

The background of the slide features silhouettes of several people in profile, appearing to be in a meeting or discussion. The silhouettes are dark against a lighter, dark blue background. A large, semi-transparent red rectangle is overlaid on the upper half of the image, containing the main title and date.

Addressing the Vulnerability of Youth in Bangladesh: Policy and Resource Allocation

27 July 2022

Background

- With more than one-third population representing youths, Bangladesh is currently experiencing a '**demographic window**' of opportunity.
- If this opportunity is to be translated into a '**demographic dividend**', youths must participate meaningfully in the national economy.
- Youths are facing **multiple vulnerabilities** which are traditionally affecting young people such as **limited access to internet services, dropping out of the formal education system, and marginalization of physically disabled persons.**
- **COVID 19 Pandemic** has exacerbated the pre-existing vulnerabilities as well as created new ones.
- Reaping the benefits of demographic dividend might require identifying the possible causes of the vulnerability of the youth as well as ensuring necessary policy and resource allocation to addressing them.

Key Objectives

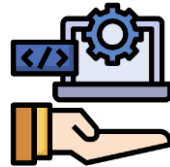
- **Highlighting the key dimensions** of the vulnerability of the youth in Bangladesh
- **Analyzing the possible causes** of the vulnerability of the youth
- **Stocktaking the key government policies** to address the vulnerability of youth
- **Examining the resource allocation** in the budget to implement the government policies for youth

Key Dimensions of The Vulnerability of Youth

The study has identified five broad dimensions of the vulnerability of youth



Education



Digital Service



Employment



Health



**Social
Deviance**

Education and Vulnerability of Youth

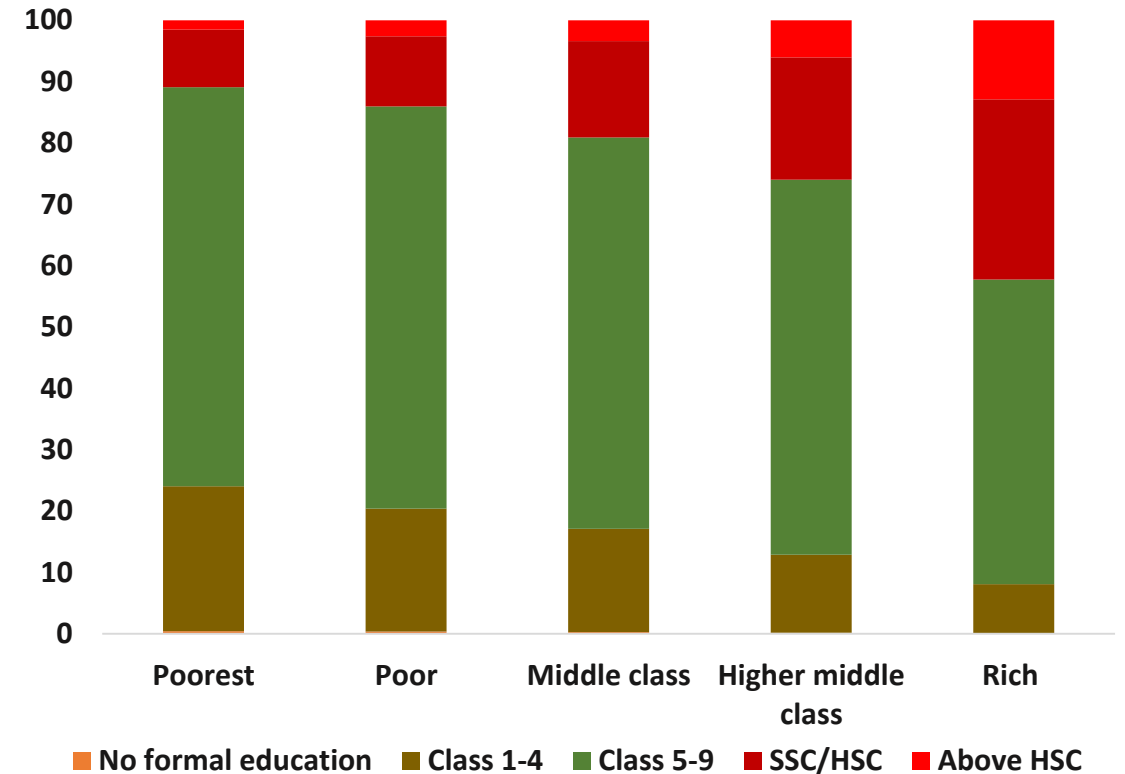
- Bangladesh, in the past few decades, has seen **notable progress** in its education sector as shown by the **increasing literacy rate**.
- However **two major issues** that lead to the vulnerability of youth in relation to education are **inequality in access to education** and **lack of quality**.
- Achieving higher education is still difficult for children from poorer households in rural areas.
- Moreover, the country is yet to provide quality education to its youth.
- But proper education is also the foundation to achieving higher level skills, higher productivity and eventually employment offering better pay.

Youth Participation in Higher Education is Still Low

Level of education among the youth who are not student (Percent)

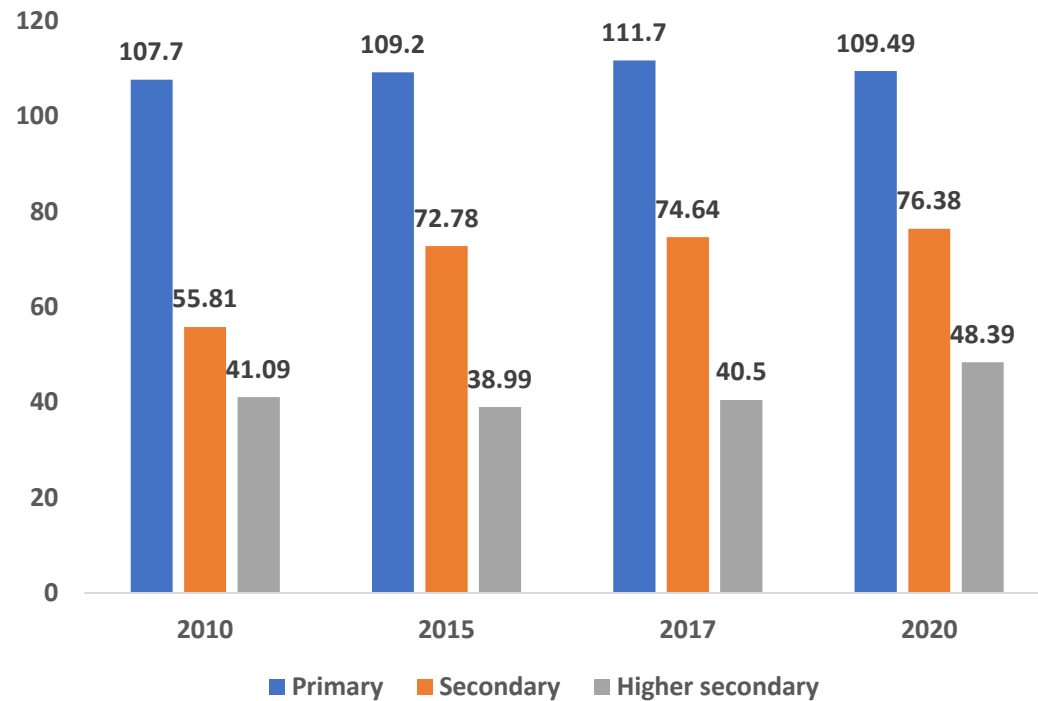
Education level	Male	Female	Total
No formal education	0.31	0.23	0.26
Class 1-4	19.51	13.57	16.23
Class 5-9	57.31	64.16	61.1
SSC/HSC	15.87	18.16	17.14
Above HSC	6.99	3.88	5.27

Socio-economic Status and the level of education among youth (non-student)

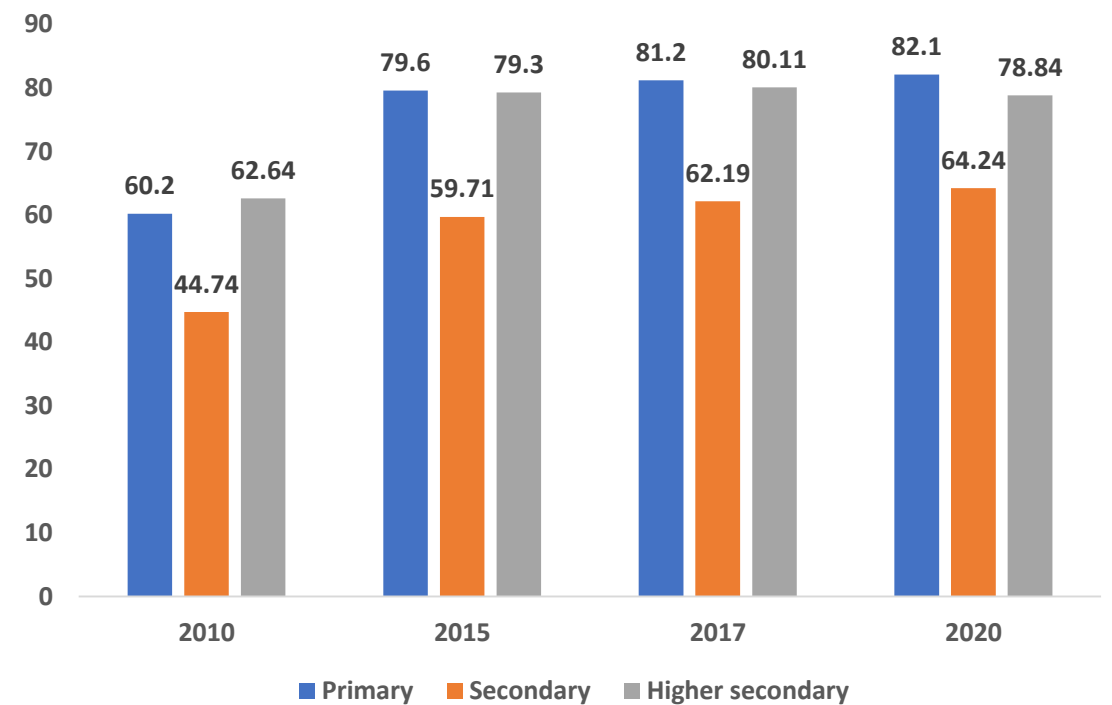


A Larger Percentage of Students Can Not Complete Secondary Education

Gross Enrolment Rate of Students (%)

