Knowledge-sharing Workshop for Journalists on Gender Equality and Gender Budgeting in Bangladesh

Session 1: Gender Equality and Gender-Related Data

Presented by
Ms Preetilata Khondaker Huq
Programme Associate
Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

Dhaka: 13 December 2025

Outline

1. Context
2. Bangladesh in Global Indexes
   - Global Gender Gap Index
   - Women, Business and the Law
   - Gender Inequality Index
3. Health
4. Child marriage
5. Violence Against Women
6. Education
7. Employment
8. Conclusion

1. Context

1.1 Why Does Gender Related Data Matter?

➢ **Reveals structural inequalities** that are otherwise hidden in aggregate statistics, particularly gaps in access to education, health, employment, assets, and decision-making.

➢ **Informs public policy and budgeting**, enabling governments to identify which groups are underserved and where institutional interventions are most needed.

➢ **Tracks national commitments** under SDGs, CEDAW, and national gender strategies, ensuring accountability and progress monitoring.

➢ **Provides an evidence base for advocacy**, helping civil society, media, and researchers highlight priority issues.

➢ **Enables more efficient allocation of public resources**, ensuring spending reaches the women and girls who need it most.

➢ **Strengthens inclusive growth** by showing where gender constraints limit labour force participation and economic productivity.

1.2 Why Reporting Matters?

➢ **Shapes public perception:** How data is framed influences how society understands gender equality and inequality.

➢ **Determines policy urgency:** Clear, accurate reporting can reveal the scale of a problem—while incomplete or misleading reporting can mask it.

➢ **Influences institutional accountability:** Media narratives can push ministries, agencies, and local governments to respond to gaps or misclassifications in the gender budget.

➢ **Prevents misinterpretation:** Poor reporting can reinforce stereotypes (e.g., portraying women only as victims rather than economic actors).

➢ **Improves data literacy:** Responsible reporting helps audiences understand complex indicators such as GGGI, WBL, GII, and national surveys.

➢ **Supports evidence-based discourse:** Data-informed storytelling leads to stronger national dialogue on equality, budget priorities, and social norms.

1.3 National vs International Data

Bangladesh's national datasets often suffer from reliability issues, especially when compared with international data sources.

Reporting errors is common.

Key statistics are sometimes either overestimated or underestimated, reducing their accuracy.

In many cases, datasets from different national agencies are not comparable due to inconsistencies in definitions, methodologies, and measurement frameworks.

Additionally, national datasets are not updated regularly, and survey-based information is typically collected at specific points in time but released much later, often reflecting conditions from previous years.

These challenges collectively undermine the credibility, usability, and timeliness of national statistics.

2. Bangladesh in Global Indices

2.1 Global Gender Gap Report 2025

- The Global Gender Gap Index, published by the World Economic Forum, assesses gender parity across **148 countries**, representing roughly two-thirds of the world's population

- Bangladesh **ranks 24th** in 2025, recording the largest jump in the global gender gap ranking in one year (up 75 places).

- Its overall gender parity score rises accordingly, increasing significantly, from **68.9% in** 2024 to **77.5%** in 2025.

- This seems to mean Bangladesh has **closed about 77.5% of the gender gap** overall.

- While this may sound good, the real story is different.

- **The most substantial contributor to this progress has been the performance of the Political Empowerment subindex**. The proportion of women in ministerial positions rises from 9.1% to 22.2% between 2024 and 2025.

- In all other sub-indicators, Bangladesh ranks **much lower**

Index and subindex	2025		2024	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Global Gender Gap Index	0.775	24	0.698	99
Economic Participation and Opportunity	0.457	141	0.312	146
Educational Attainment	0.96	115	0.94	125
Health and Survival	0.96	123	0.962	129
Political Empowerment	**0.721**	**3**	**0.543**	7

Source: Global Gender Gap Report 2025

2.2 What the Global Gender Gap Index Measures

➤ Shows the share of the gender gap closed (0 = no parity; 1 = full parity).

