



# Fostering Responsible Digital Citizenship to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh (FRDC) Project

## **MIDTERM ASSESSMENT** REPORT

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**RESEARCH TEAM**

**SUBMITTED TO:**

**The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom- FNF Bangladesh**

**SUBMITTED BY:**



### **Institute of Social Business (ISB)**

House # 86, Road #07,  
Block- C, Munsurabad Housing Society, Adabor, Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Cell Phone: +8801871508485, +8801711356197;  
Email: info.isbbd@gmail.com; info@isbbd.com

Web Address: [www.isbbd.com](http://www.isbbd.com)

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In addition, we would like to convey our sincere gratitude to the research team who were involved in the whole process.

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DSA</b>	Digital Security Act
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>FNF</b>	The Friedrich Naumann Foundation
<b>FOG</b>	Freedom of Expression
<b>FRDC</b>	Foster Responsible Digital Citizenship
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IDI</b>	In-depth Interview
<b>ISB</b>	Institute of Social Business
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>MTA</b>	Mid-term Assessment
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference

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# Executive Summary

**Background and Objectives:** This midterm assessment is undertaken based on set result indicators to see the progress of the action. The European Union (EU) is co-funding the action. FNF Bangladesh is the coordinator of the action while Dnet is the implementing partner of the project “*Foster Responsible Digital Citizenship to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh*”. The main stakeholder groups of the project include the target groups, i.e. students, guardians, teachers, policy-makers and the media. Through direct and indirect interventions, the project aims to target at least 50,000 young people in Bangladesh who will benefit from an improved regulatory framework as well as an increased knowledge on digital citizenship. The action also addresses the challenges to Freedom of Expression (FoE) in the country posed by digital security laws, mainly through advocacy efforts.

Overall objective of this MTA is to make assessment of, amongst other things, the project design, progress, challenges, and way forward in the first two years of the project 2020-2022 while the specific objectives aimed (1) to understand the relevancy and effectiveness of the project in the field of digital citizenship education in Bangladesh & (2) to measure the changes in attitude and practice of the target groups in relation to digital citizenship education & (3) to provide recommendations or way forward for achievement of project targets by the end of the project ensuring sustainability.

**Methodology:** The MTA team reviewed the literature/documents that include baseline document, project document, log frame, project reports and contemporary initiative of digital usage by the students, teachers, journalist, parents, policy experts and representative from the government. Qualitative assessment tools were used during the entire process that includes Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant Interview (KII), In-depth Interview (IDI) and Case Stories. Quantitative data from questionnaires survey was analysed to check frequency, cross tabulation, mean etc. Perspectives on the various themes and issues were also compared and contrasted. Data were triangulated across all quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, in order to build consensus on the logical findings that were carried forward to formulate recommendations. At the start of discussion with the stakeholders, MTA team explained of the purpose of the assessment, potential risks and benefits, content and time required for the interview and

sought informed consent from the interviewee maintaining confidentiality, and privacy of the data.

## **Findings/results**

### **Relevance**

The project interventions and strategies were found quite appropriate and relevant and highly reflected the needs and priorities of the target groups. When the intervention started; it was assumed that not enough response would be received. However, when the implementation started, and activities began to unfold it revealed very high response which is beyond expectation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the setting of the number of targets could have been higher to reach wider group. The intervention ensured maximum level of involvement and participation by the community as the needs and priorities were assessed through a good designed which is participatory, undertaking baseline survey where the views and ideas have been collected from the target groups.

**Relevance for Bangladesh:** The MTA reveals that the FRDC project is a priority and highly relevant for Bangladesh due to the fact that the country is rapidly transforming towards digitalization in all sectors and young people are predominant users of cyber space in Bangladesh where there is widespread **concern of radicalization and hate speech** with strong emotional content.

Government representative from the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs found that the project intervention is highly relevant to lawful interaction, maintaining digital etiquettes with the rules and regulations of digital laws of the country which will help to do lawful interaction and to change behavioral pattern of common people. The project needs to collaborate with the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ministry and division of the government. Such collaboration will bring alignment with the law of the land, infuse better harmonization and coordination which will contribute to achieving the government's goal towards transforming Bangladesh into digital Bangladesh.

**Relevance for students:** Interventions were necessary and immensely relevant due to the fact that youth constitute one third of the total population and they are at the forefront of use of digital platform. Secondly, Bangladesh is transforming into digital Bangladesh, and all should have good knowledge on digital citizenship so that they do

not become victims of digital abuse, harassment, do not spread harmful contents that violates rights of other person and can maintain digital etiquette, respect others opinion and keep themselves safe in the cyber space.

**Relevance for teachers and journalists:** Teachers and journalists strongly opined that in order to educate the students on digital citizenship the Interventions of this project were effective and hugely relevant. They argued if they are not knowledgeable about digital citizenship, then they won't be able to impart the knowledge on digital citizenship including providing guidance and protection to the students and the common people.

**Relevance for policy experts:** Policy experts lauded the intervention and stated that the project is highly relevant. They commented that the intervention is contributing to stop hate speech, spreading vengeance, rumor and uploading dirty pictures, harmful threats etc. & demonstrate how to express opinion on the digital space maintaining digital etiquette, values, emotions, ideas, behavior, decision making etc. They stated that cooperation from the policy experts, lawyers is highly essential as they know details about legal aspects.

**Relevance for Parents:** Parents expressed high satisfaction for the intervention as they learnt a lot from the website of the project which enhanced their own knowledge and insights including their family members, relatives that brought benefit to the whole family.

**Effectiveness:** The MTA found that overall progress made towards results is mixed for the Project. The project effectively met the expectation of all the stakeholders. The logical framework is coherent enough to achieve the result. The project has already passed its 2<sup>nd</sup> year but due to COVID-19 planned activities of 1<sup>st</sup> year was unable to implement. DNET and its working team is very efficient and capable to handle a project like this. DNET knows the country context very well the project has designed strongly followed the EU rules and instructions.

**Achieving outcome and outputs:** The project has been effective and on track in achieving the outcome and outputs targets set in the logical framework. Results of the projects are furnished in the followings:

- ***Freedom of expression on critical topics (Impact 1):*** It is revealed that **67% students/youth have enhanced their knowledge** through learning session, peer learning and handbook resulting they can share critical thinking on socio political



issues freely and constructively which is 37% higher than baseline value. In terms of freedom of expression on political topics, it is found that **44% of the students (45% female students) increased their knowledge** on how to express the views on political topics on the internet/digital platform freely which is 24% higher than baseline value.

- **Changes in behavior (outcome 1):** Gaining knowledge from the project initiatives **82% youth (86% women) changed their behavior in terms of interacting more appropriately in the digital space.** Changes are noted on three fundamental aspects about online etiquettes e.g. respecting self and others, educating self and others, safeguarding self and others has been resulted to make this behavior change. Changes in behaviour pattern denotes significant change compared to the baseline. It is revealed from the study that 99% respondents never post inappropriate photos because they have enhanced their knowledge from the project. Being aware from the project intervention, it is revealed that 79% never interact with fake account users of them 80% girls refrain from interacting with fake account users as they think that such act is unlawful.
- **Participation in democratic process (Impact 2): 83% youth reported that they are confident enough to make positive changes in the society through participating in democratic process using social media.** As a result of participation in democratic process youth can take appropriate, lawful and safe actions. The youth have gained knowledge and became articulated resulting 250 respondents reported that they can practice and participate democratic process in social media. It is revealed that girls are less interactive compared to boys.
- As a result of participation in democratic process youth can take appropriate, lawful and safe actions. For example, 60% youth (girls 53%) take initiative to create awareness against bullying, 20% youth (girls 17%) take legal action. 74% youth (girls 66%) mentioned that they prefer to participate in online civil society protest (e.g., against rape, road accident, etc.), 41% youth (girls 38%) like to join in online petitioning for a cause and 25% choose online e-learning portals and quiz competitions on topics that help them to become a good citizen. It is noticed that girls are not very much comfortable in taking fearless action due to lack of courage, fear

of revenge compared to the boys. Boys are more courageous in taking fearless actions.

- **Changes in knowledge (outcome 2):** It is found that the project has been successful to enhance the knowledge among youth through arranging learning session, peer learning, handbook, e-learning portal, monthly quiz arranged by the e-learning portal which increased the capacity of youth on how to express in online freely and safely. It is revealed that **66% students (69% girls) have knowledge about the DSA 2018 of Bangladesh** which is 20% higher than the baseline value.
- In regard to knowledge on digital etiquette it was found that through different components of this project youth have gained a clear understanding on digital etiquette. Therefore, 71% respondents (girls 69%) informed that they do not share password with others. Majority of the youth (63%) stated that they do not share private information (address, phone number, age, etc.) and girls were found not comfortable in sharing personal information online.
- The project has educated /aware the youth about cyber bullying through different media. As a result, 72% respondents opined that spreading rumor is mean to them as cyber bullying, 55% considers threatening someone in online is cyber bullying while 49% respondents are of the opinion that trolling someone is called cyber bullying. Surprisingly, none of the girl's response to this question.
- It is found that youth have gained considerable understanding on what constitutes hate speech. 65% respondents informed that expressing prejudice about a particular religion/belief mean to them as hate speech. 45% respondents replied that expressing prejudice about any sexual orientation is considered as hate speech to them. 42% youth think that expressing prejudice about any ethnic minority, geographical/ regional origins is also constitutes hate speech. Leaving hateful comment on someone's post/blog also falls under hate speech that think by 32% respondents. Inciting violence through status/post/blog/video means hate speech to 17% youth. 20% youth opined that all the accumulation of all indicators is hate speech out of which 18% are girls

### **Output level achievement**

- ✓ One e-learning platform and one knowledge toolkit on digital citizenship have been developed (40,000 visits, about 5,000 registered users among them 2000 have

received the courses). As a result, all users gained substantial knowledge and information about digital citizenship.