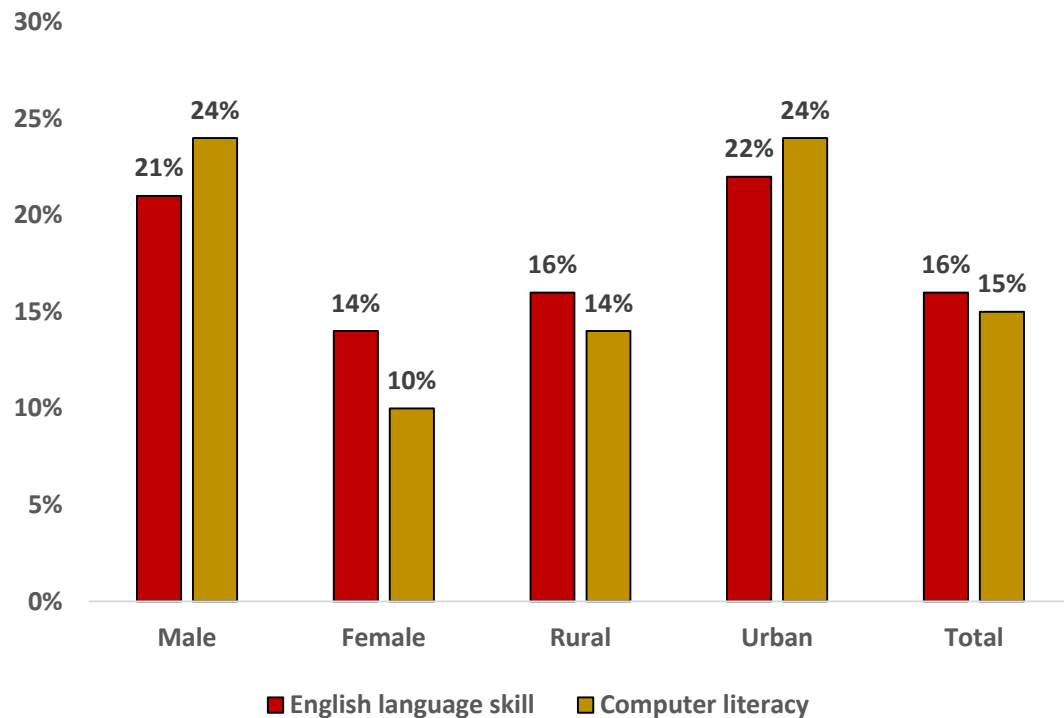


Completion Rate of Students (%)

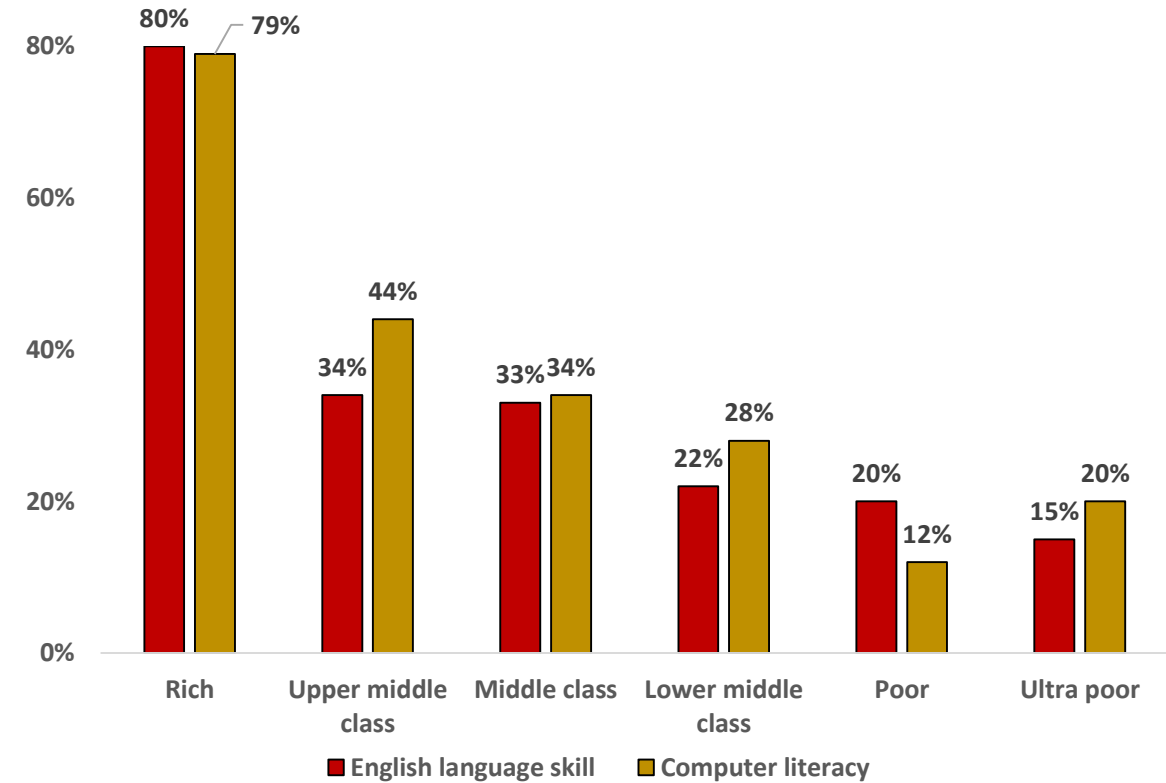


English Language and Computer Skill

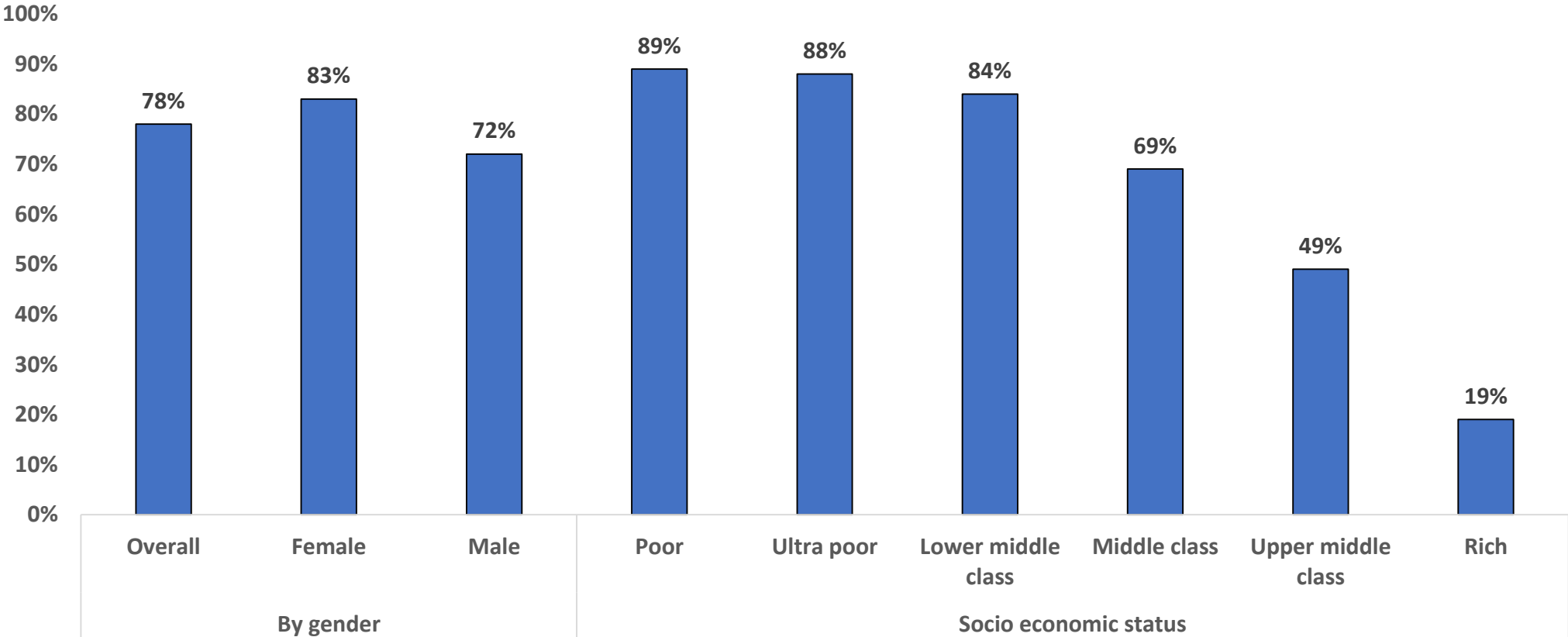
Self-assessed English Language Skills and Computer Literacy Skills (Good/Very Good)



Self-assessed English Language Skills and Computer Literacy Skills (Good/Very Good) by socio economic status



Youth (educated but not student) who think that their education would not help them get a job



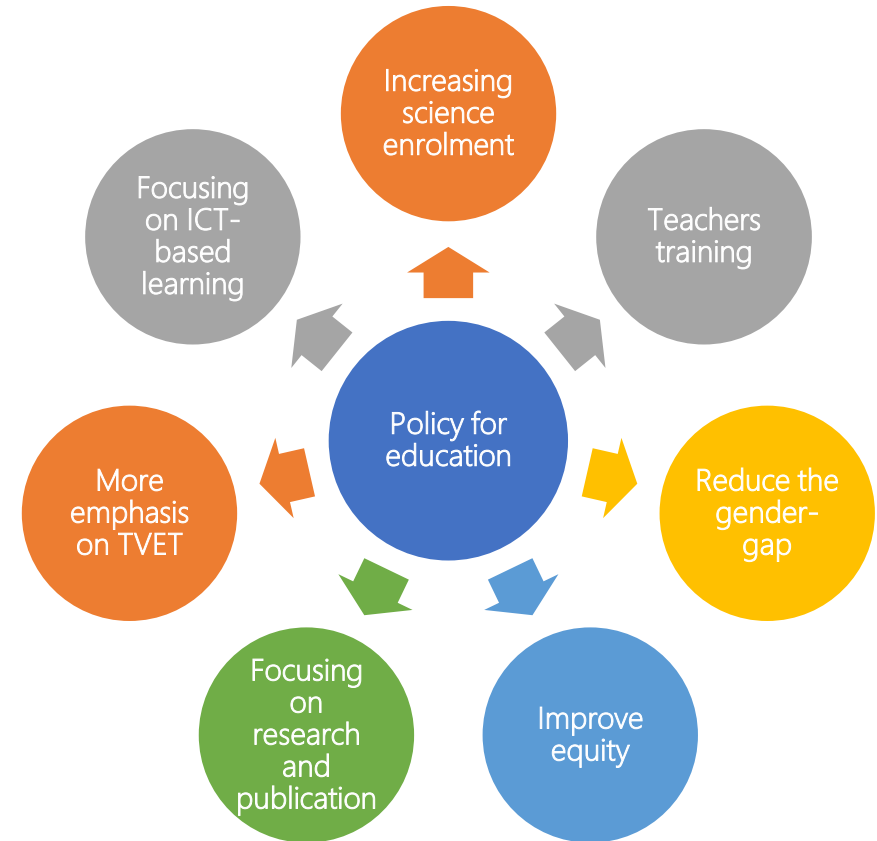
Learning loss in the context of Covid

- School closures have been difficult for all students
- According to World Bank the poor and girl students suffered greater learning losses
- The youth from poor households could not access online education
- A higher dropout rate for the young students
- Session jam for university students

