digital engagement is far from uniform. Social media use varies significantly: nearly half (49.2%) use it moderately (1–3 hours daily), while about 22% are heavy users and almost 20% are not online at all. Gender plays a strong role here, female respondents, especially those not in education or employment, are much more likely to be offline. Meanwhile, print media has minimal reach, with only 27% of NEET youth reporting regular engagement with newspapers.

On the other hand, community-based and home-based activities remain central to daily life, with over 82% involved in such offline routines. This combination of digital variation and offline activity reveals a critical gap and opportunity: digital platforms alone cannot reach the entire NEET population. A blended communication model that integrates trusted offline spaces with engaging digital content is essential.

Community participation trends further inform the communication landscape. The highest engagement is found in religious events, with 74.3% of respondents reporting participation. This reflects the role of religious institutions not just as places of worship, but as vital hubs of community life and influence. Sociocultural events are also well attended (57.7%), showing that NEET youth are not disengaged from public life; they participate when the context is familiar, relevant, or expressive. However, participation drops sharply for activities organised by educational institutions (35.4%), government bodies (25.7%), and NGOs or community-based organisations (19.3%). This pattern signals a trust and relevance gap between NEET youth and formal institutions. Rebuilding this trust will require communication that feels personal, relatable, and responsive to the realities of youth.

Furthermore, civic detachment remains a significant issue. Only 18.1% of NEET youth reported engaging in any form of voluntary group or organisation. This lack of structured community involvement indicates that young people are missing out on opportunities for peer learning, leadership, and exposure to potential pathways. The absence of these connections makes communication efforts even more essential, as they may be the main way NEET youth discover and connect with life-changing programmes.

Notably, the survey highlights that while community events are underutilised as information channels, only 28.7% of respondents received opportunity-related information from such gatherings, although a vast majority (91.1%) found them effective when utilised. This presents a clear opportunity. Blending information delivery into already existing events, such as religious festivals or local fairs, through storytelling, drama, mobile booths, or peer-driven campaigns, could dramatically enhance reach and relevance. By contrast, although digital platforms are widely used, they were considered less effective overall (69.8%), revealing a gap in quality or targeting of digital communication content.

When it comes to message framing, NEET youth themselves offer some of the most precise guidance. The overwhelming desire is not just for employment but for long-term growth, financial independence, and personal empowerment. Phrases like "Fight Poverty and Earn Skill" and "It is You to Take Initiative" resonate because they align both with external realities and internal aspirations. Other messages address structural barriers directly. For example, "Early Marriage Stops You Early" or "Winning the Family Unwillingness" reflect lived experiences of restriction and resistance, especially for young women. Youth with disabilities proposed affirming messages such as "Disability is a Special Power," reminding communicators of the need to move beyond pity or inclusion toward genuine empowerment.

All these findings inform a communication strategy that must be multi-layered and deeply contextual. At its heart, the strategy must position training and employment opportunities not merely as technical offerings but as tools for reclaiming agency, stability, and dignity.

Messaging should speak directly to the aspirations of growth and empowerment while also acknowledging the barriers many young people face. To do this effectively, content must be accessible in both terms of format and reach. This means developing mobile-friendly, visual, and interactive content that is suited for varying levels of literacy, socioeconomic status, gender and cultural backgrounds. Videos, infographics, real-life testimonials, and animated explainers can bridge this gap. However, the content must be trusted equally.

Religious institutions, cultural venues, and local champions should be central partners in delivery. Offline activities, home-based outreach, and community programming must be prioritised to engage disconnected youth, particularly young women.

Instead of favouring one channel over another, the strategy should emphasise integration, using digital tools for reach and offline relationships for depth. Peer-led storytelling, community theatre, folk events, informal demonstrations, and participatory events should complement social media campaigns, short videos, and targeted SMS alerts. Youth-led and gender-sensitive approaches must be incorporated throughout.

Ultimately, communication should not be viewed as a one-time awareness campaign. It must function as an ongoing system of connection, trust-building, and motivation. Creating sustained visibility, offering follow-up, and building feedback loops through digital or community actors can ensure that the messages don't just reach youth; they resonate, mobilise, and support them into action.

Essentially, this involves shifting the project EARN's approach from merely sharing information to creating opportunities. NEET youth in Bangladesh are not unreachable. They are waiting for a dialogue that understands their world, values their ambitions, and shows them that change is not only possible but also already within their reach.

STAKEHOLDER AND YOUTH INSIGHTS FOR STRATEGIC ACTION

Bangladesh is at a pivotal stage in its demographic transition, with youth constituting a significant proportion of the national population. Harnessing the potential of this demographic dividend requires intentional policy and programmatic efforts to address youth exclusion, especially among those identified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). As of 2024, the national NEET rate stands at 39.88%, nearly double the global average of 21.7% (ILO, 2023). The situation is particularly acute for young women, who represent almost half of the NEET population (BBS, 2024), and for rural, disabled, and marginalised youth who remain structurally excluded from opportunities for education, employment, and skills development.

The EARN Project seeks to address these exclusions by supporting NEET youth in transitioning to productive engagement through training, self-employment, and entrepreneurship pathways. However, evidence from both national and international experiences highlights that supply-side interventions alone are insufficient.

Effective youth empowerment, especially for NEETs, requires communication strategies that are not only informative but also transformative, aiming to shift deeply rooted social norms, alter perceptions, and motivate behavioural change among youth, families, communities, and institutions.

The literature review and Communication Needs Assessments (CNA) highlight the multidimensional barriers that NEET youth face in Bangladesh, including extreme poverty, inadequate access to training and employment, geographical remoteness, and weak infrastructural connectivity. These barriers are worsened by gendered norms, early marriage, social stigma, and mobility restrictions that disproportionately impact adolescent girls and young women. Youth with disabilities and individuals from third-gender communities encounter additional layers of structural discrimination that hinder their access to services, training, and decent work.

Moreover, a substantial digital divide persists, especially in rural areas where limited digital literacy and poor connectivity prevent youth from accessing emerging economic opportunities and digital services. At the same time, vocational and technical education remains stigmatised, poorly linked to local labour market needs, and often delivered through outdated curricula and inflexible institutional systems. These systemic shortcomings result in low youth motivation, poor retention in training programmes, and limited employment opportunities after training.

Within this context, communication acts as a strategic tool for promoting social inclusion, behavioural change, and demand for EARN's services. Evidence from both international and national sources on Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) offers strong models for creating effective, context-aware strategies. Globally, communication initiatives reinforce the value of using hybrid media, local influencers, and emotionally resonant storytelling to drive behavioural uptake. These campaigns also emphasise the importance of embedding communication within community structures and ensuring accessibility for marginalised groups. These highlight the need for inclusive design, family engagement, and alignment with systemic reforms in education and employment.

Drawing on these lessons, the EARN Project must adopt a communication strategy that is inclusive, behaviorally informed, and contextually grounded. The literature affirms that transformative communication, anchored in trust-building, gender responsiveness, and localised delivery mechanisms, is critical for motivating NEET youth, challenging stigma around technical education, and fostering community acceptance of women's and marginalised groups' participation in the workforce.

To ensure the relevance, inclusivity, and behavioral effectiveness of the EARN Project's communication strategy, a comprehensive Communication Needs Assessment (CNA) was conducted, encompassing three distinct yet interlinked qualitative and quantitative methods: (1) a structured survey of NEET youth, (2) Key Informant Interviews (KII) with Department of Youth Development (DYD) officials, and (3) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with youth and community members. These exercises explored stakeholder perceptions, communication preferences, emotional drivers, and barriers to youth participation.

Although these sources offer unique perspectives, they converge around several thematic concerns, particularly the need for emotionally resonant, locally rooted, and trust-building communication strategies that transcend traditional, top-down messaging.

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of the key insights derived from the three assessment streams, identifies similarities and divergences, and concludes with a set of communication-specific recommendations to inform EARN's Communication Action Plan.

Converging Themes Across Stakeholder Groups

Persistent Youth Aspirations Amid Systemic Barriers

All three assessment methods affirm that NEET youth are highly aspirational, valuing dignity, independence, and meaningful livelihoods. Far from being apathetic, most respondents demonstrate strong motivation, particularly when linked to tangible, skill-based opportunities. However, systemic constraints, such as poverty, gender-based restrictions, mobility limitations, early marriage, and rigid family roles, are widely reported. These barriers are most acutely felt by young women and rural youth, and were noted consistently across surveys, KIIs, and FGDs.

Low Institutional Trust and Perceived Irrelevance

Youth respondents express skepticism toward formal institutions, including NGOs, educational bodies, and government programs. This distrust is echoed by DYD officials themselves, who acknowledge a disconnect between training supply and labour market demand. Community voices add another dimension by highlighting emotional and moral disengagement, pointing to shame, fear, and low self-worth as factors that reduce program uptake despite availability.

Demand for Skill Certification and Practical Outcomes

All three data streams reinforce the belief that certified, job-linked, practical training is more valuable to youth than formal academic education. The desire for tangible proof of learning, employability, and follow-up support outweighs interest in theoretical knowledge or status-oriented credentials. Certification is perceived as a gateway to self-employment and wage-based work—particularly in sectors where formal employment remains inaccessible.

Hybrid Communication is Essential

There is consensus across all assessment tools that effective outreach must integrate both digital and non-digital modalities. While youth are active on social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, digital presence alone is insufficient to ensure trust or behavior change. Community members and DYD officials agree that hyper-local, relational communication is indispensable for reaching excluded populations, especially homebound young women.

Diverging Perspectives and Tensions: Program Effectiveness and Participation

- **Youth Surveys** highlight optimism for training but reflect uncertainty about the viability of formal education or overseas employment pathways. Many youths feel informed but unconvinced.

- **DYD Officials,** while recognising youth motivation, raise concerns about the misalignment between training programs and market realities. They cite limited industry linkages and underutilised training infrastructure.

- **Multistakeholder FGDs** shift the lens from structural issues to emotional and cultural deterrents, factors such as social shame, peer judgment, and fear of failure, which profoundly influence youth behaviour but often go unaddressed in formal program design.

Effective Communication Approaches

- **Youth respondents** value engaging, visually rich digital content but stress the need for emotional relatability and credible messengers. Mere exposure does not ensure action.

- **Officials** advocate for influencer-driven, digital-first strategies but admit that many current efforts feel scripted and inauthentic, failing to generate trust or relatability.

- **Community voices** are wary of excessive reliance on digital media and advocate instead for community theatre, mosque announcements, peer mentoring, and conversations in informal settings, such as tea stalls, as more grounded and persuasive for both youth and families.

Youth Spaces and Access

- **DYD officials** tend to define youth spaces in terms of public visibility—parks, sports fields, markets, and digital platforms—focusing on where youth physically or virtually congregate.

- In contrast, **FGDs** emphasise the "invisible" domestic spaces, especially for young women, who are often unreachable through traditional outreach mechanisms. These participants emphasise the importance of door-to-door engagement, family involvement, and peer role models within the community.

Insights from Emotional and Narrative Analysis

A notable distinction emerges in how different groups conceptualise the role of communication:

- **NEET youth** express a need for affirmation, not just information. Their narratives are marked by frustration, urgency, and aspiration. They seek to be seen, heard, and validated in their struggles and ambitions.

- **Institutional voices (DYD)** tend to adopt a procedural tone, and communication is framed as a vehicle for dissemination, enrolment, or compliance.

- **Community members, including parents,** advocate for narrative depth, moral clarity, and cultural alignment. They stress the power of storytelling, symbolism, and emotional connection to shift behaviour and unlock participation.

These differences underscore the need for EARN's communication strategy to incorporate **empathy, affirmation, and local cultural literacy** into its design.

2.4 Summary of Key Observations

Area	Converging Insights	Diverging Perspectives
Youth Motivation	Strong aspirations, especially for dignity and self-reliance	NEET Youth vs. institutions: optimism vs. structural skepticism
Access Barriers	Economic, gendered, and social barriers remain pervasive	FGDs emphasize emotional stigma; DYD officials focus on systemic misalignment
Preferred Communication Channels	Digital tools are essential but insufficient alone	NEET Youth prefer social media; communities (in FGDs) prefer hyper-local, trust-based dialogue
Effectiveness of Existing Communication	General distrust in current institutional messaging	DYD Officials cite lack of authenticity; NEET youth seek emotional relevance
Spaces for Outreach	Need for hybrid digital-local engagement	DYD Officials target visible youth; FGD participants stress outreach into domestic, hidden spaces

Strategic Communication Recommendations

Drawing from the comparative insights, the following strategic recommendations are proposed for the EARN Communication Action Plan:

1. **Adopt a Dual-Modality Communication Model**
   - Integrate digital platforms (Facebook, Linkedin, TikTok, YouTube) with community-rooted mechanisms (puppet theatre, mosque announcements, peer networks)
   - Ensure consistency of messaging across both spheres.

2. **Centre Communication Around Empathy and Affirmation**
   - Design messages that affirm youth struggles and aspirations, not just inform about services.
   - Use emotionally resonant narratives, peer success stories, and non-institutional tones.

3. **Localise Messaging and Messengers**
   - Employ trusted community figures (imams, teachers, returnee trainees) as key messengers.
   - Tailor messages to local dialects, cultural symbols, and everyday experiences.

4. **Prioritise Gender-Inclusive and Domestic-Space Outreach**
   - Develop outreach models that reach young women in home-bound settings, possibly through female peer educators, door-to-door visits, or family-centred counselling.

5. **Embed Feedback Loops and Participation Mechanisms**

   - Establish channels for youth to respond, share stories, and co-create content, particularly through mobile platforms.

   - Regularly evaluate the emotional and behavioural impact of communication efforts.

6. **Rebrand Vocational Training Through Aspiration**

   - Position technical and vocational education as pathways to independence, innovation, and dignity.

   - Challenge stigma by promoting youth-led entrepreneurship, particularly among female NEETs, by showcasing success stories and demystifying trades through engaging visual storytelling.

7. **Bridge the Trust Deficit**

   - Ensure communication reflects sincerity and accountability.

   - Avoid overtly promotional or bureaucratic language.

   - Show transparency in impact and follow-up processes.

From Insight to Strategy –Towards a Communication Blueprint

EARN Project recognises communication as both a delivery system and a social contract. The aim is not only to enhance program visibility and participation rates, but also to reposition communication as a catalyst for dignity, trust, and meaningful transformation in the lives of NEET youth.

Rethinking Communication as a System of Legitimacy

Communication within youth-focused programs has too often been treated as a tactical function; tasked with raising awareness, sharing logistics, or publicising outcomes. The EARN Project, however, stands at a juncture that demands a paradigm shift. The findings across both literature and field engagement underscore that NEET youth are not simply uninformed; they are underheard and overpromised. What they require is not louder messaging, but a legitimate voice; one that speaks to them, from them, and for them.

In this context, communication must be reconceptualised as a legitimising infrastructure, a way to validate the aspirations of young people, especially those excluded by geography, gender, or disability.

Messaging must reflect their realities with nuance, not simplification. Institutions must earn credibility not just through information, but through acknowledgement and empathy, offering language that resonates and messengers that feel familiar, trustworthy, and human.

Designing for Readiness: Aligning Communication with Systems Capacity

While emotional resonance and narrative authenticity are essential, they must be matched by systems readiness. NEET youth are acutely sensitive to unmet promises and performative outreach. Therefore, communication strategies that raise expectations must be closely synchronised with actual service delivery, follow-up mechanisms, and institutional responsiveness.

In practical terms, this means:

- Ensuring that information about training, certification, or job placement is backed by operational clarity and updated systems.

- Avoiding premature promotion of services or platforms that are under-resourced or inaccessible to key groups, particularly young women in restricted environments.

- Developing closed-loop communication models that enable feedback, responsiveness, and dynamic updates, especially via digital tools and peer networks.

Communication, then, is not only an input to behaviour change, but also a mirror of institutional integrity.

Beyond Messaging: Embedding Co-Creation and Youth Agency

Perhaps the most critical insight for the EARN Project moving forward is that NEET youth must be seen not only as targets but as co-authors of communication. This is not a cosmetic shift—it is a strategic necessity. The trust deficits cannot be bridged solely by more content or better outreach; they require a redistribution of narrative power.

Embedding co-creation mechanisms, such as youth media collectives, storytelling labs, mobile video testimonials, or peer-curated campaigns, can transform communication from an extractive function into a participatory platform. This approach does more than enhance message design; it fosters agency, confidence, and leadership among the very youth; EARN aims to empower.

Furthermore, involving youth in message design offers a more accurate pulse on trends, language shifts, and platform dynamics, particularly in fast-evolving digital ecosystems. It enhances relevance while reinforcing ownership, a dual benefit for sustainability and effectiveness.

As the EARN Project evolves over its core 24-month lifecycle within 36-month span, the communication strategy must remain adaptive, inclusive, and evaluative. Several emerging considerations merit integration into the strategy's forward arc:

- **Geotargeting and Platform Mapping:** Youth behaviour is not monolithic. Communication planning should leverage data analytics to map digital platform usage by region, gender, and socio-economic status, thereby refining targeting.

- **Emotional Intelligence in Campaign Design:** Develop typologies of emotional narratives (e.g., shame to pride, fear to confidence, growth failure) and integrate these arcs into storytelling formats to support youth identity shifts.

- **Family and Ecosystem Messaging:** Recognise the influence of parents, siblings, spouses, and religious leaders—not only as obstacles but as potential allies. Design layered messaging that reaches these stakeholders with tailored appeals.

- **Inclusivity by Design:** Ensure all messaging is disability-inclusive, gender-responsive, and linguistically accessible. Utilise multiple media forms (audio, visual, and kinetic) to engage youth with varying literacy and digital fluency levels.

- **Monitoring for Behavioural Shifts:** Move beyond reach metrics to capture changes in intention, confidence, and engagement. Use community ambassadors or peer monitors to track behavioral feedback loops on the ground.

Toward a Theory of Change for Communication in NEET Engagement

A final contribution of this chapter is to propose a conceptual shift: communication should no longer be treated merely as a "support activity" for service delivery. Instead, it should be embedded within the Theory of Change for NEET empowerment.

If communication affirms youth identity, acknowledges structural barriers, validates aspiration, and offers credible, context-appropriate pathways through co-created and blended formats,

Then, NEET youth will be more likely to recognise opportunities, shift their behaviour, trust institutions, and engage with programs—leading to improved participation, retention, and transition outcomes.

This theory of change provides a foundation for integrating communication across EARN's pillars: training, self-employment, and re-entry to education and ensuring that behaviour change is not a collateral effect, but a core outcome.

Communication as Transformation

In summary, the EARN Project has the potential to revolutionise how communication functions in development programmes. It can evolve from merely a tool for transmission to a catalyst for genuine change; one that promotes not just awareness but belief, and not just participation but purpose. The opportunity now is to craft a communication strategy that captures the complexity, ambition, and resilience of NEET youth, while remaining grounded in systems that can support them. By prioritising empathy, co-creation, and contextual intelligence, EARN's communication framework can become a national benchmark for how to engage with, not just speak to, Bangladesh's next generation.

THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Empowering NEET Youth in Bangladesh: Strategic Vision

Project EARN aims to empower youth who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) by building inclusive, sustainable pathways to skills, livelihoods, and civic participation. Central to this ambition is a transformative communication strategy that recognises NEET youth not as passive recipients of services, but as active agents of change and co-creators of their futures.

This strategy is informed by a triangulated needs assessment comprising three key data sources: Nationwide NEET youth surveys, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with officials from the Department of Youth Development (DYD) and Multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Moreover, this draws insights from the policy literature review. Together, these insights provide a deep, multidimensional understanding of the communication needs, barriers, and aspirations of NEET youth across Bangladesh. The result is a comprehensive, inclusive, and context-responsive communication strategy that addresses diverse segments, particularly marginalised and rural youth, with a special focus on adolescent girls and young women.

The need for this communication strategy stems from the urgent imperative to reach and meaningfully engage NEET youth, especially those in underserved areas, through targeted, inclusive, and adaptive outreach. Rooted in robust evidence and stakeholder insights, the strategy is designed to: a) Reach NEET youth with accurate, motivating information about opportunities under EARN, b) Shift entrenched social norms and behavioural barriers, as stigma, mobility constraints, and gender biases, and c) Promote uptake of second-chance education, market-aligned skills training, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

At its core, this strategy seeks to establish a multi-channel Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) framework that not only raises awareness but also drives participation through community engagement, influences social perceptions to support inclusive development and reinforces the project's offerings and long-term vision.

Beyond youth, the strategy aims to engage a broader ecosystem, including families, community leaders, employers, local governments, civil society, and the media, as partners in change. Their collective support is essential for enabling youth participation, reducing stigma, and ensuring that the benefits of EARN reach every part of society.

The communication strategy also prioritises the use of dynamic and interactive digital platforms to share stories of transformation, document progress, and support learning and visibility throughout the project cycle. These digital platforms will foster transparency, celebrate youth achievements, encourage peer motivation, and create feedback loops for continuous improvement, benefiting both implementing partners and target beneficiaries.

Goals and Strategic Objectives

This communication strategy supports Project EARN's mission through the following core goals:

- Increase Awareness: Promote visibility of skills training, second-chance education, and employment pathways for NEET youth, especially in rural and hard-to-reach areas.

- Promote Behavioural Change: Challenge deep-rooted social norms and gender biases that hinder participation, especially among young women.

- Foster Stakeholder Engagement: Activate families, communities, employers, and institutions to support NEET youth through shared responsibility and local ownership.

- Ensure Strategic Alignment: Build alignment across stakeholders to reinforce EARN's objectives and ensure long-term sustainability and scalability of outcomes.

Strategic Considerations for Communication under Project EARN

A successful communication strategy for engaging NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth in Bangladesh must go far beyond one-way information dissemination. It must be empathetic, layered, inclusive, and rooted in lived realities, speaking not only to the mind but also to the heart.

Grounding in Psychosocial and Structural Realities

NEET youth are not without ambition; they are navigating systemic barriers, including poverty, entrenched gender roles, mobility restrictions, and social stigma. Among young women, these aspirations persist despite early marriage, domestic responsibilities, unsafe environments, and social isolation. Young men, on the other hand, often bear the burden of being expected to support their families financially, without the institutional support to do

so. Communication actions must acknowledge these constraints while presenting tangible, hopeful, and actionable pathways forward. Messages should emphasise self-worth, dignity, and agency, using emotionally resonant tones. Slogans such as "It's Never Too Late to Start" or "Fight Poverty, Earn Skill" affirm potential and possibility without being prescriptive or alienating.

Hyper-local and Gender-Sensitive Outreach

NEET youth form a diverse and intersectional audience. Strategies must be tailored to account for factors such as gender, geography, literacy, digital access, and disability status. Young men in urban and peri-urban areas can be effectively reached through social media, messaging apps, and FM radio. Young women, particularly those married or homebound in rural settings, require relational, home-based outreach via mothers' groups, courtyard meetings, religious forums, and female-led community networks. One-size-fits-all communication will fail; localisation, cultural sensitivity, and gender-responsive design are non-negotiable.

Multi-channel, Blended Communication Ecosystem

While digital tools, like mobile phones and social media, are increasingly accessible, especially among young men, many NEET youth remain digitally or socially isolated, particularly rural women.

A blended approach that combines digital channels (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok) with offline engagement (e.g., community theatre, mobile vans, religious sermons, local events) is crucial for fostering inclusion, building trust, and enhancing message retention. This layered strategy ensures that no group is left behind, and every message has multiple touchpoints. Strategic layering, matching channels to audience segments, ensures both accessibility and engagement.

Building Trust and Relatability Through Influencers

A significant trust gap exists between NEET youth and institutions, including government bodies, NGOs, and education providers. This mistrust is not born of ignorance, but rather of repeated exposure to irrelevance, unfulfilled promises, and fleeting engagements. DYD officials and stakeholders recognise this disconnect and stress the need for communication that is credible, consistent, and community-rooted.

Trust is a critical enabler of youth engagement. Communication should leverage relatable figures, such as peer youth alumni, local champions, teachers, sports coaches, micro-influencers, and community leaders. Their lived experiences and local credibility help bridge the trust deficit.

Real stories of transformation, delivered by trusted messengers, carry more weight than institutional narratives. Communication should also engage secondary influencers, such as parents, spouses, teachers, and employers, who shape youth decision-making.

Co-creation, Youth Voice, and Emotional Intelligence

To avoid top-down messaging that fails to resonate, youth must be engaged in shaping the messages. Co-creation fosters ownership and authenticity, as well as cultural and emotional relevance, empowerment, and visibility. Institutions tend to communicate through projects and programmes, whereas youth express themselves through emotions and lived experience. The strategy must bridge this gap by using youth-friendly, emotionally intelligent content.

Addressing the Ecosystem of Influence

Barriers are rarely individual; they are often social and cultural. Communication must engage not only the youth but also their gatekeepers: families, spouses, community elders, and religious leaders. Effective communication must address the broader ecosystem of influence, including families and spouses, community elders and religious leaders, as well as local power structures. Community-based storytelling, regional dialects, and emotionally grounded content should be utilised to reach and engage these gatekeepers, thereby shifting norms that restrict the participation of NEET youth, especially young women. Stories of local youth success, shared in regional dialects and culturally grounded formats, can help challenge restrictive norms and cultivate broader community support.

Outcome-Oriented Messaging

NEET youth are more likely to engage when the benefits are visible and immediate. NEET youth are most responsive to communication that clearly shows tangible benefits and realistic outcomes. Messaging should answer: "What's in it for me?" The use of testimonials highlighting real success stories, visuals of jobs or entrepreneurship journeys, business outcomes, and before-and-after stories is essential to facilitate motivation and trust. Messages must strike a balance between realism and aspiration, avoiding exaggeration while showcasing meaningful change. Evidence of success, opportunity, and dignity through participation must be

central to the information and behaviour change campaign narrative. Proof points, such as placement data, peer testimonials, and before-and-after narratives, must be at the forefront of all outreach efforts.

Two-Way and Sustained Engagement

Communication for EARN cannot be a one-time effort. It must be an ongoing, evolving system of dialogue and feedback. Participatory media, youth-generated content, and interactive platforms will serve as tools for real-time connection and learning. Feedback loops will ensure the strategy adapts to changing needs and realities over time. Celebration of youth stories and visible markers of progress (e.g., "EARN Champions") will reinforce long-term motivation and retention. The communication approach must be a living system; responsive,

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Gender Lenses Formulating Communication Strategy

The challenges faced by NEET youth in Bangladesh are deeply gendered, with young women and men navigating distinct but overlapping sets of barriers that limit their participation in education, training, and employment. Female NEETs are often held back by early marriage, early motherhood, safety concerns, restrictive family norms, and the burden of unpaid domestic responsibilities, which severely constrain their mobility and access to opportunities. These barriers are compounded by workplace harassment, limited access to mentorship, and persistent stereotypes about what constitutes "appropriate" careers for women. Conversely, male NEETs often face intense pressure to secure government jobs or pursue traditional career paths, despite the current job market providing inadequate or misaligned training opportunities. Many young men grapple with career confusion, stigma, and increasing digital addiction, often worsened by financial pressure to support their families and a lack of purpose or future direction. Any communication strategy aiming to engage NEET youth effectively must begin by acknowledging these gender-specific realities and designing empathetic, context-responsive messages that speak directly to their lived experiences.

Communication as a Bridge Between Aspiration and Access

Project EARN's communication goes beyond awareness to become a system of empathetic connection and catalytic trust-building. It:

- Speaks authentically to youth aspirations, constraints, and realities,

- Addresses the trust deficit between youth and institutions by using relatable messengers and participatory approaches,

- Builds an ecosystem of influence by engaging families, religious leaders, employers, and communities,

- Uses blended channels to reach digitally connected and isolated youth alike,

- Centres on outcome-oriented messaging—highlighting tangible benefits such as certification, employment, and income.

Below is a table to aid in understanding the key points based on the above statements.

Theme	Key Insight
Youth Aspirations	Desire financial independence, dignity, and meaningful work despite disconnection from education or employment systems.
Gendered Challenges	Young women face mobility, safety, and socio-cultural restrictions; young men face income pressure without support.
Trust Deficit	Mistrust towards institutions due to unmet promises and perceived irrelevance. Credible, community-rooted outreach is essential.
Training Preferences	Youth prefer job-linked, practical training over formal academics. Certification is valuable only when tied to real outcomes.
Blended Communication Need	Digital tools alone aren't enough; face-to-face and hyper-local outreach remain critical for inclusion, especially for marginalized youth.
Youth Perception	Optimistic but cautious. Interested in training, skeptical of formal education and overseas migration.

Theme	Key Insight
Institutional View (DYD)	Acknowledge youth interest but point to mismatch between training and job market needs.
Community Insight (FGDs)	Identify emotional/cultural barriers like shame, fear, and low self-worth that limit participation despite access.
Communication Channel Preferences	Youth prefer visual, emotional content (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok). FGDs support hyper-local modes (mosques, tea stalls, folk theatre).
Emotional Needs	Youth seek recognition and validation. Institutional messages often lack empathy; community voices blend moral and emotional resonance effectively.

Strategic Implications for Communication

The triangulated insights derived from the NEET youth survey, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) reveal that effective communication for Project EARN must be transformational in design and intent. It must shift from a transactional model of awareness-raising to a human-centred approach that builds connection, trust, and motivation among NEET youth.

This requires a paradigm shift, from generic messaging to emotionally intelligent, contextually relevant engagement that responds to the lived experiences of young people, especially those in marginalised or underserved settings. The following implications define the core directional changes that should shape all communication efforts under EARN.

From Informing to Inspiring

Communication must go beyond delivering information; it must affirm dignity, agency, and ambition. While access to accurate information is essential, it is not sufficient to catalyse action. NEET youth in Bangladesh seek hope, affirmation, and a sense of belonging. Messaging should speak not only to what is being offered but to why it matters for a better future. Emotional resonance, rooted in real challenges and aspirations, is as essential as technical clarity. Messaging tone might have vibes like "Empowering, not prescriptive"; examples might include "Your Skills. Your Future." / "Start Again, Go Far"

From Institutional to Interpersonal

Trust is built through relationships, not just institutions. NEET youth often experience alienation from formal systems due to past disappointments or a perceived lack of relevance. To overcome this, communication must be embedded in familiar, trusted ecosystems—such as family, peers, neighbours, religious leaders, and local champions. These actors serve as trust bridges between the project and the youth. Strategies may encompass mobilising peer mentors, alumni, teachers, sports figures, and religious such leaders, and consider delivery modes like as face-to-face, small groups, and community networks.

From Generic to Gender-Responsive

Messaging must recognise and reflect the gendered realities and constraints faced by young women. Too often, communication targets youth as a homogenous group, overlooking the layered disadvantages faced by girls and young women, such as mobility limitations, domestic burdens, and social stigma. Representation matters. Stories of female success, diverse role models, and tailored delivery mechanisms are essential, with special focus on relational, emotionally grounded storytelling. Courtyard meetings, mothers' groups, and women's spaces can be considered here, using supportive and non-stigmatising language.

From Digital-Only to Blended Outreach

A hybrid approach is vital for reach, equity, and trust. While digital platforms offer scale and speed, they fail to connect with all NEET youth, particularly those in rural areas who are out of school or have limited digital access. Blended outreach, combining online engagement with offline, community-based methods, is essential for inclusion. Facebook Reels, WhatsApp groups, short videos, and interactive Q&As must be developed. Offline methods should include mobile miking, folk theatre, community radio, and involvement of local champions, ensuring that every digital campaign has an offline mirror or extension.

From Program Awareness to Outcome Assurance

Youth need to see not only what the project offers but also where it leads. Skepticism is high among NEET youth due to past experiences with programmes that made promises but failed to deliver. Communication must focus on evidence of impact, jobs gained, businesses started, incomes earned, and mindsets changed. Communication content may include alumni success stories, photo diaries, and before-and-after visuals with themes like "Real Youth. Real Change" to answer the core question of "What's in it for me?"

Below is the table with key considerations that may shape the communication action plan.

1 Challenge stigma and elevate the dignity of vocational work.

2 Engage families, teachers, religious and community leaders as change agents.

3 Use diverse channels including mass media social media, community events, and peer dialogues.

4 Prioritise emotional resonance, and gender sensitivity.

Core Campaign Themes, Tools, and Adaptive Communication

Project EARN's communication strategy moves from conceptual frameworks and strategic imperatives to practical campaign design and implementation. This part outlines the core themes, communication tools, risk mitigation approaches, and adaptive feedback mechanisms that together create a responsive, inclusive, and impactful outreach ecosystem.

Core Campaign Themes

At the heart of the campaign is the reframing of vocational and technical work as honourable, aspirational, and future-ready; a vital shift for NEET youth and their communities.

- Dignity and Aspirations: Vocational trades are portrayed not as fallback options but as professions that confer social recognition and economic stability.

- Storytelling Focus: A nationally broadcast docu-series or audio-visuals for national medias may feature emotionally rich narratives told through family perspectives; mothers, siblings, and spouses, highlighting youth in trades like tailoring, electrical work, agriculture, and digital services.

- Visibility and Affirmation: Billboards and posters across districts will display proud workers with captions such as "Electrician and Proud" or "Village Tailor, Family Breadwinner," visually challenging outdated stereotypes.

- Gender and Social Inclusion: To foster gender and social inclusion, campaign messaging will champion women's economic participation through culturally resonant and trusted platforms such as religious sermons, folk performances, and women-led community outreach helping dismantle stigma and affirming women's rightful place in the economic sphere.

Communication Tools and Channels

The strategy relies on a blended communication ecosystem that layers digital reach with local, interpersonal engagement.

- <u>Digital Platforms:</u> Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok for scale and youth engagement.

- <u>Offline Channels:</u> Mobile storytelling vans, community theatre, courtyard sessions, religious gatherings, posters, and school murals.

- <u>Youth Opportunity Corners:</u> Community hubs offering access to video content, printed materials, and on-site facilitators.

- <u>Mobile Pop-up Booths:</u> Traveling units at rural fairs equipped with interactive tools like VR job environment demos, quizzes, and live skill demonstrations.

- <u>Relational Outreach:</u> Door-to-door visits and small group discussions led by female facilitators and youth ambassadors.

Target parents, guardians, and gatekeepers with tailored messaging emphasising woman's financial and social empowerment.

Home visits by female ambassadors using story-driven visuals and small group sessions,

Family testimonials in print and video to reinforce pride and acceptance.

Feedback Loops and Adaptive Learning for Responsive Communication

To ensure the communication strategy under Project EARN remains dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to the evolving realities of NEET youth, several adaptive learning mechanisms are embedded into its design. Youth Advisory Groups will convene quarterly to guide message refinement and provide grounded insights for campaign recalibration. Complementing this, rapid pulse surveys—delivered via mobile platforms—will track real-time shifts in awareness, attitudes, and perceptions, allowing for timely adjustments. A dedicated hotline and IVR system will provide anonymous channels for young people to voice concerns, suggestions, and lived experiences, fostering a safe feedback environment. Semi-annual learning reviews involving all implementation partners will support reflection on what's effective, what requires adjustment, and where to pivot. Furthermore, the strategy champions youth-led content creation, empowering young people to produce and share peer-generated media that enhances authenticity, relevance, and trust within their communities.

Risk Identification and Mitigation

Proactive risk management is critical to sustaining campaign effectiveness and credibility:

Risk	Mitigation Strategies
Gender backlash or misinterpretation	Frame messages around family well-being and religious values; engage mothers, female teachers, imams, fathers; pilot test messages locally.
Youth distrust or apathy	Highlight peer success stories early; use credible messengers (alumni, champions); emphasize practical benefits (income, self-respect).
Digital exclusion	Ensure mobile-friendly, low-bandwidth content; complement digital tools with courtyard meetings, posters, and miking; use school and mosque spaces.
Elite capture or message dilution	Establish inclusive youth panels for content creation; monitor message fidelity; encourage authentic user-generated content.
Political interference or bureaucratic delays	Engage government actors (DYD, MoYS) early and regularly; maintain transparent protocols; diversify media partners for balanced coverage.
Stigma around vocational training	Use aspirational storytelling featuring successful young professionals; normalize alternate education via mainstream media and influencers.
Negative comments on digital platforms	Any negative comments will be monitored and the administrative user or supervisor will take the necessary actions and provide required training for the future

Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)

SBCC is a strategic, evidence-based approach to communication thai aims to foster positive changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. It is participatory, culturally relevant, and employs multi-channel methods to influence individuals, interpersonal relationships, communities, and societal norms.

Core features of SBCC include:

- Behaviour-centred and audience-specific design

- Multi-level reach: individual, interpersonal, community, and societal

- Participatory and inclusive processes

- Use of diverse communication channels—media, digital platforms, interpersonal engagement, and community mobilisation

SBCC Goals for Project EARN

- **Transform Mindsets:** Challenge stigma surrounding vocational training and manual labour, promoting dignity in labour through relatable messages and trusted influencers.

- **Engage Stakeholders:** Involve parents, teachers, community and religious leaders to create enabling environments, especially for young women and marginalised groups.

- **Promote Practical Pathways:** Highlight vocational education as a direct route to employment, entrepreneurship, and economic development.

- **Encourage Behavioural Shifts:** Support NEET youth to build confidence, agency, and resilience to pursue skills training and employment opportunities.

SBCC in Practice: Messaging and Activities

- **Storytelling:** Messages like "Your First Step Matters" and "Your Work Builds Your Community" will emotionally reframe how young people see themselves, backed by peer testimonials, mentorship videos, and real-life success stories.

- **Confidence Building:** Modules on self-worth, public speaking, and dream reframing will be integrated into vocational training, with alumni mentorship to reinforce new identities.

- **Gamified Engagement:** Interactive workshops, such as life-goal visualisation and income planning, will ignite ambition and sustained motivation.

- **"Skill Pride" Merchandise:** Items like T-shirts, ID badges, and certificate folders will reinforce dignity and purpose.

Communication Channels and Tools

- **Mass Media:** National docu-series, TV/radio spots, billboards, posters.

- **Digital Platforms:** Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok, SMS nudges.

- **Community Engagement:** Folk theatre, courtyard sessions, peer-led dialogues, school murals, Youth Opportunity Corners and various events, particularly with religious centres and authorities

- **Relational Outreach:** Home visits by female ambassadors, mothers' groups, religious sermons, and family testimonials.

Societal Perceptions of Vocational Training: Challenges and Opportunities

Negatives	Positives
Seen as "second-class" or inferior option	Recognized as practical pathway to employment
Associated with low-status manual jobs	Supports entrepreneurship and self-employment
Stereotyped as fallback for dropouts	Bridges skills gaps and meets labor market needs
Gendered perceptions discourage women	Flexible, adaptable, and supported by policy
Limited perceived career advancement	Crucial for economic development and growth

SBCC initiatives within Project EARN seek to address these negative perceptions and amplify the positives to shift social norms and elevate the status of vocational skills.

Community and Family Engagement

Family gatekeepers, parents, spouses, and elders, play a pivotal role in youth decision-making, especially for young women.

- Tailored communication for fathers, brothers, and spouses will emphasise the financial and social benefits of women's participation.

- Mothers' groups and school sessions will build legitimacy around vocational careers.

- Home visits by female ambassadors, utilising story-based posters and small group discussions, will address resistance and foster trust.

- Family testimonials, presented in both video and print formats, will foster emotional connection and pride.

Addressing Key Bottlenecks through SBCC

Bottleneck	Strategic Communication Response
Stigma around vocational work	Normalize through docu-series, mosque messaging, community walls
Digital exclusion	Provide low-tech options like posters, IVR, Youth Opportunity Corners
Gendered resistance	Employ family-centered storytelling; engage fathers, imams, male guardians
Motivation deficit	Use emotional testimonials, aspirational messaging, confidence-building skits
Institutional weak links	Integrate dashboards, storytelling from Vocational Training Centers
Disability exclusion	Develop inclusive media, community inclusion drives, specialized formats

The SBCC framework under Project EARN is a holistic, evidence-based approach designed to transform societal perceptions, empower NEET youth, and engage the broader ecosystem of families and communities. By combining emotionally resonant storytelling, participatory engagement, and adaptive multi-channel communication, SBCC will help create lasting behavioural change and open pathways for youth to achieve meaningful education, skills, and employment.

Contours of Communication Strategy in Formulating Communication Actions

Key Principles for Effective Communication

- <u>Empathy First:</u> Communication must speak directly to the lived realities and emotional landscapes of NEET youth, avoiding abstract jargon or purely development-driven language.

- <u>Hyper-Localization:</u> Tailor messages to reflect local dialects, cultural icons, and preferred media habits, ensuring relevance and resonance in diverse communities.

- <u>Gender and Disability Inclusion:</u> Mainstream inclusive formats, diverse messengers, and representation to ensure accessibility and equitable engagement across genders and abilities.

- <u>Consistency and Clarity:</u> Maintain coherent visual identity and narrative tone across all communication channels and over time to build trust and recognition.

Mindset Map and Communication Actions

Young people in Bangladesh, particularly women, express a strong desire for education, adaptable skills training, and opportunities for entrepreneurship. Yet, their aspirations are often hindered by entrenched social norms, stigma, and a lack of self-confidence. A significant gap in awareness about existing programs persists, although there is a notable openness to apprenticeships and community-based initiatives. While digital access is on the rise, disparities in connectivity and digital literacy persist, limiting engagement. Families and community leaders exert considerable influence over young people's decisions, making their involvement essential. To respond effectively, Project EARN must prioritise national mindset-shift campaigns rooted in storytelling, establish localised "Youth Opportunity Corners," and directly involve families and communities in outreach. Learning must be inclusive, flexible, and, where needed, home-based to accommodate constraints, while psychosocial support and post-training mentoring can reinforce sustained participation. Sharing success stories widely—both online and offline—will help foster inspiration and normalise youth empowerment across diverse contexts.

Key Messaging Framework

Target Group	Core Messaging Focus
NEET Youth	Emphasize opportunity: "It's Never Too Late," real stories of change, skill leads to income, dignity, and self-worth.
Families & Communities	Support youth—especially girls—in education and employment as a collective pathway to stability and prosperity.
Policymakers	Stress the economic cost of disengaged youth and the value of integrated skill and empowerment investments.
Employers	Position EARN youth as ready-to-work, adaptable talent—invite partnerships for internships, jobs, and mentorship.

Communication Channels and Tools

<u>Traditional Media:</u>

- Radio and television campaigns with culturally relevant content.

- Print materials such as posters, flyers, and brochures.

- Community theatre, miking and street plays to engage rural audiences in local languages.

Digital Media:

- Social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) for interactive storytelling and peer engagement.
- SMS and mobile app notifications to disseminate training updates and job resources.
- Dedicated online youth portals linking training and employment opportunities.

Grassroots Engagement:

- Community workshops, uthan baithak (courtyard meetings), and focus group discussions.
- Mobilisation of community and religious leaders as respected advocates and message carriers.

Inclusive Tools:

- Audio guides, Braille materials, and other accessible formats tailored for persons with disabilities and marginalised groups.

Addressing Disengaged & Inactive Youth

To effectively re-engage inactive youth, it is essential to first understand their diverse needs and challenges through well-designed profiling tools that capture individual circumstances, motivations, and barriers. Communication and outreach efforts should then be tailored to these profiles, using personalized counseling, peer engagement, and targeted motivation strategies that resonate with their lived realities. By fostering flexible learning options and mobilizing community support structures, Project EARN can create enabling environments that guide these young people back into training, education, or employment pathways with greater confidence and sustained interest.

