

Dialogue on

Reforms in Vocational Education, Employability and Market Readiness *Agenda on Adolescent and Young Women*

Labour Market Assessment 2024: Kishoreganj District

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Save the Children



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1. Introduction

- Bangladesh's labour market is evolving, requiring inclusive policy reforms to harness the potential of young women for sustainable economic growth
- Socio-cultural barriers and limited skill diversity challenge young women's full participation, especially in rural areas like Kishoreganj
 - Insights from Kishoreganj highlight challenges faced by women across Bangladesh in accessing training, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities
- The POWER project works as a scalable model for empowering women in economically disadvantaged areas through gender-responsive, market-relevant interventions
 - The insights generated from this assessment are intended to guide stakeholders, including policymakers, education providers, and community leaders, in creating a more inclusive, accessible, and gender-sensitive labour market environment for young women in Bangladesh
- The primary objective of this assessment is to analyse the employability and vocational skills gap of adolescent girls and young women and evaluate the gender responsiveness of the labour market
- The specific objectives include:
 - To identify the key economic sectors and industries prevalent within the communities, including both formal and informal sectors
 - To analyse the labour market conditions, including employment trends, wage levels, and types of available jobs suitable for adolescents and youth
 - Analysing the gender-specific barriers and biases in the Kishoreganj labour market

2. Methodology

Qualitative Issues

- Mixed Methodology: Combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**
 - Conducted 12 FGDs with adolescent girls and young women
 - Locations: Bhairab, Bajitpur, Kishoreganj Sadar, Karimganj, Hossainpur, Mithamain
 - 6 FGDs focused on adolescent girls, 6 on young women
- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**
 - Conducted 9 KIIs in Bhairab, Bajitpur, and Kishoreganj Sadar
 - Participants: Teachers/trainers (supply side), employers (demand side), and government officials (policy issues)

Quantitative Issues

- **Target Population**
 - Kishoreganj district: 1.7 million females
 - 8% are adolescent girls, 21% are young women (total 30%)
- **Survey Distribution**
 - Responses: 1,728 respondents (845 adolescent girls, 883 young women)
 - Coverage: 108 unions within 13 Upazilas
 - Sampling Method: Random stratified sampling with population weights
- **Labour Market Representation**
 - Large-scale survey conducted to represent Kishoreganj's labour market scenario
 - Focused on Haor and mainstream areas for better coverage of adolescent girls and young women

3. Demographic Information from Survey

Marriage Rates

- Approximately 59% (883) of young women are married
- Child marriage exists in all upazilas except Kuliarchar (no reported cases)
- Highest child marriage rates:
 - Nikli: 13%
 - Bajitpur: 7%

Recognition for the Persons with Disabilities

- Persons with Disabilities are low at 1%
- Accessibility to disability certifications and services is limited, especially for young women in Katiadi
- Recognition is critical for access to support for individuals with disabilities
- 2023 Population and Housing Census reports 20,365 females with disabilities in Kishoreganj (1.02% of the total female population)
 - Highest persons with disability are observed in Kishoreganj Sadar
 - Lowest persons with disability are observed numbers in Haor regions (Itna, Mithamain, Nikli)

3. Demographic Information from Survey

Literacy Rates

- Adolescent girls (ages 13-16):
 - High literacy rates (100% in most upazilas)
 - Slight declines in Nikli (93%), Kishoreganj Sadar, Hossainpur, and Itna
- Young women (ages 17-26):
 - Literacy rates above 90% in all upazilas
 - Lowest in Austagram (89%) and Itna (92%)

Educational Participation Rates

- Adolescent Girls:
 - Majority are currently enrolled in most upazilas
 - Higher dropout rates in Nikli: 20%, Karimganj: 14%, Bhairab: 10%
- Young Women:
 - Higher dropout prevalence or graduation exit
 - Dropout rates: Bhairab: 66%, Bajitpur: 57%
 - Causes: socio-cultural and economic factors (e.g., marriage, work, family)

3. Demographic Information from Survey

Educational Attainment

- Adolescent Girls:
 - 66% attain secondary-level education
 - Limited progression to higher secondary: Pakundia: 13%, Itna: 6%
- Young Women:
 - Broader range of qualifications, including tertiary
 - Tertiary attainment: Graduates: 14%, Postgraduates: 3%
- Challenges in Higher Education:
 - Drop-off from secondary to post-secondary levels
 - Reasons include limited access to facilities and family support in remote areas is often tied to marriage prospects

Ever been to an educational institution by age and Upazila

Upazila	Have never gone	Education completed	Have gone in the past but dropped out	Currently going	Total
<i>Adolescent girls (13-16)</i>					
Austagram	0	0	12	88	100
Bajitpur	0	5	8	87	100
Hossainpur	3	0	3	95	100
Itna	0	0	12	88	100
Karimganj	0	1	14	85	100
Katiadi	1	4	9	86	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	2	3	9	86	100
Kuliarchar	0	0	8	92	100
Mithamain	0	0	9	91	100
Tarail	0	0	8	92	100
Pakundia	0	6	1	93	100
Nikli	4	9	20	67	100
Bhairab	0	5	10	85	100
Total	1	3	9	87	100
<i>Young women (17-26)</i>					
Austagram	5	11	24	59	100
Bajitpur	0	6	57	37	100
Hossainpur	2	24	33	41	100
Itna	9	1	34	56	100
Karimganj	0	13	46	41	100
Katiadi	3	9	46	43	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	0	13	48	40	100
Kuliarchar	2	0	51	47	100
Mithamain	0	0	47	53	100
Tarail	4	13	38	45	100
Pakundia	0	22	29	49	100
Nikli	2	17	52	29	100
Bhairab	2	7	66	24	100
Total	24	10	46	42	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

- In Kishoreganj district, female employment is primarily driven by the agricultural sector (75%)
- This heavy dependence on agriculture highlights the need for diversification in skills as well as economic opportunities
- While the service sector’s employment is growing, contributing to over 21.6% of female employment, it still lags behind in providing significant job opportunities for women
- The industrial sector, being the smallest, offers limited female employment, thus highlighting the necessity for industrial and skills development and investment to create a more female-friendly job market, particularly for girls (for skills development) and young women
- In the four regions of Haor upazila—Itna (85.6%), Mithamain (81.1%), Austagram (79.6%), and Nikli (76.7%)—the highest employment is found in agriculture
 - Whereas the service sector has the lowest employment rates: Itna (10.4%), Mithamain (16.7%), Austagram (18.3%), and Nikli (18.3%) Industrial employment remains limited, with the highest levels recorded in Bhairab (10.3%), Bajitpur (5.1%), and Kuliarchar (5%)
- Kishoreganj Sadar has the highest contribution to employment in the services sector, accounting for 43%, followed closely by Bhairab at 41%