- ✓ A total of 2,269 young citizens (university students; 51% women) received training on digital citizenship through learning and peer learning sessions which broadened their knowledge, attitude and behavior on digital citizenship.
- ✓ 24 journalists were trained (women 25%); 82 teachers participated in learning session(women 35%). As an outcome of the training, positive behavior change in people have been noted.
- ✓ The project has reached about 50,000 stakeholders (including parents, teachers, students, as well as internet users) to make them aware of the intervention and its messages through intensive social media campaigning.

All the achievements were possible due to more positive target group, their will full and enthusiastic participation in the project mainly students, teachers and journalists. One of the activities that became important is that trained students taught next 4 students through peer learning process. Teachers and trained students become interested to teach more participants.

**Efficiency:** The project was implemented in an efficient manner under the guidance of the PMC and the staff members. Financial resource of the project was fully utilized. It is to be noted that COVID-19 hindered accomplishment of the planned activities in achieving its output and delivering the inputs on time against the set target. Consequently, money remained unspent. In this regard the project management team followed an adaptive management approach in terms of repurposing of the activities and changes in method of activities, i.e., from physical to online through revising budget. The unspent money was used for the purpose of online activities and to meet the demand of reprinting more copies of the handbook “Digital Citizenship Learning Tool” (‘Freedom of Expression Practice’) was raised and fulfilled. To ensure efficient use of funds, procurement, beneficiary support, budget utilization and financial monitoring the project strictly followed the EU rules.

**Sustainability:** It was evident to the MTA team that sustainability of the project is a viable option and indeed logical through development of the knowledge content such as the website, handbook, learning session materials, e-learning videos and courses. Digital knowledge products and tools signify that it will continue to be used and modified by other users beyond the project period. Peer learning sessions signifies a multiplier effect

that will continue as more and more youth start to use the knowledge on digital citizenship acquired through the learning session and then impart these with their peers.

**Recommendations:**

**Recommendations made by the students**

- 1) Continue the learning and peer learning, increase the area of the session and improve it. Increase the duration & frequency of the learning and peer-learning sessions.
- 2) Involve students from school, college and madrasa and also include common people to have multiplier effect.
- 3) Produce video on the learning and peer-learning sessions & upload the same on website.

**Recommendations made by the teachers & parents**

- 4) Update the website and the handbook of the project and organize learning and peer learning sessions once a month.
- 5) Undertake more campaign on social media to create mass awareness on digital citizenship and the DSA.
- 6) Distribute the handbook among the parents so that they become also aware of the intervention and guide their children.

**Recommendations made by the journalists & policy experts**

- 7) Arrange discussion/dialogue sessions with policy makers and regulators to exchange views and opinion for improving the digital safety and to balance the security concerns with the need for freedom of expression.
- 8) Engage/involve policy makers/policy experts in the discussions and developing knowledge products of the interventions as they know details about legal aspects of the DSA and digital citizenship issues.
- 9) Create enabling environment where policy makers and regulators can work together to ensure that DSA encouraging young people to engage in the digital citizenship discourse.
- 10) In order to avail support from the government to achieve the overall objectives of the project and to create sustainable impact in digital citizenship this project needs to collaborate with the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ministry and division of the government.

## **Conclusions**

The MTA team concludes that this intervention is a time befitting and effective for the boosting up the new generation particularly youth to become responsible digital citizens. The intervention is also encouraging/inspiring the youth to express their opinion in the cyber space freely and safely which ultimately results into building a generation of responsible citizens. Hence, this project needs to continue completion.

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Context of the Project

Bangladesh is a young country, with approximately 52 million, about 1/3rd of the country's total population, under the age of 25. It is also one of the fastest growing countries in the world for mobile use and internet access. According to the report of Data portal<sup>1</sup> there were 47.61 million internet users in Bangladesh in 2021. The number of internet users in Bangladesh increased by 7.7 million (+19%) between 2020 and 2021. Internet penetration stood in Bangladesh at 28.8% in January 2021. Similarly, there were 45.00 million social media users in Bangladesh and the number of social media users increased by 9% in 2021. All these facts and figures indicate that Bangladesh has entered the digital space quite rapidly and the number is ever increasing. According to the Cyber Security and Crime Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, 70 percent of cybercrime victims in Bangladesh are young particularly women and this figure highlights the vulnerability of women in Bangladesh, no matter where they go, what they do, and how they dress and speak<sup>2</sup>.

The problems are made worse by fraudulent use and purpose by violating the digital etiquette for example minorities (religious, ethnic, LGBT, free-thinkers) have been subjected to abuse and threats. It is easy to create fake digital IDs and to spread fake digital content, inciting hatred and violence and there have been numerous cases over the years. The Bangladeshi government reacted to this crisis in a hasty and kneejerk way by introducing a strict new law, the Digital Security Act in 2018. Without precise knowledge of and concerns for the impact on FOE and personal liberties, this Act contains rules on how to regulate the internet by criminalizing behavior, blocking sites and restricting access. There was also a Cyber Tribunal (Bangladesh) set up to deal with cases.

## 1.2 Background

Within the transforming reality of Bangladesh particularly in the area of digitalization of countries Dnet and FNF jointly developed a three-year (Feb 2020 to Jan 2023) action 'Foster responsible digital citizenship to promote freedom of expression in Bangladesh'.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-bangladesh>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bangladeshpost.net/posts/cyber-violence-against-women-43635>

The European Union also extended hands with funds to proceed with this action in the fields for capacitating youth (particularly University students) on constructively, freely, and responsibly expressing themselves in the digital space. By the time of December 2021, Dnet and FNF already reached more than 1,000 youth at 5-Universities (Dhaka and Rajshahi -see map below) through interactive learning and peer-learning sessions on Digital Citizenship. This midterm assessment is undertaken based on set result indicators to see the progress of the action The European Union (EU) is co-funding the action. FNF Bangladesh is the coordinator of the action while Dnet is the implementing partner. The main stakeholder groups of the project include the target groups, i.e. students, guardians, teachers, policy-makers and the media. Through direct and indirect interventions, the project aims to target at least 50,000 young people in Bangladesh who will benefit from an improved regulatory framework as well as an increased knowledge on digital citizenship.

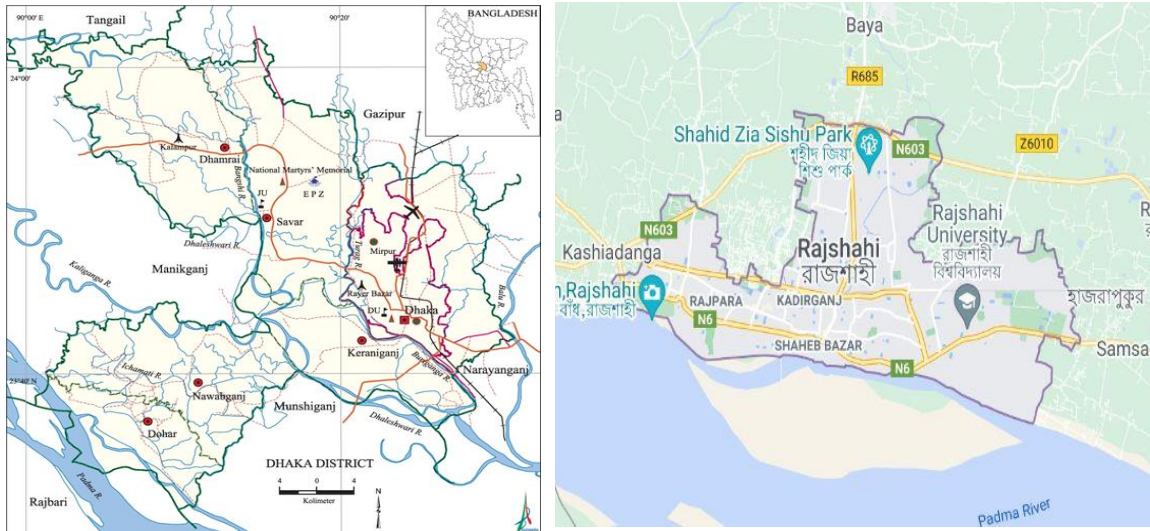
FRDC project of FNF Bangladesh works with the mission to capacitate young citizens in Bangladesh to express themselves freely, appropriately, lawfully and safely in the public sphere and to create an enabling and supportive environment for them to do so. The action also addresses the challenges to Freedom of Expression (FoE) in the country posed by digital security laws, mainly through advocacy efforts.

A baseline study was conducted in 2021 for this project. According to the study findings, it was revealed that the lack of knowledge and experience of young citizens when negotiating the digital world, and the lack of knowledge and awareness of the concepts and practice of good digital citizenships by teachers and parents.

At the midterm of the FRDC project, FNF Bangladesh has planned to conduct midterm assessment of the project for assessing the project in the light of its overall objective and the specific subjects.