- **How the Index Works**
  - o **Measurement:** Compares women's access to resources and opportunities **relative to men.**
  - o **Calculation:** Each indicator is a **female-to-male ratio** (e.g., if women earn 70% of men's income, the score is 0.70)
  - o **Overall Score:** Composite score across four dimensions.
  - o **Interpreting Scores**
    - ❖ **1.00:** Full gender parity.
    - ❖ **0.75:** Three-quarters of the gap closed.
    - ❖ **0.50:** Half of the gap closed.
    - ❖ Lower scores = wider gender gaps.

- **Four Sub-Indexes**
  - o **Economic Participation:** Labour force participation, income, leadership roles.
  - o **Educational Attainment:** Literacy and enrolment at all levels.
  - o **Health & Survival:** Sex ratio at birth and healthy life expectancy.
  - o **Political Empowerment:** Women in parliament, ministerial roles, and years with a female head of state.

2.3 Economic Participation and Opportunity

- Bangladesh has closed only 45.7% of the economic gender gap, indicating major disparities in women's economic inclusion.
- Women participate in the labour force at 53.7% of the rate of men.
- Women earn about 61.8% of what men earn for similar work.
- Women's overall earnings are 52.5% of men's earnings.
- Women hold only 7.9% of the leadership representation that men hold.
- Women occupy just 25.5% of men's share in professional and technical roles.

Indicator	Rank	Score
Economic Participation and Opportunity	141	0.457
Labour-force participation rate	129	0.537
Wage equality for similar work	87	0.618
Estimated earned income	113	0.525
Legislators, senior officials and managers	133	0.079
Professional and technical workers	133	0.255

2.4 Educational Attainment

- ➢ Bangladesh has closed 96% of the gender gap in education, though gaps remain at higher levels.
- ➢ Women's literacy rate is 95.1% of men's, indicating near parity.
- ➢ Girls' enrolment in primary education is at full parity with boys.
- ➢ Girls' enrolment in secondary education is also at full parity with boys.
- ➢ Women's tertiary enrolment is 74.2% of men's, showing a significant gap in higher education access.

Indicator	Rank	Score
Educational Attainment	115	0.96
Literacy rate	96	0.951
Enrolment in primary education	1	1
Enrolment in secondary education	1	1
Enrolment in tertiary education	125	0.742

2.5 Health and Survival

➢ Bangladesh has closed 96% of the gender gap in health and survival, though small disparities persist.

➢ The sex ratio at birth score of 0.944 indicates a slight imbalance, with fewer girls born relative to boys compared to the biological norm. This indicates Bangladesh is very close to the natural pattern, showing no significant gender bias or distortion in births.

➢ Women's healthy life expectancy is 99.7% of men's, reflecting near-parity in longevity and health outcomes.

Indicator	Rank	Score
Health and Survival	123	0.96
Sex ratio at birth	1	0.944
Healthy life expectancy	134	0.997

2.6 Political Empowerment

➢ Bangladesh's Political Empowerment score is 0.721 (3rd globally), reflecting strong female representation in leadership roles overall.

➢ Women in ministerial positions (0.222, Rank 88): Women hold about 22% of ministerial posts, based on UN Women data.

➢ Bangladesh has had women as heads of state for long enough in the last 50 years to achieve full parity.

Indicator	Rank	Score
Political Empowerment	3	0.721
Women in parliament		
Women in ministerial position	88	0.222
Years with female/male head of state (last 50)	1	1

2.7 Women, Business and the Law

➢ Women, Business and the Law 2024 (WBL 2024) identifies barriers for women's economic empowerment in three areas: women's legal rights, policy instruments designed to support the implementation of these rights, and how these rights are realised in practice.

➢ **Legal Frameworks**
  - Measure whether laws exist to support women's rights across ten areas (Safety, Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Childcare, Entrepreneurship, Assets, Pension).
  - Scored from 40 questions; average per indicator gives overall score (0–100).
  - Covers 190 countries.