Entrepreneurship Communication

NEET youth show strong interest in self-employment tied to local trades, especially in agribusiness, tailoring, and digital services.

Communication should highlight region-specific opportunities, promote youth cooperatives, and showcase the success of trade fairs and e-commerce.

Engaging families, religious leaders, and female ambassadors is key to shifting norms. Messaging must link entrepreneurship with dignity, market access, and practical mentorship.

Training Needs and Capacity Enhancement

To build a robust communication ecosystem for Project EARN, it is crucial to conduct comprehensive training needs assessments that address the distinct capacities required at multiple levels. These assessments should focus on enhancing communication skills among frontline outreach agents such as peer educators and counselors, improving information dissemination practices among secondary stakeholders like families and community leaders, and fostering public awareness to support wider engagement and volunteer mobilization. Based on these insights, tailored content and toolkits should be developed for influencers, public figures, and broader audiences, particularly through digital platforms. The integration of innovative approaches—including gamified learning, storytelling campaigns, and inclusive, user-friendly formats—into both training curricula and outreach materials will ensure messaging is not only effective but also engaging, relatable, and accessible across diverse segments of youth and their communities.

Stakeholder Group	Required Capacity & Content
Influencers & Public Figures	Campaigns on digital platforms to amplify visibility and social approval of youth empowerment
Peer Educators & Counselors	Toolkits for interpersonal communication, motivational coaching, and psychosocial first-aid
Community Leaders	Training on promoting inclusive youth development in sermons, group sessions, and community meetings
General Public	Mass media content promoting solidarity, volunteerism, and intergenerational responsibility

Integrating Technology in Communication and Learning

To ensure equitable access and deepen the impact of Project EARN's communication strategy, it is vital to adopt inclusive and technology-enabled approaches that address the digital divide across rural and underserved areas. EARN can consider leveraging IVR and mobile-based learning modules to reach NEET youth who lack reliable internet access, ensuring that key messages, learning content, and engagement opportunities are available even through basic mobile phones. In electricity-scarce rural communities, solar-powered projectors can facilitate offline content dissemination through localised screenings of training materials, motivational content, and awareness videos.

Establishing e-counselling platforms can offer remote career guidance, mentorship, and psychosocial support, fostering deeper trust and personalised interaction. Additionally, targeted SMS and WhatsApp campaigns can be deployed to share timely updates such as training schedules, job alerts, motivational stories, and interactive quizzes, helping to keep youth continuously informed and inspired. Setting up community digital access kiosks will further bridge digital gaps, providing safe and supportive environments for youth to explore skills and opportunities.

These efforts should be complemented by the use of real-time beneficiary tracking and digital monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools, enabling transparent program monitoring and iterative improvements.

Finally, by promoting digital storytelling and success videos across social media platforms, EARN can amplify youth voices, catalyse behaviour change, and build community pride around the transformative journeys of NEET youth.

Communication as a Catalyst for Change

The communication strategy for Project EARN is not simply a tool for dissemination; it is a driving force of transformation. For millions of NEET youth across Bangladesh, those not in education, employment, or training, communication must serve as more than a vehicle for information. It must become the primary medium through which hope is restored, trust is built, and futures are activated. In this context, communication is not a support activity—it is the strategy itself.

Triangulated insights from youth surveys, key informant interviews, and multi-stakeholder discussions converge on one essential truth: NEET youth are not apathetic, but systemically excluded. Their disconnection is not rooted in lack of ambition, but in lack of access, representation, and meaningful engagement. The barriers they face—economic, social, digital, geographic, and cultural—are compounded by a long history of broken promises and institutional detachment. Yet amid these constraints, young people continue to show resilience, express aspirations for dignity and independence, and seek opportunities to define their futures.

To respond to this complexity, communication under Project EARN must be reimagined. It must move from one-way outreach to two-way engagement, from broadcasting static messages to building dynamic bridges between institutions and individuals. The strategy outlined in this document envisions a shift where communication does not speak at youth but speaks with them and—most importantly—amplifies their voices.

This transformation requires communication to be empathetic, emotionally intelligent, and deeply localised. Messages must affirm the humanity and agency of young people. They must reflect lived realities and speak in the languages—both literal and cultural—that youth understand. Communication must move beyond technical jargon and project rhetoric, and instead tell stories that young people see themselves in. It must normalise the idea that vocational training and entrepreneurship are not fallback options, but valid and aspirational life choices. It must also address harmful gender norms, social stigma, and psychological barriers that disproportionately affect young women and marginalised groups.

Moreover, the success of Project EARN's communication depends on its ability to engage not only the youth, but also the broader ecosystem around them. Parents, families, community leaders, teachers, employers, religious and cultural influencers; all have a role to play in shaping young people's decisions and perceptions. Therefore, communication must not treat these actors as passive recipients of information, but rather as active co-communicators and allies in the change process.

Equally important is the need to blend digital innovation with on-the-ground presence. While mobile phones and social media offer unprecedented reach, they cannot alone ensure inclusion—especially for young women in rural areas or those facing digital exclusion. This strategy, therefore, emphasises a hybrid model that combines mobile-friendly content with face-to-face community engagement, ensuring that the project's reach is both deep and wide.

Project EARN stands at the critical intersection of economic acceleration and youth resilience. It seeks to prepare young people not only to meet the demands of a changing economy but also to contribute to and benefit from it. Communication, in this context, becomes the connective tissue that links technical training to emotional readiness, and policy intent to personal transformation. It enables NEET youth to understand what is possible, believe in what is attainable, and act on opportunities that once felt out of reach.

Capacity Building as Social Action

Empowering NEET youth as changemakers requires peer-led workshops, youth clubs, and leadership training that build life skills, confidence, and civic engagement. Trained youth can drive local problem-solving, inclusion, and service campaigns, while partnerships with local authorities ensure shared ownership and sustainable impact.

By grounding this communication strategy in empathy, inclusion, and relevance, Project EARN positions itself not just as a service provider but as a trusted partner in young people's journeys. Communication must lead this shift, not as a final step after programming, but as the front line of outreach, inspiration, and mobilisation. This means designing messages and platforms that are not only informative, but transformational. It means creating spaces where youth not only receive messages but also shape them—where communication reflects not only institutional goals but also the hopes and realities of those it seeks to serve.

Ultimately, Project EARN's communication approach is about reclaiming dignity. When young people see their identities reflected, their stories told with respect, and their futures imagined with optimism, they begin to trust. They begin to believe. And they begin to participate not out of compliance, but out of conviction.

This conclusion, then, is not an end in itself, but a call to action. To achieve the project's goals, communication must remain responsive, grounded, and adaptive throughout implementation. It must listen as much as it speaks. It must evolve in response to the communities it engages with. And it must never lose sight of its fundamental purpose: to connect, to empower, and to transform.

Project EARN is not just about programs. It is about people. And for those people, for the millions of young Bangladeshis on the margins of formal systems, communication can be the difference between exclusion and opportunity, between stagnation and self-determination, between silence and voice. Let this strategy serve as a commitment to making that difference—consistently, courageously, and compassionately.

COMMUNICATION ACTION PLAN (CAP)

Project EARN aims to empower NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth across Bangladesh by creating inclusive and gender-sensitive pathways for skills development, employment, and social involvement. The project views communication as a crucial tool for inspiring, engaging, and mobilising young people, particularly adolescent girls and marginalised groups. Fostering a vision for improved futures encourages these individuals to actively pursue personal and professional growth. The Communication Action Plan (CAP) is founded on comprehensive triangulated research, which includes NEET youth surveys, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with officials from the Department of Youth Development (DYD), and multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Insights gathered from these sources, along with a secondary literature review, inform a coherent and inclusive communication strategy that is culturally relevant and effectively addresses the diverse and complex realities faced by NEET youth across Bangladesh.

The EARN Project's communication action plan is a robust, inclusive framework designed to dismantle barriers for NEET youth engagement through synchronised digital tools and localised interventions. By combining alumni-led peer influence, religious and cultural integration, special focus on vulnerable groups, and multi-platform outreach, the plan aims to create a dynamic ecosystem that empowers youth, builds community trust, and fosters sustainable employment and self-reliance across Bangladesh.

Strategic Objectives of CAP

Reframe	Reframe vocational and technical skills as aspirational, lucrative, and nationally significant career paths.
Motivate	Motivate NEET youth, with special focus on adolescent girls, to imagine and pursue improved livelihoods.
Mobilise	Mobilise youth and families to participate in training, entrepreneurship, and self-employment pathways.
Normalise	Normalise participation of women and marginalised groups in economic activity.
Support	Support post-training persistence, social well-being, and community recognition for youth success.

Strategic Communication Pillars

Pillar	Description
Affirmative Messaging	Move beyond information to inspire, affirming youth agency and self-worth.
Trust-Based Ecosystems	Utilize peer educators, local leaders, and family influencers for legitimacy.
Gender-Responsive Outreach	Address unique constraints and safety of women and gender diverse individuals through tailored content.
Blended Modalities	Combine digital tools with community face-to-face engagement.
Outcome-Oriented Narratives	Highlight skills, income, dignity, and job linkages clearly.
Inclusive & Participatory Design	Engage youth in content creation and feedback mechanisms.
Two-Way Engagement	Enable youth voices through SMS, WhatsApp, and local forums.

Recommended Activities against Logical Phases

Project EARN's communication strategy will unfold in four interconnected phases. The first phase, Awareness, aims to ensure national visibility with the core message "You Belong Here," using mass media, public spaces, and community-based Youth Opportunity Corners to build curiosity and trust.

The second phase, Motivation and Mindset Shift, focuses on changing perceptions through storytelling, showcasing real youth journeys, and promoting women's participation under the message "Your Journey Matters."

In the third phase, the Enrollment Drive, the goal is to turn interest into action with clear, supportive messaging, such as "Start Today—We're With You," using digital tools, information booths, and personalised outreach.

Finally, the Retention and Empowerment phase sustains engagement with peer support, recognition, and psychosocial encouragement, reinforcing the message "Keep Going—You're Not Alone" to help youth stay committed and confident throughout their journey.

Phased Communication Approach

Phase	Focus	Messaging & Activities
Awareness	Generate curiosity and trust; "You Belong Here"	Mass media campaigns, mosque announcements, Youth Opportunity Corners.
Motivation & Mindset Shift	Build aspiration; "Your Journey Matters"	Storytelling docu-series, social media reels, community theatre, mobile booths.
Enrollment Drive	Encourage action; "Start Today—We're with You"	Info booths, SMS/WhatsApp campaigns, helplines, home visits.
Retention & Empowerment	Sustain commitment; "Keep Going—You're Not Alone"	Peer mentorship, SMS tips, alumni recognition, psychosocial support modules.

Activity Phases	Description
Awareness Campaigns	Launch nationwide and targeted regional campaigns introducing Project EARN, highlighting training, entrepreneurship, and success stories.
Behavioral Change Initiatives	Use storytelling, peer testimonials, and advocacy to address cultural, gender, and social barriers. Spotlight role models from similar communities.
Community Mobilization	Engage families, community leaders, religious figures, and influencers to create enabling environments. Conduct home visits and dialogue sessions.
Capacity Building	Conduct training for trainers, DYD officials, peer educators, counselors, and community stakeholders on communication best practices and youth engagement.
Phased Rollout	Implement communication activities in priority districts first, with scaling plans based on monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

More detailed Communication Action Phases

Phase	Goal	Core Message	Key Activities	Lead Channels
Awareness	Ensure target youth know about Project EARN and see it as relevant	"Your journey matters." "This is for you."	TV/radio PSAs, animated explainers, market booths, mosque announcements, posters, wall art	National TV/radio, Facebook, marketplaces, religious venues
Motivation	Inspire youth to believe change is possible and desirable	"You're not alone." "Real youth, real stories."	Peer storytelling, theatre, motivational reels, courtyard meetings, school visits	TikTok, Facebook reels, community theatre, peer-led sessions
Enrollment	Drive registrations with urgency and clarity	"Register today." "Start your future now."	SMS/WhatsApp blasts, info booths, QR-coded posters, hotline support	WhatsApp, SMS, physical booths, schools/madrasas
Retention	Sustain participation and morale during and after training	"Keep going." "We see your progress."	Weekly motivational SMS, digital peer groups, alumni recognition, certificate ceremonies	

Communication Action Phases, Methods and Channels

Phase	Methods	Lead Channel
Awareness	Print & Publications, Mass Media Campaigns, Digital & Mobile Platforms, Community Print & Outreach Tools, Outdoor & Interactive Tools	National TV/radio Commercials and Broadcasts, Press Releases/Media Kits, Brochures/Flyers, FAQs Booklet, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), Social Media, Website, Chatbot/WhatsApp, Religious venues, Community Bulletin Inserts, Posters, Miking
Motivation	Community Print & Outreach Tools, Outdoor & Interactive Tools	Courtyard Meetings (Uthan Baithaks), Door-to-Door Outreach, Tea Stall Sessions, Female Ambassador Visits, Community Messaging Modules, Whiteboards, Wall Posters/Banners, National TV/radio Commercials and Broadcasts, Press Releases/Media Kits, Brochures/Flyers, FAQs Booklet, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), Social Media, Website, Chatbot/WhatsApp, Religious venues, Community Bulletin Inserts, Posters, Miking
Enrollment	Indoor Branding & Simulation Tools	National TV/radio Commercials and Broadcasts, Press Releases/Media Kits, Brochures/Flyers, FAQs Booklet, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), Social Media, Website, Chatbot/WhatsApp, Pop-Up Kiosks, Website, Social Media, Youth Empowerment Centers, VLTCs
Retention	Recognition & Motivation, Satellite & Broadcast Media, Digital Empowerment Tools, Public Space Celebrations, Community-Led Events, Indoor Legacy Tools	Alumni Booklets, Certification Posters, Career Pathway Brochures, Social Media Spotlights, Graduation Reels, Wall Murals, Honor Boards, Community Graduation Ceremonies, Peer Referral Drives, Village Talks, Meet-the-Alumni Days, Hall of Fame

Tools against Methods

Methods	Tools
Print & Publications	• **Newspapers & Magazines:** Build legitimacy via expert-authored stories, success profiles, and motivational ads. • **Brochures/Flyers:** Clear, visual info on EARN opportunities, placed in public spots & inserted in newspapers. • **Special Content (Differently-Abled):** Braille, audio, large-print, sign-language content for accessibility. • **Press Releases/Media Kits:** Curated info packs for journalists to ensure accurate media coverage. • **Infographics/Fact Sheets:** Simple visuals conveying training info, benefits, and eligibility. • **Comic Booklets:** Illustrated, relatable NEET success stories to engage low-literacy youth. • **Pocket Guides/Leaflets:** Compact, discreet info tools for private review and ease of access. • **Wall Calendars:** Daily visual reminders with motivational quotes and program milestones. • **Activity Books:** Fun, gamified vocational learning for youth and siblings. • **FAQs Booklet:** Straightforward answers addressing concerns on registration, stipend, etc. • **Training Pathway Maps:** Step-by-step visuals of EARN's journey from registration to employment.
Mass Media Campaigns	• **TV Commercials:** Broadcast NEET stories, focus on empowerment and dignity of labor. • **Radio Broadcasts:** Jingles + talk shows for low-literacy outreach. • **TV Scrolls/Talk Shows:** Continuous updates and live discussions to address community doubts. • **Public Service Announcements (PSAs):** Government-endorsed messages to build trust and awareness.
Digital & Mobile Platforms	• **Social Media:** Engaging content via Facebook, YouTube, TikTok using contests, polls, and dialects. Facebook live from local places or studios. • **Online Video Commercials (OVCs):** Short, emotional videos tailored for NEET youth. • **Influencer Content:** Local influencers share authentic experiences to build trust. • **Hashtag Campaigns:** Boost community participation through peer-led promotions. • **Memes/Challenges:** Humor and trends to attract disengaged youth. • **Live Sessions:** Real-time Q&As with trainers, alumni, and youth. • **YouTube Testimonials:** Long-form stories showing family and personal growth. • **SMS/Voice Calls:** Outreach for low-tech households via mobile alerts and motivational calls. • **Motion Animation:** Explainers for low-literacy youth on training processes.

	• **Audiovisual Stories:** Localized content to enhance trust and relatability. • **Website:** Central info hub with registration portals and alumni directories. • **Email Blasts:** Updates for stakeholders and partners. • **Chatbot/WhatsApp:** AI-based info access with regional dialect support. • **Hotlines:** Toll-free numbers for support, especially for women and disabled youth.
Community Print & Outreach Tools	• **Community Bulletin Inserts:** Updates inserted into local newsletters. • **Field Flipcharts:** Visual guides for facilitators to hold interactive awareness sessions.
Outdoor & Interactive Tools	• **Posters:** Localized, trade-themed visuals in high-footfall areas. • **Miking:** Loudspeaker announcements in local dialects before key events. • **Courtyard Meetings (Uthan Baithaks):** Gender-sensitive small group discussions. • **Door-to-Door Outreach:** Personalized outreach targeting resistant families. • **Tea Stall Sessions:** Informal male NEET engagement at social hubs. • **Female Ambassador Visits:** Home visits for parental reassurance. • **Police Box Branding:** Info kiosks at police booths for trust-building. • **Banners/Billboards:** High-visibility branding with real NEET faces. • **Street Dramas:** Live performances on anti-fraud, financial inclusion themes. • **Community Messaging Modules:** Word-of-mouth, polling, and event-based campaigns.
Indoor Branding & Simulation Tools	• **Whiteboards:** Daily motivational messages and event reminders in learning spaces. • **Dummy Training Facilities:** Simulated training spaces to reduce fear. • **Wall Posters/Banners:** Motivational content in training centers. • **Pop-Up Kiosks:** Portable booths offering registration and program info.
Recognition & Motivation	• **Alumni Booklets:** Stories of NEET-to-success journeys. • **Certification Posters:** Photos of certified graduates as community role models. • **Post-Training Flyers:** Impact stats and quotes to show program results. • **Career Pathway Brochures:** Post-graduation planning tools
Satellite & Broadcast Media	• **Radio Alumni Stories:** First-person NEET success broadcasts. • **TV Testimonials:** Visual alumni stories aired during prime time. • **"Where Are They Now" PSAs:** One-minute updates on alumni success.
Digital Empowerment Tools	• **Social Media Spotlights:** Weekly highlights of graduate achievements. • **LinkedIn Career Stories:** Formal write-ups to attract employers. • **Graduation Reels:** Video clips from ceremonies for pride and visibility. • **Mentorship Circles:** Alumni-led support via WhatsApp/Facebook. • **Animated Diaries:** Short animated NEET-to-success journeys.

Public Space Celebrations	• **Wall Murals:** Painted scenes of local achievers in public spaces. • **Honor Boards:** Lists of top alumni in training centers. • **Mobile Musical Roadshows:** Traveling vans showcasing success and program demos.
Community-Led Events	• **Community Graduation Ceremonies:** Inclusive celebrations with families. • **Peer Referral Drives:** Incentivized alumni-led recruitment. • **Village Talks:** Local alumni sharing their journey with communities.
Indoor Legacy Tools	• **Recognition Walls:** Portraits of successful alumni on institutional walls. • **Meet-the-Alumni Days:** Trainee-alumni interactive events. • **Hall of Fame:** Classy displays honoring standout alumni.

Design and Delivery of Messaging

The tone must be affirming, empathetic, and empowering, avoiding bureaucratic language. Content should be concise, visually appealing, and emotionally engaging, using colloquial Bangla. Communication should position Project EARN as a personal journey of empowerment, featuring relatable success stories that highlight dignity, self-improvement, and economic opportunity.

• **Tone:** Affirming, empathetic, empowering, not bureaucratic.

• **Style:** Short, visual, story-driven.

• **Language: U**se colloquial Bangla with emotional resonance.

• **Framing:**

  • Position the program as a journey of personal empowerment.

  • Use real success stories to build trust and hope.

  • Avoid jargon; speak to aspirations

Design principles

• **SIMPLICITY:** The design will focus on simplicity and clarity to ensure that the messages are easily understood. Use of clear and concise language, supported by visuals, will enhance comprehension.

• **VISUAL APPEAL:** High-quality graphics, images, and infographics will be used to make the materials visually appealing and engaging. The design will consider cultural relevance and local aesthetics to resonate with the target audiences.

• **ACCESSIBILITY:** The materials will be designed to be accessible to all, including those with visual impairments and low literacy levels. This may involve the use of large fonts, simple graphics, and minimal text.

• **SPECIAL CONTENT:** A few special communication materials will be designed to reach the NEET Youth

Message Focus and Content Style

Channel/Approach	Key Message Themes	Content Style
Social & Digital Media	Dignity of work, entrepreneurship, training success stories	Visual, short-form, motivational, interactive
Messaging (SMS, WhatsApp)	Training info, class updates, motivational nudges	Brief, action-driven, inclusive
Community Radio	Access to opportunities, positive values, anti-drug/early marriage	Conversational, dramatized, dialect-sensitive
Posters & Leaflets	Key facts, contact info, awareness messages	Pictorial, accessible, low text
Theatre & Folk Media	Social norm change, youth aspirations, gender equity, puthi, jarisari and gobhiran on EARN's theme	Entertaining, cultural, emotionally resonant
Courtyard Sessions	Female empowerment, youth journey narratives	Peer-led, relational, conversational
Digital Hubs/Popups	Opportunity maps, success showcases, registration help	Infographic, interactive, hands-on
Religious Engagement	Gender-positive ethics, value of productive youth	Respectful, ethical, trust-based messaging

Messaging Pillar	Narrative Theme	Illustrative Messaging
Empowerment	Skill = Dignity = Income	"Earn Skill, Earn Respect"
Second Chances	It's not too late to try again	"It's Never Too Late to Start"
Relatability	Youth like you have succeeded	"From This Village To That Job"
Family Benefit	Empowering youth helps the entire family	"Your Daughter's Skill is Your Security"
Community Harmony	Youth potential contributes to village prosperity	"Skilled Youth, Stronger

Multi-Channel, Layered Communication Approach

Digital Channels and Other Media

- Facebook Reels, YouTube Shorts: Motivational & relatable content with clear calls to action.

- WhatsApp: Stories, reminders, and interactive guidance via voice and text.

- SMS: Simple nudges for engagement and enrollment.

- TikTok: Youth-led humorous content to build relatability and viral reach.

- Countrywide engagement through TV and Radio

Offline Channels

- Mosque-based gatherings, integrated with Friday Khutbahs, reinforce the dignity of work.

- Community, school and madrasa outreach promoting vocational careers.

- Uthan Baithak, Community Theatre & Folk Storytelling to Address Norms & Inspire Change.

- Murals (wall paint), posters at tea stalls, bus stops, and markets to maintain visibility.

Trusted Messengers

- Peer educators and youth ambassadors from the NEET community.

- Religious leaders, teachers, health workers, and NGO field staff .

Youth Co-Creation

- Youth should not just be the target audience but active participants in strategy development. Project EARN will establish youth co-creation labs in the form of an online platform to design messaging, content, scripts, and campaigns. Participation reinforces authenticity, increases engagement, and builds capacity.

- Youth Co-Creation Labs will have vlogs and blogs to develop & refresh messaging, content, & campaigns.

Special Channels

- Active involvement builds authenticity, engagement, and empowerment through job fairs and expositions.

- Sports and cultural activities by youth clubs may require communication actions.

Details of Strategic Communication Approaches at the Community Level

- **Village Talks at VLTCs and Public Places by Alumni:**

  - **Informal storytelling sessions** where successful alumni visit villages and wards to share their journeys, inspiring youth, parents, and elders. These sessions leverage trust and local influence to reshape societal attitudes, particularly in breaking down resistance in hesitant households.

  - Employers, local-level leaders and representatives of financial institutions will have interactive visits and dialogues with NEET youth at VLTCs.

  - **Support Tools:** Flipcharts, photos, printed alumni booklets.

  - **Impact:** Localised, relatable motivation that drives peer inspiration and community acceptance.

- **Alumni Recognition & Branding:**
  - **Recognition Walls:** Permanent displays in DYD offices and training centres highlighting outstanding alumni with portraits, bios, and employment details.

  - **Meet-the-Alumni Days:** Interactive sessions connecting current/prospective trainees with alumni for mentorship and motivation.

  - **Hall of Fame Displays:** Exhibits at ministry events celebrating high-achieving alumni to build institutional pride.

  - **Impact:** Reinforces program credibility, fosters aspirational culture, and sustains alumni engagement.

- **Integrating Religious and Cultural Contexts**
  - **Religious Perspectives:** Collaboration with faith leaders (imams, preachers, teachers) to incorporate religious narratives emphasising honesty, dignity of labour, and community service. Methods include sermon-like audio/video messages, verses, and community dissemination via mosque loudspeakers, madrasa bulletins, and Islamic media channels.
  - **Impact:** Influences gender norms and career aspirations, especially facilitating women's participation.

- **Communication for Socially Excluded Groups:**
  - Tailored outreach addressing indigenous and ethnic minorities through multilingual content, culturally relevant visuals, and community radio broadcasts. Alumni spotlights and mobile roadshows feature local dialects, traditions, and symbols to build trust and inclusion.
  - **Impact:** Overcomes linguistic and cultural barriers, improves minority youth enrollment, and strengthens local legitimacy.

- **Special Attention to Vulnerable Groups**
  - **Climate-Vulnerable Populations:** Position vocational skills as climate adaptation tools by showcasing alumni in solar repair, disaster response, and saline-tolerant agriculture. Utilise storytelling, climate-infographics, and message placement in cyclone shelters and community hubs.
  - **Impact:** Links training to livelihood resilience and boosts participation in disaster-prone areas.
  - **Extreme Poor:** Focus on visual storytelling of income transformation, highlighting tangible benefits like stipends, daycare, and starter kits, partner with social safety nets, (e.g., BRAC UPG) for co-branded outreach.
  - **Impact:** Reframes training as economic opportunity, addressing fears related to cost and income insecurity.
  - **Regional Disparity:** Employ localised narratives reflecting region-specific dialects, challenges, and success stories through posters, reels, murals, and Upazila-level events. Engage local leaders for authentic messaging.
  - **Impact:** Restores equity in awareness and perception, validates local realities, and fosters regional pride.

The communication plan for Project EARN places a deliberate focus on reaching excluded and marginalised groups through inclusive, empathetic, and context-sensitive messaging. For adolescent girls, content will emphasise flexibility, safety, and relatable success stories of women who have overcome barriers to pursue skills and income opportunities. Youth with disabilities will be engaged through accessible formats, including Braille materials, sign language-supported videos, and tailored family outreach. Visual representation and culturally resonant messages will ensure that religious and ethnic minorities feel seen and included. For youth with histories of substance abuse or early marriage, the strategy will present alternative narratives of recovery, renewal, and second chances, offering hope and practical pathways forward. Across all messaging, the use of local dialects and community-rooted values will evoke emotions of family pride, social dignity, and aspirations for a better future, fostering deeper resonance and sustained engagement.

Communication Channels, Audiences, Modes, and Locations

- **Primary Audience:** NEET youth (especially women), marginalised and vulnerable groups (differently-abled, ethnic minorities).

- **Secondary Audience:** Families, peers, community leaders, religious leaders, teachers and service providers.

- **Tertiary Audience:** Policymakers, private sector employers, NGOs, and the general public.

WHEN A YOUTH GETS OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE IN BANGLADESH

WHEN NOT

Audience-specific needs, preferences, and barriers.

Channel	Target Audience	Mode of Delivery	Primary Locations
Facebook, YouTube, TikTok	Urban & peri-urban youth, aspiring entrepreneurs	Short videos, reels, mentor Q&A	Urban centers, townships
WhatsApp, SMS	General youth, enrolled trainees	Direct messaging, reminders	Nationwide
Low-bandwidth, Mobile-Friendly Tools: IVR content, preloaded USBs in info booths, missed-call campaigns.	Rural youth, general youth, enrolled trainees	Discrete and time specific	Nationwide
Community Radio	Rural youth, ethnic minorities	Audio PSAs, interviews	Rural, remote villages
Posters, leaflets	Youth and families with limited digital access	Static visual materials	Union councils, bazaars, schools
Wall Art, Murals & Market Posters: Visual branding in schools, madrasas, union offices.	Rural communities, conservative families and NEET youth	Installations and following phases	Local government, Streets, Centres

Channel	Target Audience	Mode of Delivery	Primary Locations
Theater, folk songs, Jatra	Rural communities, conservative families	Live interactive performances	Union grounds, rural fairs
Traveling campaigns featuring successful female characters and local trades.	Rural communities, conservative families	Dialogues	Educational Institutions & VLTCs
Courtyard meetings	Female youth and mothers	In-person dialogue	Homes, courtyards, village clusters
Digital Hubs/Info Corners	All NEET youth, local residents	Kiosks, popup booths, peer guides	Youth clubs, schools, LGI offices
Community-Based Hubs and Activities, Youth Opportunity Corners:	All NEET youth, local residents	In every union—audio/visual materials, tactile exhibits, sign-up kiosks.	Councils, bazaars, schools
Pop-up Mobile Booths: Featuring VR goggles, mini quiz shows, sign-up counters in haat bazaars.	All NEET youth, local residents	Mobile content	Rural Markets
Village "Wall of Respect": Local honor rolls with success stories and community validation.	All NEET youth, local residents	Reality show at national media with local facilitation	Both on and offline
Religious/community leaders	Families, male gatekeepers	Sermons, community meetings, videos	Mosques, temples, community
Radio dramas	Skill-focused audio storytelling, localized	Streaming	Nationwide or Local/Regional Channels
Tea stall Adda	All NEET youth, neighbourhood residents	Linked with live streaming	Tea Stall

Examples of Platforms and Their Features

Platform	Purpose	Key Features	Impact
Youth Portal	Central info hub	Role-based access, digital library, news, surveys, social media integration	Enhances transparency, accessibility, and youth ownership.
Mobile App	Learning & engagement tool	Offline access, notifications, audio-visual modules, progress dashboard	Overcomes mobility and safety issues, especially for women.
Chatbot	24/7 AI assistance	Multilingual voice/text, FAQs, pre-scripted journeys	Instant info access, reduces dependency on intermediaries.
Job Expo (District)	Large-scale employment linkages	Live demos, employer booths, CV assistance, panel discussions	Drives public awareness, builds trust, facilitates job matching.
Job Fair (Upazila)	Localized outreach	Local employers, soft skills sessions, family-friendly spaces	Strengthens grassroots engagement and female participation.
Youth Empowerment Centers	Localized outreach and info hub	Localized information hub, gender inclusive safe space, accessible to all	Information dissemination, community building, networking, enhances transparency
Youth Sports Events & Tournaments	National and regional outreach and engagement	Family friendly space, mental and physical well being, life skills through sports	Positive youth engagement, gender inclusive participation, awareness and engagement

Platform Ecosystem

Strategic Campaign Themes & Tools

Dignity of Skilled Labour

- National Docu-Series: 10 episodes featuring family-narrated success stories, broadcast on BTV, YouTube, Facebook. And/or! TVCs and RCs for both mainstream and online medias.

- Billboards/Posters: Captions like "Electrician and Proud," "Tailor. Leader. Provider."

- Skill Champions Day: Recognition ceremonies with ministerial participation.

Gender and Social Norm Transformation

- Friday Khutbah Integration: Religious messaging on dignity of women's labor.

- Home Visit Outreach: Female facilitators engaging families and male guardians.

- Courtyard Dialogues & Mother Circles: Visual, idiomatic conversations focusing on family dynamics.

Behaviour Change and Confidence Building

- Emotional Storytelling: Testimonials, "first earnings," "then vs. now" narratives.

- Youth Co-Creation Labs and Online Blogs/Vlogs: Workshops to refine messaging.

- Psychosocial Modules: Self-worth, public speaking, life planning embedded in training.

Entrepreneurship and Migration Readiness

- Tailored reels and materials for job seekers, migrants, and entrepreneurs.

- Mentorship drives with youth entrepreneurs and diaspora role models.

- Seed grant information campaigns via posters and explainer videos.

Inclusive Design, Audience Segmentation, Targeting and Equity Lens

NEET youth in Bangladesh represent a highly diverse population, and the communication strategy must be carefully tailored to reflect the specific needs and contexts of different sub-groups. Recognizing this diversity ensures that no group is left behind and that each segment feels seen, understood, and included in the program's messaging and outreach.

Adolescent girls/young women often face mobility restrictions and gendered barriers to information. Relational and offline outreach methods are most effective for this group, including courtyard meetings, storytelling forums, engagement through schoolteachers, and activation of mothers' groups to build trust and familiarity.

Rural youth may lack consistent digital access and are more responsive to localised and familiar channels. Practical approaches include announcements at local mosques, posters at tea stalls, and direct engagement through union-level outreach efforts.

Youth with disabilities require communication that accommodates a range of physical and cognitive needs. Inclusive formats such as voice messages, screen-reader-compatible text, captioned videos, and content in sign language ensure equitable access to information and services.

Out-of-school youth, who may be disengaged from formal systems, are more likely to be reached through informal and aspirational spaces. Market-based booths, peer-led engagement activities, and targeted, engaging content on platforms like Facebook and YouTube can spark their interest and motivate them to participate.

This segmented and inclusive approach is essential to ensure the EARN initiative resonates widely, fosters participation, and addresses the unique barriers faced by each group within the broader NEET youth demographic.

Target Group	Tailored Approaches
Girls/Young Woman	Female facilitators, gender-safe spaces, flexible training hours, women role models.
Youth with Disabilities	Braille guides, sign-language videos, inclusive visuals, family engagement.
Religious/Ethnic Minorities	Culturally appropriate messages, local dialect translations, religious leader endorsements.
Rural Youth	Mobile caravans, mosque announcements, tea-stall talks, offline-first design.
Youth at Risk (Substance, Early Marriage	Dignity-focused narratives emphasizing second chances and recovery.

Audience Group	Priority Tactics
Adolescent Girls/Young Women	Through Mothers' groups, female peer leaders, schoolteachers and courtyard sessions
Rural Youth	Tea-stall posters, mosque announcements and union parishad outreach
Youth with Disabilities	Voice messages, screen-reader-friendly content and disability-inclusive visuals
Out-of-School Youth	Market/fair booths, Facebook reels, folk events and community theatre

Audience	Core Barriers	Message Focus	Example Message
Young Women (rural/married)	Mobility, stigma, family control	Dignity, safety, peer success	"She learned from home and now earns from home."
Young Men (urban/underemployed)	Disillusionment, low status of TVET	Aspirational identity, quick results	"Skill is power. Earn your own future."
Parents/Guardians	Fear of dishonor, safety, ROI	Respectability, economic return	"A daughter's skill is a family's strength."
Community Leaders/Imams	Gender norms, reputation concerns	Alignment with faith, social duty	"Supporting girls to learn is part of our deen."
Employers/Private Sector	Perception of unskilled youth	Skill-readiness, attitude, reliability	"Meet your next skilled employee through EARN."

Customisation:

Effective communication within the EARN initiative requires careful tailoring of content to reflect the diverse realities of NEET youth. Segmentation must consider key demographic factors such as gender, age, disability status, and geographic location, distinguishing between urban and rural contexts to ensure relevance and accessibility. Media formats should align with the audience's access and literacy levels, prioritising visual and audio content for low-literacy groups to ensure inclusivity. In addition, communication must directly address the social and structural barriers youth face, such as stigma around female mobility, early marriage, or disability. Building trust with marginalised groups through culturally sensitive, affirming messages is essential to foster engagement and participation.

Content Planning for Communication Action

Project EARN's communication strategy is supported by a curated suite of digital, print, and audio-visual materials designed to resonate across diverse platforms while maintaining a consistent and inclusive brand identity. These

sample materials and content concepts demonstrate the project's messaging style, tone, and engagement principles, offering ready-to-use resources for field teams, partners, and media collaborators. The digital content portfolio includes short motivational video reels for Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok that spotlight real-life success stories, as well as WhatsApp templates for interactive engagement and SMS scripts for behavioural nudges and reminders. Complementing these are print materials such as posters, flyers, and story cards that promote themes like the dignity of skilled labour, gender equity, and family support—used effectively in tea stalls, marketplaces, schools, and homes. Radio and audio scripts, tailored for mosque announcements, community theatre, and localised radio dramas, ensure outreach to low-literacy and remote audiences through culturally resonant storytelling.

To strengthen platform-specific communication, EARN can adopt tailored content strategies. For video, short docu-style stories like "From Homebound to Breadwinner" can build trust and inspire transformation. Posters and infographics should feature bold, clear messaging in Bangla and English, using relatable imagery that promotes inclusive aspirations, such as balancing caregiving and economic participation. Social media campaigns may include interactive reels, myth-busting posts, and user-generated challenges, such as #EARNMyWay, to stimulate peer-driven dialogue. Audio content, such as 10-minute radio dramas or call-in shows, can explore topics like family resistance and youth decision-making. Meanwhile, IVR and SMS-based modules can deliver motivational quotes, enrollment guidance, and weekly training reminders directly to youth with limited internet access.

A strong and consistent visual identity will further enhance message recall and community trust. Suggested branding elements include vibrant yet grounded colours, such as emerald green, deep blue, and mustard; bold, readable fonts in both Bangla and English; and a tagline that encapsulates the mission: "EARN: Empowering Youth, Enabling Futures." Real photographs of diverse youth—especially girls, youth with disabilities, and those from rural and indigenous communities—should be prioritised over stock imagery, emphasising action-oriented visuals that show young people learning, working, and leading.

To ensure these communication efforts remain impactful and adaptive, a dedicated Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework will track both output- and outcome-level indicators. This includes reach and engagement metrics, message resonance, behavioural shifts, and feedback loops through digital analytics, community feedback, and pulse surveys. These insights will enable continuous learning, content refinement, and strategic course correction, ensuring that EARN's communication ecosystem remains youth-centred, inclusive, and responsive throughout the project lifecycle.

Sample Communication Materials and Channel-Specific Concepts

Medium	Content Type	Purpose/Use	Example/Concept
Digital	Short video (2–3 mins) & reels (15-90 seconds)	Inspire trust through real youth success stories	"From Homebound to Breadwinner" – story of a mother running a tailoring business
	WhatsApp templates, SMS scripts	Send reminders, motivational nudges, interactive polls	Weekly motivational messages, training reminders
Print	Posters, flyers, billboards, stickers	Promote themes like skilled labor dignity and gender equity	Posters with taglines: "Shikkha thakey shomman, kausholey thakey aay"
	Visual aids, story cards, mother circle guides	Support courtyard dialogues and home visits	Family story cards promoting youth potential
Audio/Radio	Mosque scripts, folk drama, radio mini-dramas	Engage low-literacy and rural audiences	Mini-dramas on daughters joining training; debates on migration vs entrepreneurship
Social Media	Reels, myth busters, interactive posts	Drive youth engagement and perception change	#EARNMyWay challenge, myth vs fact posts
IVR/Mobile	Voice messages, SMS drip campaigns	Direct outreach to digitally underserved youth	Step-by-step enrollment instructions, motivational quotes
Community	Youth Opportunity Corners, home visits, street theatre	Local access to materials and personalized guidance	Posters, flyers, story cards distributed locally

Visual Identity, Design Principles, and Communication M&E

Category	Key Elements
Visual Identity	Colors: Emerald green, deep blue, mustard Fonts: Bold and clean (Bangla & English)
Design Principles	Use real photos of youth (with consent) Highlight diversity (gender, disability, ethnicity) Include rural-urban balance Favor action shots over passive portraits
Monitoring & Evaluation	Output indicators: Reach, frequency, content distribution Outcome indicators: Perception shifts, behavior change, youth feedback Tools: Digital analytics, pulse surveys, community feedback loops

A Phased Communication Approach for 24 Months

To maximise reach, effectiveness, and long-term impact, the communication strategy for Project EARN will follow a structured, phased approach over the 24-month implementation period. The communication efforts will evolve in alignment with the program's operational stages—starting with awareness-building and moving toward sustained engagement, behaviour change, and institutional visibility.

The first six months will concentrate on mobilisation and trust-building. This initial phase aims to raise awareness among NEET youth, families, and communities, while clarifying the objectives and benefits of the EARN project. Trust will be fostered through hyper-local, relational outreach methods, including courtyard sessions, community meetings, school-based activities, and engagement with women's groups, teachers, and imams. Posters, mobile miking, and FM radio messages will supplement interpersonal channels. At the same time, digital outreach will be launched with the introduction of EARN's Facebook page, the release of short introductory videos, and the activation of a multilingual IVR hotline. Messaging will emphasise introducing the programme, promoting second chances, and positioning vocational skills as pathways to future security and dignity.

Between months 7 and 14, the communication strategy will shift towards motivating behaviour change. This phase will actively promote youth registration and challenge social stigma—particularly surrounding women's participation in skills training and income-generating activities. The campaign will utilise digital storytelling, success videos, and peer-led content across social media and community television, complemented by offline approaches such as theatre for development, rural film screenings, and mother-daughter dialogue sessions. Messages will highlight themes like "Skill earns respect," "Women can work too," and "See what your neighbour achieved," with strong involvement from youth alumni, peer champions, local business leaders, and religious figures to build credibility and inspire.

From months 15 to 21, the focus will shift to deep engagement and retaining participants. By this stage, many youths will be enrolled in training or moving into employment or self-employment. The communication approach will stress continuity, encouragement, and peer-to-peer connections. Tools such as interactive Facebook groups, SMS nudges, and community storytelling events will help keep motivation high and create space for youths to share experiences. Content will showcase real journeys from skill acquisition to income generation, reinforce the message that "Your story matters," and promote ongoing growth under the theme "Grow with EARN." Mentors, facilitators, and private sector partners will be actively involved in highlighting realistic success stories and building confidence.

In the final phase from months 22 to 24, the strategy will turn toward visibility, recognition, and scale-up advocacy. This capstone period will celebrate the achievements of youth participants and advocate for broader institutional ownership and sustainability. Communication will include national media coverage, campaign days, storytelling festivals, and digital highlights through docu-shorts and animations. Messaging will spotlight transformative narratives under banners such as "From NEET to Leader" and "Empowered youth, thriving Bangladesh." This final phase will engage media partners, influencers, DYD leadership, and development stakeholders to amplify impact and promote the EARN model as a replicable approach to youth empowerment and inclusive development.

By phasing the communication strategy in alignment with the 24-month action plan, EARN ensures that messaging is responsive, relevant, and rooted in real-time program dynamics. Each stage builds upon the last—deepening engagement, transforming perceptions, and sustaining momentum as the program moves toward scale and long-term influence.