## Map: Project Locations



### 1.3 Objectives of the Mid-term Assessment

The overall objective of this Midterm Assessment is to make assessment of, amongst other things, the project design, progress, challenges, and way forward in the first two years of the project 2020-2022.

The specific objectives of the assessment are (1) to understand the relevancy and effectiveness of the project in the field of digital citizenship education in Bangladesh, (2) to measure the changes in attitude and practice of the target groups in relation to digital citizenship education (3) to provide recommendations or way forward for achievement of project targets by the end of the project ensuring sustainability.





## **2. Methodology**

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### **2.1. Mid-term assessment approach**

The mid-term assessment was participatory, using a democratic approach (MacDonald & Kushnar, 2005). This is an approach that sees the assessors in the role of a facilitator rather than referee particularly for collecting qualitative data. The identified major task was to conduct a questionnaire survey on the targeted adolescent and young especially university students to capture the present status of the indicators (excerpts from Project Log-frame) those were addressed by the project interventions. The status of these indicators of safe and secure digital environment conditions is expected to be changed due to implementation of the designed project. To carry out the assessment four basic steps were undertaken; a) review the literature/documents that include baseline document, project document, log frame, project reports and contemporary initiative of digital usage by the students; b) assessing the overall KAP toward digital citizenship among Bangladeshi university students; c) measuring the indicators starting from baseline to mid-term assessment and d) capturing the achievement (evidence-based) challenges, key lessons, and recommendations for program designing, planning, and implementation of the project.

### **2.2 Location and duration of the study**

The coverage of the survey areas (data collection) were five universities (3 public and 2 private) in Dhaka and Rajshahi. The universities are Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University (public), Daffodil International University, and Varendra University (private). The study was conducted for the period from February-April 2022. However, the field level data were collected in the month of April 2022.

### **2.3 Mid-term assessment design**

The mid-term assessment used a mixed methods design blending qualitative and quantitative data. This followed three-fold design: (i) primary data collection from the project beneficiaries and stakeholders at the field level following a set survey questionnaire for quantitative data collection and ii) for qualitative data collection focus group discussion (FGD), in-depth interview (IDI), capturing key informants' information (KII), and case study tools were followed. (iii) Desk review to explore and collate the information relating to the project audience. The process of desk review was mostly done at Dhaka level.

## **2.4 Covid-19 protocol**

The data collection team was trained to ensure that they have a comprehensive awareness of Covid-19 prevention strategies. Data collectors and respondents were provided with and requested to wear face mask during the KIIs, IDIs and FGDs sessions.

## **2.5 Sampling Technique**

### **Sample Unit**

The project intervention of the project covers mostly university students. Thus, the mid-term assessment team considered questionnaire survey of university students in this regard. To triangulate, the study also gathered data through FGDs, from university students. To supplement the quantitative data by qualitative expression, the study interviewed the following stakeholders and key informants of the project intervention areas:

**IDI:** This was done with the faculty members/Teachers and Project Staff

**KII:** The KIIs were conducted with Policy Experts (number), Media Personnel (Journalists Mostly) and Parents.

Furthermore, case studies were conducted with project beneficiaries.

## **2.6 Data collection method**

### **2.6.1 Inception report and data collection tool development**

A desk review of relevant document and data which have been shared with the mid-term assessment team has been conducted. This includes the project proposal, baseline Study report, process documentation logical framework, M&E reports, learning reports, and Research reports.

To facilitate the understanding the team also sat with the FNF team. This allowed for the development of the inception report and the data collection tools.

## 2.6.2: Data collection

### Quantitative data collection

Quantitative method was deployed for midterm survey to capture the data related to indicators designed in log frame that reveals the changing status. For quantitative data collection, one to one interview was administered through a structured questionnaire covering the indicators set in the log frame. Target



Photo: Questionnaire Survey

respondents of the survey were stratified into different strata which details are given in the sampling frame below.

A total of 300 students were surveyed at 5 universities whereas 250 were considered from treatment group and 50 were taken from controlled group. Sample size for treatment group were distributed among 4 intervened universities considering availability of project beneficiaries. In this case, samples were drawn 35 from Dhaka University, 89 from Jahangirnagar University, 10 Daffodil International University, 39 from Rajshahi University, and 127 from Varendra University.

**Table 1: Number of respondents according to university**

SL	Location	Type	University name	Number of respondents	
				Treatment Group	Control Group
1	Dhaka	Public	Dhaka university	25	10
2	Dhaka	Public	Jahangirnagar university	79	10
3	Dhaka	Private	Daffodil International University	-	10
4	Rajshahi	Public	Rajshahi university	29	10
5	Rajshahi	Private	Varendra university	117	10
<b>Total</b>				<b>250</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>300</b>	

## Qualitative data collection

The qualitative data collection tools such as FGD, IDI, KII and case study were used to extract the explorative data, and causative factors of prevailed situation to get responses to for instances, what are the causes of changes, how the changes are made, what are the most significant changes that the beneficiaries felt. For qualitative data collection a series of KIIs, IDIs and FGDs with university students were undertaken during the mid-term assessment. All the KIIs,



Photo: FGD with Students

IDIs and FGDs were conducted in person. All the KIIs, IDIs and FGDS were conducted following a checklist.

A total of 52 individuals participated in the KIIs-12, IDIs-11 and FGDs -4. For IDIs a total of 9 faculty member/teachers and 2 project staff participated during the mid-term assessment. Out of 12 KIIs, 4 persons belonging to policy expert, 1 representing government, 5 from media/journalist and 2 from parents took part. Apart from these 5 case studies were conducted with university students in the project intervention areas.

**Table2: Number of participants attended in FGDs, KIIs and IDIs**

Method & Tools	Particulars	Number	Male	Female	Total
<b>FGDs</b>	Students of Dhaka university	1	3	3	6
	Students of Jahangirnagar university	1	4	7	11
	Students of Rajshahi university	1	6	0	6
	Students of Varendra university	1	6	0	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>KIIs</b>	Parents of Dhaka university	1	0	1	1
	Parents of Rajshahi university	1	0	1	1
	Policy experts	5	1	4	5
	Media experts	2	1	1	2
	Journalist	3	3	0	3
	Government representative	1	1	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IDIs</b>	Teachers of Dhaka university	2	1	1	2
	Teachers of Jahangirnagar university	2	1	1	2
	Teachers of Rajshahi university	2	1	1	2

Teachers of Varendra university	2	2	1	3
Teacher of Daffodill university	1	1	0	1
Staff of Dnet office	2	1	1	2
Staff of FNF office	1	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>54</b>

## 2.7 Implementation of Sample Selection

Sample respondents were selected on purposively basis from the list of beneficiaries. If the selected sample was not available during the survey time, the next available beneficiaries were chosen for the survey in order to accomplish the survey in time.

## 2.8 Data Processing, Analysis and Reporting

Quantitative data from questionnaires survey was analysed using SPSS programme by which measures of frequency, cross tabulation, mean etc. were done and graphical presentation were used to present and compare results of the evaluation and project achievements. Qualitative data from KII, IDI, FGDs and case study were transcribed, coded and then interpreted in line with the ToR of the evaluation work, using thematic analysis. Perspectives on the various themes and issues were compared and contrasted. To ensure validity and allow for generalisation, data were triangulated across all quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, in order to build consensus on the logical findings that were carried forward to formulate recommendations.





### **3. Findings/Results of the Mid-Term Assessment (MTA)**

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This section summarizes of the main findings related to each area and evaluations criteria, namely: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency (and management) and sustainability.

#### **3.1 Relevance**

The project interventions and strategies were found quite appropriate and relevant and highly reflected the needs and priorities of the target groups. When the intervention started; it was assumed that not enough response would be received. However, when the implementation started, and activities began to unfold it revealed very high response which is beyond expectation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the setting of the number of targets could have been higher to reach wider group.

The intervention ensured maximum level of involvement and participation by the community. This happened due to the fact that the needs and priorities were assessed through a good designed which is participatory, undertaking baseline survey where the views and ideas have been collected from the target groups. Further, the participation of teachers and students in the project intervention is highly satisfactory and remarkable. In case of participation and involvement of journalist's it was noticeable. Parents involvement and participation was not so encouraging because it was difficult to reach them. The project had no such information about the parents who are using internet, who are attached with the e-platform or not.

One shortcoming of the intervention was noted with regard to the advocacy with policy makers. The project could not yet reach this group. However, some preparatory works are being done which found that the project needs to review the existing laws carefully and critically with international standard law. In this regard a TOR has been made with an expert lawyer team and work is in progress involving eight international standard law experts (Recommendations of the policy markers is *annexed in annexure 1*). It further noted that the work is delayed due to issue is very critical and sensitive.

#### **3.1.1 Relevance to Bangladesh:**

The FRDC project remains a priority and highly relevant initiative in the context of Bangladesh due to the fact that the country is rapidly bringing in digitalization in all sectors e. g. social, political, economic, trade, education and communication using the

digital platform. The combination of a large share of young people including teachers, journalists, parents and common people keen on using the internet to express themselves and a booming unregulated growth in access to digital media has led to a crisis regarding safe Freedom of Expression on the internet in light of the Digital Security Act. In this context, Bangladeshi youth stands at the frontline, and they are the powerhouse of all these transformations. Most of the young people of the country are user of cyber space in Bangladesh where there is widespread **concern of radicalization and hate speech** with strong emotional content. The project contributed to developing a comprehensive guideline for youth with cultural ratification, training and promoting the culture of safe use of internet particularly safety of youth and adolescent.