Employed Population by Sector

Upazila	Agriculture	Industry	Service	Total
Austagram	79.6	2.2	18.3	100
Bajitpur	67.5	5.1	27.4	100
Bhairab	48.4	10.3	41.3	100
Hossainpur	75.0	2.3	22.7	100
Itna	85.6	4.0	10.4	100
Karimganj	73.9	3.3	22.8	100
Katiadi	74.4	2.5	23.1	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	53.6	3.4	42.9	100
Kuliarchar	65.9	6.9	27.1	100
Mithamain	81.1	2.2	16.7	100
Nikli	76.7	5.0	18.3	100
Pakundia	72.7	2.1	25.2	100
Tarail	75.3	3.1	21.6	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey 2024

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

Key Economic Sectors in Kishoreganj

- Key sectors include shoemaking, coil manufacturing, small-scale industries, agriculture, and tailoring
- High-demand job positions: machine operators, assemblers, technicians, quality control staff, and packers
- Economic activities in Bhairab and Bajitpur dominated by factory work, especially shoe factories and other industries like ice cream, candle, and soap manufacturing
 - Jobs in these sectors are often low-wage and less appealing to women from better financial backgrounds
- Home-based earning opportunities like tailoring, freelancing, and online businesses are gaining popularity among women balancing income generation and household responsibilities
- Kishoreganj is predominantly agro-based, with industrial activities centred on vegetable, crop, and fish cultivation
 - Bhairab serves as the industrial hub with diverse, successful industries
 - Hossainpur and Bajitpur primarily host agro-based industries
 - Service sectors include IT, freelancing, nursing, and customer care services

Economic Activity and Household Income in Kishoreganj

- Agriculture is the predominant economic activity in most upazilas, especially in Austagram and Hossainpur
- Service sector plays a significant role in areas like Kishoreganj Sadar and Nikli
- Remittances are an important source of household income
- Migration rate in 2023 was 3.4% (BMET, 2024)
- 11% of households rely on remittance-based income
- Highest dependency on remittances in Pakundia, Bhairab, and Bajitpur

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

- The economic conditions in Kishoreganj reflect modest household incomes, averaging about BDT 19,974 for adolescent girls and slightly higher for young women at BDT 21,177
- The highest family income is observed in Hossainpur, indicating an average monthly income of BDT 23,350, while the lowest is noted in Nikli, with BDT 15,761
- The consistency of income across age groups in each upazila may reflect similar socio-economic conditions affecting family earnings

Monthly total income of family members by upazila and age group

Upazila	Adolescent Girls (13-16 Years)		Young Women (17-26 Years)	
	No of respondents	Average income	No of respondents	Average income
Overall	845	19974	883	21177
Austagram	34	18529	34	18529
Bajitpur	83	22663	83	22663
Bhairab	81	21216	81	21216
Hossainpur	40	23350	40	23350
Itna	66	16742	66	16742
Karimganj	71	21521	71	21521
Katiadi	78	17833	78	17833
Kishoreganj Sadar	118	20394	118	20394
Kuliarchar	52	17500	52	17500
Mithamain	58	19862	58	19862
Nikli	46	15761	46	15761
Pakundia	70	21129	70	21129
Total	48	21208	48	21208

Source: CPD LMA Survey

2024

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

- A notable willingness to work outside their own upazila, especially in Pakundia for both age groups
- Around half of the respondents across upazilas are open to working outside their locality
- Young women and adolescent girls show increasing openness to mobility within the region for work opportunities

Interested in doing work outside your upazila by age and Upazila

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)			Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	44	56	100	49	51	100
Bajitpur	61	39	100	46	54	100
Hossainpur	65	35	100	35	65	100
Itna	48	52	100	49	51	100
Karimganj	44	56	100	35	65	100
Katiadi	44	56	100	46	54	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	37	63	100	46	54	100
Kuliarchar	71	29	100	58	42	100
Mithamain	50	50	100	59	41	100
Tarail	48	52	100	43	57	100
Pakundia	66	34	100	62	38	100
Nikli	54	46	100	52	48	100
Bhairab	47	53	100	34	66	100
Total	51	49	100	47	53	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

Economic Participation and Market Dynamics

- Formal and Informal Sectors
 - Young women and adolescent girls in Sadar Upazila participate in both formal and informal sectors
 - Preferred roles include healthcare, education, freelancing, and garment industries
 - Informal activities such as tailoring, beautification, and home-based businesses are popular for flexibility
 - In Bhairab, economic activities include low-wage factory jobs (shoe, ice cream, candle, soap) and informal work like freelancing and online businesses
 - Mithamain girls engage less in formal activities but aspire to careers in teaching, medicine, and law, reflecting interest in public service
- Market Linkages
 - Market linkages include local marketplaces, online platforms for freelancing, and factory connections
 - Tailoring and boutique businesses sell to local customers and online, expanding reach beyond localities
 - Online platforms enable self-employment, bypassing physical market constraints and family obligations
- Product Sales
 - Adolescent girls and young women engage in tailoring, online businesses, and community-based product sales
 - Key products include handcrafted clothing, cosmetics, and boutique goods tailored to local preferences
 - Limited internet access restricts sales to friends, family, and local buyers, while others use social media for broader reach

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

- Product Sales: Employers' Perspective
 - Challenges include market instability, ineffective oversight, profit-driven business practices, and unregulated competition
 - Rising costs of raw materials (flour, oil, chicken feed) strain production and industries like food and poultry
 - Despite increased workforce skills and demand, company profits have declined due to COVID-19 and raw material price volatility
 - Lack of government accountability and support hinders ethical practices and innovation
- Sources of Raw Materials
 - Raw materials in Sadar Upazila are sourced locally or purchased online, supporting women entrepreneurs
 - In Bhairab, factory supply chains provide materials for industries like shoe and candle manufacturing, limiting worker independence
 - Mithamain relies on local markets for small-scale businesses, with limited external resources for growth
- Self-Employment Activities
 - Self-employment includes beautification, dressmaking, and computer-based jobs
 - In Sadar, activities focus on tailoring, online businesses, and beauty services, supported by skills training in sewing and boutique work
 - Bhairab participants show interest in freelancing and home-based businesses despite resource constraints
 - Mithamain participants aspire to self-employment, especially in tailoring, seeking balance between home responsibilities and income generation