Vulnerability of Youth in Education and Government Policy

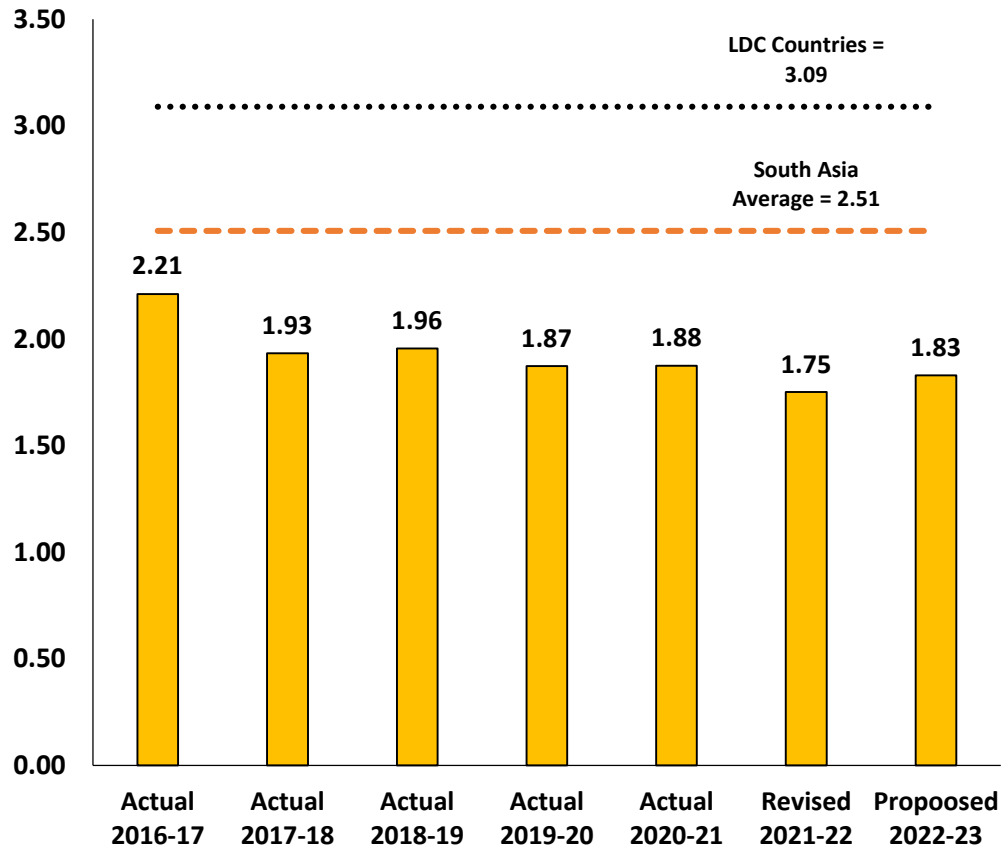
- There is no doubt that the **current education system is not meeting the demand** of the current labour market.
- Even the policymakers repeatedly talked about changing the current education system.
- The strategies for the education sector focuses on improving **the quality of education as well as ensuring equity**.
- However, **allocation of necessary fund is necessary** to implement these strategies.

Strategies for education sector

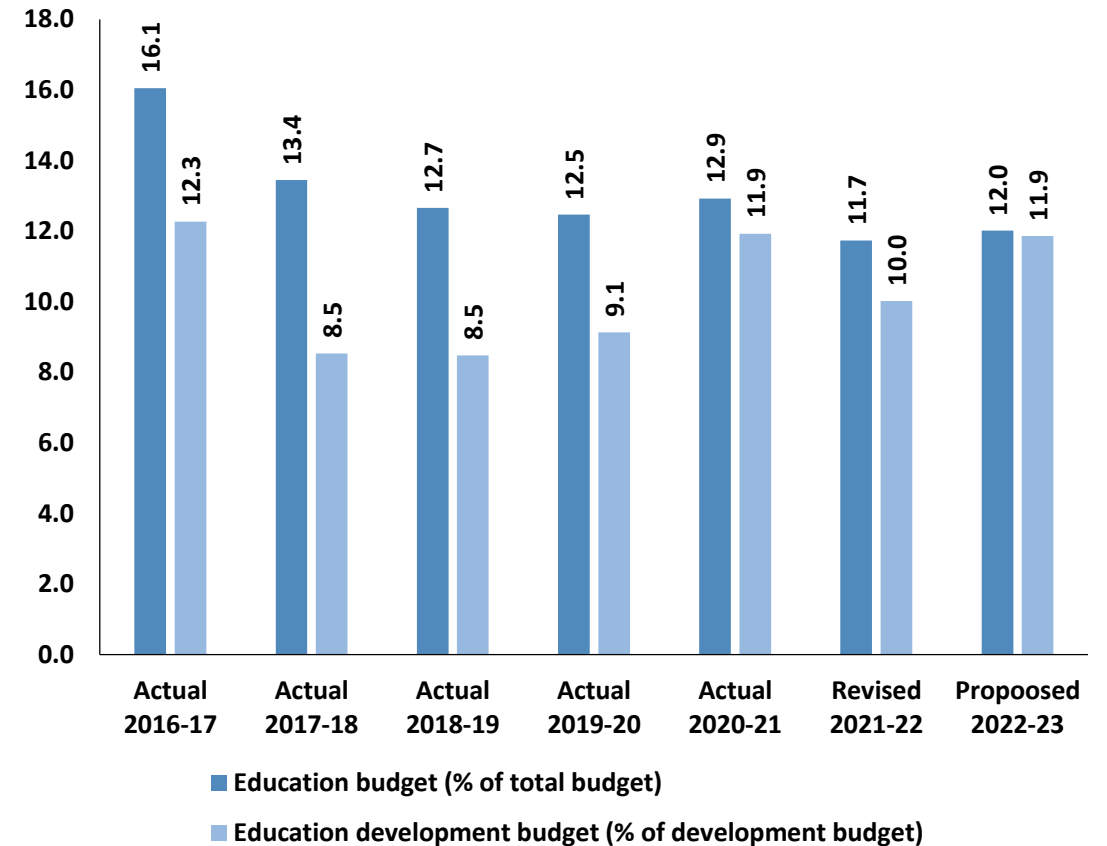


Budget Allocation to Address The Vulnerability in Education

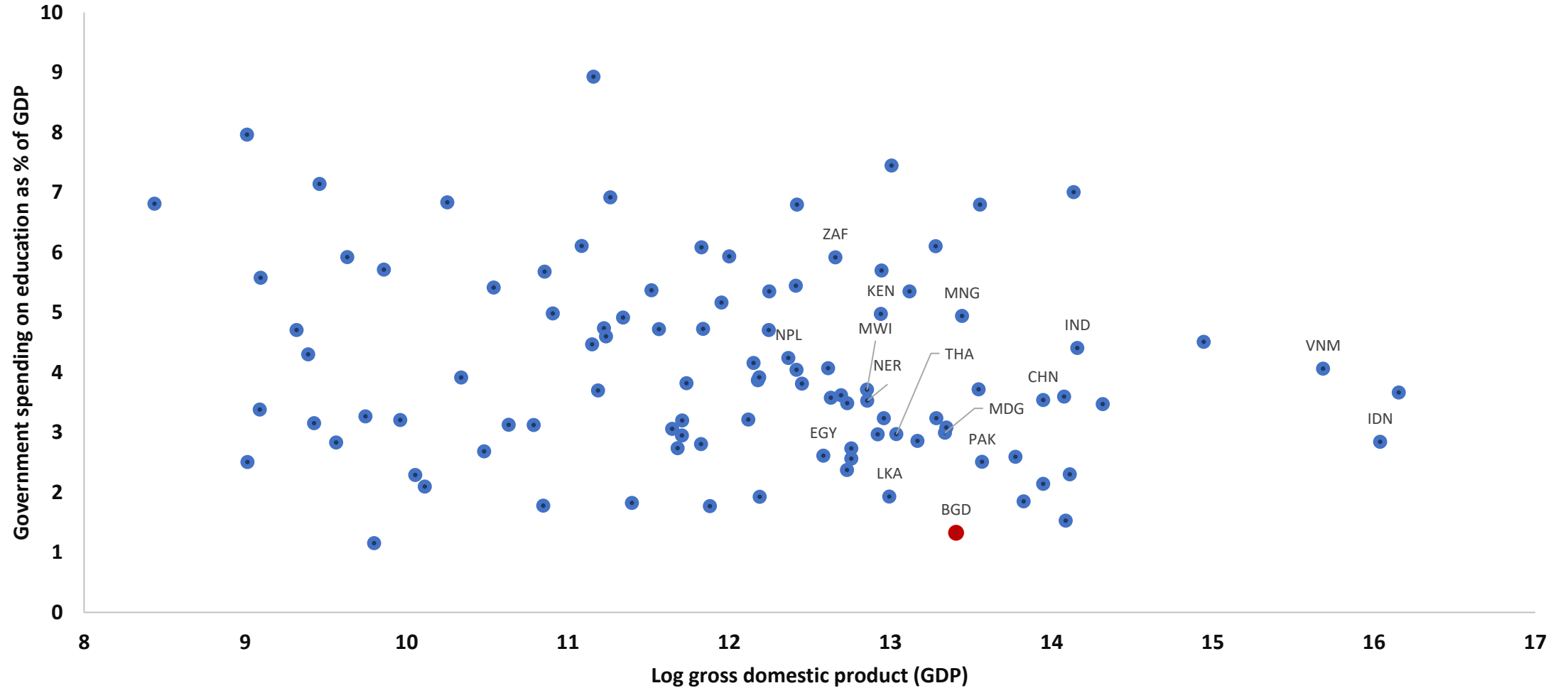
Education Budget (as % of GDP)