Government representative from the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs stated that the project intervention is highly relevant to lawful interaction, maintaining digital etiquettes with the rules and regulations of digital laws of the country which will help to do lawful interaction and to change behavioral pattern of common people. With regard to the Digital Security Act, the govt representative is of the opinion that at the moment there is no need of amendment of the existing Digital Security Act as a result the government is not thinking about amendment. He further mentioned that in order to avail support from the government to achieve the overall objectives of the project and to create sustainable impact in digital citizenship this project needs to collaborate with the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ministry and division of the government. Such collaboration will bring alignment with the law of the land, infuse better harmonization and coordination which will contribute to achieving the government's goal towards transforming Bangladesh into digital Bangladesh.

### **3.1.2 Relevance to the students**

The mid-term assessment found that the project is relevant to the need of the students. They are of the opinion that the project is essential and time befitting especially when the youth needed to have digital communication. Students have enhanced their knowledge on digital citizenship learning particularly they have been enabled to protect from bullying, abuse, harassment, violence, hate speech etc. The interventions were necessary and relevant because Bangladesh is transforming into digital Bangladesh, and all should have good knowledge on digital citizenship. The sessions were necessary and relevant because the society as a whole has benefited a lot.

Majority of students opined that the learning session and the peer learning sessions were effective and useful; pre-test, post-test, distribution of handbook, website, e-learning portal and discussion on DSA has build their capacity on lawfully, appropriately and safely behaving in the internet world. It widened their knowledge on digital security act and they learnt how to respect other's opinion.

Respondents suggested to increase the number of participants by including students from school, college, madrasa and other universities as it enlightened them with practical knowledge, skills & technique to handle/use the online platform and various social media upholding legal and social norms.

### **3.1.3 Relevance to the Teachers**

The MTA team had the impression that the project is important and relevant for the teachers. Education and formation of youth is prime concern for the teachers due to the fact that students become victims of digital menace and if teachers are not knowledgeable about digital citizenship, then they won't be able to impart the knowledge on digital citizenship including protection of their students. Consequently, teachers argued that they should know first so that they are able to guide and mentor their students.

The teachers strongly opined that in order to educate the students on digital citizenship the Interventions of this project were effective. The number of users has increased and the intervention has been able to mitigate the problems and need of the people. Around 50-75% cyber users could solve problems.

The MTA noted mixed view regarding whether the Digital Security Act is severely regulating the freedom expression. More than half of the teachers indicated that DSA has been strictly regulating freedom of expression and people cannot express freely, and they are afraid in speaking out.

### **3.1.4 Relevance to the Journalist**

The journalists found that the project is contributing to promote a positive communication culture in Bangladeshis particularly among the youth. It is encouraging/inspiring the youth to express their opinion in the cyber space freely and safely that results into building a generation of responsible digital citizens. Journalists and media professionals consider that this is a time befitting and highly relevant project.



Journalist argued that the project created positive impact in the behavior change of youth and common people in terms of having better understanding on lawful use and practice of digital/cyber space, digital etiquette, disseminates behavior changing information among youth. Journalist themselves felt that the project has created urge among them for creative writing, balanced and constructive reporting, providing lawful, safe and beneficial content that brings benefit of the society as a whole.

It was further found that this project is relevant in mitigating the problems and need of the youth with reference to use of digital space, creating conducive environment, maintaining digital safety and becoming aware of the legal aspects of DSC through which youth become responsible digital citizens. It is enabling to create e-learning portal through which youth as well as journalist can freely express their opinion and learning the digital norms and discipline and law of the land through training course

Journalist affirmed that the project has been able to change the behavior pattern of the youth in using digital space and activities of the project is in alignment with DSA. They opined that DSA is not regulating the freedom of expression strictly which is manifested by participation of large number of people in the digital platform.

### **3.1.5 Relevance to the Policy Experts**

Policy experts opined that the intervention is contributing to stop hate speech, spreading vengeance, rumor and uploading dirty pictures, harmful threats etc. This project has been able to demonstrate how to express opinion on the digital space maintaining digital etiquette, values, emotions, ideas, behavior, decision making etc. They further opined the project has also created three distinct strata, which are (a) respecting self and others; (b) educating self and others in protecting and (c) freedom of expression. The policy experts argued that to become an ideal citizen it is inevitable to know appropriately ones citizen rights and responsibilities both in on-line and off-line and to gain skills through practice. They opined that this initiative is highly relevant and cooperation from the policy experts, lawyers is highly essential as they know details about legal aspects.

### **3.1.6. Relevance to the Parents**

The mid-term assessment team found that the parents were highly satisfied with the project. They expressed that they learnt a lot from the website of the project which enhanced their own knowledge and insights including their family members, relatives that brought benefit to the whole family. They argued that if they don't understand about

digital citizenship then they will not be able to protect and guide their children. Therefore, it is highly relevant for them. Parents were worried before the project intervention regarding engagement of their children with the digital space. However, this project has helped to build the capacity of the youth to follow the correct way of digital communication/digital space and now they are more confident about their children not becoming victim of digital abuse. Parents are of the opinion that their children should be aware of cyber security and to become digital citizen for which children and other youth should be encouraged to learn about the DSA. In order for safety and security, it is essential to teach them how much to talk and how much not to express. Parents are of the opinion that their children should be aware of cyber security and to become digital citizen for which children and other youth should be encouraged to learn about the DSA

On the flip side, fear among some parents were also noted by the MTA team. Therefore, some parents think that it is not necessary to speak out/express opinion publicly. Parents wanted to extend all sorts of supports and cooperation to the youth to become digital citizen.

### **3.2. Effectiveness**

The MTA found that overall progress made towards results is mixed for the Project. All stakeholders met would support this conclusion. Overall, the MTA judged the project to be excellent in relevance, satisfactory in effectiveness and on track in the effectiveness criterion. The vast majority of targets in the project were achieved. The project effectively met the expectation of the student, teacher and parents need and has also effectively partnered with the Dnet.

The logical framework is coherent enough to achieve the result. The project has already passed its 2<sup>nd</sup> year but due to COVID-19 planned activities of 1<sup>st</sup> year was unable to implement. DNET and its working team is very efficient and capable to handle a project like this. DNET knows the country context very well the project has designed strongly followed the EU rules and instructions. In the logical frame as risk assumption unintended COVID-19 was count. However, the project has implemented more than 60% of planned activities and in some cases more than planned.

## **General information about the achievement of the project**

- An informative and quality Baseline Survey has been conducted in May 2021 with the participation of university students and teachers, journalist, human rights activists, and civil society people.
- 1000 students from 5 universities of Dhaka (DU, Daffodil U, and JU), Rajshahi (RU and Ruet.U are trained as trainer/facilitator for peer learning process.
- Each of this 1000 peer educators have trained minimum 4 students/friends and in this way 5000 university students are trained on Digital Citizenship.
- The whole education through peer learning process has been mentored by 82 university teachers out of targeted 100 teachers.
- A Handbook on Digital Citizenship for freedom of expression has designed and developed and published with the active participation of students, teachers, journalist, human rights activist, right based CSO and civil society people.
- Developed and setup E-learning portal as <https://www.digitalcitizenbd.com>  
Project implementation is ongoing.

## **Achieving outcome and outputs**

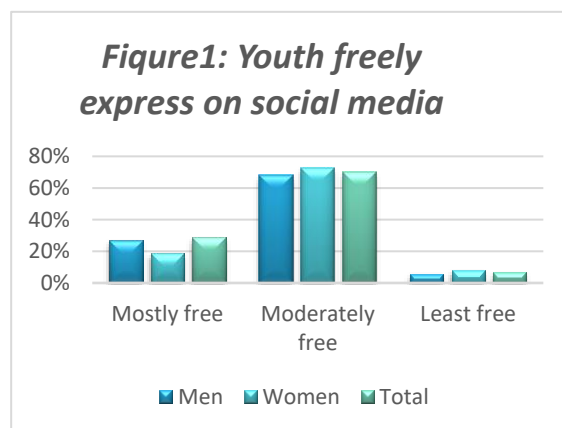
The project has been effective and on track in achieving the outcome and outputs targets set in the logical framework. A summary of the corresponding indicators, their baselines, targets and reported progress is found in the table ***as annexure 2.***

The MTA validated the findings of the most recent Result Monitoring Report (January 2022) and could also verify progress report. Some highlights against the impact and outcome level indicators are given below:

***Indicator.001: Freedom of expression of the youths on critical topics on the internet platforms***

***Freedom of expression on critical topics (Impact 1)***

It is revealed that **67% students/youth have enhanced their knowledge** through learning session, peer learning and handbook resulting they can share critical thinking on socio political issues freely and constructively which is 37% higher than baseline value. 85% youth (89% women) found the knowledge product i.e., handbook, website including the learning session are effective to express an opinion



freely. 23% students/youth freely express on social media and 70% youth said that they are moderately free to express on social media.

### ***Most shared post on social media by the students***

Student/youth uses wide range of social media platform such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Twitter, and Online games. Most usages platform is Facebook (boys 152, girls 128), followed by WhatsApp (boys 135, girls 107) and YouTube (boys 125, girls 102). From the data it is revealed that boy's use the social media more than girls.