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

Migration Trends and Aspirations in Kishoreganj

- Household Members Working Abroad
 - Pakundia and Bhairab report the highest proportions of families with members working overseas
 - Itna and Tarail show lower instances, reflecting limited migration from these areas
 - Regional migration trends are linked to local job opportunities and family financial needs
- Migration Costs
 - Highest migration expenses in Austagram for adolescent girls' families, averaging BDT 500,000
 - Lower migration costs observed in Bajitpur and Pakundia
- Recent Migration Trends
 - 54.3% of migrations occurred between 2021 and 2024
 - Increase driven by labour shortages in destination countries post-COVID and rising global demand for goods and services
- Migration Destinations
 - 71% of earlier migrants are in Middle Eastern countries, followed by 22.4% in Asian countries
 - Popular destinations: Saudi Arabia (52%), Malaysia (17%), UAE (7.5%)
- **All the information are based on CPD LMA Survey (2024)**

4. Major Economic Activities in Kishoreganj

Migration Trends and Aspirations in Kishoreganj

- Pre-Migration Training
 - High training rates in Itna for adolescent girls' households
 - Lower training uptake in Kuliarchar and other areas, influenced by access to vocational training, awareness, and financial resources
- Willingness to Work Abroad
 - Interest in working abroad is modest across upazilas, with the highest inclination in Pakundia for adolescent girls
 - Factors influencing low interest include local job availability, family preferences, cultural attitudes, and perceived barriers
- Preferred Types of Work Abroad
 - Studying overseas is the most popular choice
 - Followed by willingness to take any available job, including labour
 - Smaller interest in nursing, driving, and garment sector work
 - Reflects dual motivations: educational advancement and employment opportunities
- Desired Migration Destinations
 - Saudi Arabia is the most preferred country, likely due to family ties and job accessibility
 - Other popular destinations include Canada, USA, South Korea, and Italy
 - Varied preferences linked to employment prospects and migration networks

5. Labour Market Condition in Kishoreganj

Employment Trends

- 34% of young women are actively looking for jobs
- Pakundia has the highest job-seeking rate at 47%
- Bhairab has the lowest job-seeking rate at 17%, likely due to its status as a business hub with ample job opportunities
- Mithamain has the highest employment rate, though mostly in part-time jobs due to limited economic opportunities in Haor areas
- Job-seeking rates are generally high across upazilas, except in Bhairab and Hossainpur, where they are significantly lower

Employment and Apprenticeship Trends

- Average apprenticeship duration is 28 days, with regional disparities
- Karimganj: Shortest average (11 days)
- Katiadi: Longest average (53 days)
- Variations linked to differences in training interventions and curricula

Sectoral Employment and Roles

- 84% of young women work in the service sector, often in self-employment via online platforms
- Tarail has the highest concentration of employed young women (31%)
- Common industries include food, handicrafts, and clothing businesses
- Occupational roles include workers/co-workers (25%) and supervisors (27%)
- Tailoring and teaching are prominent career options within local contexts

Young women seeking jobs and on job

Upazilla	Seeking Job	On job
Austagram	41	14
Bajitpur	37	21
Hossainpur	22	7
Itna	43	28
Karimganj	35	5
Katiadi	34	9
Kishoreganj Sadar	38	6
Kuliarchar	32	9
Mithamain	36	55
Tarail	32	28
Pakundia	47	15
Nikli	29	23
Bhairab	17	23
Total	34	17

Engaged in economic sectors: by age and Upazila

Upazila	Young women (17-26)			
	Agriculture	Industry	Service	Total
Austagram	0	0	100	100
Bajitpur	12	0	88	100
Hossainpur	0	0	100	100
Itna	11	0	89	100
Karimganj	0	25	75	100
Katiadi	0	29	71	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	0	25	75	100
Kuliarchar	0	0	100	100
Mithamain	6	9	84	100
Tarail	0	31	69	100
Pakundia	0	18	82	100
Nikli	0	9	91	100
Bhairab	5	11	84	100
Total	5	11	84	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey
2024

5. Labour Market Condition in Kishoreganj

Training and Skill Development

- 30% of employed young women received training before joining their jobs
- Lack of training reflects perceptions of its irrelevance before employment
- Employers often hire untrained workers for lower-paying roles, leading to low motivation and job-switching tendencies
- High-demand skills: Tailoring/sewing (16.1%), computer skills (16.1%), and educational qualifications (7.3%)

Job Satisfaction and Career Aspirations

- Job satisfaction is high at 89%, though dissatisfaction peaks in Hossainpur (33%)
- Many women aspire to improve skills and seek financial autonomy through better opportunities
- 47% of young women plan to change jobs, with lower intention in Hossainpur (33%) and Kishoreganj Sadar (13%), indicating job stability in these areas

Payment and Unpaid Work

- Unpaid work remains low (8%), reflecting a shift toward paid employment
- 20% of young women received payment in cash/kind
- Highest payment rates in Itna (57%), Austagram (40%), and Hossainpur (40%)
- No payment reported in Pakundia and Tarail

Young women seeking jobs and on job

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	80	20	100
Bajitpur	41	59	100
Hossainpur	33	67	100
Itna	63	37	100
Karimganj	75	25	100
Katiadi	29	71	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	13	88	100
Kuliarchar	20	80	100
Mithamain	44	56	100
Tarail	23	77	100
Pakundia	73	27	100
Nikli	45	55	100
Bhairab	63	37	100
Total	451	549	1000

Work without salary/wages by age and Upazila

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	8	92	100
Bajitpur	5	95	100
Hossainpur	0	100	100
Itna	7	93	100
Karimganj	5	95	100
Katiadi	4	96	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	2	98	100
Kuliarchar	6	94	100
Mithamain	19	81	100
Tarail	15	85	100
Pakundia	4	96	100
Nikli	17	83	100
Bhairab	18	82	100
Total	8	92	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

2024

5. Labour Market Condition in Kishoreganj

- Most of the young women are employed in a supervisory role (27%) following worker (25%), owner (20%) and Teacher (10%)
- Nearly 40% are engaged in labour positions jobs, whereas 10% are engaged in teaching positions and 30% in mid-level positions
- 80% of young women have been in their current job for less than one to two years
 - This suggests that, after working for one to two years, they are either promoted to a new position, move to another organisation, leave the job market, or have recently joined within the past year
 - These dynamics indicate required targeted skills intervention so that the young women can build their careers and contribute to the organization
- 23% of young women are engaged in full-time job opportunities whereas Kuliarchar offers 40% full-time jobs followed by Tarail and Sadar upazila (38%)
 - Augtagram shows no full-time opportunity for young women

Job position in that organisation by age and Upazila

Position and job place	Young women (17-26)
Junior Executive	27
Worker/ Co-worker/ Employee	25
Owner	20
Teacher	10
Helper	9
Tailor	4
Mid-level officer	3
Delivery man	1
Housekeeper	1
Nurse	1
Total	100

Fulltime or part time work status by age and Upazila

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Full time	Part Time	Total
Austagram	0	100	100
Bajitpur	24	76	100
Hossainpur	33	67	100
Itna	16	84	100
Karimganj	25	75	100
Katiadi	29	71	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	38	63	100
Kuliarchar	40	60	100
Mithamain	19	81	100
Tarail	38	62	100
Pakundia	36	64	100
Nikli	18	82	100
Bhairab	16	84	100
Total	23	77	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