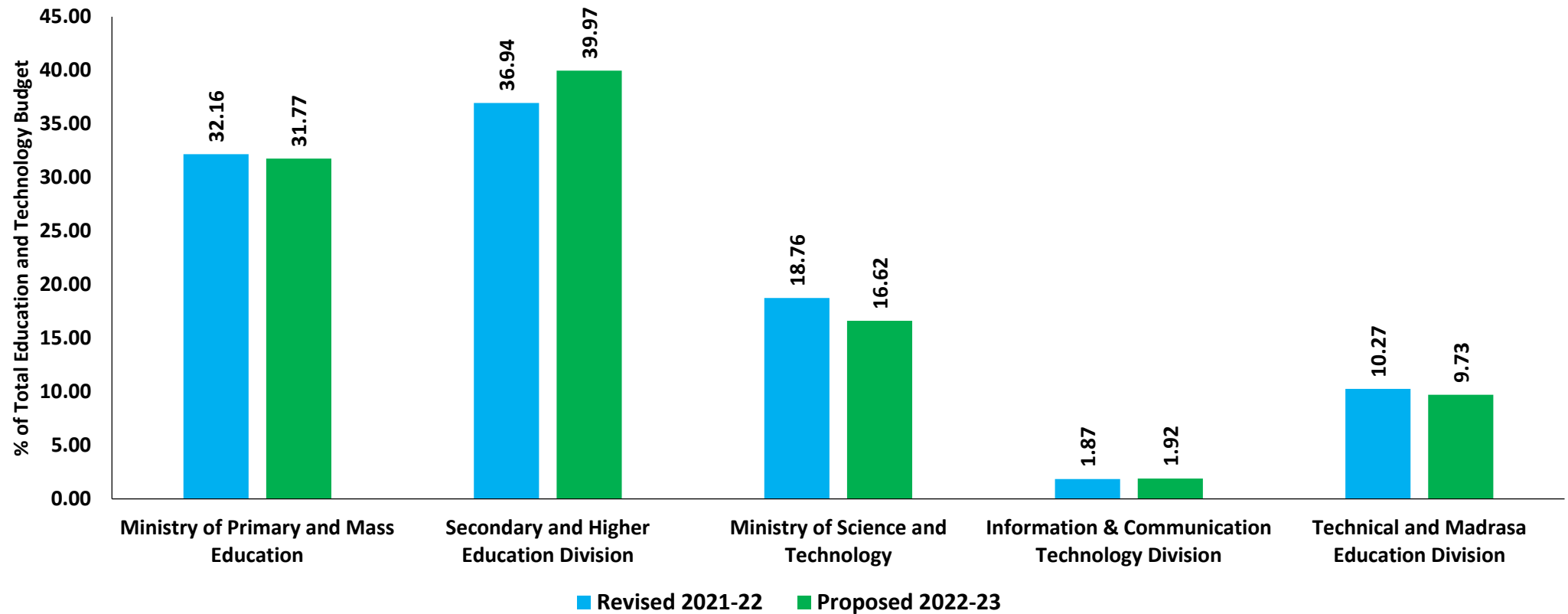
Education Budget and Education Development Budget



Bangladesh' s spending on education is one of the lowest amongst global economies

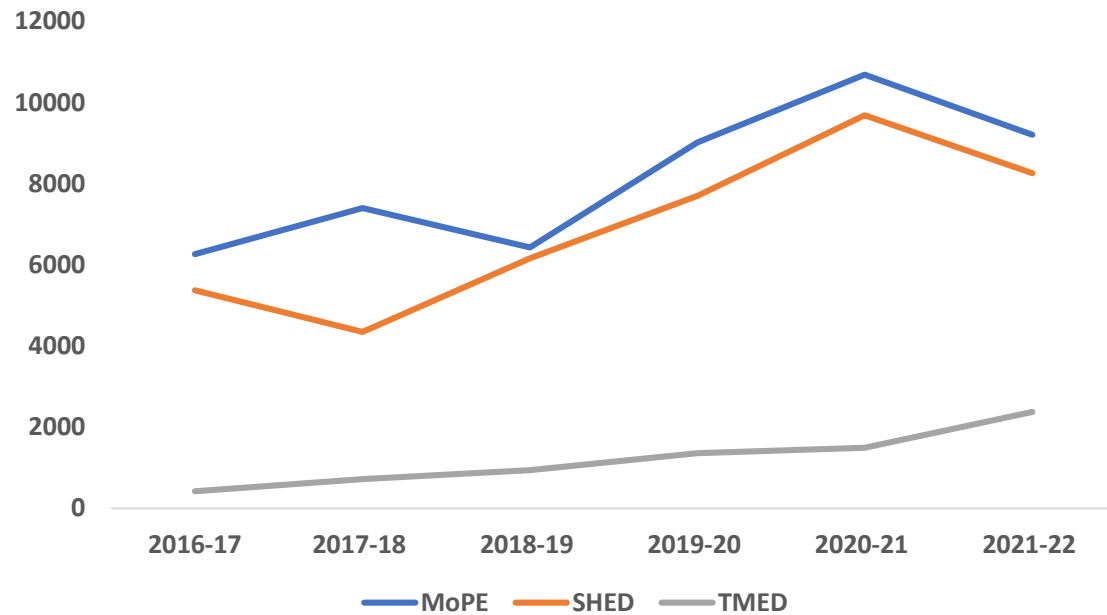


Share of The Education Budget for Different Ministries and Divisions

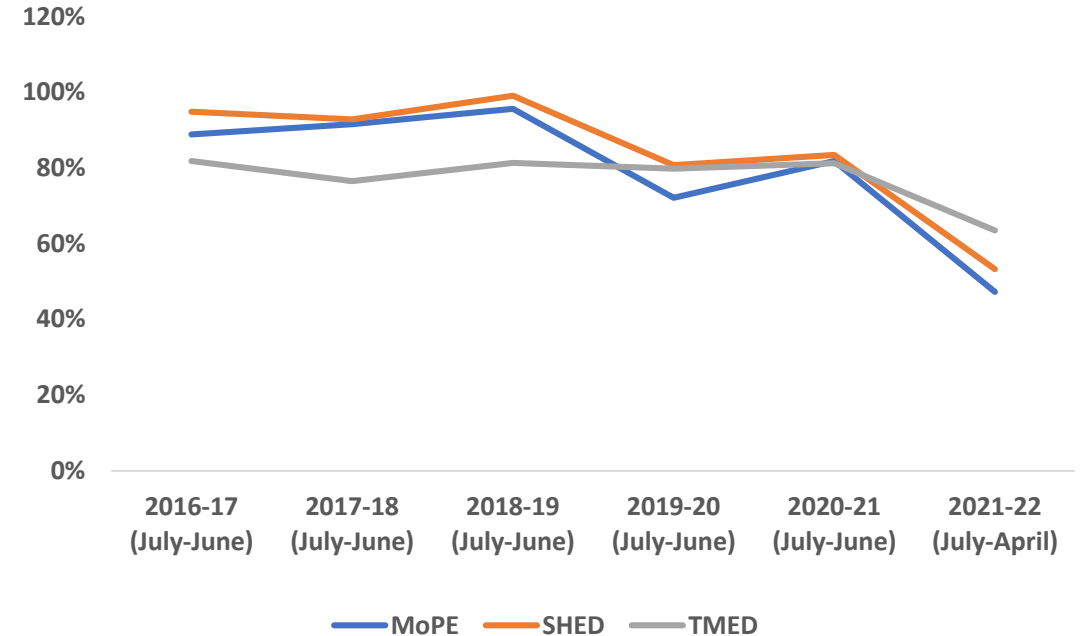


ADP allocation and implementation for different ministry and divisions

ADP allocation by ministry and division (crore taka)



ADP implementation rate by ministry and division (%)



Three areas to focus for education of youth

- **Prioritising spending on education** in the development agenda of the government
- Within the education sector **prioritizing technical and vocational education**
- Focusing more on **ensuring the quality education** to the marginalized youth

Digital Services and Youth

Two Aspects of Digital Literacy

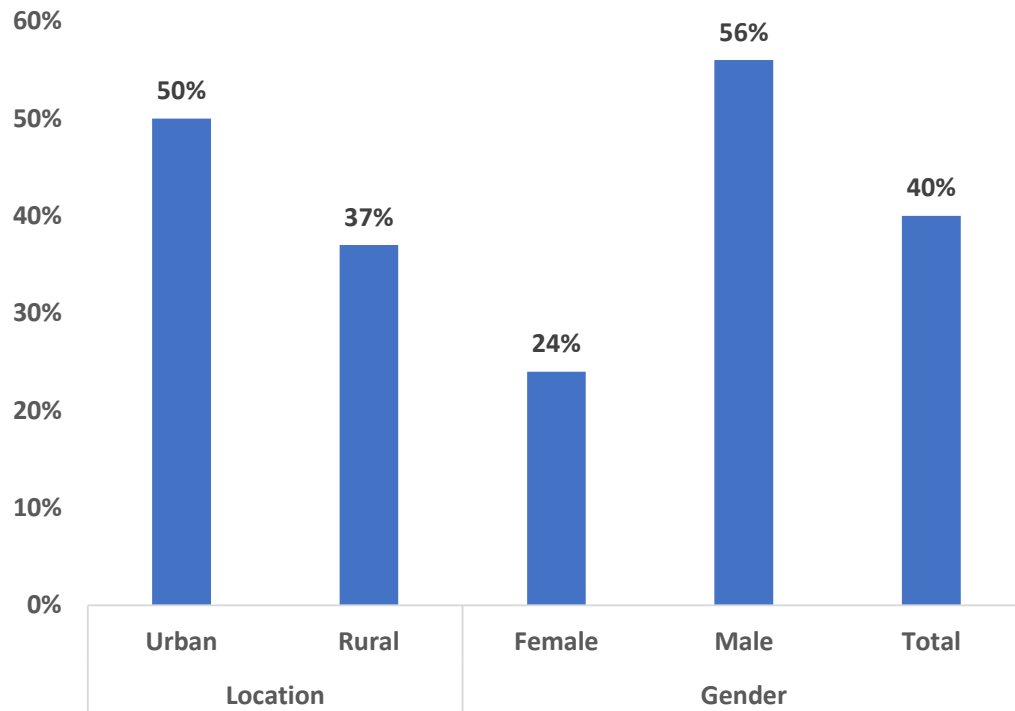
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graph TD; A[Two Aspects of Digital Literacy] --> B[Digital Access]; A --> C[Effective Digital Use];
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Digital Access

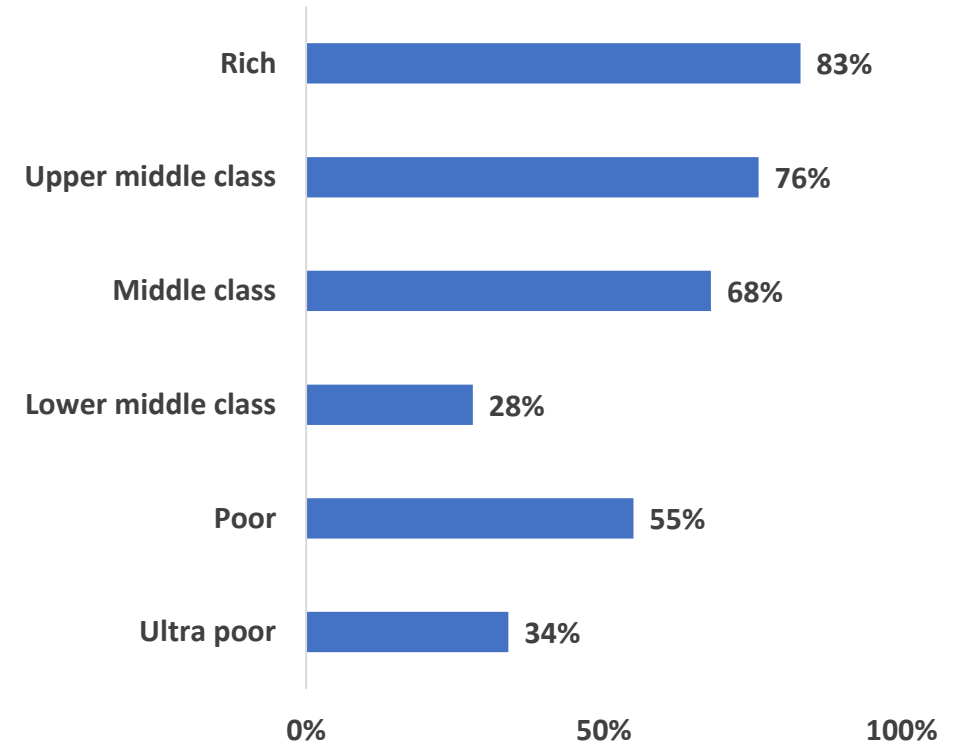
Effective Digital Use

Unequal Internet Access of Youth and “Digital Divide”