24-Month Campaign Rollout Plan (Quarterly Phases)

Timeline (Months)	Phase & Focus	Key Actions	Target Groups
Months 1–3 (Q1)	Launch & Awareness	National message framework launch, baseline survey, content prototyping, training LGIs	Implementers, youth leaders, LGIs
Months 4–6 (Q2)	Mass Visibility Drive	Billboards, radio PSAs, posters, TikTok launch, mobile van outreach	NEET youth (esp. male), general public
Months 7–9 (Q3)	Hyperlocal Activation I	Courtyard meetings, Youth Ambassadors deployed, popup IEC corners, folk theatre rollout	Female youth, parents, local influencers
Months 10–12 (Q4)	Digital Engagement Boost	Entrepreneurship reels, online mentorship promotion, IEC content series	Entrepreneurial youth, digital users
Months 13–15 (Q5)	Inclusive Focus	Content for youth with disabilities, ethnic/religious minorities, outreach in tea stalls, madrasas	Marginalized NEET youth
Months 16–18 (Q6)	Family & Community Integration	Special khutbah campaigns, male-focused messaging, radio drama series	Parents, male guardians, conservative areas
Months 19–21 (Q7)	Sustained Push & Storytelling	Sharing local success stories, user-generated content contests, motivation SMS	Current trainees, recent graduates
Months 22–24 (Q8)	Impact Recap & Exit Strategy	Final campaign roundup, learning-sharing events, follow-up surveys, integration into Local Government Institutions (LG) planning	National stakeholders, local governments

ATLAS
OF
COMMUNICATION
MATERIALS

1. Communication Actions and Materials for Project Implementation

a. Communication for Training Activities

The training sessions are the heart of the EARN Project's youth empowerment efforts. To build the skills, confidence, and sense of belonging among NEET youth, communication materials are crafted to be highly visual, multi-lingual, and gender sensitive. They also prioritise eco-friendly and reusable formats to reflect sustainability values. The communication role during training is to nurture dignity and motivation, creating an environment where youth feel valued and supported. Materials such as illustrated workbooks and story flashcards are designed to facilitate learning and reflection, while badges and certificates celebrate progress and achievements. To keep engagement continuous, motivational posters and digital kits with QR codes linking to WhatsApp groups encourage peer interaction and feedback collection.

Communication Role	Build belonging, dignity, and motivation
Key Features	Visual, multi-lingual, gender-sensitive, eco-friendly, reusable
Materials Used	Flipbook/AV, welcome poster, rights card, illustrated workbook, facilitation guide, skill roadmap, tracker, badges, certificates, motivational posters, WhatsApp QR, feedback box, story flashcards, digital training kit

b. Indoor Branding and Engagement

To further strengthen the EARN Project's visibility and build trust within training centres and community hubs, a range of indoor branding and engagement tools is utilised. These structured messaging tactics aim to enhance retention of key information among participants and promote community buy-in, contributing directly to improved enrollment and sustained participation. Whiteboards and information boards are updated daily with essential messages related to the training and project goals. Simulated demo areas, or dummy training facilities, provide hands-on previews of the training environment and activities, helping to reduce hesitation among potential enrollees. Wall posters and banners, which rotate regularly to maintain freshness and interest, support program recall rates. Additionally, pop-up booths or kiosks strategically placed at fairs and community events serve as obvious touchpoints that have successfully increased walk-in registrations.

Purpose	Strengthen visibility and trust through indoor messaging to improve retention and community buy-in
Tools & Tactics	Whiteboards & Info Boards, Dummy Training Facilities, Wall Posters & Banners, Pop-up Booths/Kiosks
Impact Metrics	Retention ↑ 20%, Enrollment hesitation ↓ 30%, Program recall ↑ 18–22%, Walk-in registrations ↑ 25%

c. Communication in Workshops/Meetings/Events

Workshops bring together multiple stakeholders, including youth, families, trainers, and local leaders, to foster understanding and collective ownership of the project goals. Communication here is designed to be interactive and inclusive, with a role-specific approach ensuring that each participant feels engaged and clear about their contributions. The use of lical and visually rich materials support clarity and inclusiveness. For example, colour-coded badges distinguish stakeholder groups, while story posters and timeline banners provide context and shared purpose. Feedback forms and certificates motivate active participation and recognition.

Communication Role	Ensure inclusion, clarity, and shared purpose
Key Features	Interactive, inclusive, role-specific, bilingual, reusable
Materials Used	Agenda, stakeholder info sheets, color-coded badges, flipcharts, story posters, timeline banner, AV, feedback forms, QR signup, certificates, press kit

d. Roadshows and Info Booths

Public spaces such as markets, rural haats rural haats and transport hubs provide opportunities to reach a diverse audience. Communication actions here aim to spark curiosity and quick engagement through bold, eye-catching designs and gamified formats. Materials include branded canopies and posters for visibility, flyers and standees for information, and interactive elements like spinner games and selfie zones to attract and retain interest. Referral cards and AV loops provide further engagement touchpoints. Folk forms like mystic songs, puthi and other performances can be synched. Folk forms like mystic songs, puthi and other performances can be synced.

Communication Role	Spark curiosity, visibility, quick engagement
Key Features	Bold, eye-catching, youth-centric, interactive
Materials Used	Branded canopy, posters, flyers, standees, spinner game, referral card, AV loop, volunteer badges, quick info sheets, selfie zone

e. Help Desks and Information Corners

To provide consistent and accessible project information, help desks are set up at strategic locations such as schools, training centres, and local government offices. These are designed to build trust and clarity through simple, friendly, and multilingual communication. Whether staffed or self-service, the desks are equipped with FAQs booklets, helpline posters, flipcharts, and QR codes linking to videos or WhatsApp support. Suggestion boxes and digital info pads allow for ongoing feedback and updates.

Communication Role	Build trust, ensure clarity, offer ongoing support
Key Features	Simple, friendly, multilingual
Materials Used	FAQs booklet, helpline poster, flipchart, QR code for video/WhatsApp, takeaway leaflets, banner, suggestion box, digital info pad

f. IEC Kit for Field Teams

To maintain consistent and high-quality communication in diverse field environments, outreach teams are provided with IEC kits. These kits are portable, easy to use, and carry the project's branding. The kits include flashcards, posters, talking guides, checklists, WhatsApp posters, community maps, voice wall starter packs, USB drives with audiovisual materials, and cloth bags.

Communication Role	Ensure quality communication across diverse field settings
Key Features	Portable, easy to use, branded
Materials Used	Flashcards, posters, talking guide, checklist, WhatsApp poster, community map, voice wall starter pack, USB with AVs, cloth bag

g. Printed Materials for Local Circulation

To reinforce visibility and awareness of the EARN Project within communities, printed materials play a vital role in both public spaces and household settings. These materials are designed with bold visuals and simple, clear language to ensure messages are easily understood and remembered by diverse audiences. Durability is a key consideration to maximise their lifespan and repeated exposure. Leaflets and wall posters are strategically distributed in high-traffic locations to spark curiosity and provide quick, accessible information. Pocket guides serve as handy references that youth and their families can keep for ongoing support. Calendars that incorporate project milestones serve as continual reminders throughout the year, while comic strip handouts engage younger or less literate audiences through storytelling. Sticker packs and illustrated FAQs further supplement the communication by adding interactive and visual elements that reinforce key messages.

Communication Role	Reinforce visibility, awareness, and recall
Key Features	Bold visuals, simple wording, durable format
Materials Used	Leaflets, wall posters, pocket guides, calendar, comic strip handouts, sticker pack, illustrated FAQ

h. Visibility Materials

Establishing a strong presence in communities and during project events is essential for building identity, trust, and brand recall for EARN. Visibility materials are developed with consistent branding and multi-use design elements that allow flexibility across various platforms and settings. Banners and tent branding create recognisable focal points at events and public gatherings. Table flags and signage further reinforce the project's identity in smaller settings like meetings or info booths. Branded apparel worn by field teams fosters a sense of unity and professionalism, while pen and pad sets serve as practical giveaways that keep the project top of mind. Eco-friendly giveaways align with sustainability values and appeal to youth and community members alike.

Communication Role	Build identity, trust, and brand recall
Key Features	Consistent branding, multi-use design
Materials Used	Banners, table flags, branded apparel, tent branding, signage, pen/pad sets, eco-friendly giveaways

i. Partner & Stakeholder Updates

Maintaining strong collaboration with partners and stakeholders requires timely, clear, and actionable communication. Regular updates foster transparency, build trust, and ensure all collaborators are aligned with project progress and next steps. Quarterly update emails summarise recent achievements and upcoming activities. WhatsApp broadcast cards provide quick, accessible alerts or reminders. Bulletin board inserts and summary slides serve as visual reminders in shared spaces. Impact snapshots highlight key outcomes to reinforce value and sustain engagement.

Communication Role	Build trust, shift biases, inspire local backing
Key Features	Simple, respectful, story-based, culturally sensitive, visual
Materials Used	Invitation letter, story/testimonial cards, facilitator flashcards, wall calendar, mini leaflets, pledge board, portable sound system, hands-up props

j. Online Events for Wider Reach

To showcase success stories and reach a broader audience, online events are leveraged. The communication focus here is to inspire pride and emotional connection, particularly among youth, through mobile-first and accessible content featuring authentic youth voices. Materials such as short teaser videos, testimonial clips, and quote graphics provide dynamic storytelling, supported by FAQ slides and interactive polls to engage the audience. Social media kits and thank-you posts help sustain momentum after events.

Communication Role	Inspire pride and emotional connection online
Key Features	Mobile-first, accessible, real youth voices
Materials Used	Short teaser videos, event banners, flyers, testimonial clips, quote graphics, FAQ slides, polls, thank-you posts, certificates, emailers, social media kit

k. Digital Knowledge Products

To demonstrate the project's impact, scalability, and innovative approach to partners, funders, and the wider public, digital knowledge products are developed with an emphasis on insightfulness, data-driven content, and polished presentation. Infographics visually summarize complex data for easy understanding. Learning briefs and slide decks provide detailed analysis and progress reports, useful for strategic decision-making and advocacy. E-newsletters keep stakeholders regularly informed, while digital fact sheets highlight key metrics and milestones. Animated explainers creatively communicate processes or concepts, increasing engagement and comprehension.

Communication Role	Show impact, scale, and innovation
Key Features	Insightful, data-driven, polished
Materials Used	Infographics, learning briefs, slide decks, e-newsletters, digital fact sheets, animated explainers

2. Communication Content During the Training Phase

During the training phase of the EARN Project, communication efforts focus on sustaining motivation among enrolled NEET youth, minimizing dropout rates, and actively engaging their families and local communities. These communications serve to reinforce the value of the training, encourage perseverance, and strengthen support systems surrounding the youth.

a) Key Communication Tactics

At the national level, media channels continue to play a vital role in maintaining the project's visibility and motivating participants through stories of progress and success. Locally, home visits and courtyard sessions are essential tools for family engagement, providing a platform for open dialogue, reassurance, and encouragement. Specialised messaging targets women, minorities, and vulnerable youth, addressing their unique challenges and reinforcing inclusive support. Additionally, integrated behavioural messages, such as awareness around drug-related issues, are incorporated sensitively to promote healthy and positive lifestyles.

b) Audience-Specific Messaging

The communication strategy is finely tuned to address the diverse needs and concerns of multiple stakeholder groups involved in or influencing the training process:

Audience	Message Focus
NEET Youth (General)	Emphasis on skill progress, peer support, and motivation to continue training.
Women	Assurance of safety, continuity of participation, and sharing role models to inspire confidence.
Third-Gender / Disabled	Inclusive support structures and success stories that highlight their achievements and possibilities. A team of third gender performers generates theatre, folk songs and others.
Parents	Updates on child progress, emphasizing financial benefits and future opportunities.
Community Leaders	Messaging around social stability and the positive economic growth resulting from youth empowerment.
Employers / Policymakers	Highlight employability of trained youth and opportunities for collaboration.

c) Media Channels and Regional Customisation

A variety of media channels are employed to ensure effective message delivery, carefully customised based on regional contexts, cultural nuances, and audience preferences. These include mass media platforms such as television, radio, and social media for broad outreach, alongside local FM stations and visible posters to reach more localised audiences. Peer group meetings and digital tools complement these approaches by fostering interactive and ongoing communication.

This layered and audience-focused communication plan during the training phase ensures that enrolled youth remain engaged and supported, families feel involved and reassured, and communities recognize the broader social and economic benefits of the project.

3. Communication Actions & Materials for Core Things/Activities of/for EARN

a. Community-Level Meetings and Local Influencer Engagement

Engaging community influencers is vital for shifting social norms and fostering local support for NEET youth inclusion. Communication actions at this level emphasise simplicity, respect, and culturally sensitive storytelling to build trust and inspire backing. Materials such as invitation letters, testimonial cards, and facilitator flashcards guide the conversations, while visual aids like wall calendars and mini leaflets reinforce messages beyond the meeting. Interactive tools such as pledge boards and portable sound systems help stimulate participation and ownership.

Communication Role	Promote transparency, progress, and alignment
Key Features	Timely, clear, actionable
Materials Used	Quarterly update email, WhatsApp broadcast card, bulletin board insert, summary slide, impact snapshot

b. Informal Uthan Boithok Sessions

Uthan Boithoks are informal, community-based gatherings, often focused on girls and families. These sessions provide a relaxed environment to build trust and motivation using women-friendly and story-driven approaches. Visual invitations and role model videos help draw participants in, while talking cards, dream cards, and drawing sheets encourage personal expression. Portable materials such as mats and reusable bags support flexible and sustainable engagement in familiar settings.

Communication Role	Build trust and motivation in familiar settings
Key Features	Women-friendly, story-driven, portable
Materials Used	Visual invite, role model video, flip chart, talking cards, mat, dream card, drawing sheets, photo board, reminder slip, reusable bag

c. Testimonial-Based Materials

The power of real stories cannot be overstated in creating emotional connections and establishing credibility. Testimonial-based materials amplify the voices of NEET youth who have benefited from the project, inspiring others and validating the impact of the interventions. Video testimonials capture authentic narratives and expressions that resonate deeply with viewers. Photo stories visually document transformation journeys, complemented by quote cards highlighting key messages and sentiments. Before-and-after posters offer tangible evidence of progress, and a dedicated "Voices of EARN" wall or display creates a communal space for sharing success stories, fostering pride and motivation.

Communication Role	Create emotional connection and credibility
Key Features	Real voices, diverse representation
Materials Used	Video testimonials, photo stories, quote cards, before-after posters, "Voices of EARN" wall

d. Youth-Generated Content

Empowering NEET youth to co-create content and share their voices is integral to building ownership, ensuring relevance, and adding authenticity to the project's communications. Youth-led creative expression brings energy and credibility that resonates strongly within peer networks. Formats include short videos that showcase day-to-day experiences and successes, poems and art posts that express personal journeys, memes for relatable humour and social commentary, and blog or vlog entries offering more profound reflections. Peer interviews and digital zines further diversify content, creating platforms for youth storytelling and leadership.

Communication Role	Build ownership, relevance, and authenticity
Key Features	Fun, creative, youth-led
Materials Used	Short videos, poems, art posts, memes, blog/vlog entries, peer interviews, digital zine

e. Edutainment Campaigns

Purpose: Use entertainment to educate and engage youth/community.

Communication Role	Make learning fun, emotional, and memorable.
Key Features	Relatable stories, humor, and drama
Materials Used	Street drama kit, comic books, puppet scripts, radio jingle, mobile AV van, local song remix, mascot or character card.

f. Parent-Youth Joint Sessions

Recognising the importance of family support, joint sessions for parents and youth are organised to create a shared vision and empathy around NEET youth participation. Communication here adopts a respectful and soft tone, using relatable stories.

Materials include storybooks, testimonial videos, and handouts for parents, alongside interactive tools such as dream walls, pledge cards, and discussion boards that facilitate dialogue and commitment.

Communication Role	Create shared vision, empathy, and support
Key Features	Relatable stories, soft tone, respect for elders
Materials Used	Storybook, dream wall, testimonial videos, handouts for parents, pledge card, activity mat, discussion board

g. Peer Networking Events

To foster motivation, mentoring, and a sense of identity among NEET youth and alumni, peer networking events are held. These youth-led, informal, and celebratory gatherings foster pride and a sense of belonging. Materials such as 'My Journey' cards, experience booths, badge sets, and group photo frames encourage sharing and bonding. Open mic setups and snack packs with motivational messages enhance the welcoming atmosphere.

Communication Role	Strengthen identity, pride, and belonging
Key Features	Youth-led, informal, celebratory
Materials Used	'My Journey' cards, experience booth, badge sets, group photo frame, quote wall, open mic setup, snack pack with message

h. Employer Linkage Sessions

These sessions connect trained youth with potential employers and job platforms, promoting confidence and alignment with opportunities. The communication approach is professional, success-oriented, and informative. Materials include youth profile cards, job-matching posters, success story booklets, and resume templates. Name tags, feedback QR codes, and thank-you folders support smooth interaction and follow-up.

Communication Role	Promote confidence, alignment, and opportunity
Key Features	Professional, informative, success-oriented
Materials Used	Youth profile cards, job-matching posters, success story booklet, name tags, resume template pad, feedback QR, thank-you folder

i. Local Media Engagement

Involving journalists, radio hosts, and local influencers is essential for shaping a positive public narrative about NEET youth empowerment. The communication strategy highlights real stories, local heroes, and outcomes. Materials prepared for media include briefs, case photo decks, interview guides, event invitations, and press kits in both print and USB formats. Quote cards provide succinct messaging support.

Communication Role	Shape positive public narrative around NEET empowerment
Key Features	Real stories, local heroes, tangible outcomes
Materials Used	Media brief, case photo deck, interview guide, event invitation, press kit (print/USB), quote cards

j. SMS and WhatsApp Outreach

Direct messaging through SMS and WhatsApp is employed to reinforce training reminders, motivational messages, and quick updates. The content is clear, short, and action-focused to maximize engagement. Messages include tips, success stories, FAQs, help links, and video clip links to support continuous learning and encouragement.

Communication Role	Reinforce messages, updates, and reminders
Key Features	Clear, short, action-focused
Materials Used	Training reminders, tips, motivational quotes, success stories, help links, FAQs, video clip links

This comprehensive integration of printed, visibility, testimonial, digital, partner, and youth-generated content ensures that the EARN Project's communication strategy is multifaceted, inclusive, and dynamic. Each material and communication action supports the overall mission of empowering NEET youth, fostering community involvement, and sustaining stakeholder engagement through clear, culturally relevant, and inspiring messaging.

4. National-Level Communication Actions and Campaign Content

Supporting EARN During the Training Phase

As the EARN Project progresses into its training phase, national-level communication assumes a dynamic campaign-style role aimed at sustaining motivation among NEET youth, amplifying project visibility, and reinforcing social support. While local-level efforts build direct engagement, national actions serve to normalise participation, build aspiration, and create a compelling public narrative around skill training and youth empowerment. These efforts contribute not only to dropout prevention but also to broad social acceptance of the training process.

a) Objectives of National Communication

- Sustain Motivation: Maintain enthusiasm and confidence among enrolled NEET youth throughout the training phase.

- Build Visibility and Public Trust: Establish the EARN Project as a nationally recognized, trusted program.

- Normalise Training Participation: Encourage communities, families, and influencers to treat skill development as a respected and viable path.

- Reinforce Positive Behaviours: Integrate behavioral messages to address social barriers such as stigma, drug abuse, or gender restrictions.

b) Core Campaign Approach

The national communication strategy during the training phase is framed as an integrated public motivation campaign, combining high-reach broadcast tools with emotionally resonant storytelling and periodic thematic bursts (e.g., "Week of Skills," "Voices of Change," or "She Learns Festival").

c) Key Components of the National Campaign:

1. Inspiration through Mass Media

Television and radio spots showcase youth currently undergoing training, highlighting their progress, personal growth, and determination. These stories are presented through dramatised testimonials, docu-style short films, and real-life clips, offering the audience a window into the journey of transformation.

2. Campaign Narratives: "She Learns, He Builds, They Rise"

Gender-balanced taglines and visuals ensure inclusivity, while focusing on self-betterment and resilience. Campaigns are adapted in urban, semi-urban, and rural dialects to ensure reach and resonance.

3. National Online Video Series and Testimonial Clips

A centrally released video series—published via YouTube, Facebook, and embedded in partner websites—follows youth through the training phase, sharing challenges, milestones, and support mechanisms in place.

4. Motivational Hashtag Movements (#MyEARNJourney, #SheLearns)

These hashtags are used in structured social media campaigns where enrolled NEET youth and alumni post training highlights, skill development milestones, and support received from their communities. National influencers, mentors, and project ambassadors echo these hashtags in supportive messages and content.

5. Televised Panel Talks and Family Outreach Episodes

Weekly television talk segments are aired on national channels featuring NEET youth, trainers, family members, and experts. These promote open dialogue on the importance of staying in training and how families and communities can offer support.

6. Radio Jingles and Community Story Capsules

Broadcast on national and regional FM, radio jingles with catchy messages and rhythmic motivation energize the audience. Short radio capsules tell local success stories, including families who supported their daughters or differently-abled youth who completed training despite barriers.

7. Animated Behavioral Clips and PSA Series

A series of 30–60 second animated videos focus on issues such as drug resistance, family support, and gender inclusivity, broadcast across national TV and digital platforms during high-engagement slots.

8. Press and Digital Editorials

National newspapers and online news platforms run bi-weekly editorial pieces showcasing EARN's progress, spotlighting youth profiles, training innovations, and economic opportunities created through the project. These reinforce the social value and return on investment of the training phase.

9. Public Transit and Billboard Branding

Metropolitan transport hubs, buses, and pedestrian hotspots display bold EARN visuals with inspirational slogans and real faces of enrolled trainees to normalise participation and encourage curiosity.

10. Mobile-Based Engagement Tools

SMS notifications and automated voice greetings featuring celebrity voices or alumni share motivating quotes, skill tips, or reminders. These national messages are personalized to the training calendar, synced with events or achievements.

d) Content and Messaging Focus at National Level

Audience Segment	Message Themes at National Level
NEET Youth (General)	"Your journey matters."; "Each skill is a step forward."
Women	"She learns, we grow."; Safety and dignity in skill development
Third-Gender/Disabled	"All abilities welcome."; Voices from diverse experiences
Parents	"Your support powers their future."; The long-term returns of skill-building
Community at Large	"Skilled youth build stronger societies."; Community pride in youth development
Employers/Policymakers	"Trained youth, ready workforce."; Showcasing job readiness and project outcomes

e) Media Mix and Campaign Frequency

The national campaign employs a layered frequency model: high-frequency bursts around key training milestones (e.g., onboarding, midway, skill demo, completion) supported by steady background messaging through radio, SMS, and social media. Channel selection is guided by content type, regional relevance, and audience accessibility.

Media Channel	Function During Training Phase
TV & Radio Broadcast	Public motivation, storytelling, family involvement
YouTube & Facebook	Visual inspiration, testimonials, influencer engagement
Newspapers & Blogs	Editorial credibility, deep-dive narratives
Posters/Billboards	Visibility, mass outreach, quick recall
SMS & Voice Messages	Motivation for low-tech users, localized nudges
Online Challenges	Engagement, user-generated content, momentum building
Transit Advertising	Normalizing youth in training, public endorsement

By presenting the training phase as a national movement, the EARN Project aims to generate not only higher training completion rates but also long-term shifts in public perception about skill development, youth capacity, and alternative education pathways. The national campaign reinforces local efforts, making every individual's progress a story of national pride.

5. Content for Channels

Channel	Function	Target/Impact
Social Media (FB, YT, TikTok)	Localized content, peer-sharing, polls, contests	Build awareness and trust among youth
Online Video Commercials (OVCs)	Real NEET stories, emotional storytelling	Boost motivation and emotional impact
Influencer Content	Testimonials, Q&As by local figures	Enhance credibility and relatability
Hashtag Campaigns (#SheLearns)	User-generated content, skill showcasing	Promote community pride and belonging
Memes/Challenges	Humorous, youth-friendly formats	Reduce stigma
Facebook/Instagram Lives	Real-time dialogue with NEETs and alumni	Build trust and transparency
YouTube Series/Testimonials	Long narratives for families	Strengthen family support
SMS/Voice Calls	Reminders and audio clips	Reach non-smartphone users
Motion Graphics	Animated explainers	Accessibility for low-literacy youth
Audio-Visual Content (Radio/TV)	Local success stories, spots	Boost familiarity and positive narratives
Website	Info hub, registration, archives	Ensure transparency and accessibility
Email/Newsletters	Impact updates for partners/policymakers	Maintain stakeholder engagement
Chatbots (WhatsApp)	Automated regional/gender-specific support	Scalable and personalized service
National Hotlines	Toll-free guidance and grievance handling	Build trust and safety

6. Content Considerations by Type

Effective communication requires content that is sensitive to gender, location, cultural norms, and specific vulnerabilities. Female-led stories and visuals are prioritised to empower young women and address gender-related barriers. Location-targeted strategies differentiate between urban areas — where digital platforms dominate — and rural regions, where radio and SMS remain primary communication channels.

Storytelling techniques use alumni videos and podcasts to provide authentic narratives that resonate deeply. Specific health-related topics, such as drug awareness, are addressed through radio messaging tailored to local contexts. Religious framing leverages mosque announcements, khutbahs (sermons), and religious radio programs to reach faith-based audiences respectfully.

Minority inclusion is actively pursued by providing content in local languages, accessible formats such as braille and sign language, and diverse visual representations. Vulnerable groups in remote or climate-affected areas receive targeted communication via interactive voice response (IVR) systems, while flyers and localised posters address economic disadvantages and promote inclusion.

Content Aspect	Approach/Tools	Purpose/Impact
Gender Sensitivity	Female-led stories and visuals	Empower women and promote gender inclusion
Location Targeting	Urban = digital; Rural = SMS, radio	Tailor channel to audience accessibility
Storytelling	Alumni videos, podcasts	Authenticity and emotional engagement
Drug Awareness	Radio messages	Address health and social risks
Eve teasing and violence against women and girls	OVCs, Local performances and IEC materials	Targeting male perpetrators
Religious Framing	Mosque announcements, khutbahs, religious radio	Reach faith communities respectfully
Minority Inclusion	Local languages, braille, sign language, diverse visuals	Foster inclusion of marginalized groups
Vulnerable Groups	IVR, flyers, localized posters	Ensure outreach to poorest and climate-affected

Content Design & Branding Principles

A core element underpinning the EARN Project's communication actions is the careful design and consistent branding of all content. The language used is primarily simple Bangla, enriched with regional dialects where appropriate to ensure clarity and relatability. A motivational tone permeates all messaging to inspire and empower NEET youth.

Visuals emphasise authenticity by featuring real NEET youth and photographs, along with culturally resonant symbols to foster connection and pride. Brand consistency is maintained through the unified application of coluors, logos, and typography across all materials and channels, strengthening recognition and trust.

Inclusivity is a key principle: content is adapted into accessible formats such as braille and audio, and deliberately represents gender and diversity to ensure no group feels excluded.

Recognising the diversity of target audiences, specific channel add-ons are employed to enhance effectiveness:

• For women and girls, communication is intensified through courtyard sessions and female-led home visits, creating safe and familiar spaces for engagement.

• Urban populations are primarily reached via FM radio and digital platforms, while rural audiences receive information through posters and outreach via trusted field mechanisms.

• Drug awareness messages are powerfully conveyed through street theatre performances, tapping into cultural storytelling traditions.

• Religious messaging utilises mosque talks to respectfully engage faith-based communities.

• Minority groups benefit from tailored content and facilitators who understand local languages and customs.

- Vulnerable youth, including those in climate-affected zones or living in poverty, receive messaging timed and adapted to their specific challenges.

Content Design Principles	Details
Language	Simple Bangla with regional dialects; motivational tone
Visuals	Real NEET youth/photos; cultural symbols
Brand Consistency	Unified colors, logos, typography
Inclusivity	Braille, audio formats; gender and diversity representation
Channel-Specific Add-ons	Target Audience & Approach
Women	Courtyard sessions, female home visits
Urban	FM radio and digital platforms
Rural	Posters and outreach activities
Drug Awareness	Street theatre
Religious Messaging	Mosque talks
Minority Groups	Tailored content and facilitators
Vulnerable Youth	Climate-timed, poverty-sensitive messaging

This framework of content design and branding ensures that the EARN Project's communication remains clear, consistent, inclusive, and culturally sensitive, thus maximizing its impact across varied audiences and communication channels.

7. Post-Training Phase Communication and Content Planning

The Post-Training Phase of Project EARN marks the critical transition from skills development to real-world application. Communication at this stage must consolidate achievements, amplify success, and inspire trust across communities, employers, policymakers, and NEET youth themselves. The communication objectives are to reinforce the value of vocational training, celebrate alumni outcomes, stimulate peer referrals, and establish a sustainable ecosystem of support and recognition.

Publications will act as evidence of transformation. Alumni booklets will narrate journeys from NEET to employment, especially highlighting stories from women, third-gender individuals, and persons with disabilities. These will be widely distributed at fairs, schools, and NGO outreach events. Certification posters, featuring proud portraits of graduates, will be displayed in communal spaces such as tea stalls, village centres, and schools. One-page success flyers with impact quotes and statistics will serve as quick-read tools in both print and digital formats. Career brochures will guide alumni toward pathways in employment, licensing, or entrepreneurship and will be offered during exit counseling or downloadable online.

Broadcast and satellite media will play a powerful role in normalizing vocational dignity. Radio segments will feature voice-based alumni stories on local FM channels, resonating with rural audiences. Television will air emotional, uplifting alumni testimonials during peak viewing hours. Short "Where Are They Now" public service announcements will run frequently, celebrating alumni milestones in 60-second capsules.

Digital platforms will elevate alumni as aspirational figures. Weekly social media posts will spotlight individual successes using photos, hashtags, and direct quotes. LinkedIn will host resume-style career stories to attract recruiters and formal stakeholders. Graduation reels—short videos from certificate award events—will circulate widely, creating a celebratory ripple. Alumni-led WhatsApp groups will foster mentorship among trainees. For low-literacy youth, animated success diaries will turn complex journeys into shareable, engaging narratives.

Outdoor and experiential branding will extend the alumni presence into community landscapes. Painted wall murals in towns and villages will showcase local success stories and inspire pride. Honor boards in training centers and district offices will celebrate top graduates. Mobile roadshows will bring these narratives to life with traveling vans that host exhibits, demonstrations, and live alumni talks in underserved areas.

Community-level communication will be highly participatory. Graduation ceremonies, attended by families and local leaders, will not only recognise trainee achievement but also legitimise their skills in the public's eyes. Peer referral drives will encourage alumni to bring in new NEET youth, who will be incentivised with recognition or digital badges. Village talks by alumni—informal yet impactful—will create personal connections backed by visual aids. Indoor branding will serve as a constant reminder of potential success within institutional environments. Training centres will feature alumni walls and framed Hall of Fame displays. "Meet-the-Alumni" days will allow trainees to engage directly with former students, creating a living loop of inspiration and guidance.

Faith-based communication will align EARN's mission with community values. Messages from Imams and madrasa teachers—delivered via bulletins, Jummah sermons, or Islamic YouTube—will highlight the dignity and self-reliance associated with vocational work.

To ensure inclusivity, special communication strands will reach underserved segments. For indigenous and ethnic minorities, content will be developed in tribal languages and shared through community radio or local youth clubs, using familiar dress and local icons. For climate-vulnerable populations, communication will link vocational skills (like solar repair) to climate resilience, using survivor narratives and deploying them in disaster-prone zones. For the extreme poor, ultra-simplified materials—like day-in-the-life videos or visuals using common items like rice or coins—will be shown in public spaces like bus stands and training centers. Finally, regional dialects and infrastructure realities will shape localised messaging, spread through local influencers and vernacular radio channels.

Post-Training Communication Strategy: Summary Table

a. Publications

Material	Content Focus	Distribution Channels
Alumni Booklets	Success stories of graduates from NEET groups	Fairs, schools, NGO partners
Certification Posters	Portraits of certified alumni	Tea stalls, schools, community centers
Success Flyers	Impact stats and quotes	Events, newspapers, online sharing
Career Brochures	Career, licensing, and entrepreneurship guides	Exit counseling, DYD offices, digital platforms

b. Broadcast & Satellite Media

Format	Description	Target Audience
Radio Alumni Stories	Real voice stories on FM	Rural listeners
TV Testimonials	Video stories aired in primetime	General public
"Where Are They Now" PSAs	1-min updates on alumni success	Mass media viewers/listeners

c. Digital Communication

Channel	Format & Purpose	Audience/Usage
Social Media Spotlights	Weekly posts with real photos/quotes	Youth, public followers
LinkedIn Career Stories	Resume-style alumni profiles	Employers, recruiters
Graduation Reels	Short videos of certificate events	Families, trainees, alumni
Digital Mentorship Circles	Alumni-led WhatsApp support groups	Current and new trainees
Animated Success Diaries	Short, low-literacy-friendly videos	Rural, semi-literate youth

d. Outdoor & Interactive Branding

Medium	Function	Deployment Areas
Wall Murals	Painted portraits of alumni	Towns, village walls
Local Honor Boards	Names/photos of top alumni	Training centers, DYD offices
Mobile Roadshows	Traveling vans with exhibits, live talks	Remote and semi-urban areas

e. Community Communication

Activity	Purpose	Audience
Graduation Ceremonies	Recognition events with families	Local leaders, parents
Peer Referral Drives	Alumni refer NEET youth	Communities, alumni networks
Village Talks	Real-time storytelling by alumni	Local youth, guardians

f. Indoor Branding & Simulation

Element	Description	Location
Alumni Walls	Visual displays of success	Training centers, offices
Meet-the-Alumni Days	Interactive Q&A with graduates	Training institutions
Hall of Fame Displays	Framed alumni showcase	Events, institutional spaces

h. Inclusive Outreach

Group	Approach	Channels/Content Format
Minority Groups	Local language, cultural dress, real stories	Community radio, youth clubs
Climate-Vulnerable	Link training to resilience (e.g., solar skills)	Disaster zone deployments
Extreme Poor	Icons, rice/fare visuals, simple video stories	Bus stands, VLTCs, rural TV
Regional Focus	Dialect-aware content, local influencers	Local radio, offline meetups

8. Communication Actions & Materials for Regional and Field-Level Communication for Rural and Underserved Areas

At the regional and field levels, communication actions are adapted to suit rural and underserved populations with a focus on face-to-face engagement, culturally appropriate outreach, and leveraging trusted local information channels. Bulletin inserts in local newsletters provide brief but trusted updates, while field flipcharts offer step-by-step visual guides that facilitate comprehension during face-to-face interactions. Posters with QR codes displayed in public spaces normalise training participation and provide easy access to digital content.

Miking through loudspeakers broadcasting in local dialects reaches even remote audiences, making project messages widely heard. Uthan Baithaks — informal courtyard talks especially for women and families — build household confidence and community support. Door-to-door outreach, particularly led by female facilitators, plays a critical role in converting hesitant families by addressing their concerns personally. Complementing this, tea stall sessions create informal male NEET peer circles that foster discussion and information exchange. Home visits by female ambassadors specifically engage mothers and guardians, building assurances of safety and support.

Police box branding and signage leverage institutional trust points to enhance visibility and legitimacy. High-visibility banners and billboards further increase community recall. Street dramas combine entertainment with messaging, drawing crowds and embedding key ideas through cultural expression. Community communication modules incorporate crowd polls and real-time updates, allowing localised and adaptive messaging responsive to emerging needs and feedback.

Regional/Field Tactics	Description	Purpose/Impact
Bulletin Inserts	Local newsletter blurbs	Trusted info channel for communities
Field Flipcharts	Visual stepwise guides	Boost face-to-face engagement
Posters	Public displays with QR codes	Normalise training and access info
Miking	Loudspeaker announcements in local dialects	Reach remote, dispersed populations
Uthan Baithaks	Courtyard talks for women/families	Build household confidence
Door-to-Door Outreach	Female-led home visits	Convert hesitant families

Regional/Field Tactics	Description	Purpose/Impact
Tea Stall Sessions	Male peer talk circles	Informal peer engagement
Home Visits by Female Ambassadors	Engage mothers/guardians	Build safety assurance and trust
Police Box Branding	Branding at local law enforcement points	Enhance institutional trust
Banners/Billboards	High-visibility public branding	Strengthen recall and awareness
Street Drama/Songs	Entertainment with messaging	Drive engagement and embed messages
Community Communication Modules	Crowd polls, real-time updates	Localized, adaptive messaging
Open Screening using TV salesroom	Partner with Electronics Brands and their showrooms	Peri-urban youth will be reached

9. Post Training National-Level Communication

Driving Policy Support, Public Awareness, and Perception Shifts

As the EARN Project moves into the post-training phase, national-level communication takes on the critical role of scaling impact, validating outcomes, and shaping public discourse on vocational education. Beyond motivating individual youth, the strategic objective at this phase is to shift societal perceptions, normalize skilled professions, and reinforce the legitimacy of vocational pathways as mainstream, future-oriented career choices. Simultaneously, these communication actions aim to secure policy attention, inter-ministerial alignment, and expanded resource commitments from national actors and development partners.

Purpose of National-Level Communication

National communication in the post-training phase operates at the intersection of public influence, governance impact, and system-building. The specific objectives are:

- To normalize vocational and skill-based careers as smart, respected, and economically viable professions.

- To celebrate EARN's outcomes across national platforms, ensuring visibility not just of the youth but also of the government's leadership and coordination capacity.

- To enhance public trust in structured, state-led skill development programs, moving beyond one-time interventions to long-term systems change.

- To attract new policy allies and donors, enabling scale-up and sustained investment across ministries, districts, and marginalized populations.

Tools and Tactics for National Visibility

National-level communications at this stage use high-reach, emotionally compelling tools tailored to inspire the public, influence policymakers, and assure stakeholders of the project's impact and scalability. These tools not only highlight individual success but also frame EARN as a model of development innovation and inclusive growth.

Communication Tool	Purpose & Deployment
TV Testimonials & PSA Series	Short features of EARN graduates in diverse trades aired during national prime time. Highlights transformation and dignity in skilled labor.
Success Data Flyers & Graduation Reels	Used in national press briefings, newspaper inserts, ministry portals, and digital platforms. Present both data impact and emotional narrative.
LinkedIn & Digital News Features	Alumni career stories shared on LinkedIn, Prothom Alo Digital, BDNews24, etc., targeting professional, policymaker, and employer networks.
Press Releases & National Milestone Events	Celebratory national launches (e.g., "10,000 Graduates Achieved") with ministerial presence, media coverage, and unified branding.

Strategic Relevance for EARN's Long-Term Impact

The outcomes of national-level communication go beyond awareness—they create legitimacy, unlock policy capital, and establish EARN as a replicable model of youth empowerment. Through well-designed campaigns, the EARN Project positions skill development as a national pride agenda, encouraging buy-in from new demographics, sectors, and partners.

Impact Area	Strategic Relevance
Narrative Reframing	Shifts the discourse from "skills are fallback options" to "skills are modern, smart, and upwardly mobile paths."
Policy Buy-In	Encourages horizontal policy integration across Youth, Education, Industry, and Women's Affairs ministries.
Cross-District Equity	Highlights success from underrepresented areas (e.g., CHT, coastal zones), reinforcing the government's inclusion agenda.
Social Legitimacy	Builds greater acceptance among families and employers, especially when youth achievements are celebrated publicly.
Donor and Stakeholder Confidence	Demonstrates measurable outcomes and cross-sector alignment, drawing future investments and institutional partnerships.

This national campaign is the final public-facing pillar of EARN's communication architecture, offering both a culmination of success stories and a launchpad for future policy adoption and scaling. It ensures that the voices of NEET youth, once marginalized, now occupy center stage in national development narratives.

10. Celebrating Outcomes, Sustaining Momentum, and Building a Legacy of Success (post-training)

The post-training phase of the EARN Project is designed to elevate the achievements of its graduates, build lasting engagement with communities, and promote vocational training as a credible and aspirational path. This phase goes beyond skill acquisition—it aims to normalise alternative career trajectories through inclusive storytelling, localised branding, and continuous public engagement. At its core, this communication strategy recognises that showcasing success is as important as enabling it. By transforming data into emotional narratives and trainees into community role models, the EARN project establishes vocational training not merely as a stopgap solution, but as a sustainable path to economic empowerment.

Publications serve as foundational tools in building credibility and inspiration.

Alumni Booklets, both digital and printed, capture the transformative journeys of graduates across diverse backgrounds—including women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities. These are distributed strategically at fairs, clubs, and homes to influence household decisions. Certification Posters and Success Flyers, prominently displayed or handed out at key locations, bridge the gap between recognition and public perception, turning graduates into visible local champions. Career Pathway Brochures, used during exit counseling and alumni events, serve as navigational tools for continued career progression and self-reliance.

Broadcast media leverages emotional resonance and scale.

Radio features in regional dialects allow alumni to voice their stories in relatable terms, reaching low-literacy and rural populations. On television, mini-documentaries and fast-paced testimonial clips track graduates' transformations, validating vocational achievements as worthy of mainstream visibility. This is complemented by PSA series revisiting alumni, keeping EARN's relevance alive in public discourse.

Digital platforms extend this engagement into virtual spaces.

Weekly alumni spotlights across Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube elevate graduates as relatable role models and digital influencers. LinkedIn-style professional stories target employers and funders, while celebratory graduation reels create shareable moments of pride. Interactive digital mentorship groups on WhatsApp or Facebook offer peer-driven support, weekly themes, and emotional check-ins to maintain continuity and morale. Animated Success Diaries, adapted to local dialects and mobile-first formats, help reach youth and low-literacy users with light, engaging content.

Outdoor and interactive branding brings recognition into the physical and social fabric of communities.

Wall murals of graduates and local honor boards in public spaces institutionalize vocational pride. Mobile roadshows featuring storytelling, exhibitions, and VR demos create immersive and inclusive learning environments across underserved areas, branding EARN as a trusted and inspiring presence.

Explicit community communication deepens grassroots acceptance.

Village-level graduation ceremonies not only reward effort but position vocational training as a dignified milestone. Peer referral drives incentivise alumni to organically expand outreach, while alumni-led village talks normalise career shifts through trusted voices within communities.

Indoor branding complements this with high-impact institutional storytelling.

Alumni Recognition Walls inside training centers inspire current trainees, while Meet-the-Alumni Days promote mentorship and reduce dropout rates. Hall of Fame exhibitions at events and government offices showcase the program's excellence and national relevance.

Specialised communication tracks ensure no one is left behind.

Religious communication engages moral and cultural authority figures—like imams and religious educators, to legitimise vocational paths, particularly among gender-sensitive audiences. Tailored materials for minority groups use indigenous languages and culturally resonant imagery to address historic exclusion. In climate-vulnerable areas, vocational training is often framed as a means of adaptation and resilience, particularly in skills related to solar energy, climate smart agriculture and disaster response. For the extreme poor, ultra-simple formats like short videos and stipend-centric messages are broadcast through channels such as cable TVs in tea stalls and communal stands. Region-specific content with local influencers, dialects, and TikTok campaigns address geographic disparities in awareness and enrollment.

Summary Table: Post–Training Communication Tracks

Communication Type	Key Tools & Channels	Purpose & Impact
Publications	Alumni booklets, certification posters, success flyers, career brochures	Build pride, tell human stories, support long-term planning
Broadcast Media	Radio stories, TV documentaries, PSA clips	Reach rural audiences, build emotional connection, sustain visibility
Digital Platforms	Alumni spotlights, graduation reels, digital mentorship, animated diaries	Promote digital engagement, enable peer learning, reach mobile-first users
Outdoor Branding	Wall murals, local honor boards, mobile roadshows	Increase village pride, brand presence, spark aspiration
Community Engagement	Graduation ceremonies, referral drives, village talks	Foster local ownership, mobilize alumni as ambassadors
Indoor Institutional Branding	Recognition walls, alumni meetups, Hall of Fame displays	Motivate trainees, institutionalize success
Specialized Tracks	Religious audio clips, indigenous language content, climate-framed messages, ultra-simple formats	

11. Planning Contents about Process- a Few Projectised Tasks

a) Holding the Job Expo

The Job Expo at the District Level serves as a flagship event designed to connect EARN-trained youth with a wide range of employers, NGOs, and development partners across the district. These large-scale expos are highly publicised and bring together stakeholders from both public and private sectors to witness and support youth transitions into employment or entrepreneurship. The events feature live demonstrations of technical skills, panel discussions with industry leaders, and structured career development sessions, including CV-building, mock interviews, and on-the-spot job placements. District-level expos also benefit from more advanced infrastructure and media coverage, offering an opportunity to showcase program success stories on a larger scale and generate public awareness and credibility. Digital systems such as registration portals, matching algorithms, and feedback tools enhance the experience for both youth and employers, while real-time data capture supports strategic decision-making and program monitoring.