5. Labour Market Condition in Kishoreganj

- 16% of young women received training outside of work
- Upazilas like Kuliarchar report higher training rates (40%), while others, such as Hossainpur and Nikli for young women, show no external training (0%)
- This underscores unequal access to supplementary skill development training
- Tailoring/sewing is the predominant skill (50% among young women), suggesting a demand for textile-related skills
- However, only 17% of young women have computer training, indicating limited digital skill acquisition and potential challenges in accessing different job markets that require technological proficiency

Taken training outside of work to improve skills for current job

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	20	80	100
Bajitpur	18	82	100
Hossainpur	0	100	100
Itna	5	95	100
Karimganj	25	75	100
Katiadi	14	86	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	38	63	100
Kuliarchar	40	60	100
Mithamain	6	94	100
Tarail	31	69	100
Pakundia	18	82	100
Nikli	0	100	100
Bhairab	21	79	100
Total	16	84	100

Name of the training by age and Upazila

	Young women (17-26)
Teaching	8
Tailoring/ Sewing work	50
Parlor/ Beautification	8
Computer	17
Diploma in nursing	8
Bakery/ Baking items	4
Electronic	4
Total	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey
2024

5. Labour Market Condition in Kishoreganj

- 58% young women believe that the female employee in their organisation is higher than the male employee which indicates a female dominating economy
 - However, from the job positions, it was identified that these positions are low-paying
 - In terms of mid-level and executive roles, the ratio is 30%, which is commendable
- Young women in Kishoreganj district believe that 23% are low skilled, 68% are semi-skilled and 10% are highly skilled
 - This indicates the scare of skilled workers and employees in the local areas
- According to the employers, they prefer to recruit low-semiskilled workers due to the labour-intensive tasks and less technological set up
- Kishoreganj district has very few large production capacity industries and mostly are small scale where workers and employees are less than 20
 - This explains the size of the firms and their financial capacities and the reason behind recruiting low-semiskilled workers

Gender wise employee comparison by age and Upazila

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	60	40	100
Bajitpur	53	47	100
Hossainpur	100	0	100
Itna	68	32	100
Karimganj	25	75	100
Katiadi	43	57	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	63	38	100
Kuliarchar	100	0	100
Mithamain	50	50	100
Tarail	46	54	100
Pakundia	73	27	100
Nikli	64	36	100
Bhairab	58	42	100
Total	58	42	100

Skill level of employees by Young women age group and upazila

Upazila	Young women (17-26)			
	Most cannot do the job well	Can get the job done	Everyone is very good at work	Total
Austagram	100	0	0	100
Bajitpur	0	100	0	100
Hossainpur	0	100	0	100
Itna	0	75	25	100
Karimganj				
Katiadi	100	0	0	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	50	50	0	100
Kuliarchar	0	0	100	100
Mithamain	14	71	14	100
Tarail	0	100	0	100
Pakundia	50	50	0	100
Nikli				
Bhairab	33	67	0	100
Total	23	68	10	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

2024

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

- Education and skill development are challenged by social, economic, and cultural barriers
 - Societal expectations, like dress codes and gender roles, limit women's educational opportunities
 - Economic constraints, such as affordability, are significant obstacles to education and training
- Community criticism and family neglect of education reduce confidence and outcomes
- Social and familial restrictions limit girls' mobility and opportunities for external work

NEET Challenges (Kishoreganj District)

- 55% of girls aged 15-24 are NEET; highest rates in Sadar, followed by Bhairab and Katiadi
 - 73% of girls aged 20-24 are NEET, accounting for 115,960 individuals (BBS census)
 - NEET girls often married or engaged in unpaid domestic work
 - Skills mismatch arises between the labour market needs and available workforce skills

NEET Population Aged 15-24 Years

Upazila	15-19	Per cent	20-24	Per cent	15-24	Per cent
Austagram	3654	5.2	5150	4.4	8804	4.7
Bajitpur	6695	9.6	9510	8.2	16205	8.7
Bhairab	9170	13.1	14743	12.7	23913	12.9
Hossainpur	3407	4.9	6909	6.0	10316	5.5
Itna	3660	5.2	5654	4.9	9314	5.0
Karimganj	6649	9.5	11639	10.0	18288	9.8
Katiadi	8077	11.5	13250	11.4	21327	11.5
Kishoreganj Sadar	9311	13.3	16406	14.1	25717	13.8
Kuliarchar	4733	6.8	7602	6.6	12335	6.6
Mithamain	2888	4.1	4313	3.7	7201	3.9
Nikli	3421	4.9	4901	4.2	8322	4.5
Pakundia	4956	7.1	10008	8.6	14964	8.0
Tarail	3367	4.8	5875	5.1	9242	5.0
Total NEET	69988	100	115960	100	185948	100
Total Population (15-24)	180465	38.8	159067	72.9	339532	54.8

Source: BBS, 2023

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

- Adolescent girls (13-16) and young women (17-26) have different average time spent on household chores, with younger women tending to have a higher average hour
- Upazilas like Kuliarchar and Kishoreganj Sadar show lower average hours for adolescent girls, possibly indicating limited household activities for younger individuals
- Marriage has a variable impact on work participation among young women
 - For example, in Kuliarchar, 30% of young women feel marriage prevents them from working, while in Hossainpur, this figure drops to just 5%
- Both parents and young women in certain upazilas place a high importance on employment before marriage
 - Upazilas like Pakundia (70%) and Mithamain (69%) show the highest proportions of parents prioritising job participation of their girls before marriage (table 46-47)
 - This indicates a shift towards valuing economic independence for women before they marry

Time spent on household chores every day by age group and upazila

Upazila	Adolescent Girls (13-16 Years)		Young Women (17-26 Years)	
	Sample Size	Average hour	Sample Size	Average hour
Overall	845	2.7	883	4.0
Austagram	34	2.9	37	3.5
Bajitpur	83	2.7	82	3.6
Bhairab	81	2.6	83	4.2
Hossainpur	40	2.6	46	4.5
Itna	66	3.1	68	4.0
Karimganj	71	2.8	80	4.0
Katiadi	78	2.9	80	4.2
Kishoreganj Sadar	118	2.5	128	4.4
Kuliarchar	52	2.3	53	3.5
Mithamain	58	2.9	58	3.8
Nikli	46	2.9	48	4.1
Pakundia	70	2.4	73	3.5
Tarail	48	2.7	47	4.4