**Table 3: Most shared posts on social media**

Question	Coding categories	Male	Female	Total
<b>What do you share most on social media?</b>	Photos of myself/my life's events	122	105	227
	My thoughts and ideas	135	113	248
	Socio-political news, articles, videos	68	33	101
	Inspirational quotes	68	70	138
	Learning/motivational contents	63	54	117

Student largely choose to share their own thoughts and ideas (83%) and their own photos /life's events (76%) on internet platforms, followed by inspirational quotes (46%), and learning/motivational contents (39%). It is found that boys are more active and ahead for posting in social media while girls like more to share the inspirational quotes. 34% students prefer to share the socio-political news, articles, and video contents while girls' percentage is very less in this regard due to the fact that girls are

less comfortable than boys to post socio-political news, articles on internet platform (Table 3).

It is revealed that 58% of these most of university students post on social media once a week while 29% of them post once a month. Only 11% of the respondents post one time in a day and 2% respondents post in social media 2 to 4 times in a day. Girls are less likely to post compared to the boys (Table 4).

**Table 4: Frequency of social media posting**

Question	Coding categories	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>On average how often, do you post in social media?</b>	Never	1	0	1	1%	0%	0%
	Monthly	45	43	88	29%	30%	29%
	Weekly	89	84	173	57%	59%	58%
	1 time a day	18	14	32	11%	10%	11%
	2-4 times a day	4	2	6	3%	1%	2%

**Freedom of expression on political topics**

It is found that **44% of the students (45% female students) increased their knowledge** on how to express the views on political topics on the internet/digital platform freely which is 24% higher than baseline value. On the other hand, 32% student (96) informed that they cannot express views on political topics on the internet feely, among them 35% are female (50) students. It is noticed that girls are less expressive on political topics and or they fear to express the political topics freely (Table 5).

**Table: 5 Express views on political topics on the internet feely**

Question	Coding categories	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>In general, can you express your views on political topics on the internet feely</b>	Yes	68	64	132	43%	45%	44%
	No	46	50	96	29%	35%	32%
	Sometimes	40	23	63	25%	16%	21%
	Do not want to answer	3	6	9	2%	4%	3%
	Total	157	143	300	100%	100%	100%

However, youth are now practicing digital citizenship in safe and confident usage of digital arena, literacy and media information, avoid negative content and torture, developed culture of positive and active environment in expressing opinion in digital platform which contributes to bring positive change in the community.

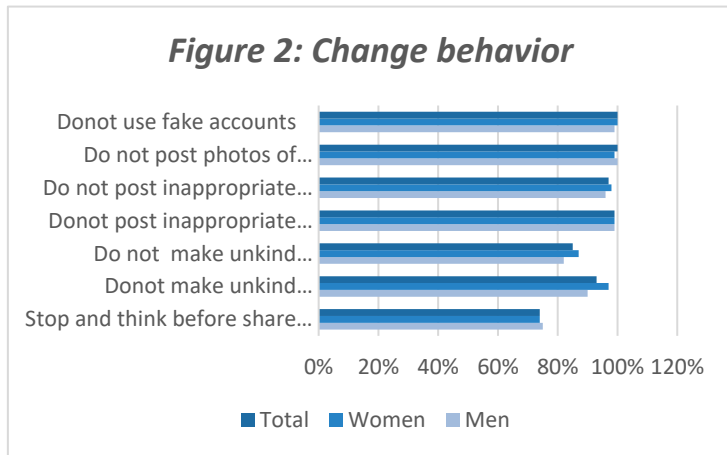
### Changes in behavior (outcome 1)

Gaining knowledge from the project initiatives **82% youth (86% women) changed their behavior in terms of interacting more appropriately in the digital space.**

Education on three fundamental aspects about online etiquettes for example, respecting self and others, educating self and others, safeguarding self and others has been resulted to make this behavior change.

*“I have changed my behavior by gaining knowledge on DSA as a result I now do not post dirty pictures, do not disturb others,*

*and irritate others. (A Youth of Jahangirnagar University)”*



Respecting self and others, and safeguarding learning have significantly contributed to changes of behavior of youth. Thus, 74% youth reported that they are very much cautious about constructive writing and posting on digital space, 93% reported that now they do not make any unkind comments on others post, do not post any inappropriate photos (99%) and do not use fake account (100%). Some of the youth reported they became victim of cyber bullying for their writing on social media, many people abused them on telephone, threaten them because they did not know the appropriate behavior before getting involved with the project.

**Table: 6 Changes in behavior patterns**

Questions	Coding categories	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>Do you post inappropriate photos (personal sexual content, something which hamper others' privacy)</b>	Sometimes	1	1	2	1%	1%	1%
	Never	156	142	298	99%	99%	99%
<b>People you interact with post inappropriate photos</b>	Sometimes	7	3	10	4%	2%	3%
	Never	150	140	290	96%	98%	97%
<b>Do you post photos of others/tag them in photos without their consent</b>	Sometimes	0	1	1	0%	1%	0%
	Never	157	142	299	100%	99%	100%
<b>Do you use fake accounts</b>	Yes	1	0	1	1%	0%	0%
	No	156	143	299	99%	100%	100%
	Often	1	7	8	1%	5%	3%
	Sometimes	35	21	56	22%	15%	19%

<b><i>People you interact with have used or use a fake account on social media</i></b>	Never	121	115	236	77%	80%	79%
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Changes in behaviour pattern in case of all categories denotes significant change compared to the baseline. It is revealed from the study that 99% respondents never post inappropriate photos because they have enhanced their knowledge from the project. When asked whether people you interact with post inappropriate photos; 97% respondents replied that they do not do that which is 10% higher than baseline value. However, still 3% respondents' sometimes post inappropriate photos/content. Remarkable positive change has been noted in the area of posting photos of others/tag them in photos without their consent where 100% respondents replied that they do not practice that. This signifies 28% higher than the baseline value. However, 1% girls still tag others content, photos without their consent.

Being aware from the project intervention about the negative implication of use of fake account, 100% student do not use fake account anymore while 1% boys still use fake account on social media for fun/amusement. On the other hand, it is revealed that 79% never interact with fake account users of them 80% girls refrain from interacting with fake account users as they think that such act is unlawful. While 19% respondents sometimes interact with fake account users and 3% respondents often interact with fake account users. However, over the period the project could infuse positive awareness among students and therefore, students are gradually refraining from malpractice and unlawful act in the social media platform (Table 6).

***Indicator 002: Confidence to make positive changes through participation in democratic process using digital space***

***Participation in democratic process (Impact 2)***

It is revealed that a good number of students in this case from 5 universities have participated in in the digital citizenship knowledge toolkit designing workshop and they opined that the contents of the toolkits is useful and met the demand between 60% to 75%.

***83% youth reported that they are confident enough to make positive changes in the society through participating in democratic process using social media.*** The MTA team found that the project intervention has enabled the youth and other stakeholders to participate and freely express their views and engage in dialogue and way forward on

much critical issues such as the digital security laws of the country and the need for reform of the same. This has contributed to participation in the democratic process and infused a sense of active citizenship using democratic norms and values.

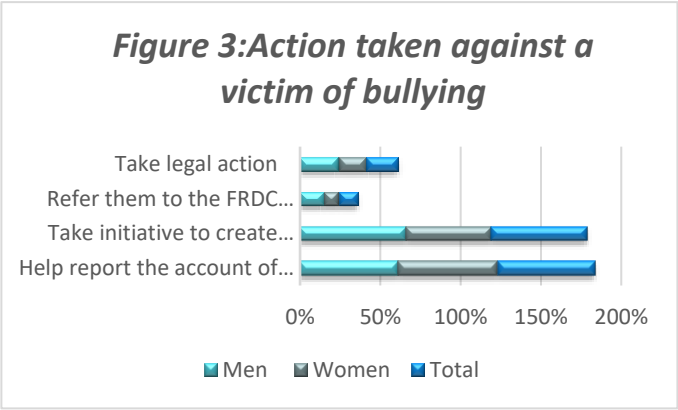
**Table 7: Participation in democratic process**

Question	Coding	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>Are you confident enough to make positive changes in the society through participating in democratic process using social media?</b>	Yes	132	118	250	84%	83%	83%
	No	0	2	2	0%	1%	1%
	Sometimes	7	8	15	4%	6%	5%
	May be	17	12	29	11%	8%	10%
	Do not want to answer	1	3	4	1%	2%	1%

The youth enhanced their confidence from the programme intervention to practice & participate in democratic process. They have gained knowledge and became articulated resulting 250 respondents reported that they can practice and participate democratic process in social media. Girls are less interactive compared to boys. 10% respondents are not very much confident whether they are able to participate or not while 5% practice democratic process sometimes and 1% do not practice and 1% did not want to answer (Table 7).

**Fearless action:**

As a result of participation in democratic process youth can take appropriate, lawful and safe actions. For example, 60% youth (girls 53%) take initiative to create awareness against bullying, 20% youth (girls 17%) take legal action. 74% youth (girls 66%) mentioned that they prefer to participate in online civil society protest (e.g., against rape, road accident, etc.), 41% youth (girls 38%) like to join in online petitioning for a cause and 25% choose online e-learning portals and quiz competitions on topics that help them to become a good citizen. It is noticed that girls are not very much comfortable in taking fearless action due to lack of courage, fear of revenge compared to the boys. Boys are more courageous in taking fearless actions.