➢ **Supportive Frameworks**
  - Measure policies, institutions, and services that help implement laws (e.g., enforcement agencies, maternity benefits, childcare).
  - Scored from 30 questions; indicator averages form the overall score (0–100).
  - Covers 190 countries.

➢ **Expert Opinions**
  - Reflect real-world implementation and outcomes based on surveys of experts.
  - Median of 15 questions per indicator, averaged across ten indicators.
  - Covers 164 economies.

➢ For **Bangladesh**, all scores reflect conditions in **Dhaka**.

2.8 Bangladesh's Scores

- ➢ Bangladesh's Legal Frameworks score (32.5/100) shows that many laws exist but are incomplete or outdated, e.g., safety, workplace equality, pay, and property laws are limited.
- ➢ The Supportive Frameworks score (35.0/100) indicates some institutional and policy support, like family law protections, but enforcement, workplace policies, and services (childcare, flexible work, complaint mechanisms) remain weak.
- ➢ The Expert Opinions score (26.3/100) reflects reality: even where laws exist, women face barriers in accessing rights, employment, inheritance, pay equality, and protection from violence.

Legal frameworks score 32.5

Supportive frameworks score 35.0

Expert opinions score 26.3

Indicator	Safety	Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Childcare	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension
Legal frameworks score	0	75	25	25	50	25	50	25	25	25
Supportive frameworks score	25	66.7	0	0	100	33.3	25	66.7	33.3	0
Expert opinions score	25	25	25	25	25	37.5	25	25	0	50

2.9 Deeper Look into Bangladesh's Scores

Indicator	Legal Framework Gap	Supportive Framework Gap	Expert Opinion Gap	Why Pressing
Safety (Violence & Harassment)	No legislation on domestic violence, femicide, sexual harassment, child marriage	Lack of special procedures, monitoring bodies, budget allocation	Weak protection and enforcement	Women face high risk of violence; laws and support systems are minimal
Workplace (Employment Rights)	No protection against gender discrimination, flexible work, recruitment bias	No guidelines, complaint mechanisms, flexible work policies	Barriers to women's employment opportunities	Women's access to jobs and career progression is hindered
Pay (Equal Remuneration & Work Conditions)	No equal pay mandate, restrictions on industrial/dangerous jobs	No pay transparency, sectoral employment data	Persistent wage gaps and unfair work conditions	Women earn less and have limited occupational choices
Parenthood & Maternity/Paternity	Limited paid leave for fathers, no dismissal protection for pregnant workers	No streamlined maternity application, no paternity incentives	Challenges for balancing work and caregiving	Gender inequality in parental benefits and career continuity
Marriage & Family Law	Divorce/remarriage rights unequal, male head-of-household norms	Legal aid available, but limited fast-track procedures	Women are disadvantaged in family law outcomes	Women face limited autonomy and legal protection in family decisions
Childcare	Limited legal standards for childcare, partial support	Registry exists, but financial support and quality monitoring insufficient	Limited access and support for childcare services	Access to quality childcare affects women's workforce participation
Entrepreneurship	Limited protection for access to credit, no quotas or gender-sensitive procurement	Some government programs exist, but lack comprehensive support	Women face financial and structural barriers	Women entrepreneurs struggle to access finance and markets
Assets & Property Rights	Unequal inheritance rights, limited valuation of non-monetary contributions	Awareness programs exist, but no regular data or incentives	Persistent inequity in property ownership	Women have reduced economic security and autonomy
Pension & Retirement	Unequal retirement ages, childcare not considered	No mechanisms to increase benefits or challenge decisions	Insufficient pension security for women	Financial security in old age is compromised

Source: Authors' illustration from World Bank's Women, Business and the Law (2024)

2.10 Gender Inequality Index (UNDP)

➢ GII (Gender Inequality Index) measures gender gaps in health, empowerment, and labour market participation.