Key Features:

- **Widespread Outreach:** Pre-event awareness campaigns in schools, community hubs, and local media.

- **Live Skill Demonstrations:** Trainees perform live skill-based tasks (e.g., ICT, electrical, tailoring), enhancing employer confidence.

- **Job Readiness Booths:** Resume help desks, mock interviews, and career guidance zones.

- **Employer Engagement:** Dedicated booths for private sector, NGOs, and government bodies, offering on-the-spot interviews.

- **Youth Voice Platform:** Alumni talks, motivational sessions, and panel discussions to inspire current and prospective trainees.

  Why It Matters:

- **Evidence of Impact:** Job offers, hiring stats, and live success stories provide tangible proof of EARN's effectiveness.

- **Stakeholder Mobilisation:** Draws attention from district administrators, employers, and media — creating multiplier effects.

- **Policy Engagement:** Demonstrates value to ministries, development partners, and corporate CSR arms.

- **Behavioral Influence:** Witnessing peer success motivates other NEET youth and garners family support.

- **Communication Impact:**

These expos elevate EARN's credibility as an employment-linked, future-ready initiative. The visual and emotional resonance of real-time hiring, success storytelling, and public celebration strengthens EARN's scope.

b) Job Fairs

In contrast, the Job Fairs at the Upazila Level are more localised, community-centred events that focus on accessibility and inclusion, particularly for rural youth who may not have the means to travel to district centres. These fairs are designed to bring opportunities closer to the ground, engaging local employers, small businesses, NGOs, and government service providers. They offer a more intimate setting for interaction, allowing youth to build confidence through direct conversations, hands-on skill demonstrations, and basic employability services like registration support, information kiosks, and simplified interviews. While smaller in scale, upazila-level job fairs are vital for reaching marginalised and mobility-constrained populations, especially young women. These fairs also serve as listening posts for local aspirations and labor market needs, feeding insights back into program design while reinforcing community ownership and trust in the EARN initiative. The EARN Upazila-Level Job Fairs are grassroots activation events that extend employment opportunities to rural and digitally disconnected NEET youth. These fairs servet as culturally relevan and, inclusive access points—particularly effective in reaching women, individualns with disabilities, and families new to vocational training.

Key Features:
- **Local Partnership Model:** Organised with the support of local NGOs, Union Councils, and community leaders.

- **Sector-Specific Booths:** Tailored to local economies—such as agro-processing, fisheries, tailoring, electrical repair, or handicrafts.

- **Soft Skills Corners:** Interactive sessions on communication, workplace behaviour, and interview preparation.

- **Family-Friendly Format:** Women-friendly layouts, seating for parents, and local language moderation to encourage inclusive participation.

- **Community-Based MSME Involvement:** Booths from small businesses, cooperatives, and rural enterprises provide job access and inspiration.

Why It Matters:
- **Localised Opportunity:** Brings job access to the doorstep of youth who might otherwise be excluded from district or urban platforms.

- **Trust Building:** Physical presence of employers and alumni improves legitimacy in conservative or hesitant communities.

- **Inclusive Engagement:** Reaches digitally excluded populations with no smartphones or formal internet exposure.

- **Feedback Loop:** Provides real-time insights from youth, families, and employers on communication gaps and placement needs.

Communication Impact:

These fairs serve as deeply resonant, low-barrier platforms to generate visibility, trust, and word-of-mouth credibility. They create face-to-face interaction spaces where EARN becomes not just a program, but a recognised opportunity that families can see, hear, and believe in.

Job Expos and Fairs: Bridging Communication Gaps through Direct Engagement

Offline events, such as District-Level Job Expos and Upazila-Level Job Fairs, address a critical communication blind spot: reaching NEET youth and families who are untouched by mass media or digital outreach. They foster personal interaction, allow for clarifying questions, enable real-time enrollment, and create lasting impressions through live demonstrations and peer success stories.

By combining high-level branding with hyperlocal trust-building, these events are essential for making EARN both aspirational and accessible. They transform passive awareness into active participation—especially for rural, female, and marginalised populations—and firmly anchor EARN in the communities it serves.

c) EARN Youth Empowerment Centres (optional and proposed)

The EARN Youth Centres are proposed community hubs designed to support NEET youth—especially women and marginalised groups—by providing integrated services that promote employment, entrepreneurship, and dignity in vocational work. They aim to create confident, economically empowered young individuals who are both job-ready and entrepreneurially capable, contributing to local development and breaking traditional stigmas.

<u>**Key Features & Benefits**</u>

Career & Skills Development - Guidance on vocational training, job applications, CV writing, and interview skills.

Entrepreneurship Support - Business idea coaching, startup planning, financial literacy, pitch competitions, and connections to seed funding.

Digital & E-learning Access - Internet-enabled hubs for learning, online freelancing, and digital business skills.

Gender-Inclusive Environment - Women-friendly hours, childcare, and female mentorship to boost female participation.

Mental Health & Motivation - Counseling to address emotional well-being, confidence, and social pressure.

Dignity in Labour Promotion - Interactive career sessions to reshape perceptions of vocational and technical professions.

Community Engagement - Hosting events, dialogue forums, and exhibitions to foster local ownership and inclusion.

d) Youth Sports & Cultural Events & Tournaments for EARN

- As part of EARN's mission to empower NEET youth, cultural and sports events can be powerful tools to showcase talent, promote inclusion, and build community pride. Combining traditional arts like Baul music and Jatra with modern trends such as street art and fusion performances creates platforms for vocational visibility and intergenerational connection. Sports tournaments in cricket, football, or kabaddi foster teamwork, discipline, and confidence while breaking gender stereotypes. Together, these activities boost motivation, strengthen community support, and link youth to training and employment opportunities.

- Youth sports events under EARN can build confidence, resilience, and social cohesion among NEET youth while promoting gender inclusion through mixed and female-led teams. Tournaments in cricket, football, kabaddi, or volleyball foster discipline, teamwork, and leadership, and also act as gateways to further engagement in EARN training and employment. By integrating job fairs, skill demonstrations, and information booths, these events link participants to tangible opportunities, aligning recreation with empowerment and employability.

<u>Key Features & Benefits</u>

- Positive Youth Engagement - Sports serve as an effective gateway to reach disconnected youth, draw them into developmental activities, and channel energy toward growth.

- Life Skills Through Sport - Participation builds discipline, teamwork, goal-setting, resilience, and self-esteem, essential for both employment and entrepreneurship.

- Gender-Inclusive Participation - Separate or mixed-gender tournaments can empower young women to participate confidently, breaking traditional barriers.

- Community Bonding & Social Inclusion - Events bring together diverse youth groups, families, and community leaders; fostering unity, acceptance, and a sense of belonging.

- Platform for Awareness Campaigns - Tournaments provide a natural gathering point for EARN messaging around vocational dignity, entrepreneurship, women's empowerment, and inclusion of people with disabilities or third-gender youth.

- Link to Employment & Recognition - Exceptional performers can be recognised and linked to further opportunities such as sports scholarships, training programs, or roles in event organising.

- Mental and Physical Well-being - Regular sporting events support healthier lifestyles, reduce stress, and improve youth motivation, important foundations for sustained development.

Key Benefit EARN Participants:

Benefit Area	Cultural Events	Sports Events
Skill Showcase & Employment Linkage	EARN trainees can sell handmade products, food, or perform; connect with buyers or sponsors.	Sponsorships, event management roles, and sports coaching opportunities can open income channels.
Community Acceptance	Showcasing vocational talent in respected cultural formats builds legitimacy for NEET youth's career paths.	Positive visibility of youth — especially women — changes local perceptions of their capabilities.
Networking & Exposure	Collaboration with artists, entrepreneurs, and event organizers broadens professional networks.	Connections with sports clubs, local leaders, and private sector sponsors lead to further opportunities.
Youth Motivation	Celebrating skills through stage performances, art exhibitions, or fashion showcases boosts self-confidence.	Recognition through trophies, awards, and media coverage inspires sustained participation in training.
Gender & Social Inclusion	Women, third-gender, and marginalized groups gain normalized public presence through performances.	Inclusive teams (mixed-gender, differently-abled) challenge deep-seated biases in society.
Cultural Preservation	EARN becomes a champion of Bangladeshi heritage while modernizing it for younger audiences.	Incorporating traditional sports (e.g., kabaddi) keeps heritage alive alongside modern games.

e) EARN Communication Platforms

Platform	Target Need	Key Benefit
Youth Portal	Centralized project info	Boosts visibility and ownership
Mobile App	At-home learning and reminders	Empowers low-mobility youth, esp. women
Chatbot	24/7 support in Bangla/English	Ensures instant, inclusive assistance
Job Expo	District-level job matching	Connects youth with national employers
Job Fair	Local job awareness	Grassroots reach and female-friendly spaces

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যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয়

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Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET

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Communication Guideline & Contents

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EARN

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET

Identity
Standards Manual

EARN

Identity Standards Manual

Contents

Introduction

The Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) Project is a national initiative led by the Department of Youth Development (DYD) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), with technical and financial support from the World Bank. The project is strategically designed to address the critical socio-economic issue of youth who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) in Bangladesh. With approximately 27% of youth aged 15–29 falling within the NEET category—nearly 90% of whom are women—EARN aims to directly engage 900,000 young individuals, with a minimum 60% female participation, through market-responsive skills training, alternative education, employment linkages, and entrepreneurship development. The initiative promotes not only economic inclusion but also social transformation, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Brand Insight

The EARN Project's primary target is the NEET youth of the whole of Bangladesh, including those from marginalised communities, especially focused on NEET youth women. Therefore, the communication materials need to reach them and to be convincing for them. The study of the NEET youth of Bangladesh suggests that the communication needs to be simple, clear, specific, information-driven, interesting and especially flexible to be tailored to the specific needs of the dynamic demography across the country. The Brand should stand out in a way that allows it to share real-life stories of NEET youth, enabling them to connect with the Brand and be inspired by its communication. Through careful assessment of the situations and challenges faced by young people and brainstorming on how to address them, this paper concludes that the most effective approach is storytelling. Along with communication messages, the visual representation of the brand significantly emphasises visual storytelling as well.

This paper includes the project's branding elements, such as logos, colour schemes, fonts, and taglines. A consistent visual identity will help create recognition and trust among the target audiences. The content of the communication materials will be tailored to the specific needs and interests of the target audiences.

The design will focus on simplicity and clarity to ensure that the messages are easily understood. Use of clear and concise language, supported by visuals, will enhance comprehension. High-quality graphics, images, and infographics will be used to make the materials visually appealing and engaging. The materials are designed to be accessible to all, including those with visual impairments and low literacy levels.

Tone of the Communication

Empowering
Believing in young people's potential, our voice highlights their strengths and capabilities.

Inspiring
Our voice ignites hope and ambition, motivating youth to engage with our projects.

Youthful and Energetic
Fresh and vibrant, our language conveys enthusiasm and a forward-thinking approach.

Optimistic
A ray of hope, our voice consistently highlights opportunities and possibilities for a brighter future.

Practical
Grounded in reality, our communications provide clear, actionable information and tangible benefits.

Inclusive
Our language resonates with young people from diverse backgrounds, ensuring inclusiveness across religion, gender, and persons with disabilities.

Simple and True
Clear, honest, and transparent, our voice builds trust through authentic and reliable messaging.

Our strategy ensures profound impact by meticulously localizing content, adapting to diverse cultural nuances—from regional dialects like Sylhet and Chattogram to religious sensitivities and family values. Crucially, for areas facing unique challenges like the remote Hill Tracts, where digital reach is limited, we implement direct, home-by-home communication. This tailored approach addresses specific local realities and socio-economic contexts of NEET youth, fostering deep trust and ensuring effective engagement across all segments of Bangladeshi society.

Core Communication Themes, Tools, and Adaptive Communication

Project EARN's communication strategy moves from conceptual frameworks and strategic imperatives to practical campaign design and implementation. This part outlines the core themes, communication tools, risk mitigation approaches, and adaptive feedback mechanisms that together create a responsive, inclusive, and impactful outreach ecosystem.

Core Campaign Themes

At the heart of the communication of this project is the reframing of vocational and technical work as honorable, aspirational, and future-ready, a vital shift for NEET youth and their communities.

Dignity and Aspirations	Storytelling Focus	Visibility and Affirmation	Gender and Social Inclusion

Being Informative
Communication materials will frequently use (if not only) real data, information, statistics, studies and real-life stories.

A key aspect of this branding guideline is to showcase real and factual data, statistics and real-life stories. Derived from the NEET youth survey and multilevel discussions, the youth trusts more on the real stories, real facts and to attract them, it is best to use information and data in a relevant manner. Throughout the communication journey of the project, to uphold the project itself, its advantages and stories of the beneficiaries, the communication will heavily utilize data, statistics and real case studies. This ranges from mapping the current scenario to the future opportunities of the NEET, in different perspectives, disparities and all.

Phases of Communication

Awareness	Motivation	Enrollment	Retention
Ensure target youth know about Project EARN and see it as relevant	Inspire youth to believe change is possible and desirable	Drive registrations with urgency and clarity	Sustain participation and morale during and after training

Design and Delivery of Messaging

The tone must be affirming, empathetic, and empowering, avoiding bureaucratic language. Content should be concise, visually appealing, and emotionally engaging, using colloquial Bangla. Communication should position Project EARN as a personal journey of empowerment, featuring relatable success stories that highlight dignity, self-improvement, and economic opportunity.

Tone	Style	Language
Affirming, empathetic, empowering, not bureaucratic.	Short, visual, story-driven.	Use colloquial Bangla with emotional resonance.

Framing

Position the program as a journey of personal empowerment.	Use real success stories to build trust and hope.	Avoid jargon; speak to aspirations

Design Principles

SIMPLICITY

The design will focus on simplicity and clarity to ensure that the messages are easily understood. Use of clear and concise language, supported by visuals, will enhance comprehension.

VISUAL APPEAL

High-quality graphics, images, and infographics will be used to make the materials visually appealing and engaging. The design will consider cultural relevance and local aesthetics to resonate with the target audiences.

ACCESSIBILITY

The materials will be designed to be accessible to all, including those with visual impairments and low literacy levels. This may involve the use of large fonts, simple graphics, and minimal text.

SPECIAL CONTENT

A few special communication materials will be designed to reach the NEET Youth

EARN

Economic   Acceleration   Resilience   NEET

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) is a project initiated and implemented by the Department of Youth Development under the Ministry of Youth and Sports, funded by the Government of Bangladesh and with technical and financial assistance from The World Bank. Under this project, nine lakh NEET youth, including five lakh young women, will be facilitated to engage in economic and social activities by 2028, and eventually will contribute to the economic transformation and growth of Bangladesh.

The EARN project aims to build and enhance the skills of youth in work-oriented, suitable, and environmentally friendly sectors, creating long-term employment while providing training and other assistances to develop them as skilled human resources and motivated entrepreneurs. Through these activities, the project aims to ensure the inclusion of a large youth population, especially young women, in the economic and social activities of Bangladesh.

Slogan of the EARN Project

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

Throughout the Communication Need Assessment, among other perspectives, youth aspiration was recognised as one of the common factors among the NEET youth. The youth have aspirations, they want to change their fate and are ready to take step ahead. Yet very often they don't know how to take that step. They lack confidence and support from the society as a whole.

Understanding the fact that if one has skill in doing something, s/he will find a way and will be able to take the next step is the first and foremost requirement for the youth of Bangladesh. Youth need to see training as a way to gain skill and needs to know that if they have skill, they can live a better life. They need to have confidence, and skill can give them the confidence. They need to know that skill is their best asset/strength, if not the only required one.

Financial solvency is the core of youth aspiration and the words **দক্ষতা** and **সম্পদ** resonates that aspiration directly. When one aims to earn wealth **(সম্পদ)** to live a prosperous and dignified life, skill **(দক্ষতা)** is her/his asset/strength **(সম্পদ)**.

That is why, **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ** has been selected as the key slogan/tag line of the EARN project among other options.

Here, **দক্ষতা** directly represents the skills training of the EARN project and **সম্পদ** represents the main prerequisite, the strength and the asset to achieve success, while the suffix **ই** with **দক্ষতা** emphasizes that need for skills and represents the confidence that only skill alone can help one to get better in life.

The slogan is small, easy to understand, relates to the pragmatic needs of the NEET youth, utters confidence, engages motivation and most importantly, echoes the hope for the youth that they are not helpless, that skill is the best asset for anybody and that they can have the asset with appropriate training.

The slogan has a wide window when using in different communication purpose and different scenario as well.

The slogan has a wide window when using in different communication purpose and different scenario as well.

দক্ষতাই সম্ভাবনা **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	Promoting the possibilities of a better life, while showcasing skill and opportunities
দক্ষতাই সক্ষমতা **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	Motivation and building confidence among the youth who feels the lack of confidence in facing challenges.
দক্ষতাই সচ্ছলতা **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	To directly communicate with the NEET resonating the need of the youth for a better future, a solvent life for themselves and their families.
দক্ষতাই স্বনির্ভরতা **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	To motivate with a perspective that the NEET youth who aims to gain self-reliance and financial stability.
দক্ষতাই সম্মান **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	While boosting the urge of the youth for an honorable living and respect from the society.
দক্ষতাই সমতা **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	In case of communications that target inclusiveness to address gender, disability, regional, racial, financial and any other disparity.
দক্ষতাই সচেতনতা **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**	While the NEET youth lack information and knowledge and suffers from it, this can be used to uphold the need for knowledge among the youth and how they can change their lives with awareness. Also, this can be used in many social and socio-behavioral cases where awareness can change the society and its perspectives.

These are few examples, and accumulating all the perspectives together makes the complete and perfect slogan for the EARN project: **দক্ষতাই সম্পদ**

Logo

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Vertical

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Horizontal

Logo Rationale
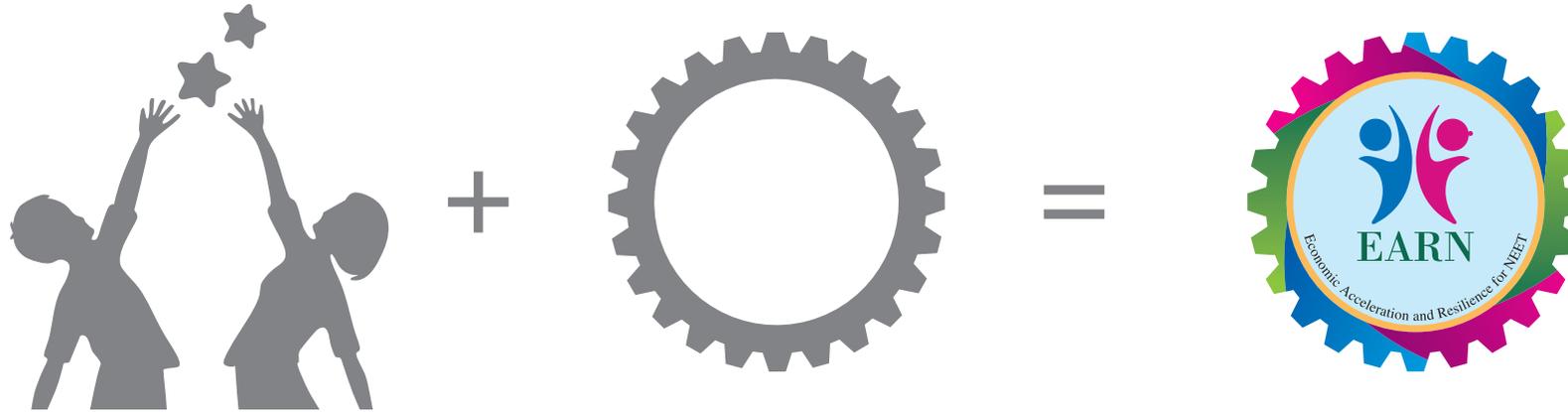
Youth. Dreams. Aspiration. Confidence. Versatility. Inclusiveness. Diversity. Growth.

The logo consists of a Typo of the Project Name, Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET, a round shaped mechanical wheel with a female and a male icon inside of the circle.

The compact shape of the logo mark represents a clear and concise goal of the project, as well as the confidence that the project aims to build among the youth of Bangladesh. The gradient shape and the rolling effect of the colours in the wheel also represent the commitment to respond to the ever-growing scenario of the youth and the economic landscape of Bangladesh.

The Gear Wheel

The round shaped mechanical gear wheel represents movement, progress, and productivity, mirroring how the project seeks to drive employment, skills, and resilience in the economy. Just like gear wheel in a machine transfer energy and drive systems forward, our project aims to create momentum in employment, training, and economic resilience. It is a universal symbol of industry, hard work, and functionality, making it the perfect emblem for a program built around skill, employment, and growth. The colours of the wheel represent diversity and versatility.

The Inner Icons

The inner icons represent youth, both male and female, and their urge for success, their aspiration and dreams.

Logo Uses

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Vertical

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Horizontal

Only wheel Insignia

(independent use in specific places)

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Only Typography

(independent use in specific places)

Logo Minimum Clear Space

0.3x   0.3x

x

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

0.3x   0.3x

Vertical

This table serves as a guideline for typography in all Microsoft collateral. These specifications should be followed as closely as possible in order to achieve consistency in all Microsoft collateral.

0.3x   0.3x

x

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

0.3x   0.3x

Horizontal

Logo Exclusion Zone

Vertical

Horizontal

The proportions of the logos are unique and have been specially calculated to ensure the visual balance and consistent reproduction of the logo.

Please do not attempt to redraw them, rearrange them or alter their colour in any way.

Please only use the master artwork supplied.

Logo Color Version

Full Color on White Background (Vertical)

Full Color on Dark Background (Horizontal)

Full Color on White Background (Horizontal)

Full Color on Dark Background

Wherever possible, the logos should appear in full colour. When colour printing restrictions occur, use the single colour black version.

Logo Color Version on EARN Primary Colors

Full Color on Yellow Background

Full Color on Blue Background

Full Color on Pink Background

Full Color on Green Background

Logo Single Color Version

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Grayscale on White Background

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

Grayscale on Dark Background

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

One Color on White Background

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

One Color on Dark Background

Logo Incorrect Use

DO NOT alter the colours

DO NOT resize disproportionately

DO NOT add special effects
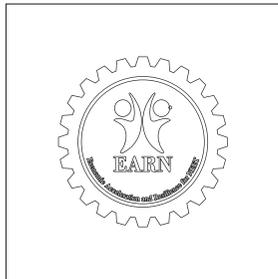
DO NOT create a keyline version

DO NOT rotate

DO NOT re-arrange

To preserve and reinforce the integrity of the logo. it is vital that we never alter or reposition any of the elements within it.

Although these examples do not represent every misuse, they do illustrate some common mistakes that must be avoided when using the logos.

Color Emotion

Colors embody emotions and identities, each carrying a deeper meaning when connected to people and purpose.

Yellow, representing youth, pulses with energy, ambition, and creativity. It symbolizes the bold spirit of a new generation—full of passion, fearless dreams, and a hunger for change. Orange is vibrant, alive, and always moving forward.

Blue, representing men, reflects strength, wisdom, and stability. It symbolizes a calm yet powerful presence—one that is thoughtful, dependable, and resilient. Blue is the color of quiet leadership and enduring loyalty.

Pink, symbolizing women, expresses joy, innocence, and grace. It carries a sense of warmth, affection, and gentle confidence. Pink radiates beauty, compassion, and a playful spirit, reflecting the nurturing and expressive nature of femininity.

Green, the color of the Bangladesh nation, stands for pride, harmony, and vitality. It embodies the fertile land, cultural unity, and unwavering spirit of the people. Green is the color of life and growth—rooted in tradition but always reaching toward progress. It reflects the heart of a nation full of resilience, dreams, and shared identity.

Together, these four colors express a powerful emotional spectrum—strength, love, pride, and passion—each representing a unique yet interconnected identity in the story of people and nation.
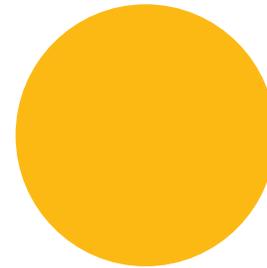
Innovation
Warmth
Positivity
Happiness
Energy
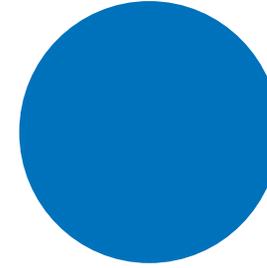
Trust
Power
Confidence
Success
Security
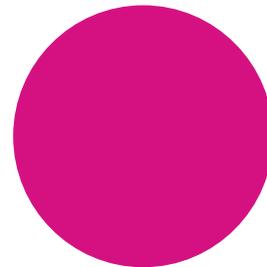
Creativity
Respect
Softness
Calm
Gratitude
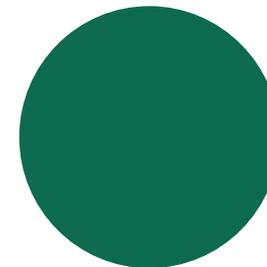
Hope
Safety
Prosperity
Harmony
Nature

Colour Palette

Primary base color for branding: Yellow

Philosophy of Yellow

Yellow is universally recognized as the color of optimism, energy, and enlightenment. It symbolizes hope, clarity, and positivity, making it a powerful choice for a project that seeks to inspire youth and communities.

Hope and Optimism: Yellow reflects the project's goal to instill confidence in marginalized groups and show them brighter possibilities for their future.

Visibility and Recognition: Yellow is eye-catching and memorable, ensuring the EARN logo and branding stand out across diverse platforms, from training centers to media campaigns.

Youthful Energy: As EARN directly engages with young people, yellow resonates with their vibrancy, enthusiasm, and readiness to embrace change.

Psychological Warmth: Yellow has a warm, inviting quality that reduces barriers, making the project feel more accessible and approachable.

Color of New beginning and Celebration: In Bangladesh and South Asia and, yellow is connected with spring and summer including festivals such as Boshonto Boron that celebrate youth, joy, and new beginnings.

EARN Yellow	
Hex	#FDB913
RGB	253, 185, 19
HSB	43, 92%, 99%
CMYK	0, 30, 100, 0
Ink Type	Process
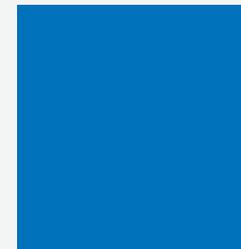
EARN Blue	
Hex	#0072BC
RGB	0, 114, 188
HSB	204, 100%, 74%
CMYK	100, 50, 0, 0
Ink Type	Process

EARN Pink	
Hex	#D51181
RGB	213, 17, 129
HSB	326, 92%, 84%
CMYK	12, 100, 10, 0
Ink Type	Process
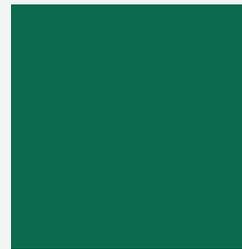
EARN Green	
Hex	#006B4F
RGB	0, 107, 79
HSB	164, 100%, 42%
CMYK	90, 34, 77, 24
Ink Type	Process

EARN Light Blue	
Hex	#C7EAFB
RGB	199, 234, 251
HSB	200, 21%, 98%
CMYK	20, 0, 0, 0
Ink Type	Process

EARN Black	
Hex	#231F20
RGB	35, 31, 32
HSB	345, 11%, 14%
CMYK	0, 0, 0, 100
Ink Type	Process

Gradient
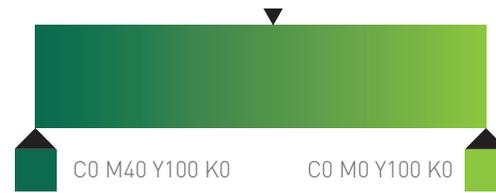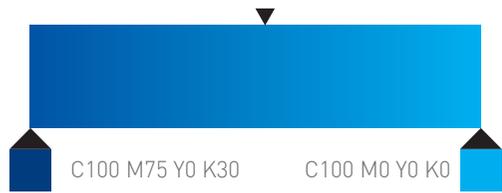
C100 M75 Y0 K30   C100 M0 Y0 K0

C0 M40 Y100 K0   C0 M0 Y100 K0

C40 M100 Y0 K30   C0 M100 Y0 K0

C0 M30 Y100 K0   C0 M0 Y100 K0

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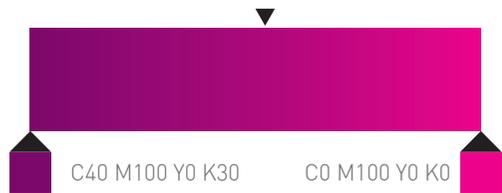
Typography Font specifications

Primary typeface

The primary English typeface is Din Pro and Bangla is Ador Noirrit and should be used on all commercially printed documents and collateral, such as:

- Reports
- Brochures
- Banners
- Posters
- Invitations
- Advertisements
- Business Cards

There are four variations: light, regular, medium and bold.

Primary typeface English

Din Pro Light
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Din Pro Regular
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Din Pro Medium
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Din Pro Bold
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Primary typeface Bangla

Ador Noirrit Light
অইঈউঊঋঝ�এঐওঔ
কখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎঁ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@৳৳%৳*()

Ador Noirrit Regular
অইঈউঊঋঝঞএঐও
ঔকখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎঁ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@৳৳%৳*()

Ador Noirrit Semibold
অইঈউঊঋঝঞএঐওঔ
কখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎঁ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@৳৳%৳*()

Ador Noirrit Bold
অইঈউঊঋঝঞএঐও
ঔকখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎঁ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@৳৳%৳*()

Secondary typeface

The secondary typeface English is Arial and Bangla is Kongsho, and is used sparingly to highlight certain headings or titles, or it is used for page numbers in documents.

Microsoft typeface

The Microsoft typeface is Calibri and is reserved for everyday internal Microsoft documents, such as:

- Letters
- Emails
- Internet
- Word documents
- Powerpoint presentations
- Press releases

Secondary typeface

Arial Regular
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Arial Italic
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&()*

Arial Bold
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Microsoft typeface

Calibri Regular
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Calibri Bold
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£$%^&*()

Secondary typeface Bangla

KongshoMJ Regular
অইঈউঊঋএঐওঔ
কখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@ৄৎ%ৄ*()

KongshoMJ Italic
অইঈউঊঋএঐওঔ
কখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@ৄৎ%ৄ()*

KongshoMJ Bold
অইঈউঊঋএঐওঔ
কখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@ৄৎ%ৄ*()

KongshoMJ Bold Italic
অইঈউঊঋএঐওঔ
কখগঘঙচছজঝঞটঠডঢণতথদধনপফবভমযরলশষসহড়ঢ়য়ৎ
১২৩৪৫৬৭৮৯০!@ৄৎ%ৄ*()

Typography Specifications for printed collateral

This table serves as a guideline for typography in all printed collateral. These specifications should be followed as closely as possible in order to achieve consistency in all printed collateral.

Document	Typography	Typeface	Style	Size
Annual Report cover (A4)	Title Date	Din Pro Bodoni	Regular Bold Italic	56 62
Regional Report cover (A4)	Title Sub-title Date	Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro	Bold Regular Bold Italic	53 28 28
Brochure cover (A4)	Title Sub-title	Din Pro Din Pro	Regular Regular	63 24
Text Pages for annual reports, regional reports and brochures (A4)	Heading Sub-heading Body copy Quotes Pull-out copy Page numbers Footer	Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro	Light Medium Light Regular Light Bold Italic Light	28 9.5 9.5 9.5 16 10.5 7
Invitation (A5)	Cover heading Event name Date and time Headings Body copy	Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro	Bold Regular Medium Regular Light/Medium	24 16 12 18 9
Banners and Posters	Project name Project descriptor **Tagline**	Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro	Bold Regular Regular	
Advertising	Tagline Body copy	Din Pro Din Pro	Regular Regular/bold	30 12
Business Cards	Personal name Designation Company name Contact details	Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro Din Pro	Medium Regular Medium Regular	10.5 10 8 8

Typography Specifications for Microsoft collateral

This table serves as a guideline for typography in all Microsoft collateral. These specifications should be followed as closely as possible in order to achieve consistency in all Microsoft collateral.

Document	Typography	Typeface	Style	Size
Correspondence, internal Documents and Forms (A4)	Headings Body Copy	Calibri Calibri	Bold Regular	11 11
Fact Sheets (A4)	Headings Sub-headings Introduction copy Body copy	Calibri Calibri Calibri Calibri	Regular Regular Regular Regular	24 10 14 9
Budget Sheet (A4)	Heading Date Sub-heading Introduction copy Body copy	Calibri Calibri Calibri Calibri Calibri	Regular Regular Regular/bold Regular Regular	27 21 18 12 9
PowerPoint	Cover heading Slide headings Body copy	Calibri Calibri Calibri	Regular Regular Regular	44 28 24
Email Signatures	Company name Contact details	Calibri Calibri	Bold Regular	8.5 8.5

The Gear Wheel as Our Brand Imprint and Key Symbol

The gear wheel is not just a mechanical shape, it symbolizes movement, progress, and productivity. In the context of the EARN project, the gear wheel represents the economic and trade-centric focus of our initiative. By establishing the gear wheel as our brand imprint and key symbol, we ensure a consistent and powerful visual identity that communicates the project's purpose at a glance. Over time, this imprint will become synonymous with opportunity, empowerment, and growth, strengthening recognition and trust across all communication and outreach efforts. The gear wheel is not simply a design choice; it is the visual heartbeat of the EARN project, anchoring its mission, unifying its stakeholders, and securing its identity for the future.

We are establishing the gear wheel as the primary brand imprint because it conveys continuity, reliability, and impact. Every time stakeholders, youth, or partners see the gear, they will instantly recognize it as EARN's signature identity.

As a logo element
The gear wheel anchors the visual identity and ensures consistency across all branding.

As a symbolic imprint
It acts as a constant reminder of the project's purpose, to connect training with real economic opportunity.

As a key symbol
It embodies the concept of collaboration, just as gears interlock and work together, the project unites government, communities, and youth toward a shared goal.

Standard Insignia
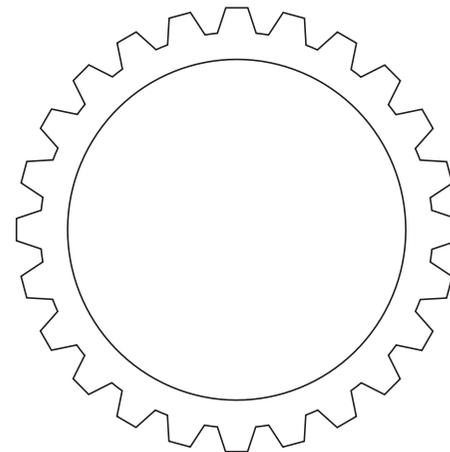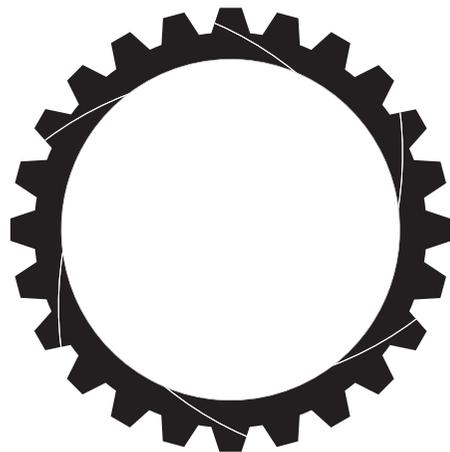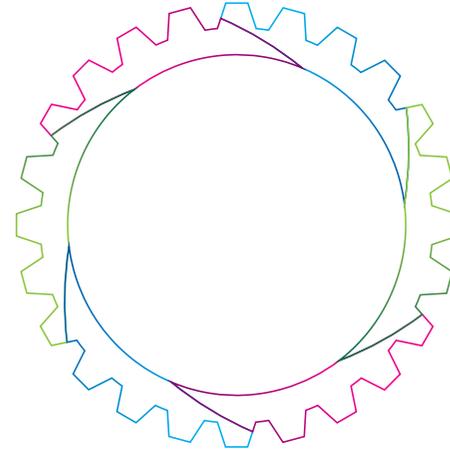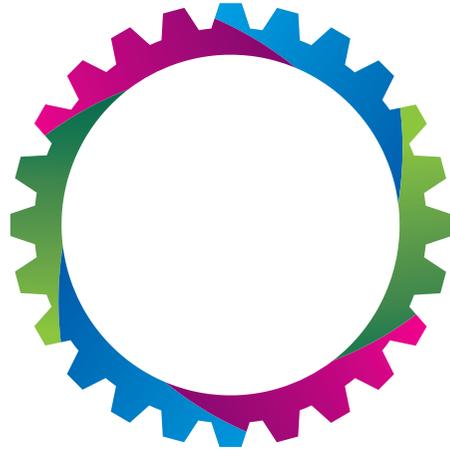
Stakeholders Logo Positioning

Logo placement for the project (main stakeholders) in different communication materials will follow the given guidelines in different cases. Please note that the positioning of the stakeholders logo is indicated in the communication sample contents elaborately.

Top Positioning

Bottom or Left/ Right Positioning
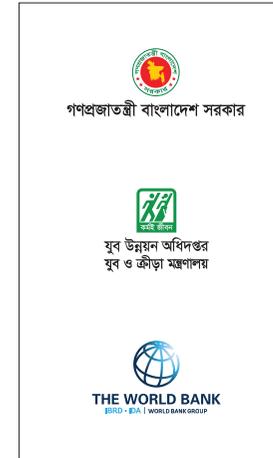
Vertical Positioning

Logo Pairing

In many cases, logo of the partner organisations, relevant participants and any other organisations will be incorporated in different communication materials. The use of partner/participant organisation logo will have to follow the guidelines stated here.

Whenever a partner logo will be used, it will have to maintain the given format, size, template and everything. A detail outline of using partner logo is included in the content sample book.

The incorporation of any logo and the layouts that allow incorporation of partner logo will be decided by the project, a sample of the layouts that allow incorporation is included in the content sample book.

EARN — Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট — NGO

EARN | দক্ষতাই সম্পদ — NGO

Patterns & Visual Elements

Following the specific photography guidelines (see the next page), the Gear Wheel, key symbol of the EARN Project, will be used in stated manners. Please note that any use of the symbol outside of the given guidelines is not allowed.
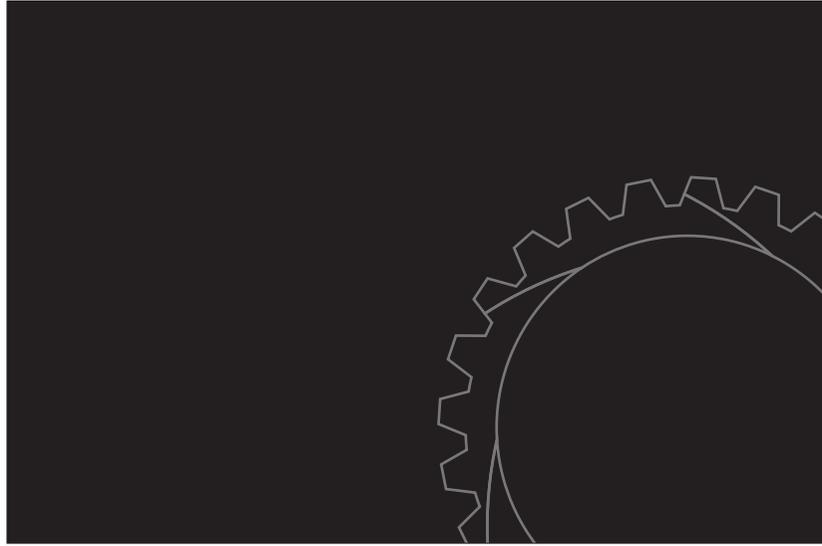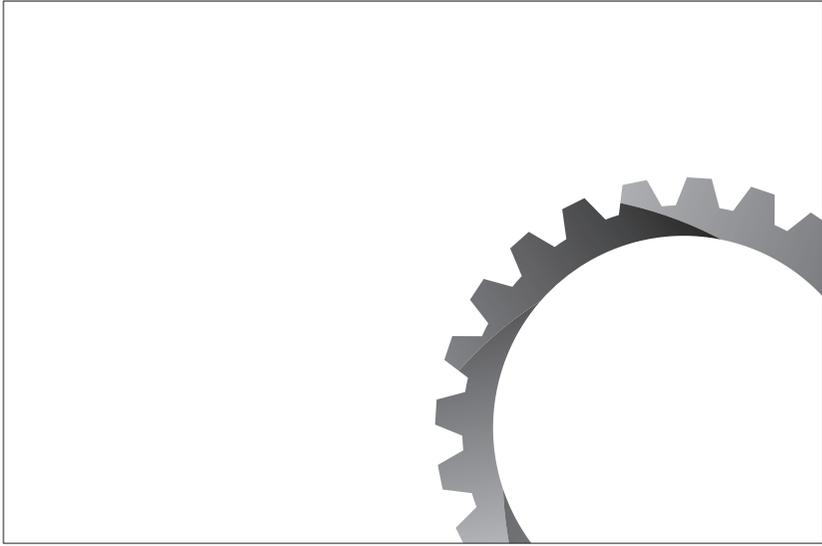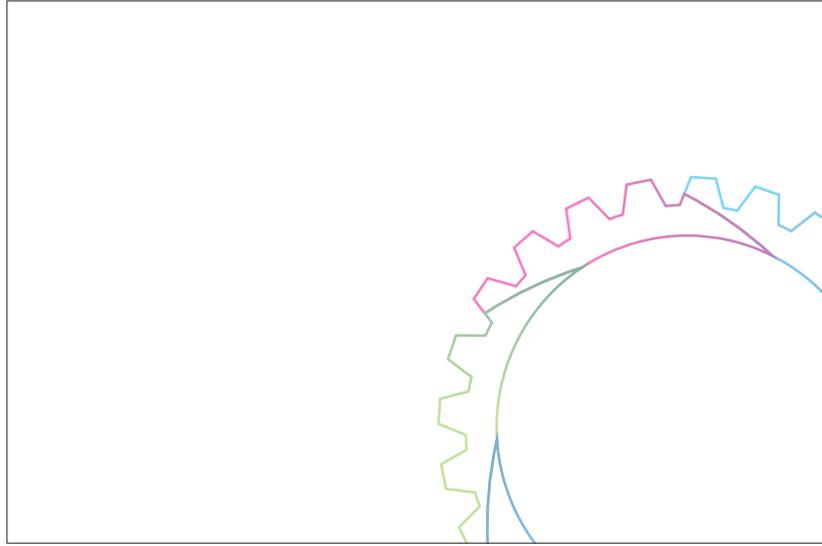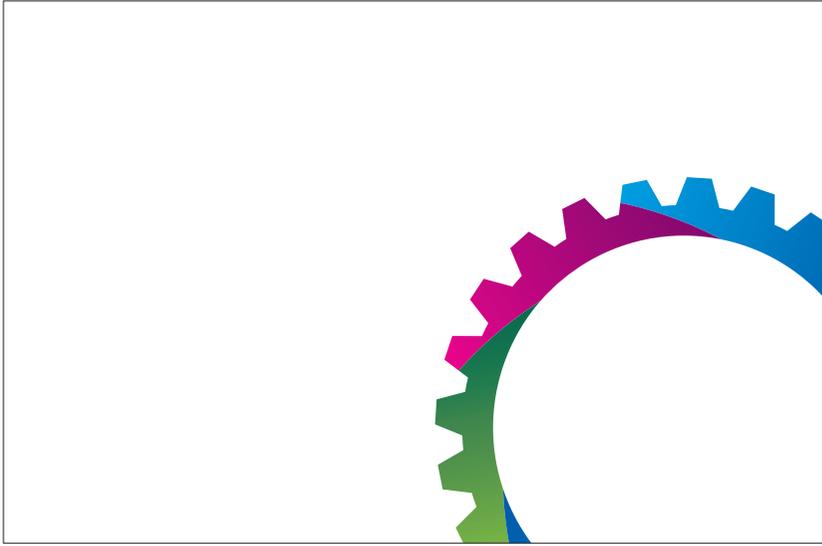
Photographic Style

Photography of the EARN Project for branding and promotion purpose will always be focused on the youth characters and their stories. As the Project communication emphasizes on the storytelling style and the real-life stories and growth of the youth, their aspiration, their challenges and their hard work, the photography will always focus on characters, their true stories, their journey towards success. The layouts will be vibrant, youthful, impactful, clear and straightforward. The initiatives or activities of the youth will be included in the layouts, when necessary. The photography will always represent the strength of youth determination and positivity.