**Table 8: Most followed content**

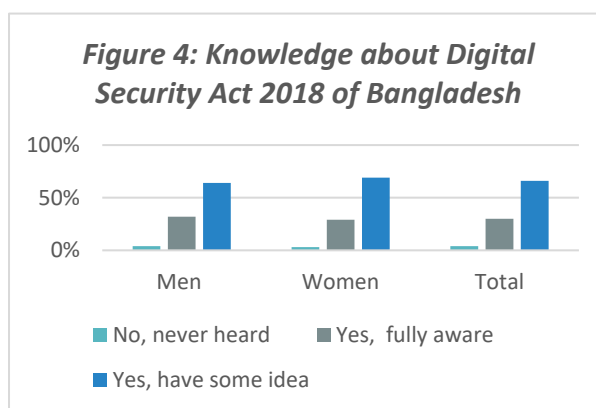
Question	Coding	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>Which of the following are you more likely to follow? (Multiple responses permitted)</b>	Celebrity news, videos, commentary, etc.	116	121	237	74%	85%	79%
	Live videos of e-businesses (online clothing page, buy and sell, etc.)	80	85	165	51%	59%	55%
	NGO/CSO webinars on various social issues	24	17	41	15%	12%	14%
	Political talk shows	54	16	70	34%	11%	23%
	Skill learning programs (such as FRDC e-learning courses)	51	41	92	32%	29%	31%
	None of the above	2	0	2	1%	0%	1%
	Other (please specify)	0	1	1	0%	1%	0%

It is revealed that a good number of youth (79%) like to follow celebrity news, videos, commentaries of them girls (85%) are more interested on this type of content followed by live videos of e-business (55%) for trading as they are young and naturally would prefer to engage into business activities in future. Girls have more preference (59%) for this type of content compared to the boys (51%). 31% of youth also like to participate in skill learning programmes followed by 23% youth like political talk shows. Girls (11%) are less interested on political talk show.

This denotes that youth have significant interest in celebrity news, videos, commentaries for their fun and entertainment while business, skill learning, webinars on various social issues make them interested to be prepared to enter into job/employment sector (Table 8).

**Changes in knowledge (Outcome 2)**

It is found that the project has been successful to enhance the knowledge among youth through arranging learning session, peer learning, handbook, e-learning portal, monthly quiz arranged by the e-learning portal which increased the capacity of youth on how to express in online freely and safely. They also gained knowledge on Digital Security



Act and citizen rights both in online and offline.

It is revealed that **66% students (69% girls) have knowledge about the DSA 2018 of Bangladesh** which is 20% higher than the baseline value. Most of the study participants (71%) do not share their passwords address, phone number, age, etc. with acquaintance. More or less students became aware about cyberbullying and hate speech. 51% students double check any information on google or other sources to know that they receive the information on social media is right.

### Knowledge on digital etiquette

Through different components of this project youth have gained a clear understanding on digital etiquette. Therefore, 71% respondents (girls 69%) informed that they do not share password with others. Majority of the youth (63%) stated that they do not share private information (address, phone number, age, etc.) and girls were found not comfortable in sharing personal information on line.

**Table 9: Understanding on cyber bullying**

Question	Coding	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>What constitutes cyberbullying? (Multiple responses permitted)</b>	Impersonation (an act of pretending to be another person for the purpose of entertainment or fraud)	63	0	116	40%	0%	39%
	Spreading rumours online	114	0	217	73%	0%	72%
	Threatening someone online	91	0	165	58%	0%	55%
	Trolling someone	78	0	147	50%	0%	49%
	All the above	45	0	90	29%	0%	30%
	I never heard of the term 'cyberbullying'	5	0	9	3%	0%	3%

The project has educated /aware the youth about cyber bullying through different media. As a result, 72% respondents opined that spreading rumor is mean to them as cyber bullying, 55% considers threatening someone in online is cyber bullying while 49% respondents are of the opinion that trolling someone is called cyber bullying. Surprisingly, none of the girl's response to this question. (Table 9)

**Table 10: Understanding on hate speech.**

Question	Coding	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
<b>What constitutes hate speech? (Multiple responses permitted)</b>	Expressing prejudice about a particular religion/belief	106	0	194	68%	0%	65%
	Expressing prejudice about any sexual orientation	65	0	134	41%	0%	45%
	Expressing prejudice about any ethnic minority, geographical/ regional origins	63	0	125	40%	0%	42%
	Leaving hateful comment on someone's post/blog	46	0	96	29%	0%	32%
	Inciting violence through status/post/blog/video	25	27	52	16%	19%	17%
	All the above	35	26	61	22%	18%	20%

It is found that youth have gained considerable understanding on what constitutes hate speech. 65% respondents informed that expressing prejudice about a particular religion/belief mean to them as hate speech. 45% respondents replied that expressing prejudice about any sexual orientation is considered as hate speech to them. 42% youth think that expressing prejudice about any ethnic minority, geographical/ regional origins is also constitutes hate speech. Leaving hateful comment on someone's post/blog also falls under hate speech that think by 32% respondents. Inciting violence through status/post/blog/video means hate speech to 17% youth. 20% youth opined that all the accumulation of all indicators is hate speech out of which 18% are girls. (Table10)

***Indicator. SO.3: No. of policy recommendations contained in advocacy briefs for revising the existing Digital Security Act (Target 05)***

The has been able to develop five policy recommendation through involving national legal expert, through consultation with CSOs, academicians, experts in the area of digital security laws and practice. However, due to covid pandemic the advocacy brief could not be prepared.

**Output level achievement**

Due to COVID-19 most of the activities are done through online though it was planned to do physically, such as meeting, workshop, peer learning, group discussion, one to one interaction etc. Formative research was done with the students. Through developed webpage i.e., e-platform they use to collect feedback. The other mechanism of feedback

collection was quarterly PMC meeting where three organizations (Partners) DNET, FNF and EU. Quality of the digital knowledge products i.e., a quality handbook is developed and distributed properly. Written progress reports prepare and submitted by DNET to FNF and in the same way FNF prepare and submit progress report to EU. Regular and open communication among DNET, FNF and EU established and continuing.

- ✓ One e-learning platform and one knowledge toolkit on digital citizenship have been developed. The website recorded more than 40,000 visits, about 5,000 registered users among them 2000 have received the courses. 6000 printed copies of the booklet were made & distributed. As a result, all users gained substantial knowledge and information about digital citizenship.
- ✓ A total of 2,269 young citizens (university students; 51% women) received training on digital citizenship through learning and peer learning sessions which broadened their knowledge, attitude and behavior on digital citizenship. Students suggested to produce video on learning session and upload the same on website so that others can learn and get the benefit.
- ✓ A total of 24 journalists were trained of which 25% were women; 82 teachers participated in learning session out of which 35% were women. As an outcome of the training, positive impact in the behavior change of people in terms of having better understanding on lawful use and practice of digital/cyber space in reference to DSA has been developed.
- ✓ The project has reached about 50,000 stakeholders (including parents, teachers, students, as well as internet users) to make them aware of the intervention and its messages through intensive social media campaigning including setting up and uploading information, education and communication materials on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube). This has brought an opportunity to introduce to wider sector and bring benefit for them.

All the achievements were possible due to more positive target group, their will full and enthusiastic participation in the project mainly students, teachers and journalists. One of the activities that became important is that trained students taught next 4 students through peer learning process. Teachers and trained students become interested to teach more participants.

#### **4. Efficiency**

COVID-19 hindered accomplishment of the planned activities in achieving its output and delivering the inputs on time against the set target. Consequently, money remained unspent. In this regard the project management team followed an adaptive management approach in terms of repurposing of the activities and changes in method of activities, i.e., from physical to online through revising budget. The unspent money was used for the purpose of online activities and to meet the demand of reprinting more copies of the handbook “Digital Citizenship Learning Tool” (‘Freedom of Expression Practice’) was raised and fulfilled.

Financial resource of the project was fully utilized. To ensure efficient use of funds, procurement, beneficiary support, budget utilization and financial monitoring the project strictly followed the EU rules. Further, to make it participatory and transparent, weekly sharing meeting was held, and quarterly reporting & online meeting was done, checking progress of activities with quality, target achieved efficiently and effectively etc. It is to be noted here that the project accomplished many activities successfully with very low cost and DNET is very efficient and sincere to control the cost and also good dealings with partners. Key stakeholders were involved in all purchase, providing beneficiary support, conducting financial monitoring and capacity building of the stakeholders. For example, students, teachers, media workers, lawyers participated in the intervention in their respective part. Even during production of the handbook, experts were involved in the process.

Project Management Committee (PMC) was set up in the first year of the project with the mandate to provide strategic guidance, leadership, and governance oversight on project implementation; to monitor project implementation through regular updates on project progress, challenges and way forward; and to make key policy decisions regarding project implementation. In the PMC meeting EU representative, ED of DNET, country representative of FNF and also German delegate of FNF participated and discussed both strong and weak side of the project on regular basis. The PMC Minutes were regularly recorded. All staff were recruited on time and the staffs played vital role under the guidance of the PMC in keeping the project on track, especially with the delays incurred in project activities due to the pandemic.

Good and efficient young team of DNET the implementing organization, like minded efficient young team of FNF which was always ready to support the implementing organization. DNET is very open and committed to implement any new and challenging task. The partnership with partners and youth organizations/platforms is very efficient.