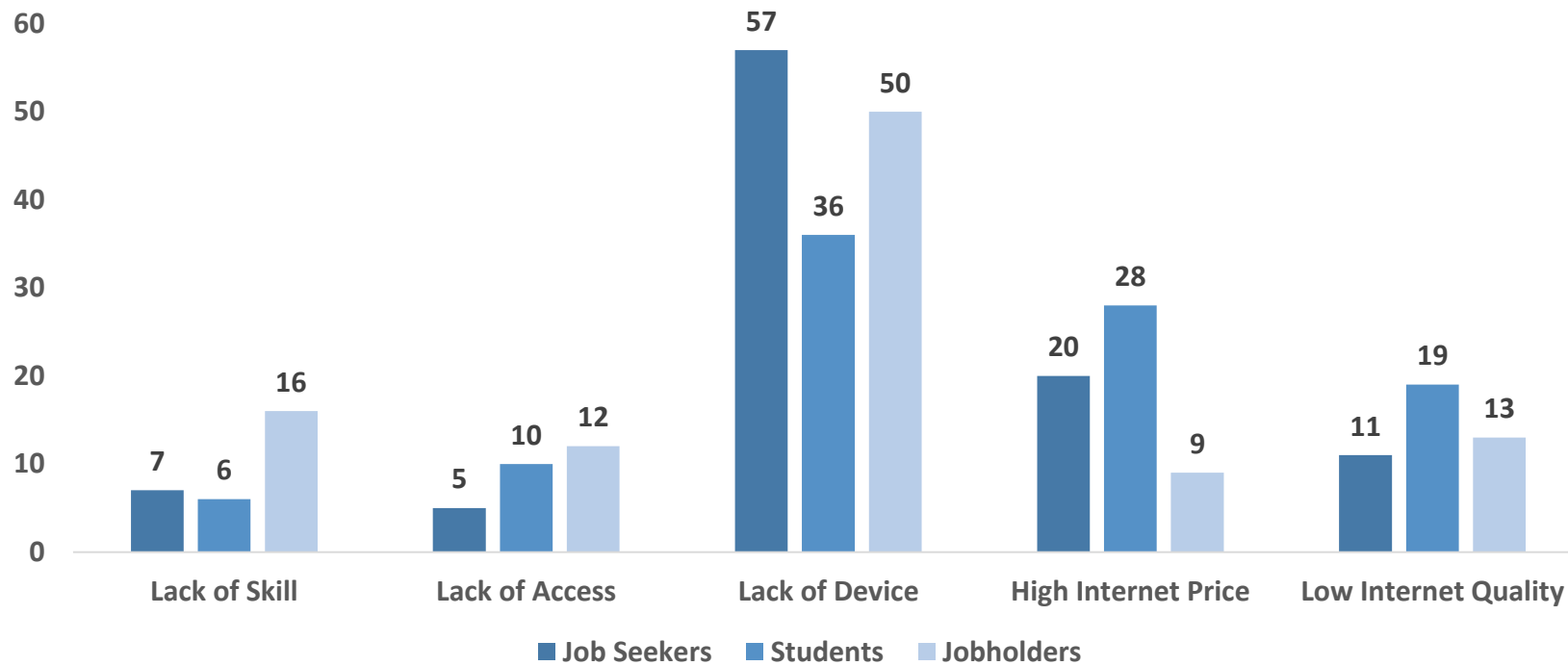
By Location and Gender



By Socio-Economic Class



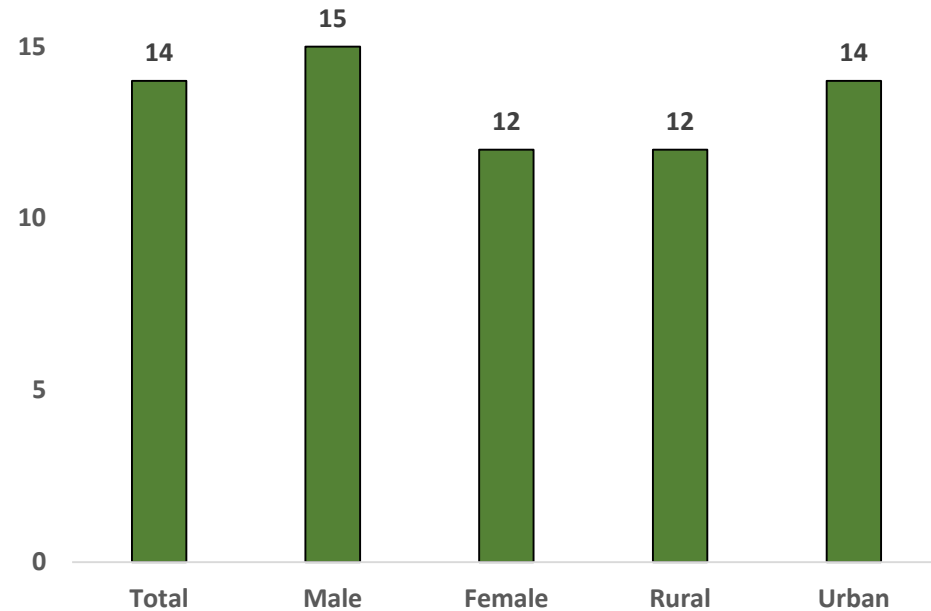
Impediments to Digital Access and Current Status of Youth (%)



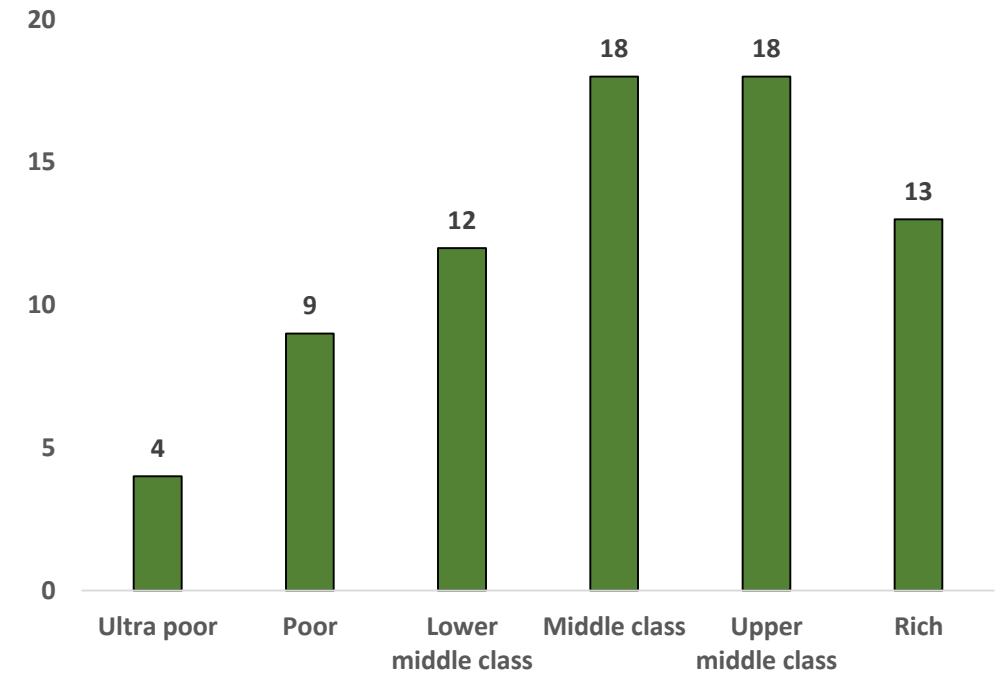
Exclusive Reasons for Not Using Internet, Cited by Female Respondents (%)	
Reasons	Response
No permission to use	95.4
Security issues	95.4
Cultural reasons	90.1

Youth Participation in Vocational Training

Youth with Vocational Training by Gender and Location



Youth with Vocational Training by Socio-Economic Status



Government Policy to Ensure More Accessible Technology

1. Connectivity and Infrastructure

- I. High-Tech Park
- II. Software Technology Park
- III. IT Training and Incubation Centre

2. Human Resource Development

- I. Sheikh Russel Digital Lab – 4176 labs in educational institutes across the nation
- II. She Power Project: Sustainable Development for Women through ICT

3. Establishing Virtual University, Multimedia University

4. Establishing Cooperation among Industry, Academia, and Government

5. Developing Digital Learning Ecosystem in Educational Institutions through Public – Private Partnership

Fiscal Measures that will impede Digital Accessibility

- Trading of mobile sets: 5% VAT exemption withdrawn
- VAT imposed on imported laptops; SD on imported optical fibre cable

Employment and Vulnerability of Youth

- Youth are disproportionately vulnerable in the labour market.
- Youth labour market participation and employment rates are low and stagnating.
- Their participation is around 47.6 percent – considerably lower than the corresponding rate of 64 percent for adults.
- The youth labour force participation is 31.6 percent of the country's total labour force
- The activity rate among the youths gradually rises with their age.