➢ Score ranges 0–1: 0 = perfect equality, 1 = maximum inequality.

➢ Indicators include reproductive health (maternal mortality, adolescent birth rate), empowerment (education attainment, parliamentary representation), and labour force participation (women vs. men).

➢ Uses national estimates from UN agencies and international databases (WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, IPU).

➢ Covers **191 countries and territories** for cross-country comparison.

➢ Shows loss in human development due to gender inequality; lower scores indicate better gender parity.

➢ Does not capture all gender gaps, e.g., unpaid care work.

2.11 GII Indicators for Bangladesh

- Bangladesh's GII value is 0.487 on a scale of 0 (equality) to 1 (maximum inequality) in 2023. GII ranks 125th out of approximately 172 countries, indicating notable gender inequality.

- Maternal mortality ratio was 123 deaths per 100,000 live births, showing a high maternal health risk.

- Adolescent birth rate was 73.2 births per 1,000 girls aged 15–19, reflecting continued early childbearing.

- Women held 20.9 % of parliamentary seats, indicating limited political representation.

- 43.2 % of women aged 25+ have some secondary education versus 48.0 % of men, showing a gender gap in education.

- Labour force participation is 43.4 % for women compared to 80.8 % for men, highlighting a large economic participation gap .

- These values indicate significant gaps in health outcomes, political empowerment, education attainment, and labour participation for women.

			SDG3.1	SDG3.7	SDG5.5	SDG4.4			
HDI rank	Gender Inequality Index		Maternal mortality ratio	Adolescent birth rate	Share of seats in parliament	Population with at least some secondary education		Labour force participation rate	
	Value	Rank	(deaths per 100,000 live births)	(births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)	(% held by women)	(% ages 25 and older)		(% ages 15 and older)	
						Female	Male	Female	Male
	2023	2023	2020	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
130	**0.487**	125	123	73.2	20.9	43.2	48.0	43.4	80.8

Source: UNDP Human Development Reports (2024)
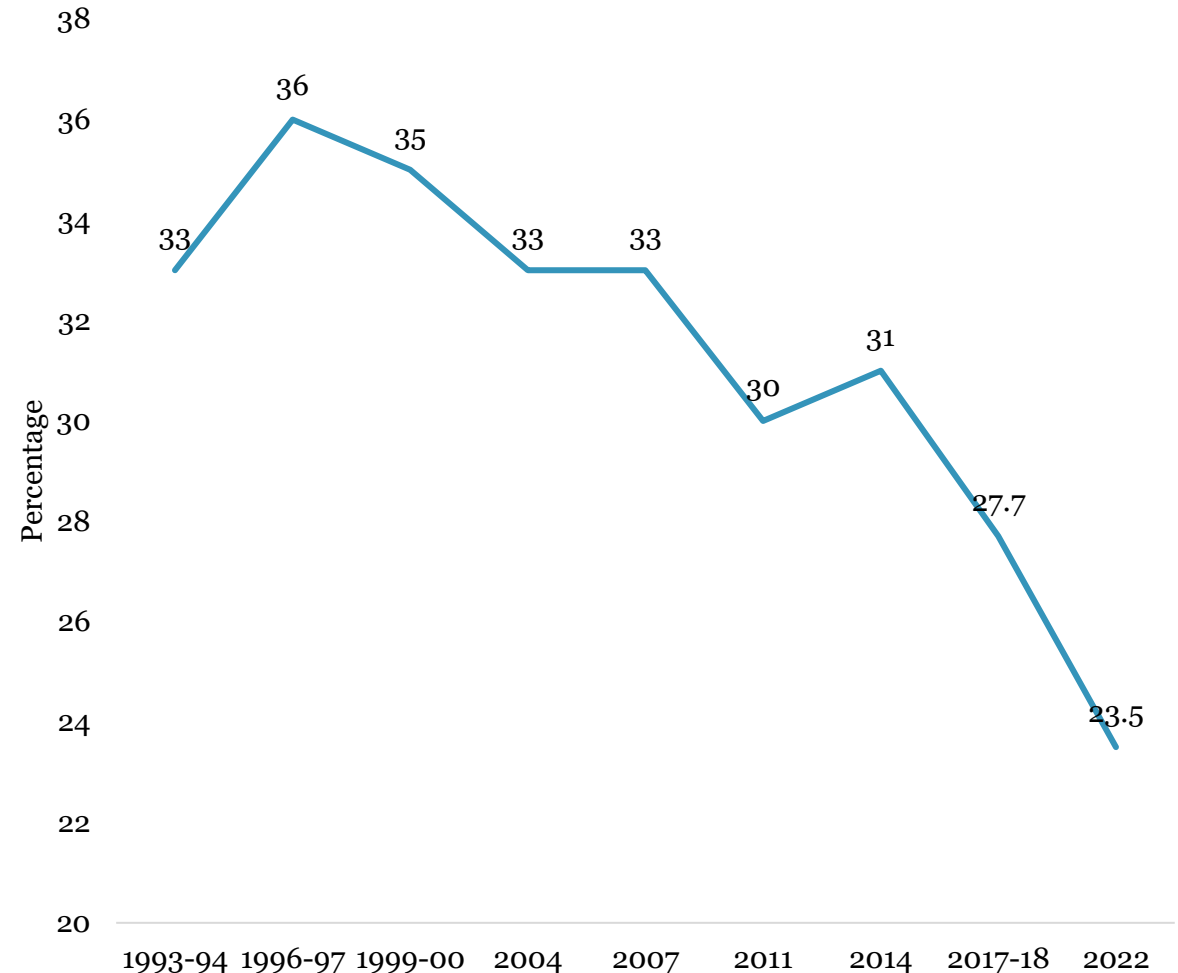
3. Health