Limitations were noted that the media workers could not give time to participate in the events. As a result, the media campaign could not be spread out to mass people. Secondly, communicating with parents was difficult because they are scattered and out of reach area. At that, the project is facing problem to reach the policy advocacy level target group because till now the project is in preparing itself with necessary information, documents, evidence, appropriate and realistic recommendations and it justification with both positive and negative side for reviewing the DSA.

## **5. Sustainability**

Sustainability of the project is ensured through development of the knowledge content such as the website, handbook, learning session materials, e-learning videos and courses. The strategies are foreseen that mostly the students will take the ownership and teachers are also willing to get involve more and in the wider scale. These digital knowledge products and tools signifies that it will continue to be used and modified by other users beyond the project period. The handbook gained fast popularity since its distribution among the users and based on this, the project team decided to translate the handbook from Bangla to English and have limited copies, to make it accessible to non-bangla speakers, especially among like-minded organizations beyond Bangladesh.

Peer learning sessions were led by the participants who received training in the learning sessions which signifies a multiplier effect that will continue as more and more youth start to use the knowledge on digital citizenship acquired through the learning session and then impart these with their peers.

One major output of this intervention was that the teachers acknowledged that how their students behave online is also to some extent their responsibility, especially those from the psychology department focused on the need to ensure mental health of the students, and committed to provide personal counselling to those students suffering from online harassment and bullying and guide them to the correct support services.

Lastly the implementing organization, i.e., Dnet is responsible for overall implementation of the activities, while FNF Bangladesh monitors and coordinates the



action. Dnet is a leading organization in Bangladesh working in the intersection of technology and development. They have a long record of achievement in implementing sizeable projects of similar nature, developing youth-based technology, and directly working in schools and colleges. Using the wealth of knowledge possessed by a Bangladeshi organization itself holds the potential to sustain the project goal in the long run.

FNF and Dnet have actively avoided any conflict with State authorities so far. Dnet also has no conflictual relationship with state authorities that may affect this project. On the contrary, for certain activities under the project, the team reached out to representatives from State authorities for their participation, such as inviting a representative from the government's a2i project to launch the e-learning portal and Digital Citizenship Challenge. Beyond and above all the dimension that has been made by the project, the intervention should continue to be pursued to bring more benefit and to create long term impact and sustainability of the action.



## **4. Conclusion, Lessons Learned & Recommendations**

### **6. Conclusions**

The MTA team concludes that this intervention is a time befitting and effective project for the boosting up the new generation particularly youth to become responsible digital citizens. The project has been contributing to promote a positive communication culture among Bangladeshis particularly among the youth. The intervention is also encouraging/inspiring the youth to express their opinion in the cyber space freely and safely which ultimately results into building a generation of responsible citizens. Hence, this project needs to continue completion. However, as stated above and below, it is strongly recommended that the project takes into consideration of the lessons learned and the recommendations made by different stakeholders to achieve its goal and objectives.

### **7. Lessons learned**

The MTA team documented some of the key lessons learned which included:

#### **Students**

- 1) Concept about digital citizenship, appropriate online etiquette, knowledge on DSA, have increased the skills of student to expression opinion freely and constructively.
- 2) Critical knowledge, increased capacity and positive attitude about digital citizenship is developed among youth. Behavior change took place about responsible citizenship, practicing citizenship in the digital world, and refrain from cyber bullying, sexual harassment, safe and confident usage of digital arena/world and avoiding negative content.
- 3) Norms and values developed among youth in terms of respecting others, educating self and others, safeguarding self and others.
- 4) Peer learning infused a sense of belongingness as it encouraged others to join sessions, making the website stronger, increase the campaign through the media about DSA, involved parents and discussing DSA among common people.

#### **Teachers & parents**

- 5) Improvisation of tools and methods is demand of the time as change is happening very fast in the digital world and to reach out wider audience.



- 6) Social media advertisement, cartoon or animation, visualization, storytelling and representation in different way have potential to enhance the outreach of the intervention.
- 7) Introduce textbooks and lectures in all educational institutions (school, college, university,
- 8) Self-motivated parents willing support the intervention holds potential for multiplier effect of the project intervention.

### **Journalist & policy experts**

- 9) Balancing security concerns and digital safety is prime need for freedom of expression and to widen the horizon of digital citizenship.
- 10) Age and occupation specific training modules will produce higher benefit to cater to need of different people.
- 11) Working with law enforcement agencies (regulators) and decision makers (policy makers) is a must to create maximum impact of the intervention and controlling cyberbullying, hate speech and violent extremism.
- 12) A pool of policy experts and lawyers can significantly contribute in making the intervention more aligned with the legal system and practices.

## **8. Recommendations**

To maximize achievement of results in remaining project period, the MTA team makes the following recommendations from each of the segment that participated in the MTA.

### **Recommendations made by the students**

- 11) Continue the learning and peer learning, increase the area of the session and improve it. Increase the duration & frequency of the learning and peer-learning sessions.
- 12) Involve students from school, college and madrasa and also include common people to have multiplier effect. Also organize more workshops and seminars for dissemination of the knowledge products of the project.
- 13) Produce video on the learning and peer-learning sessions & upload the same on website.

### **Recommendations made by the teachers & parents**

- 14) Update the website and the handbook of the project and organize learning and peer learning sessions once a month.
- 15) Undertake more campaign on social media to create mass awareness on digital citizenship and the DSA.

16) Distribute the handbook among the parents so that they become also aware of the intervention and guide their children.

**Recommendations made by the journalists & policy experts**

17) Arrange discussion/dialogue sessions with policy makers and regulators to exchange views and opinion for improving the digital safety and to balance the security concerns with the need for freedom of expression.

18) Engage/involve policy makers/policy experts in the discussions and developing knowledge products of the interventions as they know details about legal aspects of the DSA and digital citizenship issues.

19) Create enabling environment where policy makers and regulators can work together to ensure that DSA encouraging young people to engage in the digital citizenship discourse.

20) In order to avail support from the government to achieve the overall objectives of the project and to create sustainable impact in digital citizenship this project needs to collaborate with the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ministry and division of the government.

# ANNEXURE

## Annex 1

Recommendations made by the policy makers.

(Recommendation 1: Make all offences under the DSA bailable and non-cognizable so those accused of committing offences can only be arrested with a properly issued warrant from court and have a right to bail, which will help reduce the number of pre-trial prisoners)

Recommendation 2: Repeal sections 25, 29 and 31 of the DSA to remove key barriers to freedom of expression and ensure compliance with international human rights law.

Recommendation 3: Amend Section 43 of the DSA so the police requires a properly issued warrant from court to conduct searches, arrests and seizures and the scope for misusing DSA to harass individuals exercising their freedom of expression is reduced.

Recommendation 4: Ensure training and strict monitoring of Law Enforcement Agencies on the use of DSA to prevent its misuse and introduce training sessions on cyber safety law for lawyers, prosecutors and judges so genuine victims are able to seek and obtain justice

Recommendation 5: Conduct awareness campaigns with young people on the provisions of DSA to combat their state of unawareness and to ensure victims of cyber offences know their rights.

## Annex 2

### Project progress in achieving the outcome and outputs targets set in the logical framework

#### Impact and Outcome level achievement

Project Indicator	Baseline Status	Mid-term Benchmark	Remarks
Impact level Ind. OO.1: % of targeted youth feel free to express their thought on critical topics on internet platforms	20% youth freely express their views on critical topics on the internet	67%	47% increased than the baseline and 10% increased as per yearly target value
Impact level Ind. OO.2: % of targeted youth feel confident to make positive changes in society through participating in the democratic process using digital space	21% youth are confident to make positive changes in the society through participating in democratic process using social media	83%	62% and 13% increased than baseline and target value respectively.
Outcome level Ind. SO.1: % of targeted youth show positive change in behaviour (appropriately and lawfully) when they interact in the digital space	37% youth behave appropriately and in the social media	82%	45% and 32% higher than baseline and target value respectively
Outcome level Ind. SO.2: % of youth report changes in overall	On average 34% (with a range of 20% to 52%) of	66%	20% and 32% enhanced than

knowledge on how to express themselves freely, appropriately, lawfully and safely in the public sphere	youth have knowledge on different aspect of how to express themselves in digital sphere	baseline and target value respectively.
Outcome level Ind. SO.3: No. of policy recommendations contained in advocacy briefs for revising the existing Digital Security Act	<b>5 no. of policy recommendation</b>	Five (05) recommendations were developed national legal expert as part of an advocacy brief, revising the existing Digital Security Act 2018, targeting law and policy makers.

## Output level achievement

Project indicator	Baseline status	Midterm Benchmark	Remarks
Ind. Op1.1: Number of e-learning platforms and toolkits produced.	Currently, none exist	One e-learning platform and one knowledge kit developed	The e-learning platform address is <a href="https://www.digitalcitizenbd.com/">https://www.digitalcitizenbd.com/</a> . The midterm benchmark achieved the target value.
Ind. Op1.2: Number of young citizens that have acquired digital citizenship skills through learning session and e-learning platform (at least 40% female)	No such training activities have yet taken place, so baseline is 0	2,269 young citizens (university students) received training out of them 51% women	The project need cover more 2731 young citizens through providing training to meet target value. But project has brought under the coverage of good number of women.
Ind. Op2.1: Number of stakeholders trained (teachers and journalists) through workshop and learning sessions to guide and support youth on the use of digital space safely (at least 20% female)	0, since no information campaign has yet taken place	24 journalists trained of which 25% were women; 82 teachers participated in learning session out of which 35% were women.	The project needs to bring more 36 Journalists and 18 teachers under the training session to achieve the target.
Ind. Op2.2: Number of stakeholders including teachers, parents, and influencers of target group in real life reached through traditional and social media campaign and events to support young people on the use of digital space safely	0	The project has reached 44,857 people through traditional and social media campaign.	More 5143 people to be covered under this service net to reach the target.
Ind. Op3.1: Number of policy and decision makers who are sensitized through advocacy events to support the participation of youth in the digital space freely (at least 20% female)	0, since currently no such advocacy activities are taking place	As of now project could not arrange any advocacy meeting/ event and their achievement is zero.	50 persons to be brought for sensitization through advocacy.