Does marriage in any way prevent a girl from attending works

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	26	74	100
Bajitpur	11	89	100
Hossainpur	5	95	100
Itna	15	85	100
Karimganj	18	82	100
Katiadi	9	91	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	13	87	100
Kuliarchar	30	70	100
Mithamain	7	93	100
Tarail	13	88	100
Pakundia	22	78	100
Nikli	16	84	100
Bhairab	24	76	100
Total	15	85	100

Source: CPD IMA Survey

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

Job market challenges

- Financial issues are the most significant barrier (39.7%) for young women in achieving their aspirations, with family and social problems also playing a role
 - Notably, 40.6% reported facing no issues, indicating regional variations in the perception of barriers
- The majority of respondents lack a concrete strategy to overcome their challenges, with 51.3% reporting no idea of how to do so
 - Among those with strategies, earning money and seeking cooperation are common approaches.
- Marriage is the primary reason for discontinuing education (53.6%), indicating that traditional expectations play a major role in limiting educational opportunities for young women
- Marriage, child-rearing, and family responsibilities are commonly cited barriers
- Additionally, lack of experience, communication challenges, and insufficient family support further obstruct their participation in the workforce
 - Cultural factors, such as restrictive in-laws, also play a role in limiting women's career aspirations.
- Despite these challenges, women demonstrate resilience and a desire to overcome these obstacles
 - For instance, many suggest that home-based work opportunities could allow them to earn an income while managing household duties
 - There is a need for more supportive programmes that address the specific barriers women face, including affordable childcare, flexible work arrangements, and training opportunities that can be pursued from home or within the community

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

Aspirations

- A lower percentage of young women participate in school programmes
 - About 38% participated and 28% have the experience to organise and leading the management related issues
 - This low percentage of participation indicates that not every school organise such kinds of programmes or that girls are less inclined to attend

Adolescent girls participated and organise programmes at school

Upazila	Ever participated in an annual or any programme at school			Ever organised an annual or any programme at school		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	18	82	100	33	67	100
Bajitpur	41	59	100	24	76	100
Hossainpur	41	59	100	25	75	100
Itna	42	58	100	32	68	100
Karimganj	30	70	100	38	62	100
Katiadi	39	61	100	27	73	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	34	66	100	28	73	100
Kuliarchar	38	62	100	20	80	100
Mithamain	45	55	100	12	88	100
Tarail	44	56	100	19	81	100
Pakundia	43	57	100	50	50	100
Nikli	34	66	100	20	80	100
Bhairab	38	62	100	35	65	100
Total	38	62	100	28	72	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

Aspirations

- Among those who participated and organised are related to the cultural programmes (56%, annual function (12%), sports activities (24%), scouts and girls guide (16%)
- Cultural programs and annual functions improve public speaking, confidence, and creativity, all of which are important for roles requiring communication and innovation skills
- Participation in sports promote teamwork, leadership, and time management, which are invaluable in collaborative work environments
- Volunteering experiences further encourage empathy, problem-solving, and organisational skills, foundational for service-oriented and management roles
- Similarly, involvement in Scouts or Girls Guide activities promote leadership, resilience, and cooperation, benefiting roles involving responsibility and team-based projects
- Picnics, meanwhile, promote social interaction and planning abilities, particularly useful in customer service and event management
- Finally, extra curricular activities strengthen critical thinking, time management, and collaboration, important skills across all professional fields

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

- A large share of both age groups has limited experience with travelling alone, with most never visiting outside their district
 - This suggests a restriction on mobility, potentially due to safety concerns or societal norms
- Surprisingly, mobility within the own district is also lower which validates the earlier findings that parents and relatives of girls prefer more home-based economic opportunities rather than visiting outside of home even for receiving training

How far have you travelled alone without family members

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)				Young women (17-26)			
	Far away within the own district	Far away outside the own district	Never have gone	Total	Far away within the own district	Far away outside the own district	Never have gone	Total
Austagram	9	12	79	100	16	14	70	100
Bajitpur	2	12	86	100	4	16	80	100
Hossainpur	0	8	93	100	11	11	78	100
Itna	2	18	80	100	13	26	60	100
Karimganj	10	17	73	100	9	8	84	100
Katiadi	3	21	77	100	13	9	79	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	2	5	93	100	9	18	73	100
Kuliarchar	6	13	81	100	15	17	68	100
Mithamain	9	14	78	100	19	21	60	100
Tarail	2	10	88	100	13	15	72	100
Pakundia	6	14	80	100	15	25	60	100
Nikli	2	9	89	100	13	13	75	100
Bhairab	6	11	83	100	8	13	78	100
Total	4	13	83	100	11	16	73	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

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6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

- Young women in Kishoreganj have a mix of traditional and emerging career aspirations
- 24.3% aim for teaching roles while 12.9% are interested in healthcare, indicating a preference for service-oriented professions
- 5.3% aspire to business, freelancing, and entrepreneurship, reflecting a shift towards self-employment and digital careers
- Private sector, government, and defence roles attract 14.5%, highlighting a preference for stable employment
- Creative and technical careers like tailoring, engineering, and ICT show growing interest in skill-based professions
- 6.9% remain uncertain about their career paths, and 14.2% focus on traditional domestic roles such as homemaking
- The data reveals diverse aspirations, from conventional roles to independent and technical careers, shaping labour market potential

What is your dream/what do you want to be when you grow up?	13-16 Years	17-26 Years	Total
Job (Private)	7.5	11.7	9.6
Govt. Job	1.9	1.6	1.7
Defence job	1.7	0.7	1.2
Banker	0.0	0.7	0.4
Business	1.1	3.2	2.1
Doctor	22.6	3.6	12.9
Engineer	1.2	0.2	0.7
Entrepreneur/Freelancer	1.8	4.5	3.2
Go abroad	1.1	1.0	1.0
Islamic scholar/ Hafez	3.4	0.3	1.9
Teacher/Professor	27.2	21.5	24.3
Lawyer	1.7	1.0	1.3
Farming	0.1	0.8	0.5
Nurse	8.6	6.7	7.6
Police	6.8	2.4	4.5
Model/Actor/Singer/Dancer	0.7	0.2	0.5
Tailor/Skilled in sewing/Handicraft	1.5	4.4	3.0
Youtuber	0.2	0.0	0.1
Journalist	0.2	0.0	0.1
Pilot	0.4	0.1	0.2
Beauty Parlor	0.0	0.3	0.2
Social worker	0.2	0.5	0.4
To be educated	1.0	0.5	0.7
Computer training	0.4	0.1	0.2
Build a home	0.0	0.5	0.2
Do something yourself	0.0	0.7	0.4
Housewife/Good mother/Family maintainer	3.9	24.0	14.2
Do not know	5.0	8.8	6.9