Collateral Items (Offices)

Collateral Items (NGOs/VLTC)
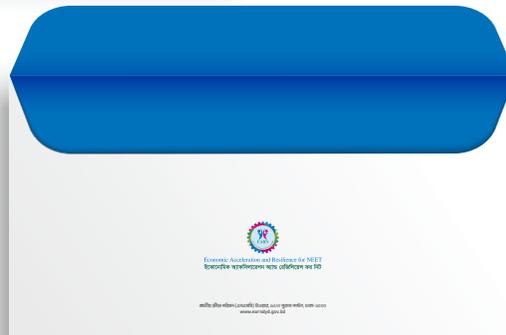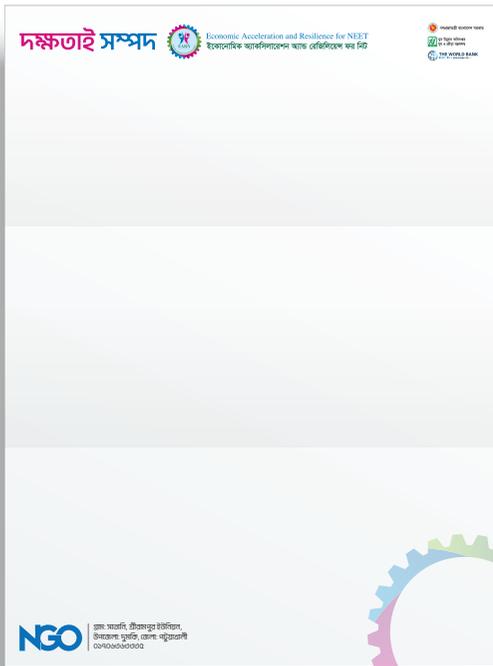
Communication Materials

Visual Template (Vertical)

The key visual template will feature a yellow background, as our primary base color is yellow.
(Reference in the color preference section above).

The allocation of poster space must follow a structured distribution:

The logo will take up 15% to 18%.

Text will be limited to 12% to 15%

Visuals will occupy 50% to 55% of the total space

The placement of the logo banner is fixed and must remain unchanged.

Visual Template (Horizontal & Square)

Horizontal and square adaptations of the visual template will follow the same guidelines as the vertical one.

The composition of the visual layout for the horizontal and square orientation will be as per stated in this visual.
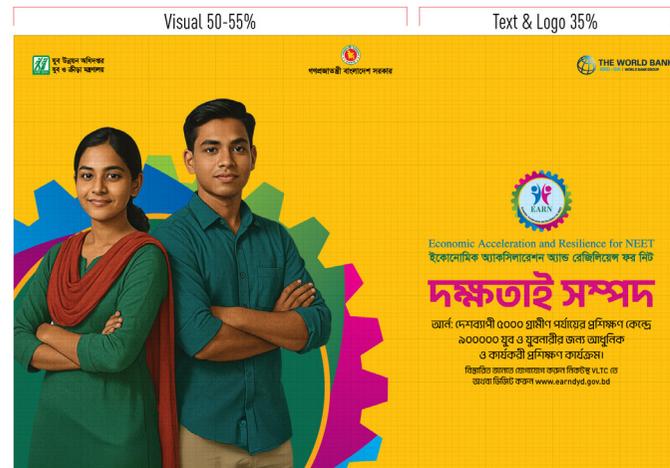
Main Poster (Vertical)

The main poster for the EARN project will be one and this is the final version that will be disseminated to all the relevant parties for use.

No alteration of this visual is allowed.

The main copy/headline of this poster will be the slogan of the project, as stated in the design.

The content will contain key information of the project, as stated.

The poster will also contain the web address and a option for aquiring knowledge, as stated.

Key visual template will feature a yellow background, as our primary base color is yellow.

Main Poster (Horizontal & Square)

The main visual adaptations for horizontal and square adaptations.

These layouts follow the same guidleine as state in the adaptation instructions of the main visual template

Common Poster Template for Different Use

Apart from the main visual of the EARN project, there can be various visuals for the project and all of them will follow the same guidelines as the main visual.

However, in case of message dissemination, the Logo and Slogan can be rearranged as this template.

The focus message will always contain information, data and real-life cases.

In case of visuals that may include partner organization logo, the layouts will follow the template and guidelines of these layouts.

Common poster template for different use (adaptations)

With the same philosophy as the previous page, the adaptation for the common poster will be like stated here.

Trade Poster Template

The Trade Poster can be treated as a mode of communication for the Service Provider (SP). Positive information and data must be represented within the designated segment, with a clear focus on showcasing opportunities based on the trade. As this is a trade-focused design, different colors are used to illustrate variation in the visuals. Trade images will be adapted or changed as required. EARN logo, Tagline and Service provider's logo and contact information will be highlighted within the allocated space of the grid at the lower end of the poster and will be used for all Trade Posters.

Success Story Poster Template

The Success Story Poster can be treated as a mode of communication for the Service Provider (SP). A real image of the individual who is a trainee or had successfully completed the EARN project's training must be placed within the gear, as indicated in the template. The success story should include relevant details and data that highlight the individual's achievements and the positive changes gained through the program. Additionally, the individual's name, age, location, and profession must be properly verified and clearly displayed.

Slogan Poster Template
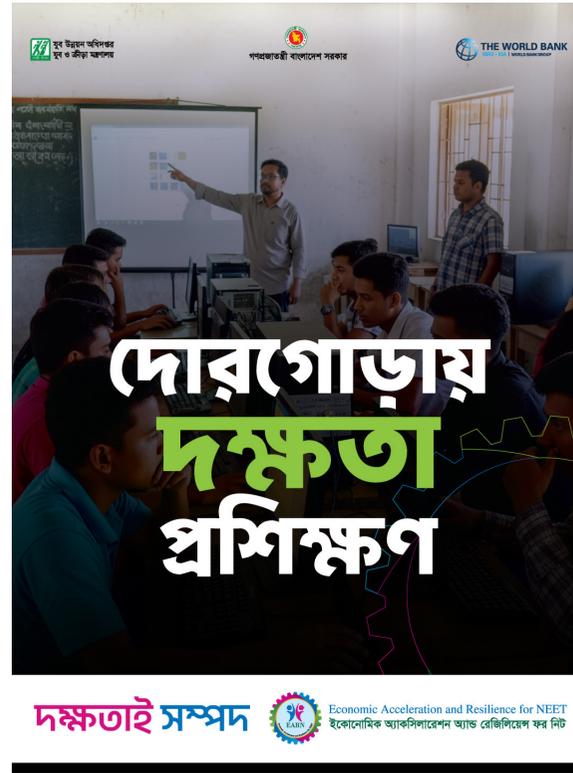
A few slogan-focused or data focused visuals may be used in different media. These templates are an example of how the logos, photos and texts should be used in these visuals. The data will be highlighted in these visuals while the photography will be as per the guidelines.

Slogan Poster Template
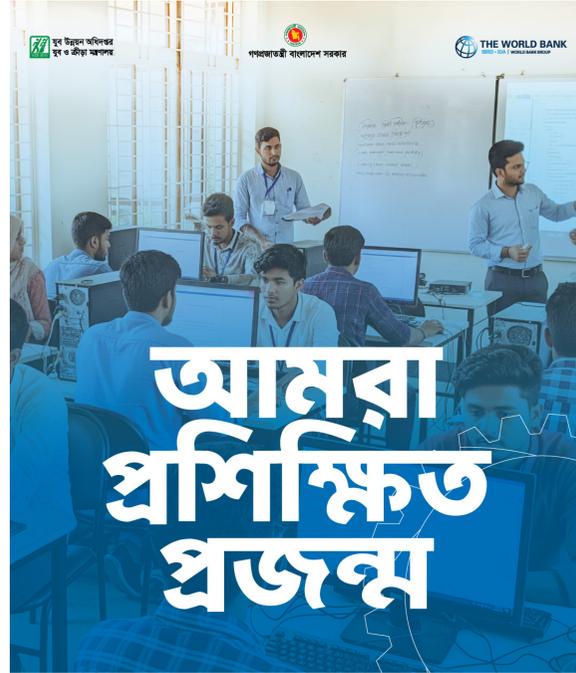
.....Followed

Press Advertisement

The main visual is the key visual for the press ad. The template on the right can be used when service providers are involved and they need to follow the template as shown.

Catchy words and information needs to be used.

Press Ads need to be circulated through national and local news media.

Press Advertisement Mockup

...Followed

Billboard Template & Mockup

When communication is to be made using billboards, the given template needs to be followed as shown.

Bus Stop Branding & Mockup

When communication is to be made using bus stop branding, the given template needs to be followed as shown.

The placement of the branding needs to be visible and attractive and easy to understand.

Banner Template & Mockup

The location and the date needs to be adjusted and changed accordingly. Within the grid, the service provider needs to use their logo and contact information.

The composition of the visual layout for the horizontal orientation will be as per stated in this visual.

Wall Branding Advertisement

At the beginning, an art containing the brand characters and on logo will be painted on the wall. It will contain relevant information and talking points that needs to be focused on. The wall art will follow the painting. An example of wall art is shown.

Slogan Chika

There are few slogans selected to use in different places through different media (according to strategy paper).

Templates and examples of slogan graffiti (chika) are shown and needs to be implemented accordingly.

আমার
সম্মান
আমার
কাজে

দোরগোড়ায়
দক্ষতা
প্রশিক্ষণ

প্রশিক্ষণই
সাফল্যের
বুনিয়াদ

আর্থিক
কমই
নারীর
জীবন

দক্ষতাই
সম্পদ

স্বপ্ন দেখা
থামবে না
বাধা এলে
দমবে না

আমরা
প্রশিক্ষিত
প্রজন্ম

পরিশ্রমের
সৎ উপাজন
আমার সম্মান
আমার অজন

কাজ শিখে
রোজগার
সচ্ছল হবে
সংসার

Proshikkhito Projonmo Badge

This badge will be provided to trainees after they have completed their training. The words cÖwkw¶Z cÖRb¥ will be written on the badge has shown.

Traning Centre Signage & Mockup

The name of the training center needs to be changed along with the location and contact information in the grid at the bottom the engine logo needs to be placed. The guideline needs to be followed completely as shown in the template.
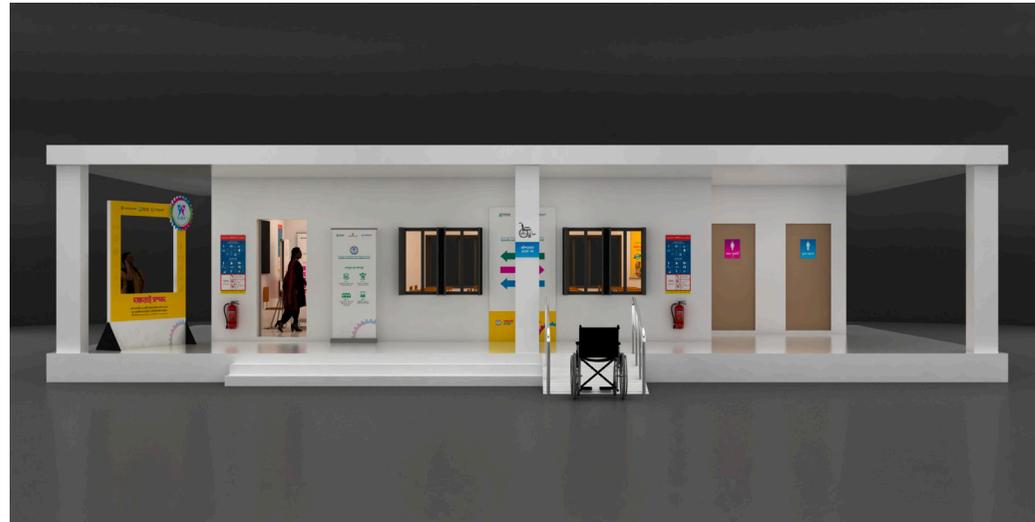
Traning Centre Branding

Placement of photo booth, banners and other infographs are shown and needs to be followed when branding for training centers. Utilization and placement of trade posters within the classrooms/indoors needs to be maintained.

As training centers will vary in the way they are built , adjustments will be needed to be made as per need.

The base requirements of branding should be present in all training centers.
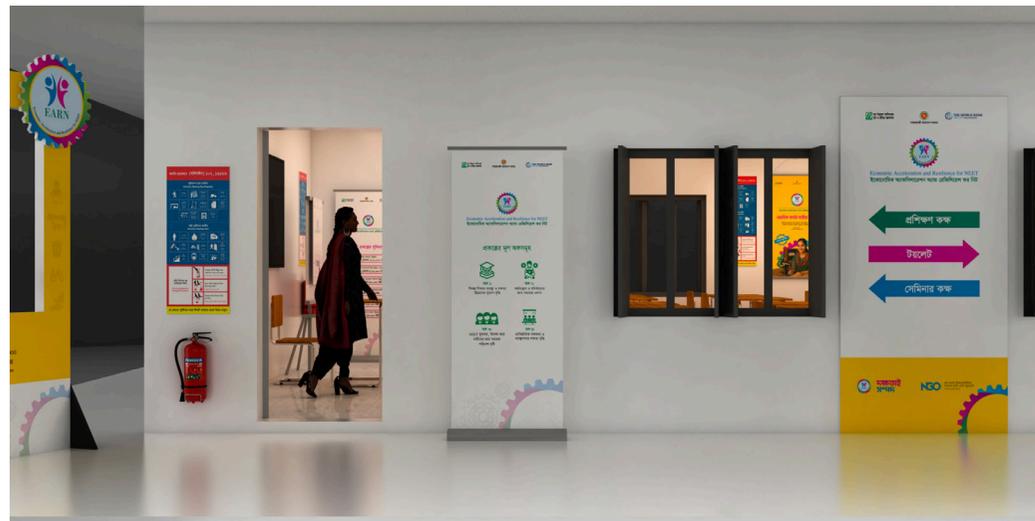
Traning Centre Branding
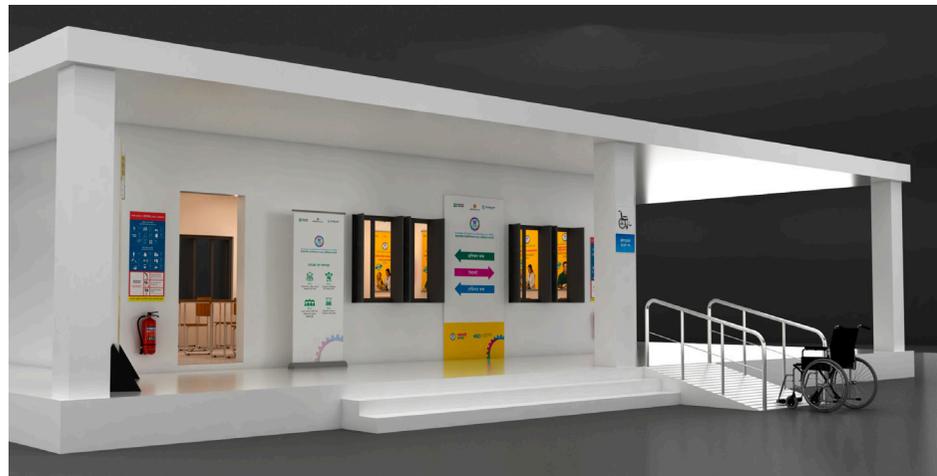
Miking Van/Rickshaw Branding

The key visual needs to be printed on both sides for the standing banners, which will be pro on a miking van or a rickshaw. The template should be followed as shown.

Tea Stall Stall Branding

The key visual or trade poster needs to be placed in a way where it will be visible for all who are attending a tea stall. Smaller sized printed posters can be pasted on other visible areas. Danglers containing EARN logo, trade posters should be utilized.
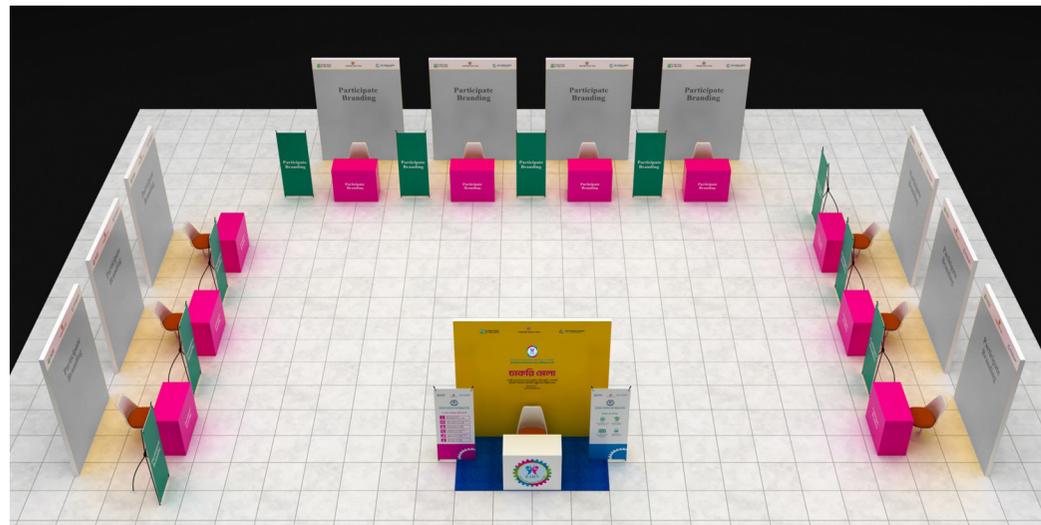
Youth Corner Branding

An example of how the placement of branding within the youth corner is shown.

Items that need to be present in the corner are a digital device (laptop), leaflets and brochures, etc.
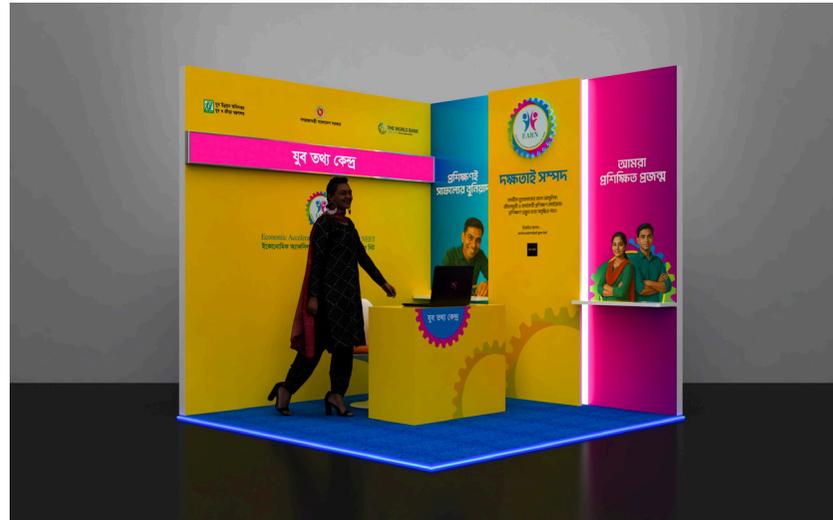
Job Fair/Expo Branding

An example of how the placement of stalls and branding within the job fair is shown.

Brochure Design

This is the main brochure. This template needs to be followed exactly as shown.

Changes made for brochures to serve other requirements need to maintain similar template design. The content should be informative and should contain real life cases and stories and data present at that moment.

Flyer Design

The template needs to be followed exactly as shown.

Jitu-Mitu Story Flip Chart

This is the cover of the flip chart that will be used for all showcases of Jitu-Mitu based stories during the Uthan Boithak.

The content of the Jitu-Mitu based stories will differ.

The template of the cover needs to be followed as shown.

Panel 1

জিতু	মিতু
জামশেদপুর গ্রামের সহজ-সরল ছেলে। ছোটবেলা বাবা হার্ট অ্যাটাকে মারা যায়। পড়াশোনা মাঝপথে থেমে যায়।	জামশেদপুর গ্রামের গরিব ঘরের মেয়ে। এসএসসির আগে পড়াশোনা থেমে যায়। দরিদ্র বাবার জন্য বিয়ে দিয়েই জীবন শেষ করার কথা।

Panel 2

জিতু	মিতু
ছোটবেলা থেকে নানা কাজে চেষ্টা, কিন্তু কাজ শিখতে না পারায় হতাশা।	পরিবার ও সমাজের বাধায় স্বপ্ন পূরণ বাধাগ্রস্ত। হাতের কাজের প্রতি ভালোবাসা থাকা সত্ত্বেও সুযোগ না পাওয়া।
এলাকার শিক্ষক রাশেদ স্যারের পরামর্শে EARN প্রজেক্টের কথা জানা। প্রথমে সন্দেহ থাকলেও স্যারের উৎসাহে ভর্তি হয় মোবাইল সার্ভিসিং কোর্সে।	পাড়ার পরিচিত জিতুর কথা শুনে EARN প্রজেক্টের ট্রেনিংয়ের সুযোগ সম্পর্কে জানতে পারে। পরিবার ও সমাজের ভয় থাকা সত্ত্বেও আগ্রহী।

Panel 3

জিতু	মিতু
হাতে-কলমে শেখা শুরু করে, আত্মবিশ্বাস বেড়ে ওঠে।	হ্যান্ডিক্রাফটস ট্রেনিংয়ে অংশ নিয়ে প্রথম হয়। নিজের দক্ষতা কাজে লাগিয়ে পণ্য তৈরি শুরু করে।
ট্রেনিং শেষে চাকরি পেয়ে প্রথমবার আয়ের মুখ দেখে। ধীরে ধীরে পরিবারকে অর্থনৈতিক সহায়তা দেয়।	পণ্য বিক্রি করে আয় শুরু, এলাকায় খ্যাতি তৈরি হয়। বাবা প্রথমবার মিতুর সম্ভাবনা স্বীকার করেন।

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর
যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয়

THE WORLD BANK

নিজের গ্রামে একটি ছোট ট্রেনিং সেন্টার চালু করে অন্যদেরও প্রশিক্ষণ দেয়।

বিয়ের পর শ্বশুরবাড়ির বাধা ও স্বামীর হীনমন্যতার মোকাবিলা করে জিতুর সাহায্যে শহরের বড় কোম্পানির সাথে কাজের সুযোগ নেয়। উদ্যোক্তা হওয়ার স্বপ্ন পোষণ করে।

ছিল পড়াশোনার অভাব ও অর্থনৈতিক দুরবস্থা।

পরিবার-পরিজনের অনুরোধে পড়াশোনা বন্ধ, বিয়ের চাপ। শ্বশুরবাড়ি বাইরের কাজ পছন্দ করে না। স্বামী হীনমন্য।

রাশেদ স্যারের পরামর্শ এবং মাহফুজের কথার মধ্য দিয়ে সচেতনতা আসে।

জিতুর সহায়তায় ট্রেনিংয়ে ভর্তি হয়, বিয়ের পর স্বামীকে বোঝাতে জিতুর সহযোগিতা।

'একটি সুযোগ, একটি প্রশিক্ষণ, আর কিছু ইচ্ছাশক্তি—এই তিনেই বদলে যেতে পারে একটি জীবন।'

'আমি শুধু একজন মেয়ে নই, আমি একজন উদ্যোক্তা। মেয়ে মানেই সীমা না, মেয়ে মানেই সম্ভাবনা।'

জিতু-মিতুর মতো হাজারো তরুণ-তরুণীর জন্য...

আমাদের আশেপাশে এখনও অনেক পিছিয়ে পড়া তরুণ ও তরুণী রয়েছে—যারা পড়াশোনা শেষ করতে পারেনি, কোনো কাজ শেখেনি, কিংবা সমাজের নানা বাধায় আটকে আছে।

তাদের জন্যই চালু হয়েছে 'আর্ন'—একটি জীবন বদলে দেওয়া প্রশিক্ষণ প্রকল্প।

এখানে আছে:
* পছন্দের ট্রেড অনুযায়ী বাস্তবভিত্তিক প্রশিক্ষণ
* হাতে-কলমে শেখা ও কাজ শেখার সুযোগ
* কর্মসংস্থানের জন্য প্রস্তুত করার আধুনিক কোর্স
* নিজে উদ্যোক্তা হবার অনুপ্রেরণা

আধুনিক, জীবনমুখী ও কার্যকরী প্রশিক্ষণ কার্যক্রমে গড়ে উঠুক দক্ষ জীবন, গড়ে উঠুক সমৃদ্ধ বাংলাদেশ।

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

জীবন বদলে দাও, আর্ন-এর সাথে শিখে এগিয়ে চলো।

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয়

THE WORLD BANK

Uthan Boithak Flip Chart

This is the cover of the flip chart that will be used for all showcases during the Uthan Boithak.

The content within the flip chart will differ based on the topic of conversation for that Uthan Boithak.

The template of the cover needs to be followed as shown.

NEET তরুণ-তরুণীরা কারা?

NEET মানে এমন ছেলে-মেয়ে যারা এখন স্কুলে পড়ে না, কোনো চাকরিতেও নেই, আর কোনো ট্রেনিংও করছে না।

বয়স ১৫ থেকে ২৯ বছরের মধ্যে।

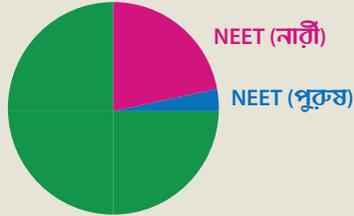তারা অলস না — তাদের সামনে সুযোগ নেই।

বাংলাদেশে কতজন NEET আছে?

বাংলাদেশে প্রায়

১ কোটি ১০ লাখের বেশি

তরুণ এখন NEET

প্রতি ৪ জনের ১ জন!

আর এদের মধ্যে প্রায়

৯০ শতাংশই মেয়ে

NEET (নারী)

NEET (পুরুষ)

তারা কেন এমন অবস্থায় আছে?

তাদের অনেকেই গরীব, পড়াশোনা মাঝপথে ছেড়ে দিয়েছে, মেয়েদের বিয়ে হয়ে গেছে ছোট বয়সে। বাড়ির লোকজন অনেক সময় কাজ বা বাইরে যেতেও দেয় না। ছেলেদের বেলায় দেখা যায় পরিবার চালাতে গিয়ে নিজের ভবিষ্যৎ ভুলে যায়।

নারী NEET সমস্যার কথা

মেয়েরা সবচেয়ে বেশি NEET অবস্থায় থাকে। কারণ সমাজে মেয়েদের ঘরের বাইরে যেতে, কাজ করতে বা ট্রেনিং নিতে অনেক বাধা। পরিবারও অনেক সময় সমর্থন করে না।

মন খারাপ আর একাকীত্ব

অনেক NEET তরুণ-তরুণী মন খারাপ করে থাকে, ভাবেন সমাজে তাদের দাম নাই। কেউ তাদের স্বপ্ন জিজ্ঞেসও করে না।

এতে তারা

হতাশ

হয়ে পড়ে।

এখন সময় বদলানোর

এই তরুণরা কোনো বোঝা না — তারাই আমাদের ভবিষ্যৎ।
দরকার শুধু সঠিক সুযোগ।

EARN

এই সুযোগ করে দেয়।

EARN কী?

EARN মানে হচ্ছে শিক্ষা, অগ্রগতি আর মানসিক দৃঢ়তা। EARN এমন এক উদ্যোগ, যা NEET তরুণদের খুঁজে বের করে, তাদের পাশে দাঁড়ায়।

EARN

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

EARN কীভাবে সাহায্য করে?

EARN তরুণদের চিহ্নিত করে, কথা বলে, ট্রেনিংয়ের ব্যবস্থা করে এবং চাকরি বা কাজের সাথে যুক্ত করে দেয়। মেয়েদের অগ্রাধিকার।

তরুণ
⬇
পরামর্শ
⬇
প্রশিক্ষণ
⬇
কর্মসংস্থান
(চাকুরি বা ব্যবসা)

VLTC মানে কী?

EARN
১৬০টি
উপজেলায়
৪০০
VLTC তৈরি করছে।

VLTC মানে গ্রামের ভেতরেই এমন একটা জায়গা, যেখানে তরুণরা পরামর্শ, প্রশিক্ষণ আর সুযোগের খবর পায়।

মানসিকতা(SBC) বদলানো দরকার

শুধু ট্রেনিং দিলে হবে না। পরিবার, সমাজ সবাইকে ভাবতে হবে, NEET ছেলেমেয়েদেরও কিছু করার ক্ষমতা আছে। সব কাজের ই সম্মান আছে।

জানাশোনা
⬇
কথা বলা
⬇
কাজ করা
⬇
গ্রহণ করা

EARN আর কী করছে?

EARN মেয়েদের উদ্যোক্তা বানাচ্ছে, অনলাইনে প্রচার করছে, সমাজের ভালো উদাহরণ দেখাচ্ছে যাতে সবাই সাহস পায়।

চলুন একসাথে বদলাই ভবিষ্যৎ

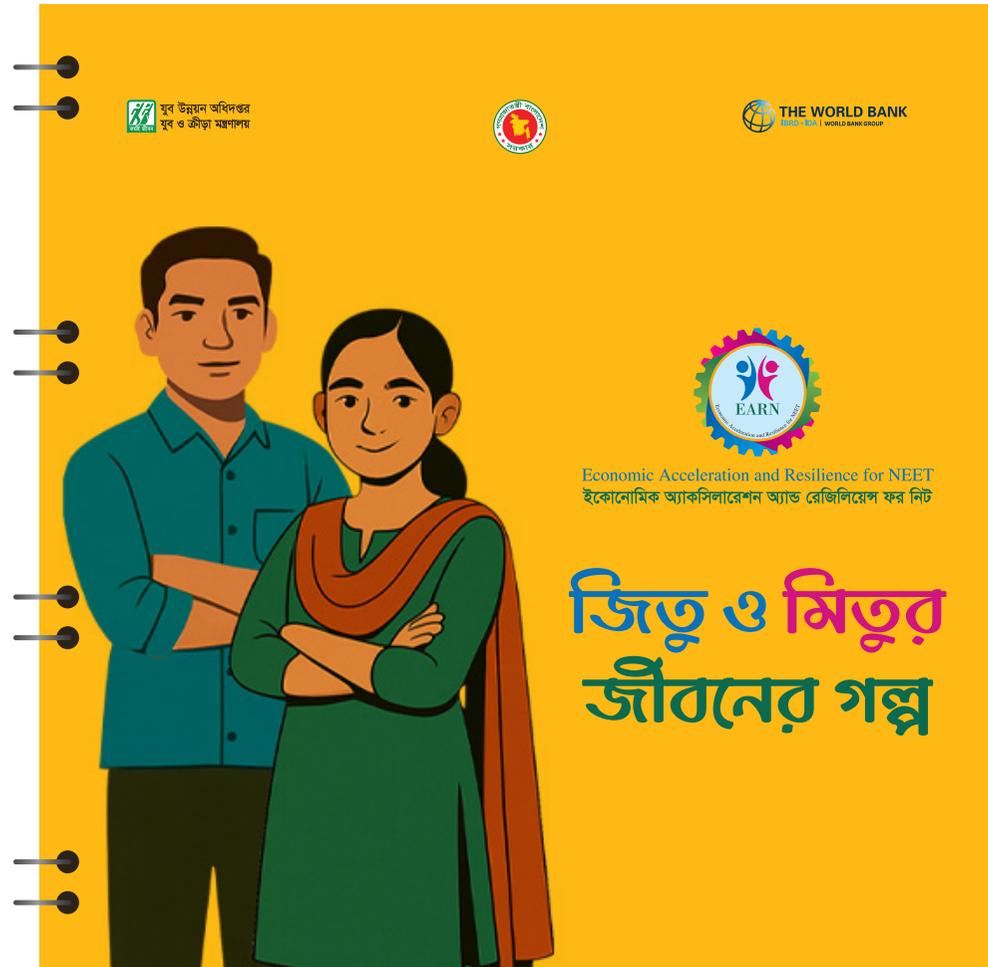আপনি যদি তরুণ হন, বাবা-মা হন, নেতা হন

আপনিও এই বদলের অংশ

এখনই সময় তরুণদের পাশে দাঁড়ানোর।

Jitu-Mitu Life Story Comic Book

This is the cover of the Jitu-Mitu Life Story Comic Book that will be used for showcasing Jitu-Mitu based stories that will be circulated nationwide.

The content of the Jitu-Mitu based stories will differ.

The template of the cover needs to be followed as shown.

জিতু

জামশেদপুর গ্রামের সহজ-সরল ছেলে।
ছোটবেলা বাবা হার্ট অ্যাটাকে মারা যায়।
পড়াশোনা মাঝপথে থেমে যায়।

মিতু

জামশেদপুর গ্রামের গরিব ঘরের মেয়ে। এসএসসির
আগে পড়াশোনা থেমে যায়। দরিদ্র বাবার জন্য বিয়ে
দিয়েই জীবন শেষ করার কথা।

জিতু

ছোটবেলা থেকে নানা কাজে চেষ্টা, কিন্তু
কাজ শিখতে না পারায় হতাশা।

মিতু

পরিবার ও সমাজের বাধায় স্বপ্ন পূরণ
বাধাগ্রস্ত। হাতের কাজের প্রতি ভালোবাসা
থাকা সত্ত্বেও সুযোগ না পাওয়া।

জিতু

এলাকার শিক্ষক রাশেদ স্যারের পরামর্শে
EARN প্রজেক্টের কথা জানা। প্রথমে
সন্দেহ থাকলেও স্যারের উৎসাহে ভর্তি হয়
মোবাইল সার্ভিসিং কোর্সে।

মিতু

পাড়ার পরিচিত জিতুর কথা শুনে EARN
প্রজেক্টের ট্রেনিংয়ের সুযোগ সম্পর্কে
জানতে পারে। পরিবার ও সমাজের ভয়
থাকা সত্ত্বেও আগ্রহী।

জিতু

হাতে-কলমে শেখা শুরু করে,
আত্মবিশ্বাস বেড়ে ওঠে।

মিতু

হ্যান্ডিক্র্যাফটস ট্রেনিংয়ে অংশ নিয়ে প্রথম
হয়। নিজের দক্ষতা কাজে লাগিয়ে পণ্য
তৈরি শুরু করে।

জিতু

ট্রেনিং শেষে চাকরি পেয়ে প্রথমবার আয়ের মুখ দেখে। ধীরে ধীরে পরিবারকে অর্থনৈতিক সহায়তা দেয়।

মিতু

জিতুর সহায়তায় ট্রেনিংয়ে ভর্তি হয়, বিয়ের পর স্বামীকে বোঝাতে জিতুর সহযোগিতা।

জিতু

নিজের গ্রামে একটি ছোট ট্রেনিং সেন্টার চালু করে অন্যদেরও প্রশিক্ষণ দেয়।

মিতু

বিয়ের পর শ্বশুরবাড়ির বাধা ও স্বামীর হীনমন্যতার মোকাবিলা করে জিতুর সাহায্যে শহরের বড় কোম্পানির সাথে কাজের সুযোগ নেয়। উদ্যোক্তা হওয়ার স্বপ্ন পোষণ করে।

জিতু

ছিল পড়াশোনার অভাব ও অর্থনৈতিক দুরবস্থা।

মিতু

জিতুর সহায়তায় ট্রেনিংয়ে ভর্তি হয়, বিয়ের পর স্বামীকে বোঝাতে জিতুর সহযোগিতা।

জিতু

রাশেদ স্যারের পরামর্শ এবং মাহফুজের কথার মধ্য দিয়ে সচেতনতা আসে।

মিতু

জিতুর সহায়তায় ট্রেনিংয়ে ভর্তি হয়, বিয়ের পর স্বামীকে বোঝাতে জিতুর সহযোগিতা।

TRAINING

জিতু

'একটি সুযোগ, একটি প্রশিক্ষণ, আর কিছু
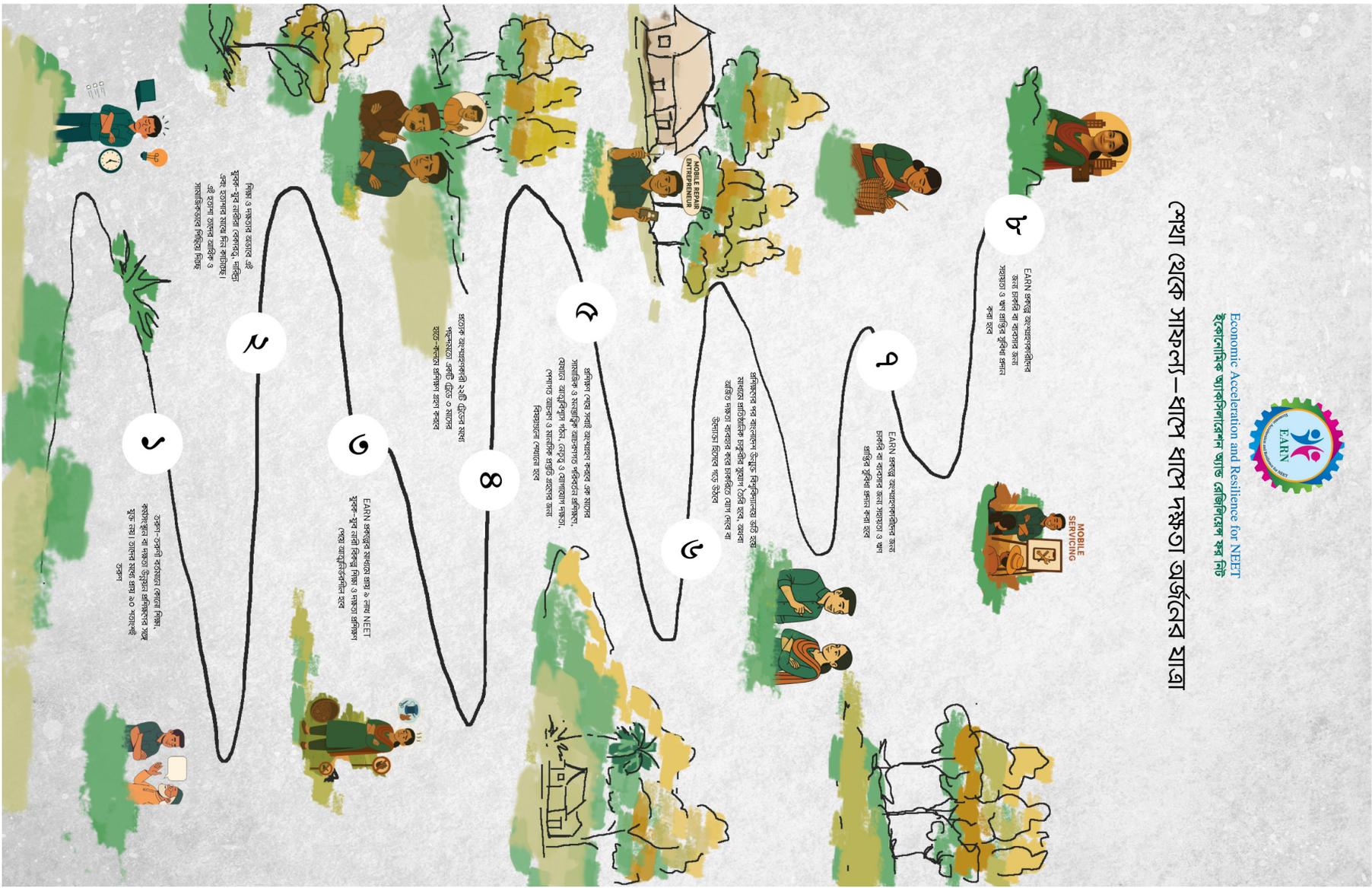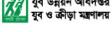ই'ছাশক্তি—এই তিনেই বদলে যেতে পারে
একটি জীবন।'

মিতু

'আমি শুধু একজন মেয়ে নই, আমি
একজন উদ্যোক্তা। মেয়ে মানেই সীমা না,
মেয়ে মানেই সম্ভাবনা।'

Training Pathway Map Flyer

Left handbill

যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর
যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয়

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

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EARN প্রকল্পের সুবিধাভোগী

১৫ থেকে ৩৫ বছর বয়সী জনগোষ্ঠী, যারা বর্তমানে কোনো প্রকার আনুষ্ঠানিক/উপানুষ্ঠানিক শিক্ষা, প্রশিক্ষণ এবং উপার্জনমূলক কর্মকাণ্ডে সম্পৃক্ত নয়, তাদের NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) নামে অভিহিত করা হয়। নয় (৯) লাখ বাংলাদেশি NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে শতকরা ৬০ ভাগ নারী, শতকরা দুই ভাগ ক্ষুদ্র ও নৃ-গোষ্ঠী এবং শতকরা এক ভাগ বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন) এই প্রকল্পের সরাসরি সুবিধাভোগী হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।

প্রকল্পের অভীষ্ট সুবিধাভোগীদের বিবরণ নিম্নরূপঃ

গ্রামীণ পর্যায়ে দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন

১৫-৩৫ বছর বয়সী পাঁচ লাখ NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে তিন লাখ নারী), যারা ন্যূনতম পঞ্চম শ্রেণি পাস।

প্রযুক্তিগত দক্ষতাসম্পন্ন SEB ও EDT প্রশিক্ষণ

দুই লাখ NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে এক লাখ ২০ হাজার নারী), যারা অন্য কোনো প্রকল্প/ প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে প্রযুক্তিগত/কারিগরি প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণ করছে অথবা এসএসসি/ এইচএসসি/ তদূর্ধ্ব যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন।

বিকল্প শিক্ষার মাধ্যমে দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন

১৫-১৯ বছর বয়সী এক লাখ NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে ৬০ হাজার নারী), যারা ২০১৯ সাল এবং তৎপরবর্তী সময়ে মাধ্যমিক স্তর থেকে ঝরে পড়েছে।

নেতৃত্ববিষয়ক যুব ক্লাবগুলোতে প্রশিক্ষণ

৫০ হাজার NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে ৩০ হাজার নারী), যারা নির্বাচিত উপজেলায় নিবন্ধিত যুব ক্লাবের সদস্য।

অনলাইন ও অফলাইন উভয় পর্যায়ে প্রশিক্ষণ

২৫ হাজার NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে ১৫ হাজার নারী), যারা EARN প্রকল্পের আওতায় অনলাইন কোর্সের জন্য নিবন্ধন করবে।

উদ্ভাবনী অর্থায়নে দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন

২৫ হাজার NEET যুব (তার মধ্যে কমপক্ষে ১৫ হাজার নারী), যারা সুবিধাবঞ্চিত ও পিছিয়ে পড়া জনগোষ্ঠীর অন্তর্ভুক্ত (বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি, ক্ষুদ্র ও নৃ-গোষ্ঠী ইত্যাদি) এবং হার্ড-টু-রিচ অঞ্চলে (চর/হাওর/পার্বত্য অঞ্চল/ উপকূলীয় অঞ্চল/চা-বাগান ইত্যাদি) বসবাসকারী।

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

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গ্রামীণ পর্যায়ে দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন
৫,০০,০০০
(৩,০০,০০০ নারী)

প্রযুক্তিগত দক্ষতাসম্পন্ন SEB ও EDT প্রশিক্ষণ
২,০০,০০০
(১,২০,০০০ নারী)

বিকল্প শিক্ষার মাধ্যমে দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন
১,০০,০০০
(৬০,০০০ নারী)

নেতৃত্ববিষয়ক যুব ক্লাবগুলোতে প্রশিক্ষণ
৫০,০০০
(৩০,০০০ নারী)

অনলাইন ও অফলাইন উভয় পর্যায়ে প্রশিক্ষণ
২৫,০০০
(১৫,০০০ নারী)

উদ্ভাবনী অর্থায়নে দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন
২৫,০০০
(১৫,০০০ নারী)

৯,০০,০০০
যুব প্রশিক্ষণ

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

SCRIPTS

EARN TVC Script: Story of Mitu (Female)

The central focus of the TVCs will be on real-life characters, highlighting their genuine challenges and success stories as the primary subject matter. The protagonists will represent relevant members of the NEET youth demographic and will be portrayed authentically, reflecting the realities of their lives. The content will be emotionally engaging, contextually relevant to rural settings, and reflective of the prevailing economic and social environment, including location-specific elements. It will also take into account different socio-economic classes, with local language used in an informal style to ensure relatability and resonance with the target audience.