Youth labour force (% of total)

Age group	Male	Female	Total
15-19	7.4	6.3	7
20-24	9.6	12	10.4
25-29	13.1	16.7	14.2
Overall youth	30.1	35	31.6

Youth Unemployment

- Youth unemployment rate was 10.6% substantially higher than the national unemployment rate of 4.2%
- Total unemployed youths represent 79.6 percent of the total unemployed population
- Reverse relationship is observed between the education level and employment status
- Youth who have secondary or higher levels of education make up around 64 percent of the total unemployed population in Bangladesh

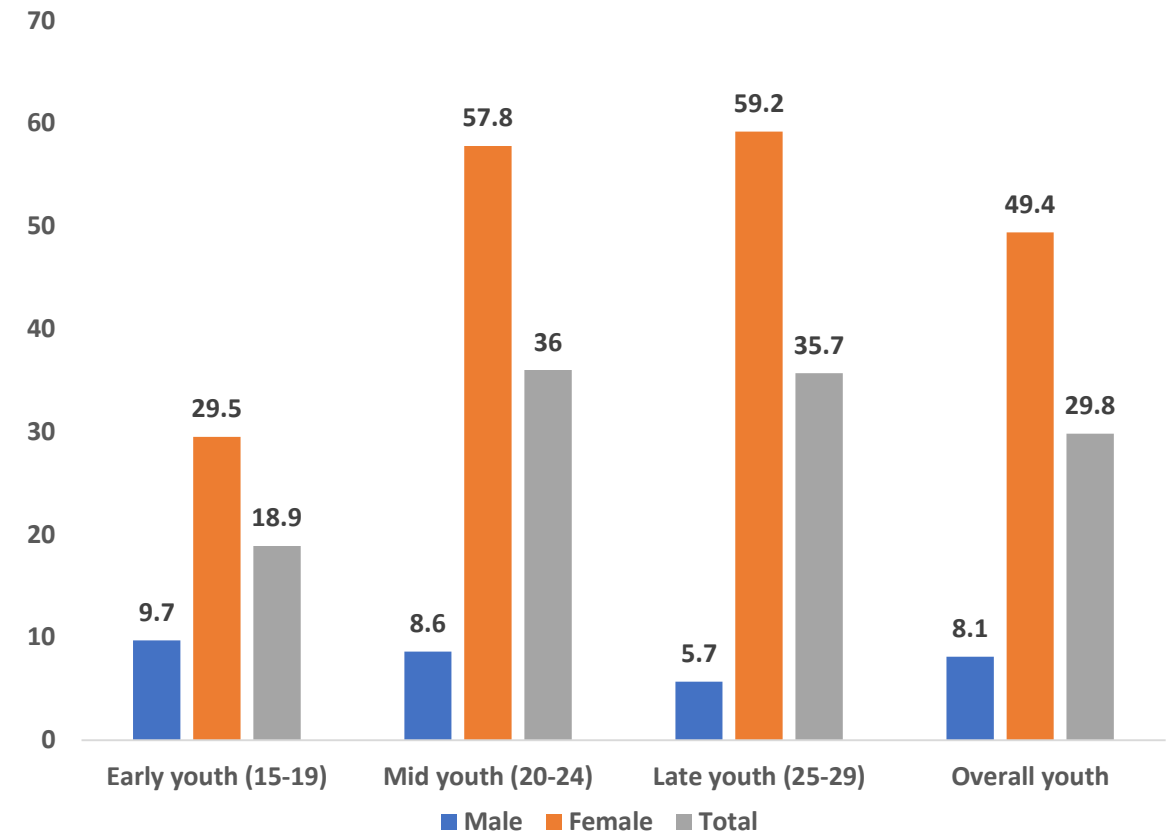
Youth unemployed as % of total unemployed, by education level

Education	Male	Female	Total
None	2.6	5.5	4
Primary	11.6	11.8	11.7
Secondary	25.6	30.4	28
Higher secondary	24.4	20.1	22.3
Tertiary	15.5	11.2	13.4
Total youth	80.2	79	79.6

Source: LFS 2016-2017

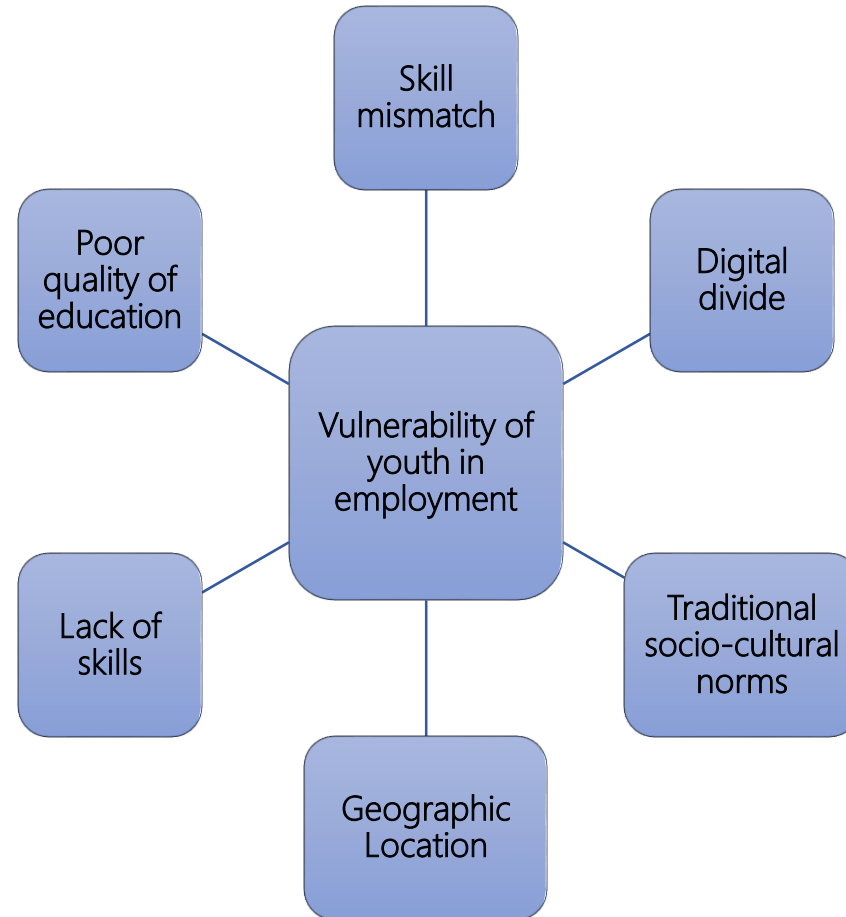
Youth NEET as a share of the Working-Age Population

- At the national level 29.8 percent of youths were not in education, employment, and training
- Youths NEET in Bangladesh is 16.2 percent higher than the global average of 21.8 percent and 9.4 percent higher than the South Asian regional average
- We find that most of the NEETs are from households with lower economic status.
- Most of them are female, married, and engaged in doing household chores.



Source: LFS 2016-2017

What causes the Vulnerability of Youth in Employment



Youth Employment in Government Policy

Strengthen the skill base of the existing youth labour force

Ensuring education and training for all

Non-ICT-based self-employment

ICT-based self-employment

International Migration

Budget Allocation and Employment of Youth

- To ensure overseas employment of 0.81 million Bangladeshi workers and provide skill development training to 0.52 million workers.
- A number of fiscal measures in the form of tax exemptions have been proposed in FY 23
- The allocation for the 'Employment Generation Program for the Poor' fell to Tk 18.30 billion in budget 2022-23 from Tk 19.25 billion in revised budget 2021- 22.
- Plans to raise ICT-based employment to 3 million by 2025.
- However, there is a lack of allocation to promote youth employability and productivity, and to boost entrepreneurship or match youth with jobs.
- Some important projects on the skill development of youth are also facing implementation challenges

	Planned Allocation in 8th FYP (In crore Taka)	BFY 23 Allocation (In crore Taka)	Percentage change
Ministry of Industry (MoI)	1810	1098	-39.3
Ministry of Labor and Employment (MoLE)	170	152	-10.6
Ministry of Expatriates and Overseas (MoEOE)	380	583	53.4

Establishment of 5 Training centers, 1 Fashion Design, 2 Market Promotion Institutes under Handloom Board (01/07/2018-30/06/2021)

Providing Training on Driving in domestic and abroad for creating employment (01/01/2020 31/12/2024)

Technology Empowerment Centre for Underprivileged Rural Young People (01/01/2022-31/12/2024)

Three Areas to Focus on for Employment

- Improving the quality of training and ensuring its access to the marginalized youth
- Introducing unemployment insurance and linking it with the necessary training for the youth.
- Ensuring access to funds for youth to be entrepreneurs

Health and Vulnerability of Youth

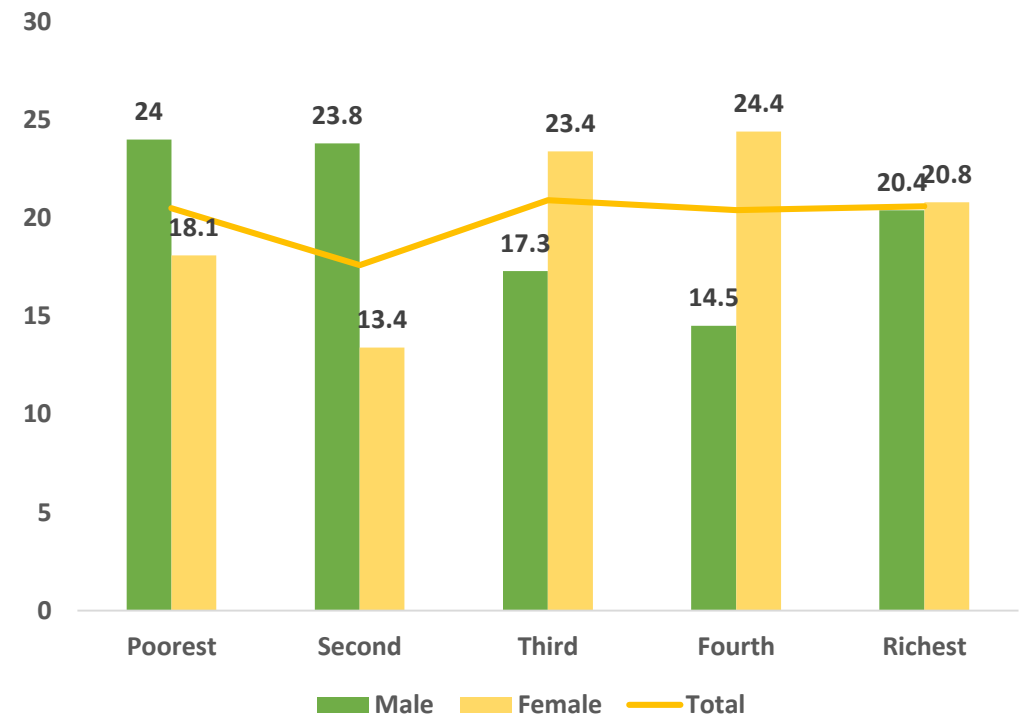
- In terms of health, mental health and sexual and reproductive health are two major concerns for the youth of Bangladesh.
- Mental disorder has detrimental effects on individuals, families, and communities.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the mental health of the Bangladeshi population.
- There has been a rise in suicide rates amongst youth in Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Suicide rate increased by 44 percent during the pandemic, and 49 percent of the individuals were aged between 20 and 35

Prevalence of Mental Disorder in Bangladesh

Prevalence of mental disorder by sex and residence (%)

Age groups	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Total
All adults (18-99)	15.7	21.5	18.9	18.7	18.7
18-29	12.8	16	18.4	13.1	14.6
30-39	15.1	23.9	15.3	21.3	20
40-49	12.6	22	18.1	17	17.2
50-59	19.4	25	21	22.4	22.1
60 and above	25.1	31.4	30	27.7	28.1