6. Gender-Specific Barriers in Kishoreganj

- Decision-making autonomy for girls and young women in Kishoreganj is limited and varies by age
- Only 23% of adolescent girls feel they can make decisions, compared to 51% of young women, showing increased autonomy with age
- Elder women primarily decide on critical areas like education, marriage, and health
- Families control all aspects of decisions for 56% of adolescent girls and 58% of young women
- Only 18-20% report no female decision-making authority in their lives
- While young women have somewhat greater control, decisions on significant personal matters remain limited: only 28.5% feel able to decide on travelling alone, and just 0.8% feel they can make decisions independently across all areas
- A majority of families support the dreams of young women, but the emphasis remains on traditional roles like marriage and family maintenance (41.2%)
- This highlights a gap between individual aspirations and familial expectations

Can girls make any decisions in their life? by age and Upazila

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)			Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	26	74	100	43	57	100
Bajitpur	22	78	100	48	52	100
Hossainpur	10	90	100	46	54	100
Itna	26	74	100	60	40	100
Karimganj	28	72	100	38	63	100
Katiadi	27	73	100	41	59	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	8	92	100	45	55	100
Kuliarchar	19	81	100	62	38	100
Mithamain	26	74	100	43	57	100
Tarail	27	73	100	62	38	100
Pakundia	29	71	100	74	26	100
Nikli	28	72	100	58	42	100
Bhairab	33	67	100	54	46	100
Total	Family agreement with this dream of girls by age and Upazila			100		

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)				Young women (17-26)			
	Yes	No	Do not know	Total	Yes	No	Do not know	Total
Austagram	85	9	6	100	92	5	3	100
Bajitpur	99	0	1	100	91	1	7	100
Hossainpur	90	3	8	100	89	2	9	100
Itna	89	5	6	100	85	7	7	100
Karimganj	90	1	8	100	76	3	21	100
Katiadi	90	6	4	100	94	3	4	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	83	6	11	100	80	1	20	100
Kuliarchar	94	0	6	100	91	0	9	100
Mithamain	95	5	0	100	84	12	3	100
Tarail	94	6	0	100	94	4	2	100
Pakundia	97	0	3	100	95	5	0	100
Nikli	85	9	7	100	90	6	4	100
Bhairab	94	4	2	100	86	6	8	100
Total	91	4	5	100	87	4	9	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

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7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Supply of Skills

- Young women in Kishoreganj have limited engagement in structured training programs and advanced vocational skills
- Training is primarily focused on low-skill areas, with moderate soft skill proficiency gaps in leadership, decision-making, and conflict resolution
- Government Training Programmes
 - 42 training programs offered by DYD and MoWCA in areas like leather production, paper bag making, confectionery, cooking, poultry rearing, and fruit cultivation
 - Adolescent clubs run by MoWCA cater to ages 13–16, offering activities like karate, sports competitions, and cultural events led by trained teachers
 - DYD training programs include computer skills, boutique work, sewing, handicrafts, and farming, lasting 15–30 days and primarily conducted in classroom settings
 - Computer training is highly popular but only available at the district level
- Emerging Training Programs
 - Growing demand for training in computers, automobile engineering, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, dressmaking, and farm machinery
 - No anticipated obsolescence of existing programs

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Supply of Skills

- Technical School and College Training
 - Offers courses in lathe, milling, grinding, and drill machine operation, automobile technology, electrical engineering, welding, and mechanical engineering
- Initially the GESP project partners Save the Children, UCEP Bangladesh and Earth Society are intervening in Kishoreganj Sadar, Bhairab and Mithamain upazila with the following trades
 - Tailoring and Dress Making (TDM)
 - Beautician
 - Caregiving

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Supply of Skills

- Participant Selection and Support
 - Training is targeted at girls aged 18–35, prioritizing educated and motivated individuals
 - Programs attract participants with prior work experience and provide transportation allowances but lack childcare and financial aid
- Challenges in Implementation
 - Limited budget, logistical support, and qualified trainers, especially in rural areas
 - Societal norms discourage women's participation
 - Inadequate infrastructure, such as training rooms, computers, and projectors, and low allowances for trainers hinder effective program delivery

Skills Composition

- Empirical data highlight low participation in skill acquisition, training engagement, and soft skill proficiency among adolescent girls and young women in Kishoreganj
 - Skill development programs focus heavily on tailoring (63.1%) and less on high-demand sectors like computer skills (26.7%)
- Training participation is uneven across Upazilas, with limited engagement from adolescent girls (13-16 years) and young women (17-26 years)
- Private institutions provide 52.1% of training, surpassing public and NGO interventions, which may limit accessibility due to cost barriers
 - The reliance on private institutions contributes to a concentrated focus on certain skills and poor alignment with the region's broader economic needs
- This supply-side gap in training and the focus on a few areas lead to a skills mismatch, reducing potential for diversified human capital development

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Have you taken any technical or soft skills training? by age and Upazila

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)			Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	12	88	100	14	86	100
Bajitpur	2	98	100	18	82	100
Hossainpur	15	85	100	22	78	100
Itna	2	98	100	10	90	100
Karimganj	11	89	100	16	84	100
Katiadi	15	85	100	19	81	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	7	93	100	18	82	100
Kuliarchar	0	100	100	11	89	100
Mithamain	12	88	100	21	79	100
Tarail	8	92	100	13	87	100
Pakundia	14	86	100	23	77	100
Nikli	4	96	100	13	88	100
Bhairab	6	94	100	16	84	100
Total	8	92	100	17	83	100

Training received

	13-16 Years	17-26 Years	Total
Tailoring/ Sewing/ Embroidery	73.9	58.1	63.1
Computer training	20.3	28.4	25.8
Handicraft/ Hand paint	1.5	5.4	4.2
Livestock rearing/ farming/ Poultry	0.0	3.4	2.3
Beauty parlour/ Beautification	1.5	0.7	0.9
Baking item/ Food Making	0.0	1.4	0.9
Ansar-VDP Training	0.0	2.7	1.8
Others	2.9	0.0	0.9
Total	100	100	100

Training received from types of institution

	13-16 Years	17-26 Years	Total
Public	11.6	31.1	24.9
Private	52.2	52.0	52.1
NGO	2.9	2.0	2.3
From abroad	0.0	0.7	0.5
Joint (government and private)	1.5	0.0	0.5
From family (Father/Mother/Sister)	18.8	5.4	9.7
From Relative	2.9	3.4	3.2
From Neighbour	1.5	2.0	1.8
Known person	8.7	3.4	5.1
Total	100	100	100

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

- While current enrolment in training programmes is low, there is a significant interest in skill improvement, especially in tailoring and computer skills
- However, the traditional skills-based training set is found to be the most available skill training in the Kishoreganj district
- This set is not related to local economic activities but rather self-employment activities
 - At the same time, young women prefer these traditional skills, which are less required by local employers
- Skills that are high in demand among young women include
 - Nakshi Kantha handwork
 - Boutique and batik techniques
 - Sewing & Embroidery
 - Beautification
 - Poultry farming
 - Vegetable farming
 - Livestock rearing
 - Computer and freelancing