3.1 Health Related Statistics

➢ The adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women) in 2023 was 71.16 (WHO);

➢ The contraceptive prevalence, any method (% of married women ages 15-49) in 2022, was 64% (United Nations Population Division).

➢ The maternal mortality ratio (modelled estimate, per 1000 live births) was 115 in 2023 (WHO)

➢ Adolescent fertility rate has decreased from 30 % in 2011 to 23.5 % in 2022 (BDHS 2022)

Figure: Adolescent fertility rate (age 15-19)

Source: BDHS 2023

3.1 Health Related Statistics

- Women with primary incomplete or complete education have the highest proportion of pregnancies and live births, suggesting that most childbearing occurs in early adulthood, often among women who complete only basic education.
- Women with no education also have relatively high childbearing, but slightly lower than those with primary incomplete education for live births, possibly reflecting early mortality or reporting differences.
- Women with secondary complete or higher education have the lowest proportion of live births (15.3%), although their percentage of having ever been pregnant (24.4%) is slightly higher than secondary incomplete. This suggests delayed childbearing among more educated women — they may become pregnant later, use contraception, or have fewer children overall.
- Women in the lowest wealth quintile have the highest percentages of ever having been pregnant (28.9%) and having had a live birth (22.3%).
- The likelihood of pregnancy and live birth decreases steadily with higher wealth. Women in the highest quintile have the lowest proportions (14.3% ever pregnant, 10.9% ever had a live birth).

Table: Percentage of women aged 15–19 who have ever had a live birth and percentage who have ever been pregnant

Background Characteristic	Have ever had a live birth	Have ever been pregnant
Education		
No education	20.2	23.5
Primary incomplete	31.7	38.4
Primary complete	29.9	35.4
Secondary incomplete	16.5	21.1
Secondary complete or higher	15.3	24.4
Wealth Quintile		
Lowest	22.3	28.9
Second	20.7	26.3
Middle	18.2	24.9
Fourth	17.1	23.5
Highest	10.9	14.3

Source: BDHS 2022

4. Child Marriage

4.1 Child Marriage

➤ Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023 (20–24 years women)