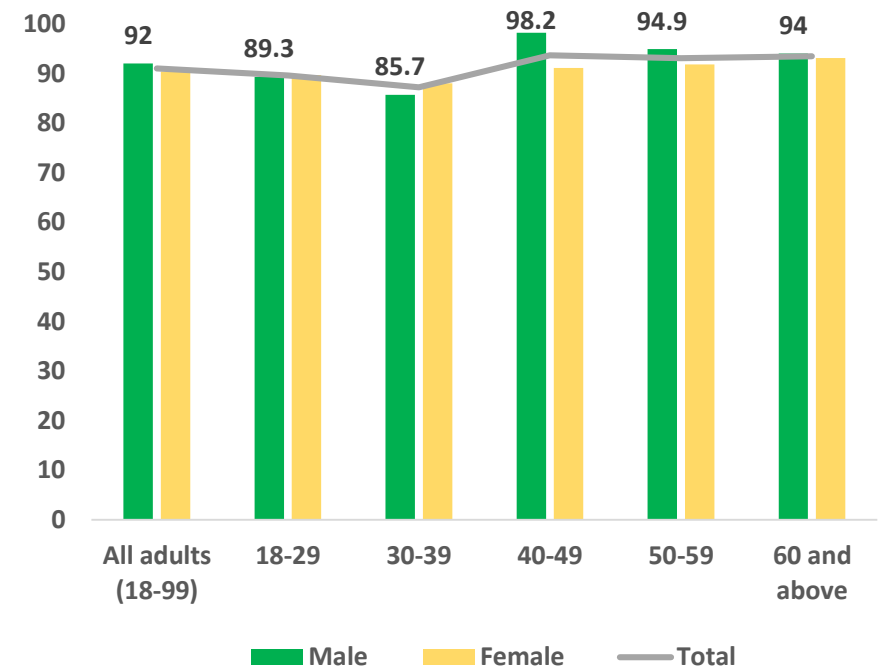
Prevalence of mental disorder by socio-economic status (%)



Inadequate Facilities for the Mental Healthcare in Bangladesh

- Only 0.49% of the healthcare workers in Bangladesh are trained in providing mental health services.
- There are only 0.16 psychiatrists per 100,000 population.
- The inadequate mental health facilities lead to a significant treatment gap for mental disorders.
- Overall the treatment gap for mental illness among the youth aged 18-29 is 89.6%.

Treatment gap for mental disorder for age groups (%)

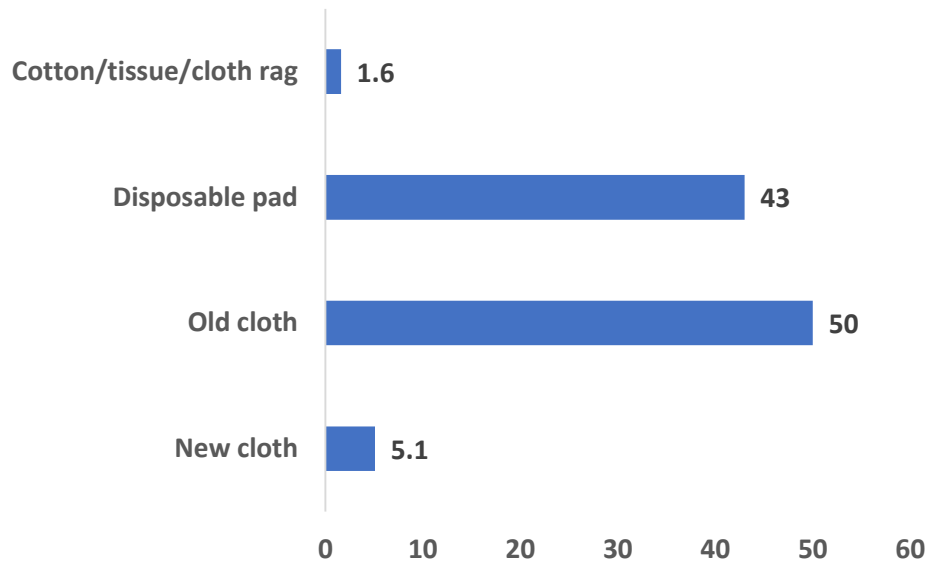


Sexual and Reproductive Health of Youth

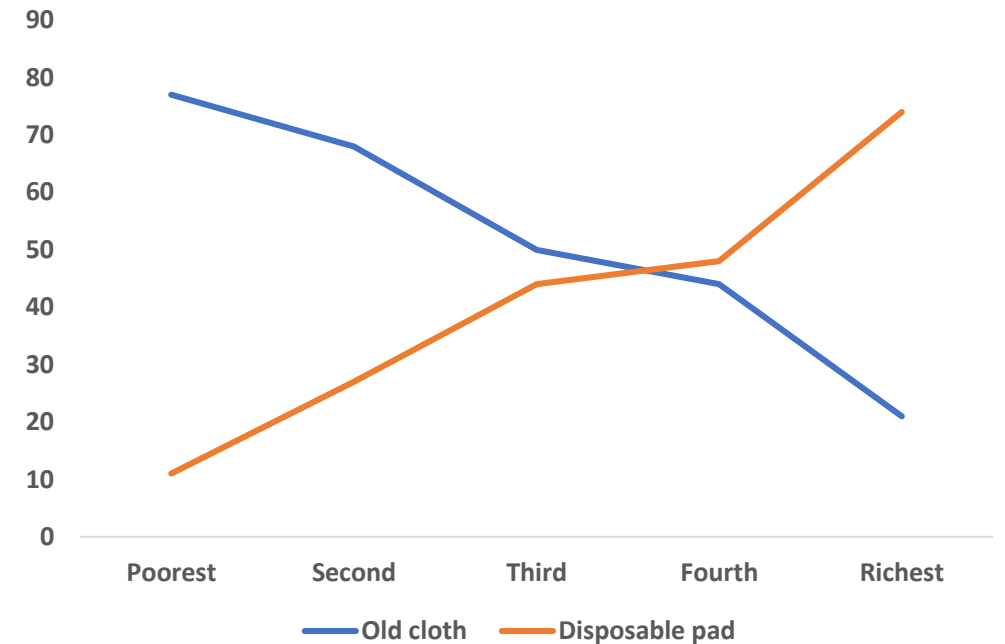
- Adolescents face tremendous challenges in meeting their sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs because of **a lack of awareness about puberty, sexuality, and basic human biological changes.**
- **Only 36% of adolescents** reported that they heard about menstruation before their first menstruation.
- These underlying factors lead to **high rates of early pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), sexual violence, limited negotiation skills, forced marriage, and high fertility rates.**
- **Child marriage, and associated teenage pregnancy and fertility** are the two pressing issues in relation to SRH that affect youth.

Menstruation Hygiene Among the Adolescents

Materials used by adolescents during menstruation (%)

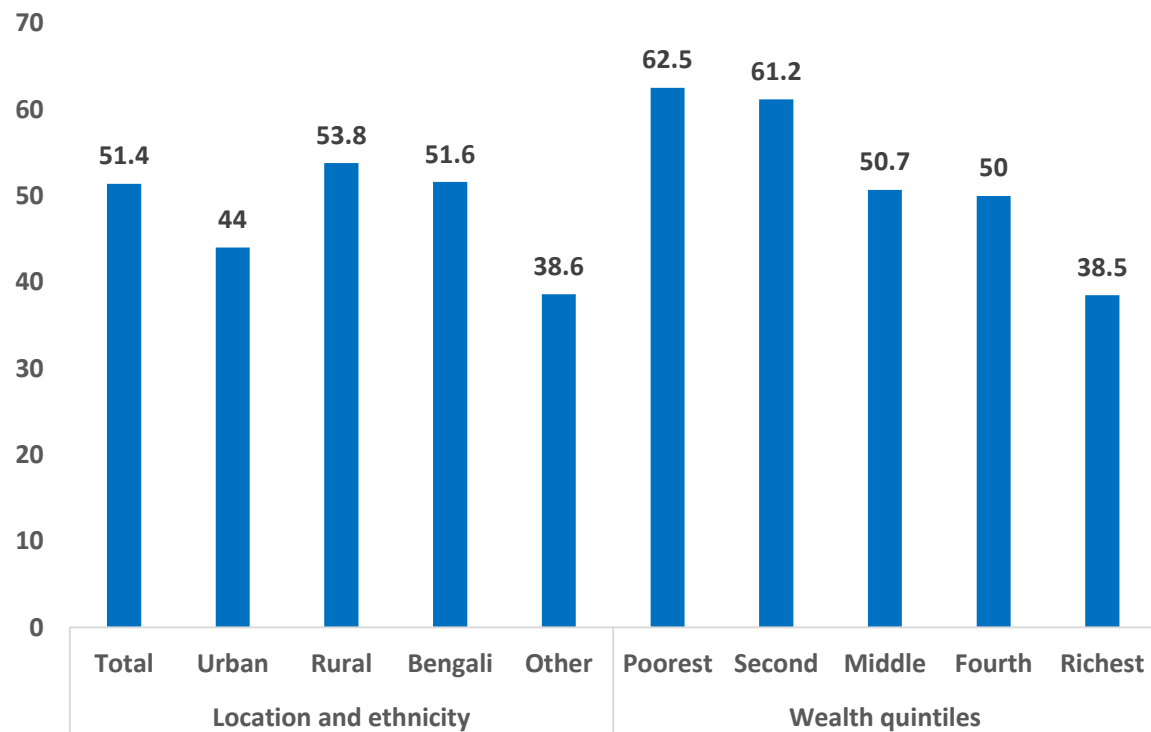


Old cloth and pad use during menstruation by wealth quintile (%)

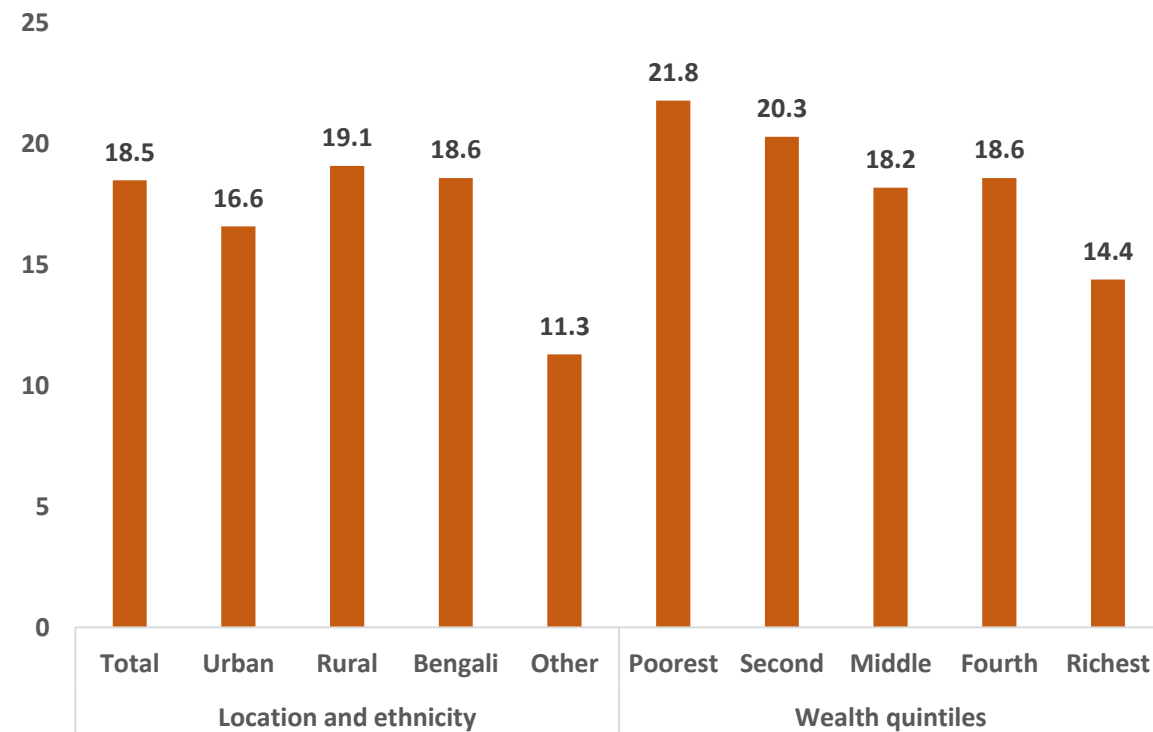


Child Marriage and Adolescents Fertility

Percentage of women aged 20-24 who got married before age 18



Percentage of women aged 15-19 who have had a live birth or are pregnant with their first child