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Demand for Skills

- High interest among girls in learning new skills, particularly in tailoring, computer skills, handicrafts, and beauty parlour services
 - Preferred training areas are female-dominated (except computer skills), potentially limiting exploration of broader economic activities
 - Computer training aligns with interest in freelancing, reflecting latent demand for skill development opportunities and human capital potential in Kishoreganj
 - Socio-cultural influences steer young women toward traditionally gendered skills, restricting broader employability and economic mobility
 - Demand analysis shows a need for sector-specific skills like tailoring, computer skills, and vocational roles, with employers prioritizing technical and soft skills such as problem-solving, adaptability, and communication
- Challenges in the Workforce
 - Skill acquisition remains limited in technical fields beyond traditional vocations like tailoring, creating a disconnect with employer demands
 - Employers in industrial and tourism sectors face difficulties in recruiting skilled workers, as low-paying jobs deter local women
 - Food processing and poultry industries rely heavily on semi or highly-skilled workers, primarily trained through on-the-job experience

Types of training willing to undertake

	Per cent
Tailoring/Sewing/Embroidery	63.9
Computer training	53.5
Handicraft/Hand paint	6.8
Livestock rearing/farming/Poultry	0.9
Beauty parlour/ Beautification	5.1
Baking item/Food Making	0.4
Ansar-VDP Training	0.1
Nursing/Caregiver/Hospitality	0.6
Freelancing	5.1
Mobile service	0.1
English language	1.2
Driving	0.7
Art and design	0.6
Online business	0.1
Marketing	0.2
Karate	0.2
Industrial training	0.1
Graphics design	0.1
Electric work	0.1
Any suitable training	0.3
Others	0.1
Total	100.0

Source: CPD LMA Survey

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7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Demand for Skills

- Employer Perspectives
 - Key issues include lack of professionalism, willingness to learn, and misconceptions about skills limited to equipment operation
 - High demand projected for both low and high-paying jobs, including labourer, engineer, and managerial positions, driven by industrial growth
- Industrial Growth and Opportunities
 - Expansion of the BSCIC industrial zone in Kishoreganj is expected to create at least 8,000 jobs within 3–5 years
 - Growth of supporting manufacturing and service-oriented industries will further boost employment
 - Preparing young women as a skilled workforce is essential to maximize benefits from the industrial boom

Jobs expected to be in higher demand in the future

Construction	Manufacturing	Tourism/Hospitality
General labourers	Electronic mechanics	Sales
Electricians	Technicians	Drivers
Carpenters	Engineers	Supervisors
Engineers	Shoemakers	Reception staff
Drivers	Quality control staff	
Wielders	Packers	
Site managers	Textile handicraft workers	
	Sewing machine operators	
	Shoemakers	
	Food preparers and makers	
	Food tasters and graders	

Source: CPD IMA Survey

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7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

- Awareness of the job market is limited among both age groups, with a larger percentage of young women being unaware of job opportunities
- The limited awareness of job search practices and current employment opportunities, especially among young women aged 17-26, who show a lower percentage of engagement in job market skills such as resume writing and interview preparation
- This knowledge gap likely constrains their capacity to effectively enter the workforce
- The insights into the demand for market-oriented skills, there is a need for career counselling and job readiness programmes to bridge the existing gap between training outcomes and the labour market's requirements

Experience with job searching, resume writing, and job interviews

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)			Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	74	26	100	27	73	100
Bajitpur	72	28	100	21	79	100
Hossainpur	65	35	100	17	83	100
Itna	71	29	100	19	81	100
Karimganj	82	18	100	15	85	100
Katiadi	65	35	100	15	85	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	60	40	100	20	80	100
Kuliarchar	87	13	100	17	83	100
Mithamain	67	33	100	19	81	100
Tarail	67	33	100	19	81	100
Pakundia	70	30	100	29	71	100
Nikli	65	35	100	27	73	100
Bhairab	67	33	100	14	86	100
Total	69	31	100	20	80	100

Experience with job searching, resume writing, and job interviews

Upazila	Adolescent girls (13-16)			Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	21	79	100	27	73	100
Bajitpur	33	67	100	37	63	100
Hossainpur	25	75	100	24	76	100
Itna	23	77	100	29	71	100
Karimganj	17	83	100	18	83	100
Katiadi	27	73	100	24	76	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	14	86	100	21	79	100
Kuliarchar	35	65	100	36	64	100
Mithamain	16	84	100	28	72	100
Tarail	25	75	100	36	64	100
Pakundia	30	70	100	38	62	100
Nikli	24	76	100	38	63	100
Bhairab	23	77	100	31	69	100
Total	24	76	100	29	71	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

- The average distance to training facilities differs across regions, with some upazilas, like Hossainpur, having closer access than others like Bajitpur
- This indicates that accessibility may be a barrier to participation in training programmes
- Additionally, as mentioned earlier the parents and relatives of young women are less reluctant to let their girls attend vocational training institutes
- Mobility is one of the key challenges for girls in the Kishoreganj district where the average distance shows a total of 1-2 hour long journey to visit the training centre and to return
- In terms of vocational skills, tailoring emerges as a common skill—some learned it at home while others received formal training from the Upazila Parishad
- However, not all women had the opportunity to pursue such skills during their schooling years, indicating gaps in access to skill development opportunities
- This gap highlights a need for more widespread vocational training and educational opportunities that accommodate the diverse aspirations of women in the community

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

- Adolescent girls and young women show moderate proficiency in adaptability, time management, and communication, with few achieving high proficiency
 - Soft skills like communication, problem-solving, and teamwork are mostly at moderate or less proficient levels, limiting employability in sectors requiring interpersonal and critical thinking skills
 - Lack of targeted soft skill training creates challenges in meeting the demands of formal employment
- Training opportunities remain limited to traditional low-skill areas like tailoring, restricting broader employment potential
 - Private institutions provide some training, but it is misaligned with emerging needs in expanding sectors like manufacturing and tourism
- Underdeveloped skills in leadership, adaptability, and communication reduce readiness for diverse work environments