ব্যাকগ্রাউন্ডে খুব অল্প আবহসঙ্গীতে ধীরলয়ে এই গানটি বাজতে থাকে:
আজকে তোরে কেমন ভেবে   অঙ্গে যে তোর ধুলো দেবে
কাল সে প্রাতে মালা হাতে আসবে রে তোর পিছু-পিছু....

প্রথম দৃশ্য:
রান্নাঘরে রান্না করছে মিতু আর তার মা। মা রান্না করছে আর মিতু বটি দিয়ে তরকারী কাটছে। জিতুর মা হাত দিয়ে তাকে রাখা একটা কড়াই দিতে বলে। মিতু কড়াই নামায়।
ক্যামেরায় দেখা যায় তাকে হাড়ি, কড়াই, বাটি, চালুনি, চামচ আলাদা সাজিয়ে রাখা, আর সবগুলোর উপরে একটা করে সুন্দর পাটের তৈরি নকশা করা ট্যাগ ঝুলছে। হাড়ির শেপ এ একটা ট্যাগ, ভেতরে কাপড়ের উপরে হাতে লেখা হাড়ি, কড়াই শেপে কড়াই....
মিতু কড়াই নামিয়ে মা'কে দেয়। নামাতে গিয়ে কড়াই লেখা ট্যাগ টা পড়ে যায়। মিতু খুব যত্ন করে তুলে সেটা ঝেড়ে আবার জায়গা মতো রাখে। দেখে মা মুচকি হাসে।

দ্বিতীয় দৃশ্য:
মিতু ঘর ঝাড়ু দিচ্ছে। বাবা এই সময় ঘরে ঢোকে। মিতু ঝাড়ু রেখে দেয়। যেখানে ঝাড়ু রাখে, সেখানে সুন্দর একটা পাটের বাক্স মতো বানানো, বাক্সের মধ্যে আলাদা ধরনের ঝাড়ু রাখা। আলাদা আলাদা করে পাটের ব্যাজ এ লেখা: ফুল ঝাড়ু, পাকা ঝাড়ু, ছাদ ঝাড়ু, বিছানা ঝাড়ু। বাবা বিরক্ত চোখে তাকায়।

তৃতীয় দৃশ্য:
মিতু বাসনকোসন ধুচ্ছে। যথারীতি কলের পাশে দেয়ালে ঝুলানো রয়েছে কয়েক ধরনের বাসন মাজার জিনিস। কোনোটাতে লেখা স্টিলের বাসন, কোনোটাতে মাটির বাসন, অ্যালুমিনিয়ামের বাসন। এই দৃশ্যে পাশের ঘর থেকে বাবা আর মায়ের কথোপকথন শোনা যাবে।

মিতুর মা বলে, মেয়ে কি সুন্দর পুতুল বানাইছে দেখছ? গুণ আছে ওর, পড়ালেখাটা করতে পারতো। অনেক পড়ালেখা হইছে, জজ ব্যারিস্টার বানানোর পয়সা নাই আমার। এখন রান্নাবান্না ঠিকমতো শেখাও যাতে ভালো একটা বিয়ে দিতে পারি। মেয়েদের অত বাইরের কাজ না জানলেও চলবে।
মিতু শুনে আবার শুকনো মুখে বাসন মাজতে থাকে।

ভয়েসওভার:
প্রত্যেকের মাঝেই প্রতিভা আছে, প্রশিক্ষণ পারে প্রতিভাকে দক্ষতায় রূপ দিতে। হাজারো পিছিয়ে পড়া তরুণ তরুণীদের পছন্দের কাজে দক্ষতা অর্জনে চালু হয়েছে দেশব্যাপী প্রশিক্ষণ প্রকল্প আর্ন।

(এই সময়ে মিতু হস্তশিল্পে প্রশিক্ষণ নিচ্ছে, সুন্দর সুন্দর জিনিস বানাচ্ছে এগুলো দেখা যাবে)।

আধুনিক, জীবনমুখী ও কার্যকরী প্রশিক্ষণ কার্যক্রমে যুবসমাজ গড়ে তুলবে সমৃদ্ধ জীবন, সমৃদ্ধ বাংলাদেশ।

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

AV Script

For audio-visual productions, the primary emphasis will be on presenting facts and real-life scenarios that ensure both authenticity and credibility. The storytelling approach will be designed to highlight not only the information but also the tangible impact of initiatives, making the content meaningful and engaging for the audience. At the center of these productions will be the NEET youth, whose lived experiences, challenges, and aspirations will serve as the core narrative. By focusing on their journeys, the audio-visuals will portray relatable situations that reflect the realities of their environment, while also showcasing pathways of growth and success. This approach will create content that is not only informative but also motivational, fostering a strong emotional connection and encouraging other young people to envision similar possibilities for themselves.

অডিও	ভিজ্যুয়াল	টেক্সট অন স্ক্রিন
তারুণ্যের দেশ বাংলাদেশ	সূর্য উঠছে। একজন তরুণ হেঁটে যাচ্ছে।	
৫ কোটিরও বেশি যুব জনগোষ্ঠী আর তাদের চোখ জুড়ে হাজারো স্বপ্ন	থিংকিং বাবল পপ করবে। তার মধ্যে লেখা থাকবে 'নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়াবো'	'নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়াবো'
স্বপ্ন দেখে স্বনির্ভরতার, স্বপ্ন দেখে সফলতার	আরেকটা থিংকিং বাবল পপ করবে। লেখা থাকবে 'মা-বাবার ইচ্ছা পূরণ করবো'।	মা-বাবার ইচ্ছা পূরণ করবো।
তবে, সবার স্বপ্নপূরণ সহজ নয়	ব্যাকগ্রাউন্ডে ঝড়, বৃষ্টি, প্রতিকূলতা দেখা যাবে।	
কেউ শিক্ষার সুযোগ থেকে হয় বঞ্চিত	একজন নারীকে দেখা যাবে বইখাতা রেখে সংসারের কাজ করছে।	শিক্ষার সুযোগ থেকে বঞ্চিত
কেউ শিক্ষিত হয়েও বয়ে বেড়ায় বেকারত্বের অভিশাপ	যুবকটি ইন্টারভিউ থেকে ফিরে হতাশ মুখে বসে আছে।	বেকারত্ব
কেউ জীবনে পিছিয়ে পড়ে প্রয়োজনীয় দক্ষতার অভাবে	কিছু প্রশিক্ষণার্থী ট্রেনিং সেন্টারে যাচ্ছে এবং আরেকটি নারী চরিত্র দেখা যাবে। সে হতাশ। মাথা নিচু করে আছে।	প্রয়োজনীয় প্রশিক্ষণের অভাব
জীবন যাত্রায় পিছিয়ে পড়া এরকম হাজারো যুব ও যুব-নারী রয়েছে আমাদের আশেপাশেই	অ্যানিমেটেড ম্যাপে দেখানো হবে, দেশের বিভিন্ন এলাকায় এমন যুব-যুবতী রয়েছে	জীবন যাত্রায় পিছিয়ে যায় অনেকে
যারা শিক্ষা, প্রশিক্ষণ বা কর্মসংস্থান কোনকিছুর সাথেই জড়িত নেই	এক এক তিন চরিত্রকে একসাথে দেখা যাবে	নিট যুব ও যুব নারী
তবুও নিজেকে সাবলম্বী করে গড়ে তোলার অদম্য স্পৃহা নিয়ে সংগ্রাম করে যায়	বিভিন্ন শব্দ পপ করবে।	ত্যাগ, পরিশ্রম, সংগ্রাম
এইসব সম্ভাবনাময় যুব ও যুব নারীদের সুদক্ষ করে গড়ে তুলতে বিশ্ব ব্যাংক এর ঋণ সহায়তায় যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয় এর আওতাধীন যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক নেয়া হয়েছে Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) প্রকল্পের উদ্যোগ।	বিশ্বব্যাংক, যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয় ও যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তরের লোগো এবং EARN প্রকল্পের লোগো	
শিক্ষা ও দক্ষতা বঞ্চিত নয় লক্ষ যুব জনগোষ্ঠীকে প্রশিক্ষণ ও শিক্ষা প্রদানের জন্য	স্থানীয় একজন ব্যক্তি তিনজনের সাথে আলোচনা করছেন	৯,০০,০০০ যুব জনগোষ্ঠী
প্রথমেই নির্ভরযোগ্য স্থানীয় ব্যক্তিদের সহায়তায় খুঁজে বের করা হবে প্রকৃত নিট যুবদের	ব্যক্তিটির সাথে যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তরের মডেল বিল্ডিংয়ের সামনে চরিত্র তিনটিকে দেখা যাবে।	প্রকৃত নিট যুব
দেশের ২৫০ টি উপজেলায় পাঁচ হাজার ট্রেনিং সেন্টারের মাধ্যমে প্রশিক্ষণ পাবে এই যুব জনগোষ্ঠী	একটি ম্যাপে ২৫০টি উপজেলা হাইলাইট হচ্ছে, যেখানে ৫০০০ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার কাজ করবে	২৫০ টি উপজেলা
পিছিয়ে পড়া যুব নারীদেরকে এগিয়ে নিতে প্রশিক্ষণার্থীদের মধ্যে অন্তত ৬০ শতাংশ থাকবে নারী	দৃশ্যে ট্রেনিং সেন্টারে নারীদের উপস্থিতি বেশি দেখা যাবে এবং একটি পরিসংখ্যান গ্রাফ দেখানো হবে—প্রশিক্ষণপ্রাপ্তদের ৬০% হবে নারী	৫০০০ ট্রেনিং সেন্টার
বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন ও প্রান্তিক জনগোষ্ঠীকে এগিয়ে নিতেও দেয়া হয়েছে বিশেষ গুরুত্ব	বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন যুবক হুইলচেয়ারে বসে কম্পিউটারে কাজ করছে	৬০ শতাংশ নারী প্রশিক্ষণার্থী
প্রশিক্ষণের পর যুবদের উদ্যোক্তা হিসেবে গড়ে তুলতে থাকবে ক্ষুদ্র ঋণের ব্যবস্থা	ক্ষুদ্র ঋণ গ্রহণের মাধ্যমে একজন সফল উদ্যোক্তা দেখানো হবে	বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি
এছাড়া প্রশিক্ষণ সম্পর্কিত নানা তথ্য এবং সুযোগ, সহায়তা সম্পর্কে জানাতে তৈরি করা হয়েছে যুব পোর্টাল।	এক যুবক মোবাইলে 'যুব পোর্টাল' খুলে বিভিন্ন সুযোগ-সুবিধা দেখছে	সুবিধা বঞ্চিত ও প্রান্তিক জনগোষ্ঠী
আত্মনির্ভরশীলতা আনে আত্মসম্মান, আর স্বচ্ছল জীবনের পথে নিজেকে তৈরি করার কোনো বিকল্প নেই।	নারী চরিত্রটি নিজে ব্যবসা শুরু করেছে	উদ্যোক্তাদের জন্য ক্ষুদ্র ঋণের ব্যবস্থা
এই প্রকল্প যুবদের শুধু প্রশিক্ষণই নয়, শেখাবে কিভাবে আত্মবিশ্বাসের সাথে জীবনের লক্ষ্য অর্জন করতে হয়।	যুবকটি মা-বাবাকে কিছু উপহার দিচ্ছে	যুব পোর্টাল
যুবদের দেখাবে মর্যাদাসম্পন্ন জীবন তৈরির পথ।	তিনটি চরিত্রের সাফল্য	সফল উদ্যোক্তা

Animated OVC

প্রত্যেকেরই স্বপ্ন থাকে

জীবনের প্রথম অধ্যায়ে এই স্বপ্ন নিয়ে এগিয়ে যেতে চায় সবাই

সাধ থাকে আরেকটু ভালোভাবে বাঁচবার, একটু সাফল্যের

তবে, সবার স্বপ্নপূরণ সহজ নয়

অনেকেই আজীবন সংগ্রামে বিপর্যস্ত

স্বপ্ন দূরে থাক, সামনের রাস্তাটাতেই অন্ধকার দেখে

অনেকে আটকে থাকে পরিস্থিতির নিষ্ঠুর বেড়াজালে

কেউ দারিদ্র্যের কবলে পড়ে, কেউ সামাজিক সংকটে

কাঁধে তুলে নেয় সংসারের ভারী বোঝা

অথবা খুঁজে পায় না নিস্তারের পথ

শিক্ষা থেকে বঞ্চিত হয়

আবার স্বনির্ভরতার জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় দক্ষতা না থাকায়

একদিন খেয়াল করে, পায়ের নিচে মাটি নেই

জীবন যাত্রায় পিছিয়ে পড়া এরকম হাজারো তরুণ-তরুণী রয়েছে আমাদের আশেপাশেই

যারা শিক্ষা, প্রশিক্ষণ বা কর্মসংস্থান কোনকিছুর সাথেই জড়িত নেই

তবুও নিজেকে সাবলম্বী করে গড়ে তোলার অদম্য স্পৃহা নিয়ে সংগ্রাম করে যায়

এইসব সম্ভাবনাময় তরুণ-তরুণীকে সুদক্ষ করে গড়ে তুলতে গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার এর অনুদান এবং বিশ্ব ব্যাংক এর ঋণ সহায়তায় যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয় এর আওতাধীন যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক নেয়া হয়েছে Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) প্রকল্প।

শিক্ষা ও দক্ষতা বঞ্চিত ৯,০০,০০০ যুব জনগোষ্ঠীকে প্রশিক্ষণ ও শিক্ষা প্রদানের মাধ্যমে স্বাবলম্বী করে তোলাই এই প্রকল্পের লক্ষ্য।

যেহেতু যুবনারীদের ক্ষেত্রে এই সংকট আরো ঘনীভূত, তাই প্রকল্পের প্রশিক্ষণপ্রাপ্তদের অন্তত ৬০% হবে নারী।

২৫০টি উপজেলায় পাঁচ হাজার গ্রামীণ পর্যায়ের ট্রেনিং সেন্টারের মাধ্যমে প্রত্যন্ত অঞ্চলে তরুণ জনগোষ্ঠীর দোরগোড়ায় প্রশিক্ষণ পৌঁছে যাবে।

প্রযুক্তি ও কারিগরি বিষয়ে প্রশিক্ষণের পাশাপাশি শিক্ষা থেকে ঝরে পড়া ও পিছিয়ে পড়া যুবদের জন্য বিকল্প শিক্ষা ও প্রশিক্ষণ দেয়া হবে।

যুবদের সামাজিক ও মনোসামাজিক উন্নয়নে বিশেষ প্রশিক্ষণের ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে, যাতে করে আত্মবিশ্বাসের সাথে নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়ানোর শক্তি পায় এই বিশাল যুবসমাজ।

বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন, সুবিধা বঞ্চিত, প্রান্তিক ও পিছিয়ে পড়া জনগোষ্ঠীকে এই প্রকল্পে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করতে বিশেষ জোর দেওয়া হয়েছে।

প্রত্যন্ত এলাকার স্থানীয় গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ব্যক্তিবর্গ এবং যুবদের পরিবারের সাথে আলোচনার মাধ্যমে তাদের সহায়তায় প্রকৃত নিট যুবদেরকে প্রশিক্ষণের আওতায় আনা হবে।

প্রশিক্ষণের পর কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ সৃষ্টি এবং যুব উদ্যোক্তাদেরকে উদ্যোগে সহায়তা প্রদান ও ক্ষুদ্রঋণ সহায়তার আয়োজন করা এই প্রকল্পের অন্যতম উদ্দেশ্য।

আধুনিক ও প্রযুক্তির সহায়তার ট্রেনিং কার্যক্রম পরিচালনার পাশাপাশি একটি যুব পোর্টাল তৈরি হয়েছে, যা প্রশিক্ষণের নানা খুঁটিনাটি জানা, কর্মসংস্থান বা উদ্যোগের সুযোগ ও সহায়তার জন্য একটি সমন্বিত নেটওয়ার্ক হিসেবে কাজ করবে।

আত্মনির্ভশীলতা আনে আত্মসম্মান, আর স্বচ্ছল জীবনের পথে নিজেকে তৈরি করার কোনো বিকল্প নেই।

এই প্রকল্প যুবদের শুধু প্রশিক্ষণই নয়, শেখাবে কিভাবে আত্মবিশ্বাসের সাথে জীবনের লক্ষ্য অর্জন করতে হয়।

তারুণ্য জীবনের শ্রেষ্ঠ সময়

বেকারত্বের অভিশাপ থেকে মুক্ত করে যুবদের দেখাবে মর্যাদাসম্পন্ন জীবন তৈরির পথ।

Success Story OVCs

OVC Script and story will follow the story pattern of the TVC stories. Same philosophy of focusing on characters, their real life challenges and real life success stories will be the main subject of the OVCs, while the protagonists will be relevant characters of our NEET youth and they will be portrayed just the same as the real characters.

Different stories will represent different segments of the NEET youth, as following:

১। NEET তরুণদের নিয়ে সামগ্রিক স্ক্রিপ্ট

২। একজন NEET তরুণীর গল্প

৩। একজন হতাশাগ্রস্ত যুবকের গল্প (ড্রাগ এবিউজ)

৪। শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী তরুণীর সাফল্যের গল্প

৫। আদিবাসী তরুণ/তরুণীর গল্প

৬। পিছিয়ে পড়া জনগোষ্ঠীর তরুণের গল্প

Youth Ambassadors

যুব অ্যাম্বাসেডর: পরিচিতি

EARN প্রকল্পের "যুব অ্যাম্বাসেডর" হলো এমন কিছু নির্বাচিত তরুণ-তরুণী যারা নিজেদের জীবনের অভিজ্ঞতা, সংগ্রাম, এবং আশার গল্প নিয়ে স্থানীয় কমিউনিটিতে সচেতনতা ছড়াবে ও অন্যদের উদ্বুদ্ধ করবে। এরা NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) শ্রেণির তরুণদের চিন্তা, চ্যালেঞ্জ, এবং স্বপ্নকে প্রতিনিধিত্ব করবে—তাদের ভাষায়, তাদের বাস্তবতায়।

প্রতিটি উপজেলাতে একজন ছেলে এবং একজন মেয়ে অ্যাম্বাসেডর নির্বাচন করা— যেমন, গাজীপুরের শ্রীপুর থেকে একজন যুবক ও একজন যুবতী নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন, যারা নিজ এলাকায় মানুষের সাথে সরাসরি কথা বলবে, প্রশিক্ষণের প্রয়োজনীয়তা বোঝাবে এবং নিজস্ব অভিজ্ঞতার মাধ্যমে বাস্তব দৃষ্টান্ত তৈরি করবে।

তাদের ভূমিকা ও কার্যক্রম:

- উঠান বৈঠক, বাজার, মসজিদ, স্কুল কিংবা চায়ের দোকানে মুখোমুখি আলাপচারিতায় কমিউনিটির সঙ্গে সংযোগ স্থাপন করবে

- ভয়, লজ্জা ও সন্দেহ কাটিয়ে NEET তরুণদের উৎসাহিত করবে প্রশিক্ষণে অংশ নিতে

- নিজের সফলতার গল্প বলবে—কীভাবে প্রশিক্ষণ তাকে স্বনির্ভর করেছে এবং সমাজে মর্যাদা এনে দিয়েছে

- স্থানীয় ভাষা ও অনুভব দিয়ে তরুণদের বাস্তব সমস্যা তুলে ধরবে এবং সমাধানের পথ দেখাবে

- সামাজিক যোগাযোগমাধ্যম (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok)-এ ভিডিও, গল্প ও রিলের মাধ্যমে আরও তরুণদের কাছে বার্তা পৌঁছে দেবে

আলোচ্য বিষয়ভিত্তিক বার্তাবলী ও সমাধানমূলক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি

- তরুণরা শুধু একটা চাকরি চায় না—তারা চায় সম্মান, নিজের পরিচয় তৈরি করতে, এবং পরিবারের পাশে দাঁড়াতে। এমন অনেকেই আছে যারা এখনো পড়াশোনা বা চাকরির সঙ্গে যুক্ত নয়, কিন্তু তাও থেমে যায়নি। EARN প্রকল্পের প্রশিক্ষণ হতে পারে তাদের জীবনের নতুন শুরু।

- এই বাস্তবতায়, মেয়েরা অনেক সময় ঘর থেকে বের হতে ভয় পায়—সমাজ, নিরাপত্তা, আর পারিবারিক চাপ তাদের আটকে রাখে। ছেলেরাও চাপে থাকে আয় করার, কিন্তু পাশে দাঁড়ানোর কেউ থাকে না। তাই এই প্রশিক্ষণ কেবল একটি দক্ষতা শেখার জায়গা নয়—এটা সাহস শেখার জায়গা। ছেলে-মেয়ে যেই হোক, এই প্ল্যাটফর্মে সবার জায়গা আছে।

- অনেকেই আগে প্রতিশ্রুতি পেয়েছে, কিন্তু ফল পায়নি। তাই মানুষ এখন সন্দেহ করে, প্রশ্ন করে। কিন্তু যুব অ্যাম্বাসেডররা বাইরের কেউ নয়—তারা নিজেরা এই পথ পেরিয়ে এসেছে, তাদের কথা বিশ্বাসযোগ্য, কারণ তারা পাশের বাড়িরই কেউ। তারা কাজ দিয়েই বিশ্বাস অর্জন করবে।

- তরুণরা আজকাল সনদ নয়, কাজ চায়। শুধু কাগজ নয়—যে শেখা বাস্তবে কাজে লাগে, সেটা তারা খোঁজে। এই প্রশিক্ষণ বাস্তবভিত্তিক, হাতে-কলমে শেখা, আর সরাসরি কাজের সুযোগের সঙ্গে যুক্ত।

- অনেক তরুণের কাছে ডিজিটাল মাধ্যম এখনো দুরের বিষয়। সবার হাতে স্মার্টফোন নেই, অনেকে জানেই না কোথায় আবেদন করতে হয়। তাই এই বার্তা পৌছাতে হবে মাঠে-মাঠে, চায়ের দোকানে, মসজিদে, উঠানে—যেখানে মানুষ আছে, সেখানেই।

- তরুণদের মধ্যে সম্ভাবনা আছে, কিন্তু ভয়ও আছে—যদি আবার প্রতারণা হয়, যদি আবার সময় নষ্ট হয়! তাদের সেই ভয় দূর করতে হবে। পাশে থাকতে হবে, সাহস দিতে হবে, ছোট ছোট পদক্ষেপের মাধ্যমে এগিয়ে যেতে সহায়তা করতে হবে।

- প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলো হয়তো বলে প্রশিক্ষণের সঙ্গে কাজের যোগ নেই। কিন্তু আমরা জানি, আমাদের এলাকায় কেমন কাজ চলে, কী দরকার। এই বাস্তবতার ভিত্তিতে পরিকল্পনা দরকার, যেন প্রশিক্ষণ সত্যিই কাজে লাগে।

- অনেক তরুণ চায়, কিন্তু ভয় পায়—'আমি পারবো না', 'মানুষ কি বলবে'। এই ভয়ই তাদের আটকে রাখে। কিন্তু যখন কেউ বলে, "তুই পারবি", তখন বদলে যায় সবকিছু। একে অপরের গল্প শুনে, পাশে দাঁড়িয়ে এই বাধা কাটিয়ে উঠতে পারি।

- তরুণরা হৃদয় ছোঁয়া কনটেন্ট পছন্দ করে—ভিডিও, গান, নাটক, ছোট গল্প। বক্তৃতার চেয়ে তারা ভালোবাসে এমন বার্তা, যেখানে আবেগ আছে, বাস্তবতা আছে। তাই আমাদের ভাষায়, আমাদের গল্পেই বার্তা ছড়াতে হবে।

- সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ—তরুণরা চায়, কেউ তাদের বুঝুক। শুধু প্রশিক্ষণ বা কাজ নয়, তারা চায় স্বীকৃতি, চায় কেউ বলুক, "তুমি যথেষ্ট।" প্রতিষ্ঠানের ভাষায় নয়, এক ভাই বা বোনের মতো কথা বললে তারা শুনবে, বিশ্বাস করবে, বদলাবে।

EARN প্রকল্পের যুব অ্যাম্বাসেডররা হলো পরিবর্তনের কণ্ঠস্বর।

তাদের বার্তাগুলো জীবনের গল্পের মতো সত্য, চোখের ভাষার মতো স্পষ্ট, আর আশার মতো ছড়িয়ে পড়া। তারা শুধু তথ্য প্রদানকারী নয়—তারা আস্থার কণ্ঠস্বর, অনুপ্রেরণার প্রতীক, এবং সাহসী বার্তাবাহক।

তারা বলবে:

"আমিও একসময় তোমার জায়গায় ছিলাম। সুযোগটা পেয়েছি, কাজে লাগিয়েছি। এখন তুমি পারো। তুমি যেমন আছো, ঠিক সেখান থেকেই শুরু করো।"

"আমরা পেরেছি, তুমিও পারবে।"

তাদের বার্তা কেবল প্রশিক্ষণ নয়, বরং আত্মবিশ্বাস, সম্ভাবনা এবং সামাজিক স্বীকৃতির বার্তা। তারা প্রমাণ করে দেয়— *"এটা শুধু একটি প্রকল্প নয়, এটা আমাদের জীবন বদলের গল্প।"*

এই যুব অ্যাম্বাসেডররা সত্যিকার অর্থেই আত্মবিশ্বাসের ফেরিওয়ালা—যারা তরুণদের কণ্ঠে, তরুণদের ভাষায়, তরুণদের পাশে দাঁড়িয়ে বলছে:

"তুমি যেমন আছো, সেখান থেকেই শুরু করো।"

Drama Series (YouTube or TV Channel: Jitu Mitu)

The drama will be developed based on the real-life stories and challenges of NEET youth, ensuring that the visualization is authentic, relatable, and motivational for the target audience. The content will be crafted in a manner that allows NEET youth to connect with the narrative and draw inspiration from it. Experienced scriptwriters and directors, who have a proven track record of creating impactful content aligned with the demographic and social class of NEET youth, such as Sadat Hossain or similar professionals will be engaged to ensure quality and relevance.

EARN নাটক সিরিজ

নাম	:	"EARN নাটক সিরিজ"
ধরণ	:	ছোট নাট্যসিরিজ (Anthology-style drama series)
প্রযোজনা	:	EARN প্রকল্প, যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর ও ওয়ার্ল্ড ব্যাংকের সহায়তায়
পর্ব সংখ্যা	:	প্রাথমিকভাবে ১০টি পর্ব (Episode 1–10) → ভবিষ্যতে EARN প্রকল্প চলাকালীন সময়জুড়ে আরও পর্ব যুক্ত হবে।
প্রতিটি পর্বের দৈর্ঘ্য	:	২০:৩০ মিনিট
ভাষা	:	বাংলা
লক্ষ্য শ্রোতা	:	গ্রামীণ তরুণ-তরুণী, পরিবার, স্থানীয় সম্প্রদায়

সিরিজের সারাংশ:

EARN নাটক সিরিজ একটি আবেগঘন, অনুপ্রেরণামূলক নাট্যসিরিজ যা বাংলাদেশের গ্রামীণ অঞ্চলের **NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)** যুবকদের জীবনের বাস্তবতা তুলে ধরে। প্রতিটি পর্বে থাকবে ভিন্ন ভিন্ন চরিত্র, ছোট ছোট গল্প এবং সামাজিক বাস্তবতায় গড়ে ওঠা জীবনসংগ্রামের চিত্র। এই সিরিজের কেন্দ্রীয় চরিত্র দুইজন — জিতু ও মিতু, যারা একসময় পথহারা ছিল, কিন্তু EARN প্রকল্পের সহায়তায় খুঁজে পায় নিজের সম্ভাবনার নতুন দরজা।

প্রতিটি গল্পে উঠে আসবে দারিদ্র্য, সামাজিক বাধা, পারিবারিক দায়িত্ব, লিঙ্গ বৈষম্য ও গ্রামীণ বাস্তবতার মাঝে NEET তরুণদের সংগ্রাম ও স্বপ্ন দেখার গল্প। ধাপে ধাপে দর্শক জানবে জিতু ও মিতুর জীবন, তাদের সংকট, সমাজের চোখে অবমূল্যায়ন, এবং শেষে তাদের সাহসিকতায় বদলে যাওয়া বাস্তবতা।

সিরিজের উদ্দেশ্য:

- নাট্যরূপে বাস্তবতা: দর্শকদের চোখে তুলে ধরা NEET তরুণ-তরুণীদের অভিজ্ঞতা, অসহায়তা ও স্বপ্ন।

- পর্যায়ক্রমিক উন্নয়ন: ধাপে ধাপে উঅজঘ প্রকল্প সম্পর্কে জানাশোনা, কোর্সে ভর্তি, ও জীবন বদলে ফেলার গল্প।

- চরিত্র গঠন: মিতু ও জিতু ছাড়াও থাকবে প্রতিবেশী, মা-বাবা, বন্ধু, শিক্ষক, মুরব্বি — যাঁরা সমাজের একেকটি প্রতিচ্ছবি।

- আবেগ ও অনুপ্রেরণা: প্রতিটি পর্ব শেষে থাকবে বাস্তবভিত্তিক বার্তা — "দক্ষতাই সম্পদ", #EarnMyWay

EARN নাটক সিরিজ

Synopsis

পর্ব ১: হারিয়ে যাওয়া ছেলের খোঁজে ("জিতুর দিন")

একটি গ্রামীণ সকালের চা দোকানে বসে থাকা বেকার যুবক জিতু হঠাৎ জানতে পারে স্থানীয় আবেদ চাচার ছোট ছেলে জয়নুল মাছ ধরতে গিয়ে হারিয়ে গেছে। নিজের কোন কাজ না থাকলেও জিতু দেরি না করে ছুটে যায় খুঁজতে এবং সারাদিন চেষ্টার পর ছেলেটিকে ফিরিয়ে আনে—নীরবে, বিনিময়ে কিছু না চেয়ে। সেইসাথে সমান্তরালে দেখা যায় মিতুর পাট দিয়ে পুতুল তৈরির মুহূর্ত, গ্রামীণ জীবনের এক কোমল দৃশ্য। দিন শেষে জিতু ফিরে পায় মায়ের হতাশা ও রাগ—"নিজের আয় নেই, শুধু অন্যের জন্য ঘোরাঘুরি!" জিতু নীরব থাকে। তবে তার চোখে ভেসে ওঠে নিজের অক্ষমতা ও সম্ভাবনার সন্ধান।

পর্ব ২: পুতুল, প্রতিবন্ধকতা ও পিতার হাত ("মিতুর দিন")

মিতু তার গ্রামের ছোট মেয়েদের জন্য নিজ হাতে পাট দিয়ে পুতুল বানায়—ভালোবাসা ও যত্নে গড়া। কিন্তু দড়ি সংগ্রহে গেলে প্রতিবেশী এক বৃদ্ধ কটাক্ষ করেন—"মেয়ে হয়ে বাইরায় ঘুরিস? পুতুল বানানো আবার কাজ নাকি?" তিনি সরাসরি মিতুর বাবার কাছে অভিযোগ নিয়ে যান। রাতে বাড়ি ফিরে মিতু বাবার ধমক খায়, কাঁদে, না খেয়ে থাকে। তবে রাতের এক কোমল মুহূর্তে বাবা এসে বলে—"আমার উপর রাগ কর, কিন্তু ভাতের উপর করিস না।" পরদিন খেলায় মিতুর বানানো পুতুল সবচেয়ে সুন্দর। মিতু তাকিয়ে থাকে, দীর্ঘশ্বাস ফেলে—তার চোখে ধরা পড়ে দমন করা স্বপ্ন আর সম্ভাবনার প্রতিচ্ছবি।

পর্ব ৩: ভাঙনের ফাঁকে বন্ধুত্ব

এক রোদের দিনে মিতুর বাড়ির একটি মুরগি জিতুর মায়ের ধানে ঠোকর দেয়—তুচ্ছ ঘটনাকে কেন্দ্র করে দুই পরিবারের মধ্যে ঝগড়া বেধে যায়। দুজনেই একে অপরের সন্তানকে অপমান করে। সেই উত্তপ্ত পরিস্থিতিতে এগিয়ে আসে জিতু ও মিতু—দুজনেই শান্তভাবে দায়িত্ব নেয়, ক্ষমা চায়, এবং পরিস্থিতি নিয়ন্ত্রণে আনে। বিকেলে দুজন একসাথে বসে উপলব্ধি করে—নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়ানোর অভাবেই ছোট ছোট ঘটনায় এমন অপমান আসে। তারা প্রথমবার একে অপরের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিতে নিজের যন্ত্রণাকে খুঁজে পায়। এটাই তাদের বন্ধুত্বের শুরু, যা ভবিষ্যতের পরিবর্তনের পথ দেখায়।

Newspaper Feature

When it comes to newspapers, content will be strategically developed and published at different intervals, ensuring continuous engagement and visibility. These articles and features will focus on the NEET youth, highlighting their stories, challenges, and opportunities, while also showcasing the impact of skill development and training initiatives. The objective will be to create awareness, inspire action, and influence public perception by presenting authentic narratives and positive outcomes. By utilizing the reach and credibility of print media, the content will serve as an effective tool to connect with a wide audience and reinforce the importance of empowering NEET youth within the broader socio-economic context.

Article Topic Suggestions

নিজেকে জানার আর একবার সুযোগ পেলাম": নারীর চোখে **EARN** প্রকল্পের নতুন ভোর

VLTC : যেখানে নারীরা প্রথমবার নিজের জন্য হাঁটেন

নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়ানোর প্রথম গল্প : এক নারীর ভাষায়

নারী উদ্যোগতা : মনের জোরই সেরা পুঁজি

EARN প্রকল্পের ভিতরে সমাজ পরিবর্তনের নীরব স্রোত

ভিন্নভাবে সক্ষমদের স্বপ্ন ছুঁয়ে দিচ্ছে **EARN** প্রকল্প

সামাজিক মনোভাবেও পরিবর্তন আনছে **EARN**

EARN প্রকল্প : একটি অন্তর্ভুক্তিমূলক ভবিষ্যতের প্রতিশ্রুতি

SMS Content

SMS 1: প্রকল্প পরিচিতি ও উদ্বুদ্ধকরণ

📥 **বাংলা (≤160 শব্দের সীমার মধ্যে):**

EARN প্রকল্প (যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর ও বিশ্ব ব্যাংকের সহায়তায়) এখন NEET তরুণদের জন্য চালু!

৩ মাসের ট্রেড প্রশিক্ষণ + ১ মাসের জীবনদক্ষতা প্রশিক্ষণ।

বিনামূল্যে কোর্স, ভাতা, সার্টিফিকেট এবং ভবিষ্যৎ শিক্ষার সুযোগ!

👉 এখনই আগ্রহী হোন।

👉 দক্ষতাই সম্পদ।

#EARNMyWay

📥 **English:**
EARN Project (by DYD & World Bank) now open for NEET youth!
3-month skill training + 1-month life skills course.
Free training, allowance, certificate & future education path!
👉 Get ready today.
👉 Skills are the real asset.
#EARNMyWay

SMS 2: ভর্তি ও ওয়েবসাইট তথ্য

📥 **বাংলা:**

আপনি কি ১৬–৩০ বছর বয়সী, শিক্ষায়/কাজে/প্রশিক্ষণে নেই?

EARN প্রকল্পে আজই আবেদন করুন!

✅ ট্রেড বাছাই করে প্রশিক্ষণ নিন

✅ ভাতা ও প্রশংসাপত্র

🔗 আবেদন: https://earndyd.com

👉 দক্ষতাই সম্পদ।

#EARNMyWay

📥 **English:**
Are you 16–30 and not in education/ employment/training?
Apply to EARN Project now!
✅ Learn a trade
✅ Get allowance & certificate
🔗 Apply: https://earndyd.com
👉 Skills are the real asset.
#EARNMyWay

SMS 3: নারীদের জন্য বিশেষ বার্তা

📥 **বাংলা:**

মেয়েদের জন্য নিরাপদ ও নারী-বান্ধব প্রশিক্ষণ!

EARN প্রকল্পে রয়েছে নারী প্রশিক্ষক, আলাদা ব্যাচ,

ভাতা ও ভবিষ্যৎ শিক্ষার সুযোগ।

🔗 আবেদন করুন: https://earndyd.com

👉 দক্ষতাই সম্পদ।

#EARNMyWay

📥 **English:**
Safe & women-friendly training for girls!
EARN offers female trainers, separate batches, allowance & open learning path.
🔗 Apply: https://earndyd.com
👉 Skills are the real asset.
#EARNMyWay

Local success story card-01

The local success story card should contain a real image of the individual who is a trainee or had successfully completed the EARN project's training must be placed at the lower section of the front side of the card as shown in the template. At the back of the card, success story of the individual should include relevant details of past and present lifestyle I decide and data that highlight the individual's achievements and the positive changes gained through the program. A quote of the individual should be included at the end before presenting the name. The temperature should be followed as shown.

যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর
যুব ও ক্রীড়া মন্ত্রণালয়

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

THE WORLD BANK

EARN

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

কর্মহীন যুবসমাজের জন্য আধুনিক, জীবনমুখী ও কার্যকরী
প্রশিক্ষণ কার্যক্রম। প্রশিক্ষণ প্রস্তুত হবো সমৃদ্ধির পথে।

রহিমা খাতুন
সংসার চালানোর সংগ্রামে জয়ের হাসি

রহিমা খাতুন একজন গৃহবধূ, থাকেন মানিকগঞ্জ জেলার এক গ্রামে। তার স্বামী একজন ছোটখাটো রিকশাচালক, আয় খুব সীমিত। দুই সন্তান—একজন স্কুলে পড়ে, আরেকজন ছোট। সংসার চালাতে হিমশিম খেতে হতো রহিমাকে। সন্তানদের ঠিকমতো খাওয়াতে না পারা, বই কিনে দিতে না পারা, চিকিৎসা করাতে না পারা—এইসব কষ্ট তাকে রাতজেগে কাঁদাতো।

একদিন গ্রামে **EARN** প্রকল্পের "টেকসই দুগ্ধ উৎপাদন **(Sustainable Dairy Production)**" প্রশিক্ষণের খবর এলো। অনেকেই বলেছিল, "তুমি কি পারবে?" কিন্তু রহিমা ভাবলেন—এই না হয় শেষ চেষ্টা। প্রশিক্ষণে গিয়ে তিনি দুধ উৎপাদন, পশুর স্বাস্থ্য পরিচর্যা, বাজারে বিক্রির কৌশলসহ নানা বিষয়ে জানতে শেখেন। হাতে-কলমে কাজ করে তিনি সাহস পান। প্রশিক্ষণ শেষে একটি গাভী কেনেন পারিবারিক সহায়তায় এবং নিয়মিতভাবে দুধ বিক্রি শুরু করেন।

এখন রহিমা প্রতিদিন প্রায় ৫–৭ লিটার দুধ বিক্রি করেন এবং মাসে প্রায় ৮–১০ হাজার টাকা আয় করেন। সন্তানদের ভালোভাবে খাওয়াতে পারছেন, স্কুলের খরচ চালাতে পারছেন। তার মুখে এখন হাসি, চোখে আত্মবিশ্বাস।

"আগে শুধু স্বামীর আয়ে সংসার চলতো না।
এখন আমি আছি, আমার আয় আছে,
আমার সম্মান আছে।"
–বললেন রহিমা।

Local success story card-02

...Followed

EARN

Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET
ইকোনোমিক অ্যাকসিলারেশন অ্যান্ড রেজিলিয়েন্স ফর নিট

দক্ষতাই সম্পদ

কর্মহীন যুবসমাজের জন্য আধুনিক, জীবনমুখী ও কার্যকরী
প্রশিক্ষণ কার্যক্রম। প্রশিক্ষণে প্রস্তুত হবে সমৃদ্ধির পথে।

মনোয়ারা বেগম
মর্যাদার জন্য এক নারীর লড়াই

মনোয়ারা বেগম একজন বিধবা নারী, থাকেন সাতক্ষীরার এক উপকূলীয় গ্রামে। স্বামীকে হারিয়েছেন পাঁচ বছর আগে। ছোট একটি ছেলে নিয়ে তখন থেকে ভাইয়ের সংসারে থাকছেন। কিন্তু দিন যত গড়িয়েছে, ভাইয়ের পরিবার তাকে বোঝা মনে করতে শুরু করেছে। কিছু বলত না, কিন্তু আচরণে ছিল উপেক্ষা। মনোয়ারা নিজেই বুঝতেন, তিনি কারও উপর নির্ভরশীল হয়ে আছেন, আর সেটা তাকে প্রতিদিন একটু একটু করে গিলে খাচ্ছিল।

এই অবস্থায় তিনি জানতে পারেন **EARN** প্রকল্পে "সামুদ্রিক মাছ ও চিংড়ি চাষ **(Sustainable Aquamarine/Mariculture)**" প্রশিক্ষণ চলছে। সাহস করে নাম লেখালেন। প্রশিক্ষণে গিয়ে মাছের ঘের তৈরি, খাদ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা, রোগ প্রতিরোধ, বাজারজাতকরণ—সবকিছু শিখলেন মনোয়ারা। প্রথম দিকে একটু ভয় পেয়েছিলেন, কিন্তু কোর্স শেষে একটি ক্ষুদ্র ঘের ভাড়া নেন এবং চিংড়ি ও কাঁকড়া চাষ শুরু করেন।

প্রথম মৌসুমেই লাভ হয়, তারপর ধীরে ধীরে আয় বাড়তে থাকে। এখন তিনি প্রতি মাসে প্রায় ১২–১৫ হাজার টাকা আয় করেন এবং ছেলেকে স্থানীয় স্কুলে পাঠাচ্ছেন। নিজের খরচ নিজেই চালাচ্ছেন। ভাইয়ের পরিবারের কাছে এখন তিনি আর বোঝা নন—তিনি একজন সফল মৎস্যচাষি।
"আমি এখন নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়িয়েছি। সমাজ আমাকে যেমন ভাবতো, আমি আর তা নই।" –গর্বভরে বললেন মনোয়ারা।

এই তিনজন নারীর গল্প প্রমাণ করে—সুযোগ পেলে, নারী কখনোই পিছিয়ে থাকে না। উঅঅঘ প্রকল্প তাদের শুধু প্রশিক্ষণ দেয়নি, দিয়েছে আত্মবিশ্বাস, দিয়েছে নতুন জীবন শুরু করার দিশা। এখন তারা নিজেরাই নিজেদের পরিচয়।

...Followed

সাবিনা ইসলাম
নিজেকে হারিয়ে খোঁজার গল্প

সাবিনা ইসলাম দাউদপুর ইউনিয়নের এক গ্রাম থেকে উঠে আসা এক তরুণী। শৈশব থেকেই তার জীবনটা ছিল একটু ভিন্ন। বাবা-মা সবসময় চেয়েছেন মেয়েকে নিরাপদে রাখতে, কিন্তু সমাজের নানা গুজব, পারিপার্শ্বিকতা আর দারিদ্র্য তার পথ কঠিন করে তোলে। স্কুলে যেতেন ভালোই, কিন্তু অষ্টম শ্রেণির পর পারিবারিক সমস্যার কারণে পড়াশোনা বন্ধ হয়ে যায়। দিন দিন আত্মবিশ্বাস হারিয়ে ফেলেন সাবিনা। গ্রামের মানুষ তাকে নিয়ে হাসাহাসি করতো, "এ তো কিছুই করতে পারবে না"—এই ধরনের কথা যেন চারপাশ ঘিরে ধরেছিল।

কিন্তু তার ভেতরে ছিল এক অদম্য ইচ্ছা—নিজেকে গড়ার, কিছু হয়ে ওঠার। যখন **EARN** প্রকল্পের "বিক্রয় ও বিপণন **(Sales and Marketing)**" বিষয়ে প্রশিক্ষণের খবর পান, প্রথমে একটু ভয় পেয়েছিলেন—"আমি পারবো তো?" কিন্তু সাহস করে নাম লেখালেন। প্রশিক্ষণে এসে বুঝলেন, তার মতো আরও অনেক মেয়ে আছে যারা সুযোগের অপেক্ষায় ছিল। এখানে সাবিনা শুধু পেশাগত দক্ষতাই অর্জন করেননি, নিজের ভেতরের আত্মবিশ্বাসকেও ফিরে পেয়েছেন। ক্লাসে অংশগ্রহণ, দলের সাথে কাজ করা, প্রেজেন্টেশন দেওয়া—সবই তাকে বদলে দিতে শুরু করে।

প্রশিক্ষণ শেষে একটি স্থানীয় কসমেটিকস কোম্পানিতে কাজ পান। এখন তিনি গ্রামে ঘুরে ঘুরে পণ্য বিক্রি করেন, নিজস্ব গ্রাহক গড়ে তুলেছেন এবং মাসে ১০-১২ হাজার টাকা আয় করেন।

সাবিনা বলেন,
"*আগে মানুষ আমাকে অবহেলা করতো, এখন সবাই আমার কথা শোনে। আমি এখন শুধু সাবিনা না—আমি একজন সেলস প্রফেশনাল।*"

Diversity Story Book (Cover)

The Publication, which is meant for national and international reach should contain real stories, quotes and photos of individuals who have been able to overcome their inability to gain success due to lacking in education training for employment. This Publication will showcase and highlight the inclusivity of nationals within the EARN project and its training modules.

Diversity Story Book (Inner)

Mitu, a 21-year-old from Jhalokathi, enrolled in tailoring under EARN. At first, her father was reluctant—but after hearing a Friday khutbah where the Imam said, "Honest skill is a form of worship," he agreed.
Now, Mitu has stitched 12 school uniforms for her village. The EARN SMS that her father gets says: "Your daughter is doing great. Ask her about today's stitch!"

"I stitched my dreams with each lesson. When my father showed my name on the mosque announcement board, I knew—he's proud."
-Mitu
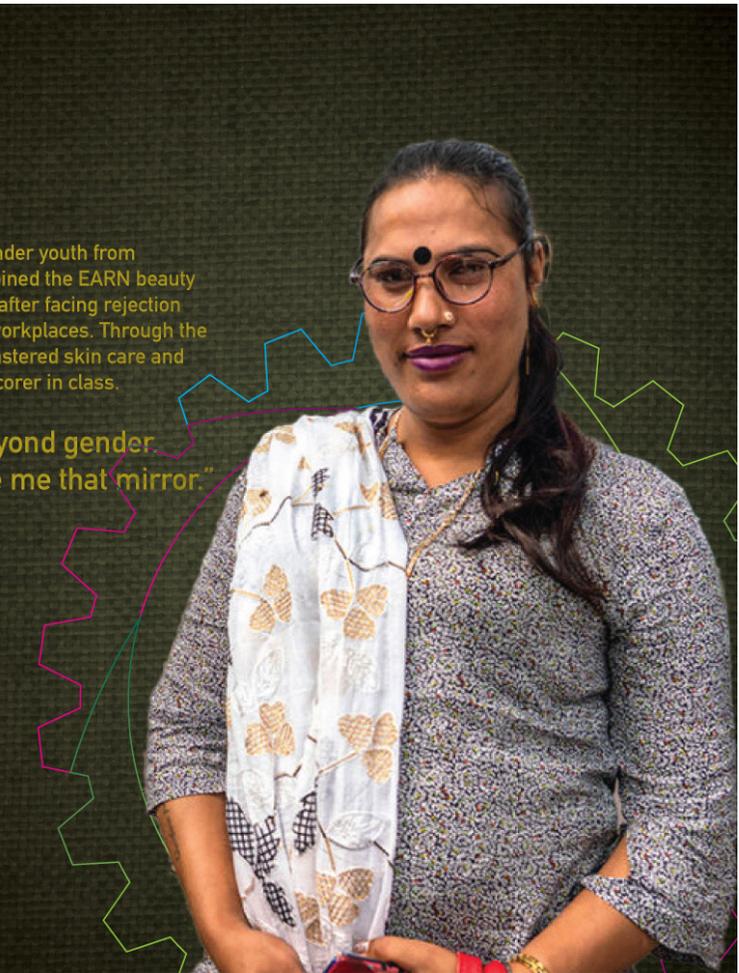
Rafi, a third-gender youth from Mymensingh, joined the EARN beauty therapy course after facing rejection from multiple workplaces. Through the course, they mastered skin care and became a top scorer in class.

"Skill is beyond gender. EARN gave me that mirror."
-Rafi

Diversity Story Book (Inner)

Ching Nu from Bandarban once thought training was only for boys from towns. Her school dropout left her unsure, until an EARN facilitator explained the program in Marma.
Now she's taking hospitality training and speaks to tourists in basic English. Her mother heard about it from a courtyard meeting held at the Buddhist temple.

"They showed me a success story in my own language. I thought—if she can do it, why not me?"

–Ching Nu

Zitu used to roam aimlessly around the tea stalls in Kurigram. At 19, he had no job, no plan—and often heard taunts about being a burden. Then, he joined EARN's refrigeration repair training. Three months in, Zitu is now helping fix fans and fridges in his neighborhood. Every Friday, he shares his "Trainee Diary" video on YouTube, where he talks about overcoming laziness, skipping peer pressure, and learning wiring safety.

"I almost dropped out during Eid—but my trainer called me, and then an SMS came saying, 'Your journey matters.' I stayed. I'm proud I did."

–Zitu

Diversity Story Book (Inner)

Julekha, a 20-year-old in Bhola, missed two classes due to flooding. Just as she thought about dropping out, an IVR call informed her of the rescheduled sessions. The local facilitator also posted a weather update and motivation quote outside her shelter.

"Even during the flood, they didn't forget me. I realized—I'm not alone in this."

-Julekha

Sohel's mother worried that enrolling him in training would cost them too much. But after hearing the EARN radio segment about stipends and support, she agreed. Now, Sohel is learning mobile repair in Jamalpur and earns Tk 150 daily fixing phones part-time.

"The poster said I would get Tk 2,000. I got it—and now I fix phones and help pay for groceries."

-Sohel

Diversity Story Book (Inner)

In Dinajpur, Mina joined the agro-processing training under EARN. She learned to package and market mango pickle. Her success story was painted as a mural in the village market—with her photo and the slogan: "Mina'r achar, EARN er shikkha – ekta shurur golpo."
Her mother attended a courtyard meeting where trainers shared how Mina could sell through local fairs.

"They trained me for what my region needs. I am not just trained—I am ready."

-Mina

Raju, who has a hearing disability, learned radio repair at an EARN center in Rajshahi. With sign language support and easy-to-read materials, he now runs a tiny repair booth with two other trainees.

"When the radio plays a song, I don't hear it. But I fix it—because skills speak louder."

-Raju

Success Hall of Fame Publication

Detailed and informative storytelling of a successful individual who completed the EARN's training module is written. A real photo of the individual is shown. When creating a success, Hall of Fame Publication, this template needs to be followed.

সফল পশুপালক: মিতার গল্প
(Sustainable Livestock Production, Processing and Diversified Applications)

মিতার স্বপ্ন ছিল আত্মনির্ভরশীল হওয়ার, কিন্তু গ্রামের সীমাবদ্ধতা আর প্রশিক্ষণের অভাবে তার পথ ছিল বন্ধ। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের পড়া শেষ করে সে যখন বেকার বসেছিল, তখন চারপাশের হতাশাজনক চিত্র তাকে আরও অস্থির করে তুলছিল। একদিন যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তরের EARN প্রজেক্টের কথা জানতে পারে সে। দ্বিধা থাকলেও, পরিবারের উৎসাহে মিতা 'সাসটেইনেবল লাইভস্টক প্রোডাকশন, প্রসেসিং অ্যান্ড ডাইভারসিফাইড অ্যাপ্লিকেশনস' ট্রেডে প্রশিক্ষণের জন্য আবেদন করে।

প্রশিক্ষণটি ছিল মিতার জন্য এক নতুন দিগন্ত। এখানে সে আধুনিক পদ্ধতিতে গবাদিপশু পালন, তাদের স্বাস্থ্যসেবা, প্রক্রিয়াকরণ এবং মাংস, দুধ, ডিমসহ বিভিন্ন উপজাত পণ্যের বহুমুখী ব্যবহার সম্পর্কে হাতে-কলমে শেখে। প্রশিক্ষণের পাশাপাশি সে উদ্যোক্তা হওয়ার কলাকৌশল এবং বাজারজাতকরণের ধারণাও পায়। প্রশিক্ষকদের আন্তরিক সহযোগিতা ও ব্যবহারিক ক্লাস মিতাকে আত্মবিশ্বাসী করে তোলে।

প্রশিক্ষণ শেষে মিতা একটি ছোট আকারের গরুর খামার শুরু করার সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়। প্রথমে দুটি উন্নত জাতের গরু নিয়ে শুরু করলেও, উজ্জীবন প্রজেক্ট থেকে প্রাপ্ত দিকনির্দেশনা এবং স্থানীয় ব্যাংক থেকে স্বল্প সুদে ঋণ নিয়ে সে ধীরে ধীরে তার ফার্ম বড় করে তোলে। এখন মিতার ফার্মে ২০টিরও বেশি উন্নত জাতের গরু আছে। সাথে রয়েছে বিভিন্ন প্রজাতির ছাগল। এছাড়াও সে তার খামার থেকে উৎপাদিত গোবর ব্যবহার করে সে জৈব সার তৈরি করে কৃষকদের কাছে বিক্রি করে।

আজ মিতা শুধু একজন সফল উদ্যোক্তাই নয়, এলাকার আরও কয়েকজন তরুণীকে সে তার ফার্মে কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ করে দিয়েছে। মিতার গল্প এখন গ্রামের অন্য মেয়েদের জন্যও অনুপ্রেরণা। সে প্রমাণ করেছে, সঠিক প্রশিক্ষণ আর অদম্য ইচ্ছা থাকলে গ্রামের মেয়েরাও কৃষিনির্ভর অর্থনীতিতে এক নতুন বিপ্লব ঘটাতে পারে। উজ্জীবন প্রজেক্ট মিতার জীবনে এনেছে এই অভাবনীয় পরিবর্তন।

ডেয়ারি কুইন: শিলার গল্প
(Sustainable Dairy Production)

শিলার পরিবার ছিল প্রান্তিক কৃষক। লেখাপড়া শেষ না করেই তাকে বসে থাকতে হয়েছিল কারণ পরিবারের আর্থিক অবস্থা ভালো ছিল না। কিন্তু শিলার চোখে ছিল বড় স্বপ্ন নিজের পায়ে দাঁড়ানোর। প্রতিদিনের গৃহস্থালি কাজ করতে করতে সে ভাবতো, কীভাবে সে পরিবারের হাল ধরতে পারে। এমন সময়ই তার এলাকার একজন যুব উন্নয়ন কর্মকর্তা তাকে EARN প্রজেক্টের 'সাসটেইনেবল ডেয়ারি প্রোডাকশন' প্রশিক্ষণের কথা জানান। শিলা প্রথমদিকে কিছুটা সন্দিহান ছিল, কিন্তু বিনামূল্যে প্রশিক্ষণের সুযোগ শুনে সে আগ্রহী হয়ে ওঠে।

প্রশিক্ষণটি ছিল শিলার জীবনের মোড় ঘোরানোর মতো। এখানে সে বৈজ্ঞানিক পদ্ধতিতে গরুর পরিচর্যা, উন্নত জাতের দুগ্ধবতী গাভী নির্বাচন, দুধের গুণগত মান রক্ষা, এবং দুগ্ধজাত পণ্য তৈরির কৌশল শেখে। প্রশিক্ষকরা ব্যবহারিক ক্লাসের মাধ্যমে তাকে খামার ব্যবস্থাপনার খুঁটিনাটি বিষয়ে প্রশিক্ষণ দেন। শিলা জানতে পারে কিভাবে স্বল্প পুঁজিতে একটি লাভজনক দুগ্ধ খামার গড়ে তোলা যায় এবং কীভাবে দুগ্ধজাত পণ্যের বাজার তৈরি করতে হয়।

প্রশিক্ষণ শেষে, শিলা ছোট পরিসরে তিনটি গাভী নিয়ে তার নিজস্ব ডেয়ারি ফার্ম শুরু করে। সে দুধ বিক্রি করার পাশাপাশি, প্রশিক্ষণ থেকে শেখা জ্ঞান কাজে লাগিয়ে দই, ছানা এবং ঘি তৈরি করে স্থানীয় মিষ্টির দোকান ও ঘরে ঘরে সরবরাহ শুরু করে। তার পণ্যের মান ভালো হওয়ায় দ্রুতই তার সুনাম ছড়িয়ে পড়ে এবং চাহিদা বাড়তে থাকে। তার আয় দেখে তার বাবা-মাও খুশি হন।

আজ শিলা গ্রামের একজন সফল ডেয়ারি উদ্যোক্তা। তার ফার্ম এখন আরও বড় এবং সে এলাকার আরও কয়েকটি পরিবারের জন্য কর্মসংস্থান তৈরি করেছে। শিলার সাফল্য দেখে গ্রামের অনেক তরুণীও এখন ডেয়ারি উৎপাদনে আগ্রহী হচ্ছে। শিলা প্রমাণ করেছে যে, সঠিক সুযোগ ও প্রশিক্ষণ পেলে একজন সাধারণ গ্রামীণ মেয়েও অসাধারণ কিছু করতে পারে। উজ্জীবন প্রজেক্ট শিলার জীবনে এনেছে স্বাবলম্বিতার নতুন অধ্যায়।

Success Hall of Fame Publication

চাকমা শিল্পীর গল্প
(Craft & Handmade Industry)

রাঙ্গামাটির সবুজ পাহাড়ের কোলে রিনি চাকমার বাড়ি। স্কুলজীবন শেষ করেই রিনিকে পরিবারে আর্থিক অনটনের কারণে পড়ালেখা ছেড়ে দিতে হয়েছিল। হস্তশিল্পে তার জন্মগত প্রতিভা থাকলেও, কীভাবে তা বাণিজ্যিক রূপ দেওয়া যায়, সেই পথ তার জানা ছিল না। পাহাড়ের ঐতিহ্যবাহী বুননশিল্পে তার পারদর্শিতা ছিল, কিন্তু বাজারজাতকরণের অভাবে তার তৈরি জিনিসপত্র ঘরের কোণেই পড়ে থাকত। রিনি নিজেকে পরিবারের বোঝা মনে করত, কারণ তার আয়ের কোনো পথ ছিল না।

একদিন স্থানীয় এনজিও কর্মী এবং যুব উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তরের মাধ্যমে রিনি EARN প্রজেক্টের 'ক্রাফট অ্যান্ড হ্যান্ডমেড ইন্ডাস্ট্রি' ট্রেডের প্রশিক্ষণের কথা জানতে পারে। তার মনে আশার সঞ্চার হয়। বিনামূল্যে এই প্রশিক্ষণ নেওয়ার সুযোগ পেয়ে রিনি আর দেরি করেনি।

প্রশিক্ষণে রিনি তার ঐতিহ্যবাহী বুননশিল্পকে আধুনিক বাজারের চাহিদা অনুযায়ী কীভাবে তৈরি করা যায়, সেই কৌশল শেখে। সে ব্যাগ, ওয়ালম্যাট, পোশাক এবং জুয়েলারি তৈরির নতুন ডিজাইন ও কৌশল আয়ত্ত করে। প্রশিক্ষকদের কাছ থেকে সে পণ্য প্যাকেজিং, ব্র্যান্ডিং এবং অনলাইন মার্কেটিং সম্পর্কেও জ্ঞান লাভ করে। এই প্রশিক্ষণ রিনিকে শুধু একজন শিল্পী হিসেবেই নয়, একজন উদ্যোক্তা হিসেবে গড়ে তোলে।

প্রশিক্ষণ শেষে রিনি তার নিজের ছোট একটি ওয়ার্কশপ চালু করে। প্রথমে নিজ হাতে কাজ করলেও, পরে সে গ্রামের আরও কয়েকজন নারীকে প্রশিক্ষণ দিয়ে তার কাজে যুক্ত করে। রিনির তৈরি হাতেবোনা পণ্যগুলো এখন অনলাইন প্ল্যাটফর্মে এবং স্থানীয় পর্যটন কেন্দ্রগুলোতে খুব জনপ্রিয়। তার পণ্যের গুণগত মান ও বৈচিত্র্য তাকে দ্রুত পরিচিতি এনে দেয়। তার আয় এখন পরিবারের আর্থিক অবস্থার পরিবর্তন এনেছে এবং সে আর নিজেকে বোঝা মনে করে না।

আজ রিনি চাকমা তার সম্প্রদায়ের গর্ব। সে প্রমাণ করেছে যে, মেধা ও সঠিক প্রশিক্ষণের সুযোগ পেলে শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধকতা বা প্রান্তিকতা কোনো বাধা নয়। উমজঘ প্রজেক্ট রিনিকে শুধু অর্থনৈতিক মুক্তিই দেয়নি, বরং তাকে তার ঐতিহ্যবাহী শিল্পকে বাঁচিয়ে রাখার এবং অন্যদের কর্মসংস্থানের সুযোগ তৈরির পথও দেখিয়েছে। রিনি এখন স্বাবলম্বী এবং একজন সফল ক্রাফট উদ্যোক্তা।

ফিনান্সিয়াল সার্ভিসেসের তারকা: আকাশের গল্প
(Bank-led Mobile Financial Services (MFS) Sector)

আকাশ (২৫ বছর বয়সী) পড়ালেখায় ভালো ছিল, কিন্তু ডিগ্রি শেষ করে যখন চাকরির বাজারে নামল, তখন হতাশাই সঙ্গী হলো। হাজার চেষ্টা করেও একটি চাকরি জোগাড় করতে না পেরে সে ক্রমশ ভেঙে পড়ছিল। পরিবারের একমাত্র উপার্জনক্ষম ব্যক্তি তার বাবা, যার দিনমজুরির সামান্য আয়ে সংসার চলছিল না। আকাশ নিজেকে পরিবারের জন্য একটি বোঝা মনে করত, তার চোখে স্বপ্নগুলো ফিকে হয়ে আসছিল। সে না ছিল কোনো শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে, না কোনো কাজে, না কোনো প্রশিক্ষণে একদমই NEET।

একদিন একটি স্থানীয় যুব কেন্দ্র থেকে সে EARN প্রজেক্টের 'ব্যাংক-লেড মোবাইল ফাইন্যান্সিয়াল সার্ভিসেস (MFS) সেক্টর' প্রশিক্ষণের কথা জানতে পারে। মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং, রেমিট্যান্স, বিল পেমেন্ট এসব সম্পর্কে জানার আগ্রহ নিয়ে সে প্রশিক্ষণে যোগ দেয়। বিনামূল্যে প্রশিক্ষণ তাকে নতুন আশার আলো দেখায়।

প্রশিক্ষণে আকাশ এমএফএস এর খুঁটিনাটি বিষয়, গ্রাহক সেবা, লেনদেনের নিরাপত্তা এবং ডিজিটাল ফিনান্সিয়াল লিটারেসি সম্পর্কে বিস্তারিত জ্ঞান লাভ করে। প্রশিক্ষকরা তাকে ব্যবহারিক প্রশিক্ষণ দেন, কীভাবে এজেন্ট পয়েন্ট পরিচালনা করতে হয়, গ্রাহকদের সমস্যা সমাধান করতে হয় এবং নতুন গ্রাহকদের কাছে সেবা পৌঁছাতে হয়। এই প্রশিক্ষণ তাকে ডিজিটাল অর্থনীতিতে নিজের জায়গা করে নিতে সাহায্য করে।

প্রশিক্ষণ শেষে আকাশ একটি পরিচিত মোবাইল ফিনান্সিয়াল সার্ভিস প্রোভাইডারের এজেন্ট হিসেবে কাজ শুরু করে। কঠোর পরিশ্রম আর প্রশিক্ষণের জ্ঞান কাজে লাগিয়ে সে দ্রুতই তার এলাকার সেরা এজেন্টদের একজন হয়ে ওঠে। তার সৎ ও নির্ভরযোগ্য সেবার কারণে অনেক গ্রাহক তার কাছে আসে। তার আয় এখন তার পরিবারের প্রধান অবলম্বন। সে তার ছোট ভাইবোনের পড়ালেখার খরচ যোগাচ্ছে এবং বাবার কষ্ট কিছুটা লাঘব করতে পেরেছে।

আকাশ এখন শুধু একজন সফল এজেন্টই নয়, সে এলাকার তরুণদের এমএফএস সম্পর্কে সচেতনও করছে। তার এই সাফল্য দেখে অনেকেই এখন এই খাতে আসতে আগ্রহী হচ্ছে। আকাশ প্রমাণ করেছে যে, সঠিক প্রশিক্ষণ আর সুযোগ পেলে বেকারত্বকে জয় করে ডিজিটাল অর্থনীতিতে অবদান রাখা সম্ভব। উমজঘ প্রজেক্ট আকাশের জীবনে এনেছে স্বাবলম্বী হওয়ার এক নতুন দিগন্ত।
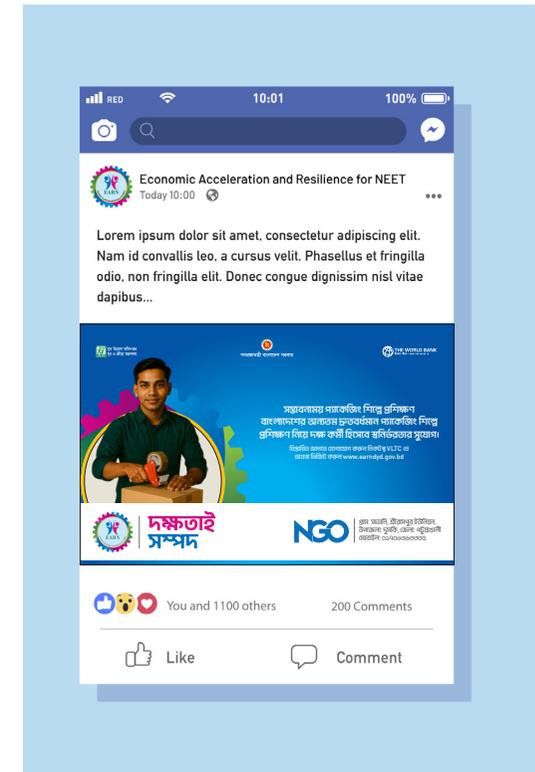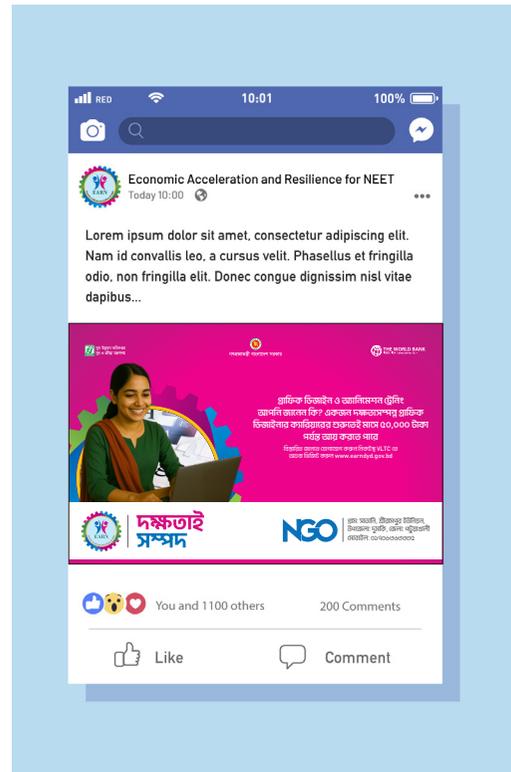
Social Media ads

The main visual is the key visual for the social media ad. The template shown below can be used when service providers are involved and they need to follow the guideline as depicted. The trade photo should be changed as per the advertised training module.

Social Media ads Mockup
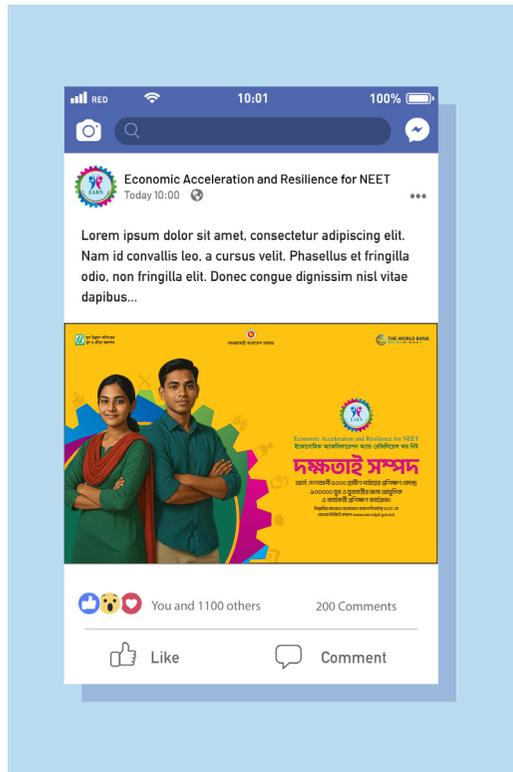
...Followed

WhatsApp Template

The main visual is the key visual for the whatsapp message.

WhatsApp Template Mockup

...Followed
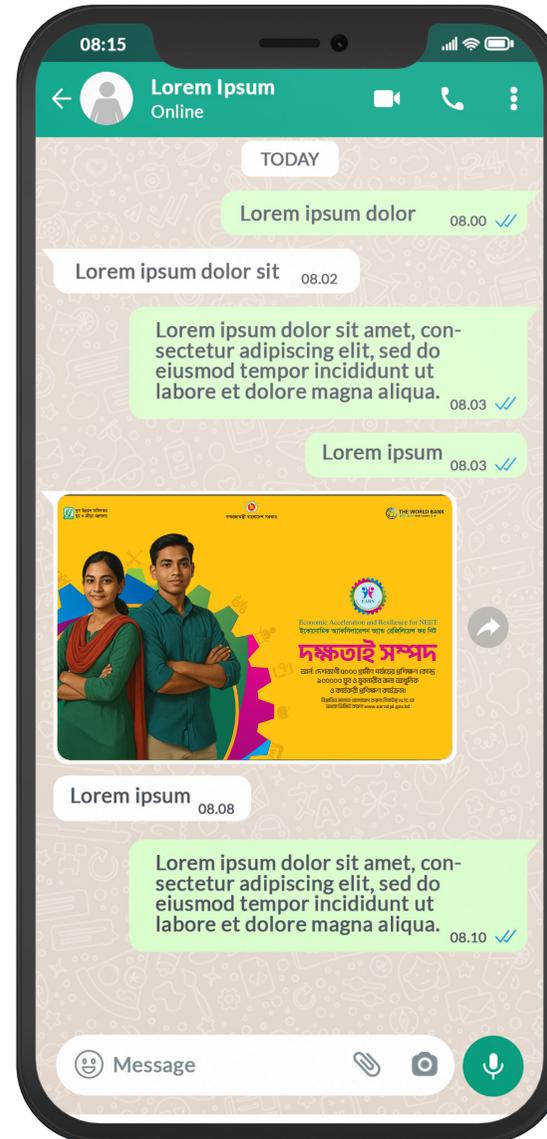
Mythbusters, Interactive Posts

The myth which needs to be disapproved needs to be placed on the bottom left side section of the template. The proper and right information which disapproves the myth needs to be placed on the bottom right section of the template. The guideline needs to be followed as shown.

Mythbusters, Interactive Posts Mockup

...Followed

Social Media Video content

Social Media Reels Plan for EARN: Engagement Through Authentic Stories and Emotion

To effectively connect with NEET youth, EARN project will use short-form video content (social media reels) that emotionally and practically showcases the transformative power of skills. These engaging videos will feature real stories, relatable scenarios, and authentic voices to highlight the benefits of vocational training, break societal stigma, and build trust in the program. Each video will end with the powerful message "দক্ষতাই সম্পদ" (Skills are the real asset)—emphasizing how skill development sets individuals apart, even within the same profession.

Format	Description	Target Emotion	Strategic Value
Day in My Life	Real EARN trainees show their daily routine – in training, at job, or as entrepreneurs	Inspiration, relatability	Humanizes beneficiaries; showcases success
My Workshop	Tours of trade training sessions or work environments	Curiosity, aspiration	Shows real skills; de-mystifies technical learning
Before-After Success	Juxtapose life before and after EARN training	Transformation, hope	Ideal for showcasing impact
Breaking Barriers	Stories addressing gender norms, earning pressure, mobility issues	Courage, empathy	Tackles stigma head-on
Skills in Action	Fast-paced demonstrations of learned skills	Excitement, mastery	Makes skills "cool," reduces stigma
Ask Me Anything (AMA)	Trainees answer questions in a Q&A style	Trust, authenticity	Humanizes messaging; invites interaction
Mini Testimonials	30–60 sec reels of personal quotes or moments	Credibility, emotion	Easy-to-produce and emotionally potent

Social Media

Tone, Language, and Narrative Guidelines

Guideline	Implementation
Language	Bangla with local dialect variations (Jessore, Barisal, Sylhet, Chattogram)
Tone	Conversational, hopeful, non-bureaucratic
Message Framing	"Ami pari" (I can do it), "Amar golpo" (My story), "Shikhchi, gorchi" (Learning, building)
Relatable Hooks	"Amar age shopno chilona, EARN amar poth dekhaise" / "Shuru chhilo onishchoita, ekhon boro shopno"
Cultural Anchors	Use relatable locations: tea stalls, homes, mosques, markets, training centres

Publishing & Promotion Strategy

Step	Details
Platform	Facebook (primary), cross-post on TikTok, YouTube Shorts
Frequency	3–4 reels per week (Mon–Thu), peak times: 6–8pm
Length	30–60 seconds (max 90 sec)
Hashtags	#দক্ষতাই সম্পদ | #EarnMyWay
Boosting	Boost selected high-performing reels via paid ad targeting by region, age (18–35), interest (skills, jobs, inspiration)
Geo-targeting	Focus on areas with high NEET density or low training participation
Caption Style	Personal voice, short emotional hook + call to action:

Social Media

Engagement & Feedback Loops

Mechanism	Implementation
Comment Prompts	End videos with on-screen text: "Tumi ki emon obosthai achho? Comment e bolo."
Poll Reels	Simple reels with poll options: "Shikhte chai? Yes/No"
WhatsApp Hotline Integration	Reel caption includes WhatsApp/helpline to inquire about local training
UGC Encouragement	"Tumi o tomer golpo pathao – best video pabe EARN gift hamper!"
Monthly Challenges	e.g., "Best Workshop Reel," "Breaking Stigma Story Contest"

Rebranding Vocational Training via Reels

Approach	Example
Aspirational Titles	"Tech Girl from Satkhira" / "My Toolkit, My Freedom"
Trade Demystification	Show mobile repair, tailoring, or solar panel work as smart, clean, precise
Dignity Framing	Focus on self-reliance, family support, not just income
Showcase Social Change	Reel series: "Baba amake kaj korte diyechhe" or "Bondhura bolto parbo na... ekhon tara amake dekhe inspire hoy"

Social Media

Success Reels

Simple Graphic Animation

✓ DO'S **✗ DON'TS**

Aspect	Dos	Don'ts
NEET Youth & Marginalized Groups Outreach	Use real, local faces and relatable stories	Over-glamorize or use elite imagery
	Speak directly to them, not about them	Use pity-based or charity tones
	Include diversity in all visuals	Assume all youth have the same goals
	Offer hope and step-by-step guidance	Promise overnight success
Parents & Guardians Outreach	Address their concerns with empathy	Blame or shame them for "holding girls back"
	Show benefits through relatable stories	Use technical or formal jargon
	Include familiar faces and community trust symbols	Use bold or shocking imagery of rebellion
Community Leaders Outreach	Show how this aligns with their moral and religious values	Frame the message as pressure or guilt
	Involve leaders as public partners, not just endorsers	Exclude them from planning or activation
	Use language of unity and progress	Use political or partisan tones
Private Sector Employers Outreach	Focus on productivity and value	Lead with charity or guilt-based messaging
	Provide simple onboarding steps	Overload with documentation or red tape
	Celebrate existing inclusive employers	Criticize current hiring practices

✅ DO'S   ❌ DON'TS

Aspect	Dos	Don'ts
NGOs & Development Partners Outreach	Position EARN as a platform for synergy	Frame it as competition or duplication
	Highlight co-branding and shared learning opportunities	Restrict branding to project-only visuals
	Offer flexible collaboration models	Impose rigid systems or slow MoU processes
General Public Outreach	Showcase relatable, humble success	Only feature urban, polished narratives
	Involve youth-led and gender-inclusive imagery	Reinforce existing stereotypes or pity tropes
	Position skills as national strength	Frame the unemployed as a burden
Service Providers Outreach	Acknowledge their leadership and insight	Treat them as just intermediaries
	Make tools simple and multilingual	Overload with technical info
	Provide regular updates and support	Leave them out of post-referral feedback loop
Policymakers & Government Stakeholders Outreach	Show alignment with national development strategies	Frame it as an external or temporary program
	Present both human stories and hard data	Rely only on anecdotal success
	Emphasize cross-ministerial value	Focus messaging only through MoYS
	Highlight institutional opportunities	Focus on risks or internal bottlenecks

Summary of Communication channels and Materials

F. Regional & Grassroots Activities
- Courtyard meetings (Uthan Baithaks)
- Door-to-door visits & tea stall sessions
- Mobile booths, mosque corner boards

A. Mass Media Campaigns
- TV & radio broadcasts (success stories, PSAs, jingles, talk shows)
- Mosque announcements & khutbah integrations
- National newspaper/magazine features

E. Digital Channels
- Social media storytelling & influencer reels (#SheLearns)
- OVCs, memes, challenges, Facebook Lives
- Chatbot campaigns & WhatsApp support lines

B. Print & Publication Tools
- Brochures, flyers, FAQs booklets
- Comic booklets & activity books for youth
- Pocket guides & training pathway maps
- Wall calendars & infographics

D. Inclusivity-Focused Materials
- Braille, sign-language videos, large-print posters
- Local-language versions (Chakma, Marma, Santali, etc.)

C. Outdoor & Community Outreach
- Posters, banners, billboards
- Miking/loudspeaker announcements
- Community bulletin inserts and flipcharts
- Police box branding

Phase 1
AWARENESS

Phase 2
MOTIVATION & MINDSET SHIFT

D. Cultural & Faith Alignment
- Religious radio segments on dignity of work
- Mosque-level talks integrating success stories
- Inclusion of third-gender and minority voices

A. Storytelling & Emotional Content
- Docu-series and YouTube testimonials
- TV & radio broadcasts (success stories, PSAs, jingles, talk shows)
- Mini-documentaries featuring alumni
- Radio & TV interviews with successful trainees

C. Community Mobilization
- Street theatre & interactive dramas
- Role model posters and alumni showcases
- Family-centered courtyard sessions and flipcharts

B. Digital Engagement
- Peer video challenges, live Q&A with trainers
- Social media reels & motivational quotes
- Influencer-led myth-busting campaigns

Phase 3
ENROLMENT DRIVE

A. Enrollment Support Tools
- Info booths, kiosks, and registration pop-ups
- Training pathway maps & hotline guidance
- SMS/WhatsApp campaigns for reminders

B. Field-Level Activation
- Door-to-door campaigns & community fairs
- Miking before enrollment deadlines and flipcharts
- Home visits by female ambassadors

C. Regional Reinforcement
- Police box branding & banners near union offices
- Flipcharts for field workers to explain benefits

D. Digital & Mobile Engagement
- Chatbots for quick inquiries
- Mobile-friendly microsite for registration
- Voice-based IVR in local dialects

E. Monitoring Focus
- Tracking conversion through outreach logs
- Dropout risk mapping and targeted follow-up

Phase 4
RETENTION & EMPOWERMENT

A. Retention Communication
- Peer mentorship circles (WhatsApp/Telegram)
- SMS motivational tips and stipend alerts
- Family feedback and progress sharing

B. Alumni Engagement & Recognition
- Alumni booklets, honor boards, and wall murals
- "Meet the Alumni" days & hall of fame displays
- Career pathway brochures and success flyers

C. National Visibility
- TV/Radio testimonials, PSA series "Where Are They Now"
- Press releases celebrating milestones (e.g., 10,000 graduates)
- Social media alumni spotlights

D. Regional Reinforcement
- Community graduation ceremonies
- Village talks by alumni and flipcharts
- Mobile roadshows and murals of achievers

E. Inclusivity & Vulnerable Group Focus
- Climate-resilient storytelling
- Financial empowerment videos for the extreme poor
- Minority language adaptations and regional showcases

COMMUNICATION NOTES ON POLICY ADVOCACY

Bangladesh is entering a critical and opportunity-filled decade of demographic transition. However, before this demographic window of opportunity closes, it is essential to ensure the skills and productivity of this young population. The reality is stark: approximately 39.7% of youth aged 15-24 in Bangladesh are in a NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) situation, nearly double the global average of 21.7% and among the highest in South Asia. The rate is almost twice as high among young women, indicating a significant gender disparity.

This is not merely a social concern; it represents a structural labour market crisis that is excluding a large segment of the working-age population from productive engagement. Many of these NEET youth are engaged in informal sectors, some are unemployed or discouraged, while others are excluded from the labour market due to a lack of technical skills, minimum educational qualifications, or relevant training.

The Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEETs (EARN) project has been carefully designed to address this urgent national issue. The project recognises that awareness campaigns alone are insufficient to drive behavioural change. What is needed is a comprehensive policy framework that tackles the root causes of the NEET problem. This calls for a youth-focused policy agenda that emphasises skills development, high-quality technical and vocational education, labour market connections, entrepreneurship support, and psychosocial services.

A Strategic Role for Policy Advocacy in NEET Inclusion

At the heart of Project EARN's policy advocacy effort lies the development of a comprehensive policy brief. This brief will serve as both a diagnostic and a call to action, synthesising national data, global benchmarks, and field-level insights to make the economic and social case for increased investments in youth empowerment. Importantly, it will align with EARN's two institutional mandates:

A. contributing to the formulation of a long-term Youth Development Plan and

B. supporting the Organisational Development Plan (ODP) of the Department of Youth Development (DYD) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS).

The policy brief will advocate for a coordinated, youth-centred national response that goes beyond fragmented programming and addresses the root causes of NEET status, skills mismatches, social exclusion, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of dignified employment opportunities. It will articulate how policy change, if effectively designed and implemented, can transform NEET youth from passive recipients of aid into empowered economic agents and civic actors.

Understanding the Structural Bottlenecks: Insights from Policy and Practice

Bangladesh has already laid a foundation through numerous national and NGO-led initiatives aimed at youth empowerment. These include the Skills for Employment Investment Program (SEIP), BRAC's Skills Development Programme (SDP), the Building Youth Employability through Skills (BYETS) initiative by Swisscontact, Save the Children's Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) program, and the government-run National Service Programme (NSP). Moreover, there are many skill development initiatives run by different ministries.

Yet despite this extensive institutional infrastructure, systemic constraints continue to limit progress.

A core barrier is the skills mismatch between education outcomes and labour market demands. Studies reveal that many graduates are unprepared for modern sectors due to outdated curricula and limited exposure to soft skills or digital competencies.

Furthermore, urban bias in industrial development and training programmes restricts access for rural youth, while socio-cultural norms continue to limit the mobility and participation of young women. Data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2024) shows that 47% of young women aged 15–29 is NEET, compared to just 11–13% of their male counterparts.

Bangladesh's informal sector, which employs over 85% of the workforce, offers precarious and low-paying jobs with minimal protections. Nepotism, corruption, and patronage systems, particularly in public recruitment, further erode trust and exclude youth from marginalised backgrounds. Transparency International Bangladesh (2023) reports widespread bribery in government hiring, leaving talented but poor candidates disenfranchised.

Moreover, limited investment in education and skills remains a persistent problem. The country allocates only 2% of its GDP to education, which is well below global benchmarks. Without increased public spending, capacity-building, and infrastructure development, even the most well-intentioned youth programs cannot reach scale or sustainability.