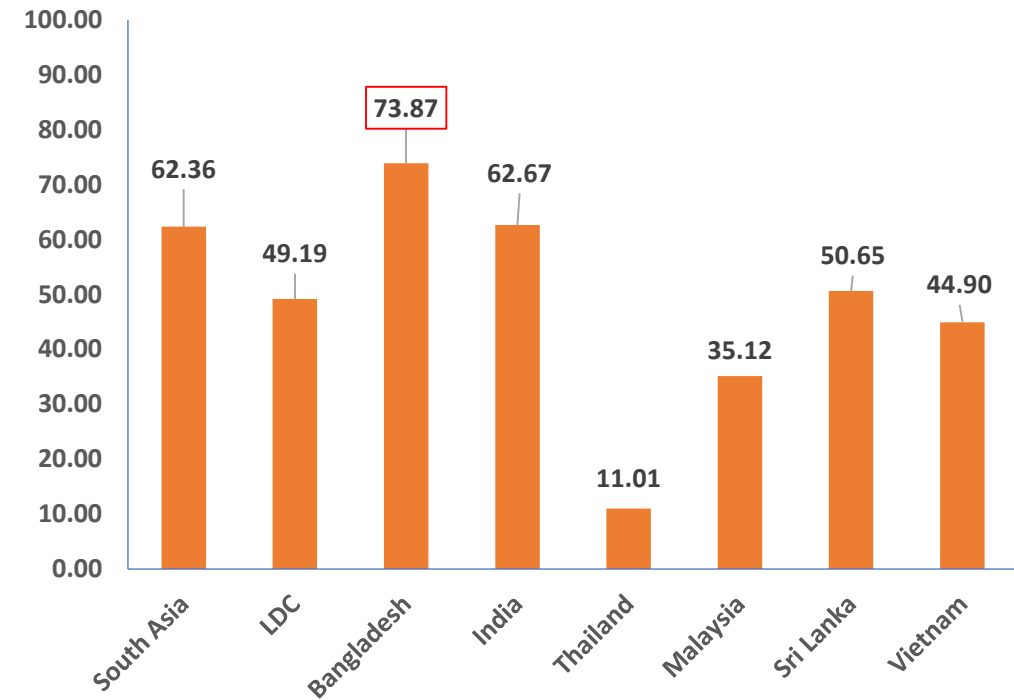
Government Policy to Ensure SRH

- 'National Plan of Action (NPA) to End Child Marriage 2018-2030' targeted to achieve zero child marriage before age of 15 by 2021
- Improving knowledge of women, men and particularly the adolescents, on reproductive health (RTI/ STI, abortion, infertility, etc) including HIV/ AIDS.
- Increasing access to reproductive and adolescent friendly health services through the frontline health personnel and appropriate NGO workers at individual level.
- Creating positive change in the behaviour and attitude of the protectors of adolescents (parents, guardians, teachers, religious leaders, Peers, etc.)
- Carrying out appropriate training of service providers of health and community health workers.

Vulnerability of Health and Resource Allocation

- The very high out-of-pocket health expenditure is a major barrier to ensuring the health care of the youth.
- Mental health expenditures by the Bangladeshi government are 0.44% of the total health budget.
- Of all the expenditures on mental health, 67% is dedicated to mental hospitals.
- Tax has been imposed on a sanitary pad.
- The TTI on imported sanitary napkins in FY23 was 127.72%.
- Given the risk of rising child marriage and associated health problems, the government needs to spend more to protect the young girls.

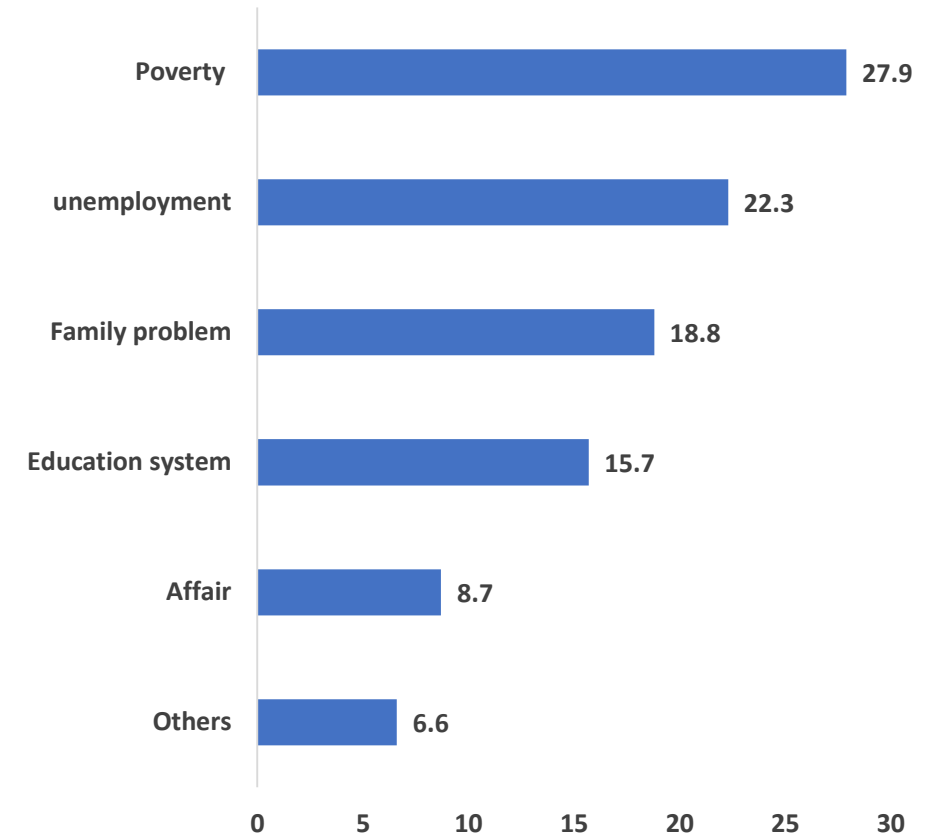
Out-of-pocket Health Expenditure



Social Deviance of Youth

- Juvenile offense is a major concern in Bangladesh
- The number of youth involved in anti-social activities appears to be on the rise.
- The rising teen gangs in urban areas are a major concern that commits pretty crimes, as well as more serious offenses like mugging, drug abuse, murder, etc.
- The new manifestations of juvenile offenses include gang activities, purposeless offenses, acts of vandalism, joy-riding, eve-teasing, and militancy.
- The main reasons that have been cited as the causes of the criminal activities of the youth includes poverty, unemployment, and family problem.

Causes of youth criminal activity

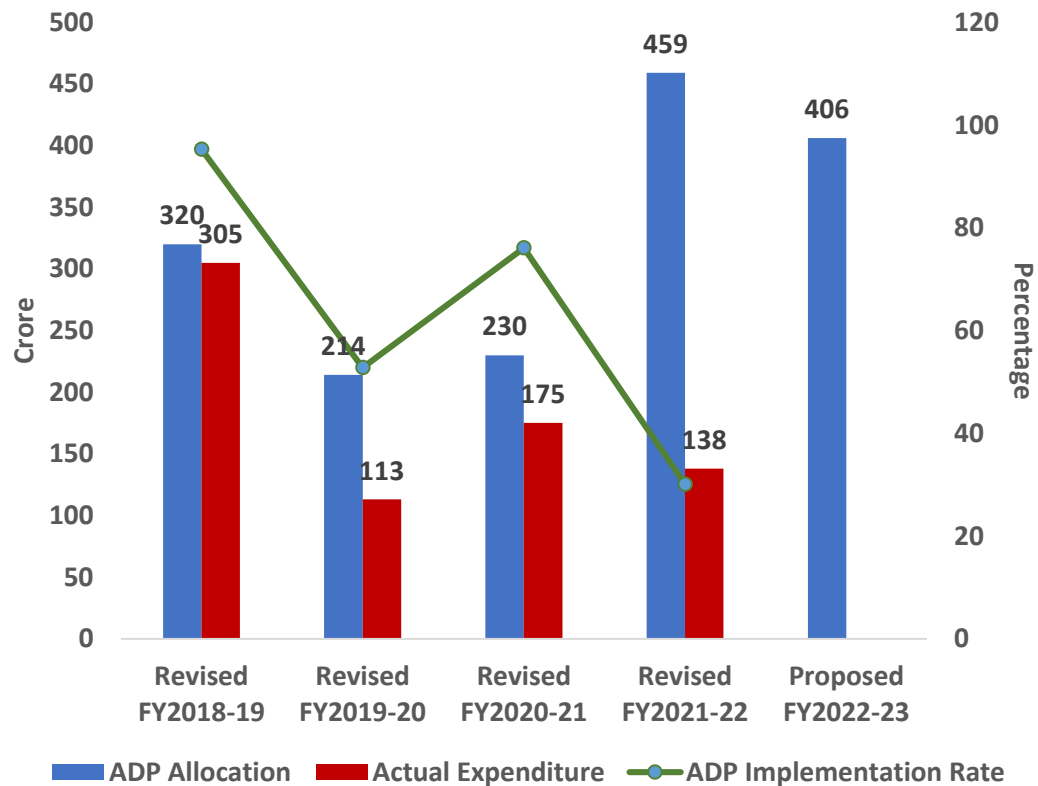


Policies to Prevent Social Deviation of Youth

- Strictly preventing production, import, and marketing of the narcotic substance
- Introducing sport as part of the regular curriculum to ensure youth's physical and mental health.
- Motivating youth towards volunteerism for sustainable development.
- Ensuring the constructive social participation of youth.

Government Resource Allocation for Youth Development

ADP allocation and implementation of the ministry of youth and sports



- The ADP allocation focuses on developing sports infrastructure.
- There is little or no focus on the sports facilities at the local level.
- There is a lack of focus on ensuring the social participation of youth or awareness-raising programmes against drug abuse or other social malpractices.
- For youth development “Technology Empowerment Centre on Wheels For Underprivileged Rural Young People of Bangladesh (TECUYB)” has been approved.

Thank you!