- Marriage before 15: Total ~6–6.5%; rural is higher (6.9%) than urban (5.3%).
- Marriage before 18: Total ~41%; rural higher (42.9%) than urban (34.9%).
- Child marriage has gone up from 2019 to 2023 in both rural and urban areas

➤ Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (DHS 2022)

- Marriage before 16: Total 26.7%; urban 24%, rural 27.9%.
- Marriage before 18: Total 50.1%; urban 44.4%, rural 52.6%.
- Education and wealth patterns:
  - o Highest prevalence among women with no education (68.9% before 18).
  - o Lowest among secondary complete+ (32.1% before 18).
  - o Wealthier women marry later; poorest quintile has highest early marriage rates.

➤ Discrepancies between the two sources:

- Magnitude difference: DHS reports much higher rates than Sample Vital Statistics (50% married before age 18 according to DGHS, vs 41.6 % according to BBS, 2023)

Table: Early/Child Marriage (among 20-24 years women) in (per cent)

Age at Marriage	Area	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Before 15	Total	6.2	4.9	4.7	6.5	8.2
	Rural	6.8	5.2	5.2	6.9	8.8
	Urban	6.5	4.6	4.6	5.3	6.8
Before 18	Total	41.1	31.3	32.4	40.9	41.6
	Rural	46.8	34.6	33.8	42.9	44.4
	Urban	35	27.6	28.2	34.9	33.5

Source: Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023

Table: Early/Child Marriage (among 20-24 years women) in (per cent)

Background Characteristic	% Married Before 16	% Married Before 18
Residence		
Urban	24	44.4
Rural	27.9	52.6
Education		
No education	49	68.9
Primary incomplete	37.3	61.6
Primary complete	45.4	63.6
Secondary incomplete	36.3	60.3
Secondary complete+	8	32.1
Wealth quintile		
Lowest	36.4	64
Second	32.2	58.1
Middle	26.4	50.1
Fourth	25.5	48.2
Highest	15.2	33.4
Total	**26.7**	**50.1**

Source: BDHS 2022

5. Violence Against Women

5.1 Violence Against Women

> The 2024 Violence Against Women Survey is a nationally representative household survey conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) with technical support from UNFPA. It interviewed 27,476 women aged 15+ across Bangladesh

> The survey used both international (UN/WHO) standard definitions and locally relevant measures to capture multiple forms of violence — including physical, sexual, emotional, economic, and controlling behaviours — allowing both global comparability and national contextual relevance.

> High prevalence of IPV:~70% of women experienced any form of intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetime.~40% experienced IPV in the last 12 months.

Table: Prevalence of intimate partner violence experienced at least once among ever-married women aged 15 and above

Type of Violence	Lifetime Prevalence (%)	Last 12 Months Prevalence (%)
	2024	**2015**
Physical violence	47.3	49.6
Sexual violence	29.0	27.2
Emotional/psychological violence	37.4	28.7
Controlling behaviour	67.6	55.4
Economic violence	19.6	11.4
Physical and/or sexual violence	54.4	54.2
Physical and/or sexual and/or emotional	59.3	57.7
Any form of violence (overall)	75.9	72.6

Source: BBS 2024

5.1 Violence Against Women

- Physical and sexual violence
  - Nearly 50% of ever-married women experienced physical violence in their lifetime; ~10% in the past year.
  - Sexual violence affects ~30% in lifetime, with ~10% in the last year; prevalence has declined over the past decade.
  - Psychological violence dominates: Emotional violence now affects ~1 in 3 women; ~1 in 7 recently.
- Controlling behaviour impacts ~50% of women both lifetime and past year.
- Economic violence persists: Despite some decline, economic violence remains significant, particularly among urban women.
- Regional and socio-demographic variations
  - Highest IPV prevalence: Barishal and Khulna; lowest: Rajshahi and Dhaka.
  - Women in disaster-prone areas face higher rates of both IPV and non-partner violence (NPV).
- Adolescent girls report the highest recent prevalence for most forms of violence.
- Non-partner violence (NPV)
  - Experienced by 15% of women, showing a decline since 2015.
  - Most common among adolescents; prevalence declines with age.
- Help-seeking and awareness:
  - ~2/3 of IPV survivors never disclosed their experience.
  - Only half of women know where to report violence; <50% aware of 999 helpline; ~10% aware of 109.
  - Only 15% sought medical care, and <8% took legal action. Average costs: BDT 2,512 (medical), BDT 4,104 (legal); rural women spend more on medical care, urban women more on legal costs.