Policy Advocacy through the Full Policy Cycle: From Formulation to Audit

To address these structural gaps, Project EARN proposes a comprehensive policy advocacy framework that engages across the four stages of the policy cycle—formulation, interpretation, implementation, and audit—anchored in national strategies such as the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) 2021, the NSDA Act 2018, the Eighth Five-Year Plan (2021–2025), the Vision 2041, and the forthcoming Youth Entrepreneurship Policy 2025.

Policy Formulation: Shaping the Agenda

The policy advocacy effort begins by influencing the formulation of youth-focused strategies to incorporate the following elements:

- Integration of soft skills, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship into national curricula;

- Expansion of TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) programs to rural and underrepresented groups;

- Gender-responsive programming and community-based outreach;

- Establishment of Village Learning and Training Centres (VLTCs) as decentralised platforms;

- Reforms in recruitment practices and support for micro-entrepreneurship.

By engaging institutions like the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA), MoYS, the Planning Commission, and the Ministry of Education, the policy brief will articulate these priorities using data, case studies, and return-on-investment analysis.

Policy Interpretation: Institutional Uptake and Coherence

Once policies are adopted, their interpretation by ministries and agencies determines practical outcomes. Project EARN's advocacy will:

- Promote inter-ministerial coordination to overcome siloed approaches;

- Advocate for cross-sectoral alignment with education, industry, ICT, social welfare, and finance ministries;

- Encourage private sector involvement in TVET design and delivery;

- Support the internal reform of DYD through the Organizational Development Plan to ensure capacity and inclusiveness.

Youth voices, employer feedback, and gender equity considerations will be integrated into program design through consultations, roundtables, and youth-led forums.

Policy Implementation: Bridging Strategy and Action

Effective implementation is the litmus test of sound policy. EARN's advocacy aims to strengthen:

- National budget allocations for youth training and entrepreneurship;

- Public-private partnerships (PPPs) to deliver demand-driven, locally relevant skills training;

- ICT infrastructure to support digital learning and e-employment;

- Rural entrepreneurship and green economy pathways for NEET youth.

Programmatic collaboration will be encouraged with key stakeholders, including PKSF, the Local Government Division, the ICT Division, business chambers/forumsand MSME platforms. The policy brief will highlight successful models, such as SEIP, BYETS, and StartUp Bangladesh, which demonstrate how innovative partnerships can link youth training with real economic opportunities.

Policy Audit: Accountability, Learning, and Adaptation

Sustainable policy reform depends on transparency, evidence, and feedback. Project EARN will push for:

- Creation of a national NEET database with gender and location disaggregation;

- Strengthened labour market information systems (LMIS) for data-driven planning;

- Youth-led monitoring and feedback loops at local levels;

- Annual "Youth Employment Scorecards" to track ministry-level progress;

- Institutionalisation of results-based financing (RBF) in government programs.

- Independent audits, academic partnerships, and social accountability tools will be promoted to keep policies aligned with youth realities.

Tackling the Societal Layer: Communication as Policy Enabler

Policy reform cannot succeed in isolation from societal change. EARN recognizes the importance of strategic communication and social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) in shifting perceptions that stigmatize vocational training, restrict women's participation, and undervalue non-academic careers. Communication strategies must engage:

- Parents and caregivers through awareness drives and success stories;

- Employers to reduce hiring bias and increase youth inclusion;

- Community and religious leaders to champion women's mobility and education;

- The media to spotlight youth-led innovations and employment narratives.

By integrating communication within policy advocacy, EARN ensures that public attitudes evolve alongside institutional reforms, enabling a more inclusive and supportive ecosystem for youth empowerment.

Towards a Systemic and Sustainable Youth Agenda

Policy advocacy is not an add-on to Project EARN, it is a driving force that ensures the communication strategy connects with broader systems of governance, financing, and social transformation. By operating across the entire policy cycle, EARN will push for institutional coherence, rural equity, gender inclusion, and accountability in youth programming.

With the right policies, implemented with integrity and informed by lived experience, Bangladesh can transform its NEET youth challenge into an opportunity for economic resilience and social renewal. EARN's policy advocacy, grounded in evidence and elevated by strategic communication, offers a blueprint for this transformation—where every young person, regardless of background, can realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the nation's future.

Policy Advocacy Framework for NEET Empowerment through TVET and Systemic Reform

Dimension	Key Gaps	Advocacy Focus	Recommended Policy Reforms
System Design & Delivery	Mismatch with market needs, weak industry links, urban bias	Align TVET with emerging sectors & local demand	Update curricula (soft, digital, entrepreneurial skills), expand to rural areas, institutionalise industry partnerships
Access & Inclusion	Rural & climate-vulnerable gaps, gender disparity, stigma	Make TVET universally accessible & valued	Integrate TVET in secondary school, stipends & transport support, scale up VLTCs
Quality & Infrastructure	Outdated tools, low trainer capacity	Modernise facilities & pedagogy	Increase TVET budget, trainer development incentives, ICT-enabled rural centres
Labour Market Linkages	Fragmented coordination, high informal employment	Create demand-driven, formal pathways	Link TVET to jobs, apprenticeships, startups; include gig economy, care work, agribusiness & others
Governance & Accountability	Corruption, weak M&E, poor data	Ensure transparent, inclusive systems	Reform DYD/NSP governance, independent monitoring, disaggregated data
Financial Sustainability	Donor dependency, weak PPPs	Build multi-source funding	Institutionalise TVET funding, CSR youth hubs, diaspora bonds
Societal Norms & Motivation	Low aspirations, gender norms	Shift attitudes & aspirations	National 'Youth Skills for Life' campaign, career counselling, success stories

Additional Notes for Advocacy Implementation under EARN

- Policy Brief Focus: Economic returns of youth investment, gender parity in employment, digital inclusion, and PPP innovations.

- Strategic Allies: NSDA, MoYS, Planning Commission, MoF, ICT Division, Industry Chambers, Local Governments.

- Timeframe Alignment: Eighth Five-Year Plan (ends 2025), Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041, Youth Entrepreneurship Policy 2025.

- Amplification Tools: Youth advisory forums, media engagement, data-driven storytelling, donor-policy roundtables.

MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Monitoring, Evaluation, & Impact Assessment of the Communication Strategy

A robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system is central to the success of Project EARN's Communication Strategy and Action Plan. In the context of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) youth in Bangladesh, communication is not merely an outreach function; it is a catalyst for behavioural change, social norm transformation, and policy uptake. Therefore, the MEL framework must be dynamic, inclusive, and capable of capturing both quantitative outputs and qualitative outcomes across digital, community, and institutional domains.

1. Purpose and Principles

The MEL framework for Project EARN's communication is grounded in the principles of adaptive learning, youth participation, equity, and evidence-based refinement. It aims to:

• Track the reach, engagement, relevance, and impact of communication efforts.

• Provide real-time data for course correction and message adaptation.

• Ensure that the communication resonates with marginalised NEET youth, particularly adolescent girls, youth with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and the ultra-poor.

• Contribute to the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the program through continuous learning.

2. Monitoring Framework

2.1 Output-Level Indicators

These indicators measure communication delivery and immediate reach:

Indicator	Frequency	Tools/Source
Number of posters/brochures distributed	Monthly	Distribution logs
Social media reach & engagement	Weekly	Facebook/YouTube/Instagram analytics
Number of courtyard sessions held	Monthly	Field activity reports
Number of IVR/SMS interactions initiated	Monthly	Telco dashboard
Broadcast events via radio/TV	Quarterly	Broadcast logs
Number of mural arts or community exhibitions	Quarterly	Visual documentation

2.2 Outcome-Level Indicators
These track awareness, attitudinal shifts, and behaviour change:

Indicator	Tool	Frequency
Awareness change on EARN services	Pre/post surveys	Quarterly
Female enrollment increase	MIS records	Biannually
Youth reporting reduced stigma or self-doubt	FGDs	Midline & Endline
Community leader support for girls' participation	KIIs	Annual
Trust in DYD and partners	SMS polls	Semi-annually

3. Impact Assessment Framework

Impact will be measured through multi-dimensional indicators over a 24-month implementation period, aligned with SBCC goals and behavioural science theories of change:

Impact Area	Metric	Target by Month 24
Reach & Exposure	% of NEET youth reached (digital/offline)	70% of target group
Engagement	Online interactions and offline participation	200,000+ digital views; 30,000+ engagements
Inclusion	Representation in media of girls, disabled youth, minorities	100% inclusive campaign compliance
Behavior Change	Enrollment increase due to comms	25% rise in training uptake
Family Attitude Shift	% of families supporting youth, esp. girls	50% increase in positive support
Norm Change	Reduced stigma around girls' mobility, early marriage	30% positive shift in attitudes
Crisis Mitigation	Reduction in youth-perceived risk (drugs, early marriage)	20% improvement
Institutional Readiness	% of LGIs and CBOs capacitated	90% outreach-ready
Sustainability	Comms integrated into local youth services	Institutionalized by Month 24

Tools include baseline/midline/endline surveys, analytics dashboards, SMS/WhatsApp polls, FGDs, KIIs, and community observation templates.

4. Feedback Loops and Adaptive Communication

To ensure relevance and real-time adaptation, Project EARN will institutionalise feedback and learning through:

•   SMS and WhatsApp Polls: Low-cost, scalable sentiment trackers.

•   Social Media Comments and DMs: Monitored and tagged for insights.

•   Youth Content Labs: Platforms for youth to create and critique messages.

•   Quarterly/Biannual Learning Reviews: Multi-stakeholder sessions to evaluate what's working and recalibrate.

•   Youth Monitors: Alumni volunteers conducting community audits and validating message resonance.

This bottom-up intelligence system ensures that communication stays grounded, responsive, and inclusive.

5. Institutional and Technical Infrastructure

A successful MEL system requires dedicated infrastructure:

•   Communication Toolkit: Ready-made IEC templates, SMS scripts, community radio formats, and messaging calendars for DYD and partner use.

•   Digital Content Hub: A repository of localized visuals, posters, videos, and feedback dashboards.

•   Capacity-Building: Training for DYD, local NGOs, and facilitators on youth storytelling, inclusive messaging, and monitoring techniques.

•   Two-Way Communication Channels: Helplines, QR-coded feedback forms, and WhatsApp bots for constant youth input.

6. Coordination Mechanisms

Monitoring and learning processes will be embedded in the project governance system through:

• Monthly MEL Coordination Meetings between communication, implementation, and data teams.

• Quarterly Youth Feedback Briefings to present findings to stakeholders.

• Annual MEL Summits to reflect, share evidence, and scale what works.

7. Exit Strategy and Sustainability of Communication Impact

As Project EARN approaches its final phase, a well-crafted exit strategy is crucial to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of its communication achievements.

7.1 Knowledge Transfer and Institutional Embedding

• The Communication Toolkit and Digital Content Hub will be handed over to the Department of Youth Development (DYD) and local NGOs.

• Final training rounds will focus on capacity building of local facilitators, government staff, and community leaders to continue message dissemination.

• Community Radio and local print partners will be oriented on continuing youth storytelling beyond project life.

7.2 Policy and Planning Integration

• Communication methods and messaging approaches will be documented in a "Youth Communication Integration Guide" to be adopted in local development plans.

• EARN's Communication Strategy will be linked with national youth development and digital inclusion policies through advocacy with MoYS and LGIs.

7.3 Youth Networks and Peer Continuity

• Alumni groups and youth clubs, strengthened during the project, will continue acting as communication nodes.

• A network of trained youth monitors and peer educators will remain in place to support ongoing community mobilisation.

7.4 Digital Legacy

• The centralized Digital Hub will remain live post-project under DYD management, acting as a repository for content, toolkits, and updates.

• All communication assets will be made open-source and adaptable for future use by development partners.

Conclusion

The MEL and Impact Assessment framework for Project EARN's communication is not a static mechanism—it is a living, learning system designed to evolve alongside the youth it serves. Through adaptive tools, community engagement, real-time analytics, and structured learning, the strategy ensures that communication is impactful, inclusive, and sustainable. The exit strategy ensures that its legacy continues—through institutional ownership, youth networks, and policy linkages—long after the project concludes. This structured approach not only drives accountability and results but also contributes to systemic transformation in youth empowerment communication in Bangladesh.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION ECOSYSTEM

Integrated Digital Communication Ecosystem for Project EARN: Centralised Content Hub, Interactive Platforms, and Community-Driven Engagement

To enable inclusive, context-sensitive, and scalable communication targeting NEET youth across Bangladesh, Project EARN will establish a multi-dimensional digital and community interface. This ecosystem centres around a Centralised Content Hub, an Interactive Youth Portal, a Mobile App, and an AI Chatbot, supported by participatory co-creation labs, trusted messenger networks, gatekeeper engagement strategies, and cross-sectoral partner coordination.

Together, these interconnected systems will ensure that communication is not only disseminated but co-created, trusted, reinforced within households, and amplified through collaboration—creating an enabling environment for youth participation, behaviour change, and sustainable economic empowerment.

1. Centralized Content Hub: The Nerve Center for Coordination and Field Communication

The Centralised Content Hub is a secure digital platform developed to serve regional heads, field trainers, communication officers, and implementing partners. This hub ensures unified, quality-controlled, and culturally relevant messaging across all EARN regions.

Core Functions and Features:
- Communication Toolkits tailored for rural, marginalised, and hard-to-reach communities, with linguistic and cultural adaptability.

- Role-Based Dashboards (Admins, Trainers, Trainees, Guests) with defined upload, feedback, and access privileges.

- Official Branding Materials , including templates, logos, colour guides, and audiovisual assets, to maintain message consistency.

- Onboarding Materials for new field staff and NEET youth trainees, including explainer videos, orientation presentations, and process maps.

- Pre-Approved Messaging Templates for social media, SMS, community radio, and in-person outreach.

- Cross-Platform Dissemination functionality, enabling printable formats, WhatsApp-ready content, and one-click social sharing.

All content will follow standardised templates and tagging protocols to improve accessibility, searchability, and strategic monitoring.

2. Youth Co-Creation Labs: Grounding Campaigns in Youth Voices

Embedded within the digital content development cycle is a structured process of Youth Co-Creation Labs. These are participatory workshops (online or offline) where NEET youth from diverse backgrounds, rural, urban, differently abled, and minority groups, collaboratively design and test communication content.

Key Guidelines:
- Inclusion Criteria: Gender-balanced groups, diversity in education status, regional and linguistic representation, youth with disabilities, and out-of-school youth.

- Facilitation Methods: Use of storytelling, visual mapping, role play, and rapid prototyping to elicit ideas and feedback.

- Feedback Integration: Suggestions and co-created prototypes from the labs are uploaded to the Content Hub, tagged, reviewed, and adapted into final campaign materials.

- Ambassador Development: Participants are encouraged to act as campaign ambassadors, sharing messages within their communities and through the Youth Portal.

This co-creation model ensures that campaign content remains authentic, youth-centered, and locally resonant.

3. Youth Portal: Empowerment through Digital Engagement

The Youth Portal serves as a centralised, user-friendly digital gateway for NEET youth, families, and program officials. It connects users to training centres, events, information, and interactive tools.

Key Features:

- Searchable Training Centre Directory by district and upazila.

- Personal Dashboards for youth, caregivers, and officials.

- Discussion Forums, feedback forms, and peer storytelling features.

- Digital Surveys and polls are integrated into program feedback loops.

- News, Announcements, and Success Stories, with options for public visibility and private commentaries.

This platform also hosts co-creation outcomes, publishes youth ambassador blogs, and provides a space for public engagement campaigns coordinated with partner organisations.

4. Mobile App: Offline-First Learning and Updates

To address the connectivity and literacy challenges faced by NEET youth, especially females and rural residents, a mobile-first application will be launched.

Key Functionalities:

- Offline-Accessible Training Modules, FAQs, and motivational content.

- Voice, Video, and Visual Aids for low-literacy users.

- Push Notifications on training updates, job fairs, and campaign activities.

- Personalised Learning Paths and gamified content.

The mobile app also enables anonymous access to resources, especially critical for young women navigating restrictive social environments.

5. AI Chatbot: 24/7 Support and Guided Interaction

The AI-powered virtual assistant will be embedded across the Youth Portal, mobile app, and social platforms to provide instant, multilingual and voice-enabled support.

Capabilities:

- Real-time answers to FAQs on training, job applications, eligibility, and safety.

- Escalation to Human Support when issues require personalised follow-up.

- Anonymous Interaction to support vulnerable users.

- Motivational Messaging built into daily user prompts and learning modules.

The chatbot contributes to increased youth autonomy, privacy, and confidence in navigating the program.

6. Trusted Messenger Identification: Building Networks of Local Influence

To strengthen message credibility and peer influence, Project EARN will identify and equip local trusted messengers.

Mapping and Mobilisation:

- Identification of peer leaders, teachers, religious leaders, health workers, and NGO staff as key influencers.

- Training Modules in basic communication, behavioral messaging, and youth engagement techniques.

- Inclusion of messengers in Content Hub access lists for receiving campaign updates, IEC materials, and feedback forms.

Trained messengers act as echo channels to reinforce key messages offline and online, especially in remote areas.

7. Gatekeeper Engagement: Building Household and Community Support

To tackle socio-cultural barriers, particularly for female and disabled youth, a dedicated strategy for family and community gatekeepers will be implemented.

Engagement Methods:

- Courtyard Dialogues with parents, guardians, and elders.

- Home Visits and focused group discussions led by field staff and trained messengers.

- Community Forums with storytelling, youth testimonials, and program orientations.

Insights and objections gathered from gatekeepers are analysed and uploaded to the Content Hub for iterative improvement in campaign tone, messaging, and targeting.

8. Partner Coordination: Unified and Amplified Campaign Delivery

The Content Hub and Youth Portal will include a dedicated space for partner collaboration, ensuring alignment across:

- Government Agencies (DYD, MoYS, local administration)

- NGOs and Youth Networks

- Media Outlets and Journalists

- Private Sector (employers, ed-tech providers, training vendors)

This includes:

- Shared calendars for outreach events.

- Partner-generated content review pipelines.

- Joint messaging kits and brand guidelines.

- Data dashboards for tracking campaign reach, media mentions, and engagement.

A Unified Communication Ecosystem Rooted in Local Wisdom and Digital Connectivity

Project EARN's integrated communication system, anchored in the Centralised Content Hub and extended through co-creation labs, trusted messengers, digital platforms, and community engagement, creates a responsive, inclusive, and scalable infrastructure. It ensures that NEET youth are not just recipients of information but co-creators of change, with families, communities, and institutions working in tandem to support their journeys.

By blending technology with trust and structure with storytelling, this ecosystem addresses systemic barriers while celebrating the unique aspirations of Bangladesh's NEET youth.

Conclusion

"This comprehensive document—spanning the literature review, communication needs assessment, and strategic action planning—underscores the urgent necessity and strong potential of the EARN initiative in transforming the socio-economic landscape for NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) youth in Bangladesh.

The literature review illuminated entrenched structural and behavioural barriers, including educational mismatch, economic vulnerability, social exclusion, and gender-based limitations, particularly among rural and marginalised populations. These findings established a foundational understanding of why NEET youth remain disconnected from opportunity ecosystems, and affirmed the need for targeted, inclusive, and adaptive interventions.

The communication needs assessment, built upon survey data, stakeholder consultations, and FGDs across all eight divisions, identified critical information gaps, mistrust in institutional actors, and limited awareness of available resources. It highlighted the importance of context-sensitive messaging, trusted messengers, accessible formats (both digital and offline), and feedback-enabled two-way communication systems. It also demonstrated a widespread desire among NEET youth for aspirational, practical, and relatable information that speaks directly to their lived experiences.

The resulting communication strategy and action plan are therefore rooted in behavioural insights, localised realities, and systemic barriers. It outlines a phased, multi-channel SBCC (Social and Behaviour Change Communication) framework that emphasises empowerment, trust-building, and institutional visibility. It incorporates gender-transformative messaging, inclusive representation, and targeted outreach to underserved subgroups such as adolescent girls, youth with disabilities, ethnic/religious minorities, and youth affected by early marriage or substance abuse. Simultaneously, it provides operational guidance for DYD and partners on M&E frameworks, digital ecosystem integration, and regional content hubs to support decentralised action.

Insights from the FGDs strongly validate the EARN project's core design—affirming the need for flexible training, second-chance education, employer linkages, and psychosocial support. These elements, when combined with sustained community engagement and feedback loops, are positioned to address both the supply-side (skills, training, and access) and demand-side (employer needs, entrepreneurial opportunities, and market alignment) gaps that NEET youth face.

Looking ahead, future research should extend to longitudinal and behavioural studies, including digital access mapping and sociocultural drivers of exclusion, particularly among rural young women. These efforts will not only refine EARN's adaptive learning but also contribute to national policy frameworks that support youth empowerment and inclusive development.

In summary, the EARN initiative, grounded in evidence, co-created through grassroots insights, and executed through a strategic, multi-layered communication plan, provides a robust pathway for transforming disconnection into opportunity. By aligning systemic reform with human-centred design, it positions NEET youth not as passive beneficiaries but as active agents in shaping Bangladesh's economic future."

ANNEXURE:
QUESTIONNAIRES, CHECKLIST AND PROCEEDINGS

Multi-stakeholder Focus Group Discussion Checklist
Date:
Location Details:

Moderator Guidelines for the FGD on NEET Youth Engagement
The moderator plays a vital role in ensuring that the focus group discussion is inclusive, time-limited, respectful, and productive. At the start, it is important to establish an open and respectful environment where every participant feels comfortable sharing their perspectives. The moderator must actively guarantee that all participants—regardless of their background or level of authority—have the chance to express their views. This involves gently inviting quieter members to contribute while tactfully managing more vocal participants, ensuring a balance of voices in the conversation.

Time management is vital to the success of the session. Each segment of the discussion has a specific duration, and it is the moderator's responsibility to keep the conversation within these time limits. If any segment exceeds its allotted time, the moderator should tactfully steer the discussion forward, ensuring that all key agenda items are adequately addressed without rushing.

Throughout the session, the discussion must remain focused on the core themes, namely the barriers faced by NEET youth, their behavioural patterns, and effective communication strategies for engaging them in education, employment, or training. If the conversation begins to drift into unrelated territory, the moderator should intervene politely and redirect the group's attention to the relevant topic. This focus will help maintain the integrity and usefulness of the insights collected.

Maintaining a safe and respectful environment is essential. The moderator should start by establishing basic ground rules, emphasising that all opinions are valued and that mutual respect is non-negotiable. If any conflict, discomfort, or potentially problematic situation occurs, the moderator must handle it promptly and diplomatically to prevent escalation. Discussions should always remain constructive and non-partisan.

To enhance the quality of dialogue, the moderator should use probing questions to draw out deeper responses and encourage elaboration. Questions such as "Can you provide an example?" or "What was the outcome of that approach?" can prompt richer insights. Additionally, summarizing key points at the end of each segment helps to consolidate understanding and keep the discussion coherent.

Finally, the moderator must coordinate closely with the designated note-taker or recorder to ensure that all valuable insights are adequately documented. When necessary, the moderator can paraphrase or restate essential points to ensure accurate documentation and reinforce a shared understanding among participants.

Part A: Introduction & Contextual Understanding

In your opinion, who falls under the NEET category in your region? Probe: Are there gender, location, or disability-based differences?]

What are the most common reasons, in your experience, that youth become NEET?
o   Economic?
o   Cultural/social norms?
o   Lack of education or skills?
o   Health or disability?
o   Migration?

How do NEET youth typically spend their time during the day? [Probe for gender-specific routines, digital access, and household responsibilities.]

Are there differences in the reasons for becoming NEET among:
o   Urban vs. rural youth?
o   Males vs. females?
o   Persons with disabilities vs. those without?

Part B: Behavioural Traits & Psychosocial Barriers

How motivated do you think NEET youth are to rejoin education, employment, or training programs?
What are the main drivers of motivation?
What demotivates them?

What roles do families, communities, or peers play in either supporting or limiting youth participation in programs?

Have you observed any psychological or emotional barriers (e.g., low self-esteem, anxiety, lack of confidence) among NEET youth? How can these be addressed?

Part C: Communication and Outreach

What types of communication methods or tools have been used to reach NEET youth in your area (e.g., posters, mobile phones, social media, religious institutions, peer educators)?

Which communication channels have been most effective? Which ones have failed or had low response? Why?

How do NEET youth typically receive information?
Word of mouth?
Mobile phones?
Community leaders?
Online groups?

What formats do they respond to most (e.g., videos, face-to-face interaction, drama, audio messages, peer testimony)?

What communication approaches do you think are most effective for:
Adolescent girls?
Youth with disabilities?
Religious or ethnic minorities?
Married youth or those with children?

Part D: Recommendations and Feedback

What suggestions would you give to make communication strategies more inclusive and impactful for NEET youth?

Can you share any success stories where NEET youth have been effectively re-engaged in education or livelihood programs?

What are the key risks or challenges in engaging NEET youth that should be avoided or mitigated?

Current Situation of NEET Youth
(45 Minutes)

Understanding Barriers in Education
For NEET Youth:
Can you share why you had to leave school or why you didn't continue your education?

Were there any financial problems, family responsibilities, social pressure, or personal reasons that made it difficult?

Have you ever considered returning to study again? If not, what is stopping you?

What kind of support or programs do you think would help you return to education?

For Parents of NEET Youth:
What difficulties did your child face while continuing their education?

Did you try to seek any help or support regarding your child's schooling? If not, why?

What are your thoughts on non-traditional education options like online learning or technical schools?

For Community Leaders, Youth Development Officials, and Stakeholders:
In your view, what kinds of local or national initiatives could help NEET youth rejoin the education system?

Are there specific groups (e.g., girls, disabled youth, ethnic minorities) who face greater educational challenges? Why?

Understanding Barriers in Skill Training Programs
For NEET Youth:
Have you ever thought about joining any training or skill-building program? What motivated or discouraged you?

If you tried, what kind of obstacles did you face—was it about cost, travel, timing, or something else?

What kind of training (technical, digital, craft-based, etc.) do you think would help you the most for finding a job?

For Parents of NEET Youth:
Do you think vocational or skills training can help your child become self-reliant? Why or why not?

Have you ever encouraged your child to enroll in such programs? What worries or concerns do you have about them?

For Community Leaders, Youth Development Officials, and Stakeholders:
What types of training programs currently exist for NEET youth in this region? Are they easy to access?

What changes do you think are needed at the policy or local level to help more youth participate in skill development?

Understanding Barriers in Employment
For NEET Youth:
What are the reasons you are currently not doing any job or work?

Have you tried looking for work? If yes, what kind of problems did you face—lack of opportunities, skills, discrimination?

What kind of job would you like to do, and what skills do you think are necessary for that kind of job?

For Community Leaders, Employers, and Youth Development Officials:
In your experience, what are the most significant barriers that prevent NEET youth from securing employment in this area?

How do employers view NEET youth in terms of employability, reliability, and skills?

Are there any government, NGO, or private sector efforts that encourage businesses to hire NEET youth? How effective are these?

Exploring Solutions and Support Mechanisms
Cross-Stakeholder Questions:
What types of new or improved policies can make education, training, or employment more accessible to NEET youth?

How can we make programs more inclusive for young women, youth with disabilities, and other disadvantaged groups?

What role should local government, NGOs, the private sector, and the community play in supporting NEET youth in their transition into learning or work?

How can we encourage businesses to take more

responsibility in hiring or mentoring NEET youth?

Understanding the Behavioural Patterns of NEET Youth: Duration: 1 Hour

Current Behaviours, Experiences, and Attitudes of

NEET Youth

For NEET Youth:
Can you describe how you typically spend your day? What activities take up most of your time?

What kinds of things encourage you to think about work, education, or training? What discourages you?

Do you feel that you are treated differently or face discrimination when trying to access education or work? If yes, can you share an example?

What does a good job mean to you? What kind of career or livelihood do you imagine for yourself?

Have you ever participated in or heard about any training or awareness campaigns for youth like yourself? What did you think about them?

If you didn't join such programs, what made you hesitant or uninterested?

Understanding Motivational Barriers and Enablers For Parents of NEET Youth:
What changes have you seen in your child's attitude or behaviour related to work or education?

In your opinion, does your child lack confidence, motivation, or direction? What do you think might be the cause?

What have you done, if anything, to encourage them to participate in educational or employment-related activities?

What type of support do you think would help your child get back on a productive path?

For Opinion Leaders, Community Representatives, and Youth Development Officials:
Based on your observations, what are the common attitudes or mindset traits seen among NEET youth in this area?

What psychological or social issues seem to discourage them from engaging in learning or earning?

Are there any social norms, stigma, or peer pressures that influence their inactivity or disinterest?

Have you seen any successful strategies—like counselling, peer-led sessions, or mentorship—that helped shift behaviour or attitudes?

Strategies to Attract NEET Youth to Programs Cross-Stakeholder Questions:
What type of campaigns, training initiatives, or local

events have worked well in attracting NEET youth?

Why do you think some youth respond positively to such programs while others ignore them?

What kind of incentives—monetary or non-monetary—would motivate more youth to join training or job placement programs?

How significant is peer influence in helping youth make positive decisions? Can peer mentors or role models make a difference?

What kind of learning environment or program style do NEET youth prefer—hands-on, informal, digital, group-based, etc.?

**Case Study Session
Duration: 1 Hour + 20 Minutes (including Q&A and closing)**

Exploring Reactions to Communication Materials

Visual Review Activity:

Participants will be shown sample communication materials (advertisements, posters, slogans, social media posts, or videos). After viewing, the following questions will be discussed:

For All Participants (NEET Youth, Parents, Community Members, and Officials):

What did you think about the visual and creative elements of the communication content you just saw?

How appealing were the colours used?

Was the slogan memorable or meaningful to you?

Did the images or characters feel relatable?

Was the video or storyline engaging and easy to understand?

What part of the message or content did you connect with the most?

Was it the story? The emotion? The setting? The language?

What kind of message makes you want to take action or share with others?

Can you recall a campaign or ad that truly inspired you?

Perspectives on Messaging; Group-Specific Questions:

In your opinion, what kind of communication or message would best resonate with the following groups?

• Women

• Men

• Religious minorities (non-Muslims)

• People with disabilities

• Hijra (transgender community)

• Ethnic minorities

• Youth from low-income households

Do you think these groups are currently well-represented in the materials you've seen? If not, what should be added or changed?

What specific channels or platforms (e.g., social media, miking, community events, schools, mosques, YouTube, peer educators) work best for each group you mentioned?

How can we ensure communication campaigns are inclusive, respectful, and representative of all youth?

Creative Message Generation
For All Participants:
If you had the chance to create a slogan or message to motivate NEET youth, what would it be?

You can share it as a short poem, a line from a song, a motivational phrase, a simple call to action, or any form that comes naturally.

(Facilitator note: Encourage participants to write or say it aloud. This is both a creative and emotional engagement activity.)

Peer-to-Peer Q&A and Experience Sharing
Duration: 15 Minutes
This segment will be open for participant interaction. The moderator will prompt the group:

Does anyone have a question for another participant—maybe about an idea they shared or an experience they mentioned?

Would anyone like to share a personal success story, challenge, or community initiative they think others can learn from?

What do you think we can do together—as youth, parents, officials, and community members—to better support NEET youth?

Objective: Foster dialogue, collaborative thinking, and peer learning.

Final Closing Discussion
Duration: 5 Minutes

The moderator will summarise key insights, including:

• Main barriers identified

• Behaviour trends observed

• Effective communication strategies discussed

• Actionable ideas or policy suggestions raised by the group

Participants will be thanked for their time, ideas, and openness, and informed that their insights will shape future youth programs and policies.

Key Informant Survey (KIS) Questionnaire for DYD Officials
Section 1: General Information
1. Email Address
2. Name
3. Designation
4. Organisation

Have you previously been involved in any youth skill development initiatives? - Yes - No

If yes, please mention the name(s) of the project(s).

Duration of your engagement: - Less than 1 year - 1 to 3 years - 3 to 5 years - More than 5 years

In your opinion, how important is the role of communication and awareness campaigns in encouraging youth participation in skill training programs? - Extremely significant - Somewhat significant - Neutral - Slightly insignificant - Not significant at all

Barriers to NEET Participation

What are the key challenges that prevent youth from participating in training programs? (Select all that apply) - In-person/offline nature of training - Inflexible schedule - Low market relevance of training content - Lack of financial incentives - Distance from training centre - Educational disadvantages - Absence of job linkage after training - Lack of women-friendly environment

In your opinion, to what extent are unemployed youth in Bangladesh interested in participating in training? - Highly interested - Somewhat interested - Neutral - Slightly uninterested - Not interested at all

What are the key communication limitations in current training outreach strategies? (Select all that apply) - Unclear objectives - Inadequate understanding of the target audience - Lack of diversified communication channels - Insufficient follow-up or reinforcement - Resistance to change - Information overload -

Technical or digital limitations

Training & Employment Perception
What is your estimate of the percentage of youth who secure employment after completing training? - 1–20% - 21–40% - 41–60% - 61–80% - 81–100% 13.

How do you think employers value training certificates in recruitment decisions? - Highly value - Somewhat value - Neutral - Slightly value - Not valued at all

Based on your experience, what key motivators can increase youth interest in skill development training? (Select all that apply) - Financial empowerment - Personal development - Family support - Social respect

What type of message content is most effective in motivating NEET youth? - Data-driven - Emotion-driven - Inspirational/success-based - Entertaining - A combination of approaches

Training Preferences
Which training sectors are NEET youth generally more interested in? (Select all that apply) - Sewing - Food Processing - Modern Trade (e.g., Facebook commerce) - Agriculture - Pottery/Clay Work - Handicrafts - Computer & IT - Light Engineering - Livestock & Farm Management

Which training sectors are most preferred by young women? (Select all that apply — same options as above)

Career Aspirations and Influencers
What are the primary aspirations of youth in your area? - Entrepreneurship - Employment - Migration abroad

Who are the most influential figures in shaping career decisions of youth? (Select all that apply) - Family members - Teachers - Friends - Relatives - Religious leaders - Successful individuals - Local elders - Social media influencers

Which type of public figures are most influential among youth in your area? - Film actors - Athletes - Politicians - Scientists / Academicians

Barriers and Enablers for Female Participation
Alongside vocational training, how interested are young people in receiving training on mental health, hygiene, general knowledge, etc.? To what extent do you think young women are interested in participating in training programs? - Highly interested - Somewhat interested - Neutral - Slightly uninterested - Not interested at all

What is the current participation level of women in the Department of Youth Development (DYD) skill training programs? - Equal to men - Lower than men - Higher than men

What are the key barriers preventing women from participating in training? (Select all that apply) - Lack of

women-friendly environments - Religious restrictions - Physically intensive nature of training - Social stigma - Family restrictions - Limited job prospects - Time not suitable for women

Please provide your thoughtful suggestions on how to encourage women to participate in training programs and make their participation easier.

From which perspective should training promotion be designed to overcome social or psychological barriers to women's participation? - Women's empowerment - Family financial support - Social respect for women - Expanding women's opportunities in gender-appropriate trades

Communication Targets & Messaging
Besides youth, which additional groups should be included in outreach efforts? (Select all that apply) - Working professionals - Unemployed adults - Small business owners and entrepreneurs - Retirees or elderly persons - Men and women over the age of 35 - Persons with disabilities - Non-formal educators or trainers - Community members and leaders

How aware is the current youth population about environmental conservation? - Very aware - Somewhat aware - Moderately aware - Slightly aware - Not aware at all

To what extent do environmental awareness campaigns influence youth? - Strongly influences - Somewhat influences - Moderately influences - Slightly influences - No influence

What type of communication tone is most effective when addressing young people? - Emotional - Humorous - Informative - Light and engaging - Serious and formal - Artistic or imaginative

Communication Strategy & Branding Effectiveness:
How likely is it that traditional branding materials (e.g., posters, flyers, TVCs, RDCs, miking) would increase visibility among NEET stakeholders to join DYD training programs? - Very likely - Likely - Neutral – might help but not significantly - Unlikely - Very unlikely

Please rate the effectiveness (1–10) of the following communication tools in outreach campaigns: - Posters - Leaflets/Flyers - Calendars - Miking - Wall Painting - Religious Ceremonies - Community Events (e.g., Sports, Courtyard Meetings, Seminars) - TV Advertisements - Radio Advertisements - Facebook Ads - YouTube Ads - TikTok Ads - IMO Ads - Social Media Influencer Endorsements.

Local Area & Recommendations

Area Name: _____

Upazila: _____

Division: (Select One)

How do NEET youth in your area typically spend their free time? (Rate 1–10) - Chatting - Watching TV - Playing sports - Roaming - Browsing social media - Watching drama/films - Watching news

NEET Youth Survey

Previous Involvement in Youth Initiatives
Have you previously been involved in any youth skill development initiatives? Yes/No

If yes, please mention the name(s) of the project(s):

[Open-ended]

Duration of your engagement:
- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 3 years
- 3 to 5 years
- More than 5 years

Communication and Awareness
In your opinion, how important is the role of communication and awareness campaigns in encouraging youth participation in skill training programs?
- Extremely significant
- Somewhat significant
- Neutral
- Slightly insignificant
- Not significant at all

Barriers to NEET Participation

What are the key challenges that prevent youth from participating in training programs? (Select all that apply)

- In-person/offline nature of training

- Inflexible schedule

- Low market relevance of training content

- Lack of financial incentives

- Distance from training centre

- Educational disadvantages

- Absence of job linkage after training

- Lack of a women-friendly environment

In your opinion, to what extent are unemployed youth in Bangladesh interested in participating in training?

- Highly interested

- Somewhat interested

- Neutral

- Slightly uninterested

- Not interested at all

What are the key communication limitations in current training outreach strategies? (Select all that apply)

- Unclear objectives

- Inadequate understanding of the target audience

- Lack of diversified communication channels

- Insufficient follow-up or reinforcement

- Resistance to change

- Information overload

- Technical or digital limitations

Training & Employment Perception
What is your estimate of the percentage of youth who secure employment after completing training?
- 1–20%
- 21–40%
- 41–60%
- 61–80%
- 81–100%

How do you think employers value training certificates in recruitment decisions?
- Highly value
- Somewhat value
- Neutral
- Slightly value
- Not valued at all

Based on your experience, what key motivators can increase youth interest in skill development training? (Select all that apply)
- Financial empowerment
- Personal development
- Family support
- Social respect

What type of message content is most effective in motivating NEET youth?

- Data-driven

- Emotion-driven

- Inspirational/success-based

- Entertaining

- A combination of approaches

Training Preferences
Which training sectors are NEET youth generally more interested in? (Select all that apply)

- Sewing

- Food Processing

- Modern Trade (e.g., Facebook commerce)

- Agriculture

- Pottery/Clay Work

- Handicrafts

- Computer & IT

- Light Engineering

- Livestock & Farm Management

Which training sectors are most preferred by young women? (Select all that apply)

- Sewing

- Food Processing

- Modern Trade

- Agriculture

- Pottery/Clay Work

- Handicrafts

- Computer & IT

- Light Engineering

- Livestock & Farm Management

Career Aspirations and Influencers
What are the primary aspirations of youth in your area?
- Entrepreneurship
- Employment
- Migration abroad

Who are the most influential figures in shaping the career decisions of youth? (Select all that apply)
- Family members
- Teachers
- Friends
- Relatives
- Religious leaders
- Successful individuals
- Local elders
- Social media influencers

Which type of public figures are most influential among youth in your area?
- Film actors
- Athletes
- Politicians
- Scientists / Academicians

Female Participation – Barriers and Enablers
Alongside vocational training, how interested are young people in receiving training on mental health, hygiene, and general knowledge?
- Highly interested
- Somewhat interested
- Neutral
- Slightly uninterested

- Not interested at all

What is the current participation level of women in DYD training programs?

- Equal to men

- Lower than men

- Higher than men

What are the key barriers preventing women from participating in training? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of women-friendly environments

- Religious restrictions

- Physically intensive nature of training

- Social stigma

- Family restrictions

- Limited job prospects

- Training time not suitable for women

Please provide your suggestions on how to encourage women to participate in training programs:

[Open-ended]

From which perspective should training promotion be designed to overcome social or psychological barriers to women's participation?

- Women's empowerment

- Family financial support

- Social respect for women

- Expanding opportunities in gender-appropriate trades

Communication Targets & Messaging
Besides youth, which additional groups should be included in outreach efforts? (Select all that apply)
- Working professionals
- Unemployed adults
- Small business owners/entrepreneurs
- Retirees or elderly persons
- Men and women over 35
- Persons with disabilities
- Non-formal educators/trainers
- Community members and leaders

How aware is the current youth population about environmental conservation?
- Very aware
- Somewhat aware
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To what extent do environmental awareness campaigns influence youth?
- Strongly influence
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- Slightly influence
- No influence

Which tone of communication is most effective when addressing youth?
- Emotional
- Humorous
- Informative
- Light and engaging
- Serious and formal
- Artistic or imaginative

Communication Strategy & Branding Effectiveness

How likely is it that traditional branding materials (e.g., posters, flyers, TVCs, RDCs, miking) would increase visibility among NEET stakeholders?
- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

Communication Tool	Effectiveness(1–10)
Posters	
Leaflets/Flyers	
Calendars	
Miking	
Wall Painting	
Religious Ceremonies	
Community Events (Sports, Seminars)	
TV Advertisements	
Radio Advertisements	
Facebook Ads YouTube Ads	
TikTok Ads	
IMO Ads	
Social Media Influencer Endorsements	

Local Area & Recommendations

Area Name: _____

Upazila: _____

Division:

How do NEET youth in your area typically spend their free time? (Rate each from 1–10)

Activity	Rating(1–10)
Chatting	
Watching TV	
Playing sports	
Roaming	
Browsing social media	
Watching dramas/films	
Watching news	

Where do most NEET youth spend their leisure time in your area? (Rate each from 1–9)

Location	Rating (1-9)
Bridges	
Tea stalls	
Tourist spots	
Restaurants	
Riverbanks	
Parks	

Name any auditorium or public venue used for workshops or cultural events in your area:
[Open-ended]
Mention any prominent industry, company, product, or emerging employment opportunity in your area:
[Open-ended]
Please share any additional suggestions or area-specific observations for running awareness campaigns on training programs:
[Open-ended]

Workshops and Meetings

On May 15, 2025, a Stakeholder Consultation Workshop for the Economic Acceleration and Resilience for NEET (EARN) initiative was held at the InterContinental Dhaka. Organised by Spellbound Communications Limited and Policy Exchange Bangladesh and led by the Department of Youth Development (DYD) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), the event was supported by The World Bank. It aimed to engage diverse stakeholders in shaping strategies to empower Bangladesh's NEET youth through skill development, employment, and awareness-building.

Participants included representatives from government bodies, NGOs (e.g., BRAC, CARE, Caritas), academia (e.g., Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh Open University), and the private sector. Keynote speakers highlighted the need for SDG-aligned youth initiatives, existing infrastructure like solar-powered training centers, and future-ready skillsets for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The session was moderated by Mohammad Sadequl Arefeen, CEO of Spellbound.

Interactive sessions addressed barriers such as social stigma, childcare, and mobility challenges for women. Solutions proposed included flexible training models, digital tools, storytelling for mindset shifts, and engaging men in women's economic empowerment.
The workshop concluded with a commitment to incorporating the insights into a comprehensive communication strategy for EARN. The collaborative dialogue is expected to guide an inclusive and impactful rollout, particularly for young women, helping them gain skills and opportunities to thrive in the national economy.

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