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# Youth Skill Development Approach SHOUHARDO III





## Introduction

In Bangladesh, 33 percent of the 160 million population is aged between 18-35 years .According to the Labor Force Survey, 2016-2017 (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics), 28 percent of youth with a secondary level education were unemployed. The unemployment rate was higher at 29.8 percent among youth not engaged in any formal education or training programs .

SHOUHARDO III's youth development strategy strengthens young adults' (aged 16 to 25 years) knowledge, capacity, and skillset. Many impoverished youths in Bangladesh do not get the opportunity to access alternative education programs designed to increase their theoretical and practical skills holistically. Additionally, prospective employers often see youth who drop out of standard educational programs as less skilled or trustworthy.



Mindful of this community perception, SHOUHARDO III provides a three-phased skills development training program to both male and female youth from Poor and Extreme Poor (PEP) households of the northeastern Char and Haor regions of the country.



## **SHOUHARDO III's three-phased youth employment skills development approach**

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The first phase of this program is designed to give the youth critical life skills in decision-making, problem-solving, health, gender, and resilience building. This first phase is followed by a vocational training component where youth are given access to training programs provided by public and private institutions. During this phase, opportunities are developed for youth to professionally engage with local entrepreneurs'/service providers to learn practical skills in their chosen fields. Where appropriate, youth are linked into formalized apprenticeship structures. During the program's final phase, participating youth are related to financial services, job databases, and critical employment infrastructure to maximize their ability to obtain paid employment.

## Life Skills Training

Decision-making

Communication

Negotiation

Financial Literacy

Business planning & management skills

Gender awareness

Problem solving

Health and resilience

## Vocational Skills Training

Institutional Training:  
at the district and  
upazila level

Local Training: with  
local level resources

Apprenticeship: with  
a local level  
entrepreneur

Local Constructing  
Society or Local  
WASH service  
provider

## Employment Linkages & Certification

Markets &  
employer linkages

Financial  
institution linkage

Government  
skilled labor  
database

Local job portal  
and website



## Unique features of SHOUHARDO III interventions

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The SHOUHARDO III youth-focused interventions are designed to both equip young people with employable skills and increase their confidence and motivation to explore a range of employment opportunities. The program adapted its approach to enhancing the levels of training needed, optimizing the use of national experts, developing partnerships with essential public and private entities, and strengthening links to employment structures. With this adjustment, the SHOUHARDO III youth intervention program now employs a more holistic approach to meeting the unique needs of young people.

# SHOUHARDO III Youth skill development approach

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Applied different skills training approaches like institutional, local and apprenticeship/ internship considering the youth ability, academic qualification, practical situation and challenges of the youth family

Partnering with Government and Non-Government employers



Working with government training institutions for training youth, ensures the youths' names are on the government skilled labour database

Ensuring that trained youth are linked to the market for wage or self-employment. Financial institution linkage is also made for financial support



## Key Program Learnings

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### Youth motivation

The program's approach of providing a personalized experience and giving extra support has incredibly motivated the youth. The program allows students to participate flexibly in obtaining skills quickly and be linked to job opportunities both within and outside their immediate community. Additionally, the program also follows an apprenticeship modality for career development which provides realistic examples of current opportunities and helps inform students on needed inputs to enhance their career development.





## Training

The inclusion of life skills on topics such as financial literacy, business planning, confidence, motivation, communication, and negotiations, has played an effective role in the holistic development of youth. Coupled with the provision of practical work experiences, youth are directly linked with prospective employers and experience tangible work experiences they can learn from.

## Tailor-made, customized approach

The SHOUHARDO III program has opted to take a customized approach in its youth program. This has allowed for skill-building in line with prospective employer demands. The inclusion of life skills and practicums has ensured that the skills obtained are more sustainable for the participating youth and combine practical and theoretical learning.





## Gender

SHOUHARDO III's youth program ensures active engagement of the female youth. By using local, non-residential training programs, young women have engaged in learning while meeting familial commitments consistently. The addition of life skills training has ensured young women are better suited to employer expectations and can actively pursue work of interest at optimal pay and conditions.

## Job fairs and digital skill development

To ensure job linkages for the trained youth, SHOUHARDO III has organized in-person and digital job fairs to link trained youth with potential employers. Both forums have had a high participation with renowned companies also attending with many young people receiving employment offers.





## Adaptation of skills by youth given Covid-19 context

COVID-19 presented an opportunity for youths to adapt their skills to cope with the pandemic. At the peak of lockdown, 280 youth participants (Male 220, and Female 60) adapted their skills. They found new local employment opportunities, including electrical house wiring, construction, and the production of low-cost face masks.

*“As we were good at tailoring, it was not difficult for us to learn making masks during the COVID-19 pandemic. We ensured quality masks at a reasonable price and thus received a demand from different government and non-government offices. We are planning to expand our production soon”*

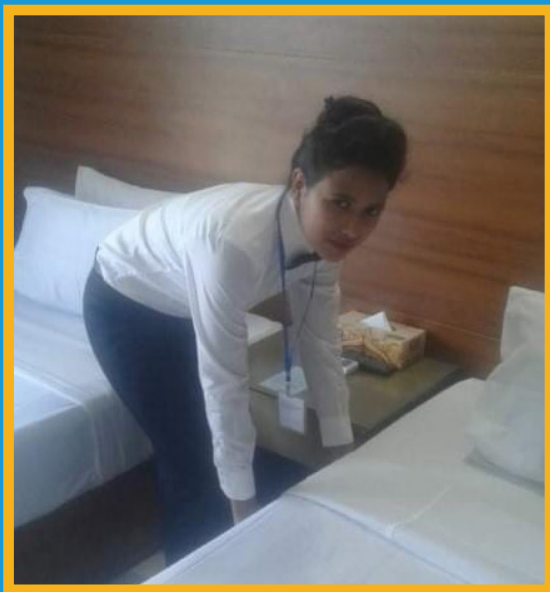
Rowsan Ara, a youth participant of SHOUHARDO III



## STORIES FROM YOUTH

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Shariful's village in Gaibandha received an electrical connection in January 2019. However, the village only had a few electricians in the locality. Due to the lack of electricians, the residents would have to wait for hours before their electrical troubles were attended to, and that too for a higher price. Shariful participated in a training on electrical wiring repairs held at the local Union Parishad. He was determined to select a trade that was high in demand locally and to strengthen his skills by practicing. After being trained as a young electrician, Shariful secured a position in the locality that helps to support his community and family.



Resma from Sirajganj expressed a high degree of interest in participating in a training course to become a professional housekeeper. Reshma's choice presented many challenges as the role carried a stigma as culturally, women do not enter or clean the room of an unrelated male. Upon completion, she received employment at a three-star hotel in Dhaka. Reshma is delighted with the opportunities provided to her by the program to explore new skills and engagement.

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