7. Employability Skills in Kishoreganj

Soft skills by age and Upazila

Soft skills	Age group	Not Proficient	Less Proficient	Moderate	Proficient	Very Proficient	Total
Listening	13-16	7	21	51	15	7	100
	17-26	6	21	46	19	7	100
Speaking	13-16	4	22	50	20	4	100
	17-26	5	21	44	25	5	100
Writing	13-16	6	27	47	16	4	100
	17-26	5	24	44	19	7	100
Teamwork and Collaboration	13-16	6	24	48	18	5	100
	17-26	6	22	45	20	6	100
Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking	13-16	6	25	50	13	5	100
	17-26	5	19	49	21	6	100
Adaptability and Flexibility	13-16	6	27	47	18	4	100
	17-26	6	20	46	21	7	100
Time Management	13-16	5	23	49	18	5	100
	17-26	5	19	51	19	6	100
Leadership Skills	13-16	6	28	50	13	3	100
	17-26	6	22	50	16	5	100
Conflict Resolution	13-16	6	29	50	11	3	100
	17-26	6	20	50	18	5	100
Decision-Making	13-16	6	27	46	16	5	100
	17-26	6	17	52	18	7	100

8. Market Linkages and Opportunities in Kishoreganj

- Young entrepreneurs in Kishoreganj face challenges in marketing their products due to limited access to networks and professional connections
 - Gender biases and socio-cultural norms restrict young women’s workforce participation, especially in male-dominated sectors
 - Insufficient access to capital and financial resources limits their ability to start or expand businesses, confining many to informal, low-wage, and unstable employment
 - Entrepreneurs report that promises from MoWCA and Joyeeta Foundation to market their products nationwide through Joyeeta remain unfulfilled
- Challenges for Local and Online Businesses
 - Local women entrepreneurs supply food, clothing, handicrafts, and boutique products but face low market demand and high production costs in local markets
 - Low demand and high costs result in reduced production and earnings, failing to cover associated variable costs
 - Online businesses represent only 2% of young women entrepreneurs, with aspirations to open shops or showrooms in urban areas for better promotion
 - Most entrepreneurs operate from home or rented spaces, with very few succeeding in establishing shops

Running an online business

Upazila	Young women (17-26)		
	Yes	No	Total
Austagram	3	97	100
Bajitpur	4	96	100
Hossainpur	0	100	100
Itna	0	100	100
Karimganj	0	100	100
Katiadi	4	96	100
Kishoreganj Sadar	1	99	100
Kuliarchar	0	100	100
Mithamain	0	100	100
Tarail	4	96	100
Pakundia	4	96	100
Nikli	2	98	100
Bhairab	0	100	100
Total	2	98	100

Types of online business are running

	Per cent
Clothes	70.4
Baby dress	3.7
Baking items	3.7
Cosmetics	11.1
Product	7.4
Arts & Crafts	3.7
Total	100

Source: CPD LMA Survey
2024

8. Market Linkages and Opportunities in Kishoreganj

- Training programmes for entrepreneurship development should include business management, inventory management, human resource management, cash flow management, and risk management skills
- Equipping young women with these skills will help them anticipate business trends, manage risks, and expand their businesses effectively
- Strengthen support mechanisms for young women entrepreneurs by improving access to networks, capital, and nationwide marketing platforms
- Stakeholders, including training institutions, employers, and families, acknowledge the need for supportive environments to promote women's education and career development
 - Existing programmes like sewing and tailoring initiatives are underutilized due to limited awareness among women
 - Personal skills such as self-confidence, time management, and communication are increasingly recognized as essential for workforce success
 - Women express a preference for home-based work opportunities to balance economic contributions with family responsibilities

9. Recommendations

Training and Employment Opportunities for Adolescent Girls

- Austagram, Mithamain, Itna: Introduce foundational skills in non-traditional areas like digital literacy and STEM to expand career awareness alongside existing skills: ***Necessary reform in skills on non-traditional areas across the country will be required***
- Bhairab, Kishoreganj Sadar: Develop skill courses for emerging sectors, such as healthcare, freelancing, and computer training, to expose girls to high-demand, skill-intensive roles: ***Necessary reform on skill courses on emerging sectors across the country will be required***

Training and Employment Opportunities for Young Women

- Karimganj, Tarail, Pakundia: Focus on high-demand technical skills (e.g., sewing, computer applications, business operations) for industries like manufacturing and customer service: ***Necessary reform in technical skills for high demand sector across the country will be required***
- Itna, Hossainpur: Strengthen agricultural training, integrating agribusiness management, eco-farming, and livestock rearing to align with local market demands: ***Necessary reform in training agriculture and agri-business aligning local demands across the country will be required***

Market Linkage and Value Chain Development

- Austagram, Mithamain: Establish online marketplaces and digital platforms for local products, incorporating e-commerce and online marketing skills. Partner with cooperatives for bulk sales and cost reduction: ***Necessary reform online businesses and digital platforms across the country will be required***
- Bhairab, Bajitpur: Strengthen ties with local industries (e.g., shoe, garment, food processing) for youth apprenticeships and direct employment opportunities: ***Necessary reform in strengthening ties with local industries across the country will be required***

Digital Literacy and Communication Training for Adolescent Girls

- All Upazilas: Provide workshops in schools on digital literacy, teamwork, problem-solving, and communication to lay the groundwork for employment or entrepreneurship: ***Necessary reform in school-level digital literacy, teamwork, problem-solving and communication across the country will be required***

9. Recommendations

Confidence and Career Awareness Training for Adolescent Girls

- All Upazilas: Host workshops with role models and career counsellors to inspire aspirations and raise awareness of job opportunities: *Necessary reform in career counselling and workshop of role models across the country will be required*

Digital Literacy and Business Training for Young Women

- Mithamain, Nikli, Kuliarchar: Offer programmes on freelancing, content creation, and digital marketing to facilitate remote work opportunities: *Necessary reform in freelancing, content creation, and digital marketing across the country will be required*
- Kishoreganj Sadar, Pakundia: Incorporate soft skills training in leadership, conflict resolution, and customer handling to prepare for professional roles: *Necessary reform in soft skills training in leadership, conflict resolution, and customer handling across the country will be required*

Labour Market Linkages through Age-Specific Apprenticeships

- Austagram, Katiadi: Partner with local businesses to create paid apprenticeship programmes for adolescent girls and young women in eco-tourism, food processing, and light manufacturing: *Necessary reform local businesses to create paid apprenticeship programmes across the country will be required*

Labour Market Linkages through Career Guidance

- Bhairab, Bajitpur, Hossainpur: Establish career counselling and job placement services, directing young women to high-demand sectors like manufacturing and digital services: *Necessary reform counselling and job placement services, directing young women across the country will be required*
- Kishoreganj Sadar: Set up a career centre offering resume writing, interview skills, and job application support for young women: *Necessary reform career centre offering resume writing, interview skills, and job application across the country will be required*

Policy and Stakeholder Engagement

- Form multi-stakeholder forums with training institutions, local government, and private sector representatives to align training with market needs: *Necessary reform training institutions, local government, and private sector representatives across the country will be required*
- Provide upazila-specific incentives (e.g., tax breaks or subsidies) for businesses hiring young women or offering on-the-job training: *Necessary reform on upazila-specific incentives across the country will be required*

Thank you