6. Education

6.1 Education

- Gross Enrolment Rate (GER): % of children enrolled at the level, including over- and under-age students. Girls are higher than boys (2023: 109.8% vs 100.7%).

- Net Enrolment Rate (NER): Girls are slightly higher (2023: 97.8% vs 97.7%).

- Survival Rate to Grade 5: % of students who reach Grade 5. Girls outperform boys (2023: 87.8% vs 85.9%).

- Primary Cycle Dropout Rate: % of students leaving before completing primary. Lower for girls (2023: 12.3% vs 14.1%).

Table: Key Indicators of Primary Education, 2018-2023

Key Indicators	2023
Gross Enrolment Rate (%)	
Boys	100.71
Girls	109.83
All	104.53
Net Enrolment Rate (%)	
Boys	97.68
Girls	97.84
All	97.76
Survival Rate to Grade 5 (%)	
Boys	85.91
Girls	87.83
All	86.93
Primary Cycle Dropout Rate (%)	
Boys	14.12
Girls	12.32
All	13.15
Teacher−Student Ratio	1:29

Source: APSC 2023

6.2 Secondary Education

- In 2023, the Gross Enrolment Rate for secondary education was higher for girls (83.7%) than for boys (66.6%), showing more girls enrolled overall.
- The Net Enrolment Rate was also higher for girls (80.6%) compared to boys (64.4%).
- Despite higher enrolment, the dropout rate was higher for girls (34.9%) than for boys (30.5%), indicating that more girls leave school before completing secondary education.

Table: Key Indicators of Secondary Education, 2023

Key Indicators	2023
Gross Enrolment Rate (%)	
Boys	66.55
Girls	83.70
All	74.81
Net Enrolment Rate (%)	
Boys	64.37
Girls	80.62
All	72.20
Dropout Rate (%)	
Boys	30.46
Girls	34.87
All	32.85
Teacher–Student Ratio	1:34

Source: Bangladesh Education Statistics 2023 (BANBEIS)

6.3 Higher Secondary Education

Table: Key Indicators of Higher Secondary Education

➤ In 2023, the **Gross Enrolment Rate** for higher secondary education in Bangladesh was slightly higher for girls (58.5%) than for boys (56.1%), showing strong female participation.

➤ The **Net Enrolment Rate**, which counts only age-appropriate students, was also higher for girls (52.7%) compared to boys (51.1%).

➤ The **dropout rate** remained higher for girls (22.5%) than boys (20.5%), indicating retention challenges at this level.

➤ The **teacher–student ratio** was 1:38, slightly higher than secondary, suggesting larger class sizes. Overall, girls are well represented in higher secondary education, but dropout continues to be an area of concern.

Key Indicators	2023
Gross Enrolment Rate (%)	
Boys	56.06
Girls	58.47
All	57.20
Net Enrolment Rate (%)	
Boys	51.14
Girls	52.74
All	51.90
Dropout Rate (%)	
Boys	20.51
Girls	22.45
All	21.51
Teacher–Student Ratio	1:38

Source: Bangladesh Education Statistics 2023 (BANBEIS)

6.4 Tertiary Education

Table: Number of female students in tertiary education by type of university 2023

Type of university	No. of university	Number of students		
		Total	**Female**	**% Female**
Private	114	339305	100841	29.72
Public	55	725971	100841	41.03
International	2	4303	2057	47.8
Total	171	1069579	400738	**37.47**

Source: BANBEIS

6.4 Tertiary Education

- ➢ In Bangladesh, the percentage of adults 25+ with at least a Bachelor's degree is consistently higher for males than for females.
- ➢ Female attainment shows gradual improvement over the years, rising from 5.30% in 2010 to a peak of 6.92% in 2016, before slightly declining to 5.10% in 2018.
- ➢ Male attainment increased from 11.19% in 2010 to 12.79% in 2016, then declined to 9.95% in 2018.
- ➢ The gender gap remains significant, with males roughly twice as likely to have a Bachelor's or higher degree compared to females.

Table: Cumulative percentage of adults 25+ with at least a Bachelor's degree.

Year	Female (%)	Male (%)
2015	5.30	11.19
2016	5.45	11.53
2017	5.92	12.06
2018	6.35	12.50
2019	6.67	12.95
2020		
2021	6.92	12.79
2022	5.08	10.08
2023	5.10	9.95

Source: WDI

7. Employment

7.1 Employment

Table: Rates of unemployment and NEET

Indicator	Male	Female	Total
Unemployment rate (%) (19th ICLS)	3.6	6.1	4.2
Unemployment rate (%) (13th ICLS)	3.4	3.2	3.4
Youth unemployment rate (%)	4.9	2.4	7.3
NEET Youth (aged 15-29)	15.4	22.1	18.9

Source: Labour Force Survey 2023

Table: Employment by broad sector (%)

Sector	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture	18.8	25.6	44.4
Industry	14.2	3.1	17.3
Service	32.5	5.9	38.2
Total	65.5	34.5	100

Source: Labour Force Survey 2023

7.2 Female Employment Trends & Vulnerable Employment

Table: Female Labour Force Participation Rate

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
ILO estimate	33.5	33.5	36.7	38.1	39.4	40.4	42.3	43.7	43.7	44.2
national estimate		33.2	36.3					43.354	41.5	

Source: ILO

Table: Informal employment rate by sex (%)

	Total	Male	Female
2013	89	88	94
2017	95	94	97
2022	85	78	97

Source: ILO

Table: Vulnerable employment

Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Vulnerable employment, male (% of male employment)	52.91	52.17	50.82	49.22	47.62	46.64	45.2	43.35	42.58
Vulnerable employment, female (% of female employment)	71.99	70.06	67.74	66.54	65.33	64.43	62.78	60.75	59.81

Source: ILO

➢ Female labour force participation is steadily rising, increasing from 33.5% (2015) to 44.2% (2024, ILO), indicating slow but consistent progress.
- National estimates broadly align with ILO trends but show fluctuations, highlighting differences in survey methods and definitions.

➢ Informal employment remains very high overall, especially for women.
- In 2022, 97% of women were in informal work compared to 78% of men, showing women's extreme dependency on low-quality, unprotected jobs.

➢ Vulnerable employment is falling for both sexes, indicating gradual structural improvement. However, women consistently show much higher vulnerability than men.
- This reflects gendered barriers such as limited mobility, low skills, household duties, and concentration in informal home-based activities.

8. Conclusion

Conclusion

Bangladesh shows mixed progress: strong political empowerment but persistent gaps in economic inclusion, legal protection, health, and safety.

International gender indices offer useful benchmarks, but national data reveal deeper structural inequalities that global rankings often mask.

Gender outcomes remain heavily shaped by early marriage, violence, limited access to quality jobs, and entrenched social norms.

Accurate, responsible reporting is essential for shaping public debate, strengthening accountability, and ensuring gender data leads to real improvements.

Journalists have a critical role in turning evidence into meaningful narratives that encourage informed national dialogue.

THANK YOU

Generating Knowledge, Giving Voice
Challenging Injustice

cpd.org.bd

CPDBangladesh

https://cpd.org.bd

CPDBangladesh

cpd_bangladesh