## Annex 3

### Case Study-1

Md Sumon Reza

Rajshahi University, Department of English

I started to use different social media after 2014. From my childhood I developed keen interest on writing articles and features. I loved writing on different issues. From my interest in writing, I began to write regularly on social media platforms. My writings included different topics. Key topics of my writing included religion, politics, social issues, good and bad things concerning the country. For long I continued writing all those topics on the social media platform and never faced any problem.

One day, all of a sudden, I received a telephone call. After receiving the phone, the caller started scolding/abusing me. The caller told me that *"you are involved with politics of Shibir (student wing of Jamat e Islam, an ultra-Islamist party). You write against the government. You comment on different issues of the country. Have you been a big leader of the country? If you do not stop all these writings, then a case will be filed against you under Digital Security Act and you will be put into jail. Then, I will see which God father comes/helps you to get out of the jail."* After scolding and threatening the caller dropped the phone.

I did not give importance to the call and continued to express/writing on the social medial platform. A few days later, I again received a call from an unknown number. Soon as I received the phone the caller identified himself as a police officer and instructed me to meet him at the police station saying that there is an allegation/case against me. Hearing this, I shared the entire matter with two of my friends. After listening to me, my friends said, *"we presume you are going to get into a big trouble"*. Hearing my friends, I became little scared/afraid. Later on I went to the police station with two of my friends to meet the Officer in Charge (OC) . At one point of our discussion with the OC, the police officer informed me that *"there is case filed against you under the digital security act"*. I will now arrest you. And following the arrest the police officer locked me up at the police station. Thereafter I was sent to jail. After being in the jail for few days I was released.

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### Case study 2

Mitu Rani

Varendra University, Department of English

I have been using social media for long. And I use Facebook messenger, Imu, WhatsApp, Instagram etc. Out of all these social media I use mostly Facebook and messenger. Beginning from uploading pictures on Facebook to maintaining communication with my friends, on-line hanging out, getting information about campus life etc. everything I used to do through Facebook and messenger. Everything was going on all right. I used Facebook and messenger on my own and I was spending a good time. I used to think that Facebook and messenger is a good media to pass time.

All of a sudden some of my friends called me over phone and told me that some dirty pictures are being uploaded from my Facebook ID. They also told me that *"you are*

*sending obscene pictures from your Facebook ID to our inbox*". They also told me that *some people are sending message in their inbox and asking for money*" Hearing all these, I became very scared. I could not think what is needed to be done or what shall I do. At this difficult moment, I shared the matter with some of my close friends and with my family. All of them suggested me to inform the matter to the police. Accordingly, I and some of my friends went to the police station and shared everything with the duty officer of the police station.

Hearing all the details from me the police officer advised me to file a written petition. Following his advice, I filed a written petition with the police station. Thereafter, I used to go to the police station and follow up the matter. I wanted to know about the progress of my case. In reply to the police officer used to tell me that it is almost done, and it will not take much time anymore. Long time passed away and there was no progress of my case. Now, I don't go to the police station anymore and also do not follow up the matter any longer. So far, I have not been into any trouble. After all these incidents, I stopped using social media for a long time. I always used to think and became fearful that there might be any new trouble come up again. Slowly I have overcome my fears and now using all social media platforms again.

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### **Case study 3**

Avishek Kumar Karmakar

Varendra University, Department of English

I use almost all the platforms whatever we understand or call the social media or on-line platform. Among them the important ones are: Facebook messenger, WhatsApp, Imo, Snapchat, instagrm etc. But, after using Facebook, messenger, WhatsApp for so many days, I never had any idea about digital security act. I did not know that there is an Act in Bangladesh call Digital Security Act. I was unaware which actions cause violation of digital security action and when a person can lodge a case against me under digital security act. I even did not know or did not have any interest to know why the act has been promulgated in Bangladesh. And when I became interested to know about the digital security Act, then one of my friends informed me about a name of the project. My friend also told me that this project is an educational project, and you will be able to gather good knowledge about digital security act. You will further come to know how you can express your opinion freely and safely following the act. He also told me that the project aims to create a positive communication culture among the youth through this project.

Thereafter, I told my friend to let me know more how I can participate in the project. I expressed my interest to learn from the project. Taking note of my interest my friend took me along with him to participate in a workshop. From that day on, I started working with that project. This project is none other than the EU funded Fredrick Neuman Foundation for Freedom and D-Net supported "Foster Responsible Digital Citizenship" to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh. Since my joining with this project, I

have learn a lot about digital security act and how to use an on-line platform. I have shared with my friends and family the knowledge that I gained from this project. Now along with me, many of my friends and family members have adequate knowledge and information about digital security act which will be useful for my friends and family in their day to day life and beyond.

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#### **Case study 4**

Sayed Ibrahim Rifat

Jahangirnagar University, Department of Journalism

I am Sayed Ibrahim Rifat and nick name of Rifat. From my childhood I was very naughty and indomitable. From my childhood I was very passionate in reading newspaper it gradually became an addiction. Due to my passion for news, I started to collect news and used to publish them in local newspapers. At the young age when children usually keep themselves busy in playing games, I used to gather news and publish those in the newspaper.

In my school life I was known as a Child Journalist. Later on, when I entered into college, I got involved with college journalist organization. Later on, my childhood passion for journalism brought me to the department of journalism in Jahangirnagar University in Savar.

One day, by an invitation and sharing from one of my fellow students, I came to know about the digital citizenship and digital security Act. After listening in detail from my fellow student; I participated a seminar on DSA. I did a pre and post-test before joining the seminar. The seminar opened my eyes due to the fact I had never knew about all these things before joining the seminar. I had a feeling that I have entered into a new chapter in my life. Since I have been studying journalism therefore, I had to get myself connected and updated with digital networks. I then realized that the DSA was very essential for journalism. From that point of view this project is very relevant and time befitting for young journalists like me.

I have observed that many students behave unwantedly in the digital platform. As a result, common people are showing disinterest on using digital platform. At this very right moment the project has brought a good plan for all. The project has facilities for direct training for participants with modern training curriculum, provision for application of the learning such as learning sessions, peer learning, website, handbook etc. All these are very useful and modern. The project has also provision for learning at home through peer learning and using the handbook and following website. To me this project is a complete and comprehensive one.

Having said, I am also of the opinion that the project needs to extend some components. For example, budget of the project should be increased, bring all university students under the coverage of the project. Even the project can extend its activities at school, college and madrasa level students and bring them under the coverage of this project. Consequently, all students will have a comprehensive knowledge about digital platform. Lastly, it can be said that the project can enhance knowledge of people on digital world which will bring benefit for them.



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**Case study-5**

Mohd Gazi Imran

Dhaka University, Department of French Language and Literature

My name is Gazi Imran, and I am from Chuddogram sub-district of Cumilla District. After completing my school and college level education successfully, I got admitted into the highest educational institute of the country i.e., Dhaka University. I study French language and literature and now in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of my academic course.

From my school life I liked to get myself involved with different socio-cultural organizations. At times, I took the responsibility to run/govern the organization. Sometimes I thought of disengaging myself from all these organizational activities but from deep in my mind, I could not do so. As a result, soon as I got admitted into the university, I became member of a few organizations such as – Prothom Alo Bondhu Sova (Friends Circle of Prothom Alo a leading Bangali Daily newspaper); Led Bangladesh; British Council Programme instructor, Scouting, Debate Club and lastly d-net and FNF's digital citizenship project.

After getting involved with the D-net and FNF's digital citizenship project, a complete change happened within me. I realized that when Bangladesh is marching towards becoming digital Bangladesh; at that moment, the EU funded FNF & d-net sponsored project has been assisting in implementation of the digital security Act which is a very important step.

I could not stop myself from joining this unique project. Therefore, without any hesitation I participated directly in the learning session conducted by the project. After participating in the learning session, I wondered how this time befitting, appropriate and highly project for the youth of Bangladesh has been launched! I was struck with the designing of the project for the project is youth friendly and has very good co-relation with the digital security Act. For example, was amazed to see how appropriate was the usage of the tools of the project, teaching methods etc. Similarly, I liked the direct learning method including peer learning, distribution of handbooks, dissemination of awareness through the website and training for the youth. All these features of the project are very useful and unique.

From my own evaluation, I can say that the project is praiseworthy initiative undertaken by the FNF and d-net.

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## Annex 4

### Questionnaire for Students/Youths

#### Mid-term Evaluation of the project “Foster Responsible Digital Citizenship (FRDC) to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh”

Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FnF) Bangladesh

Respondent ID			
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Interviewers: (Describe the following part to the respondent and ask for permission before the interview)

Greetings! This is \_\_\_\_\_. I am field researcher of Institute of Social Business (ISB) and working with FnF Bangladesh to conduct mid-term evaluation of “FRDC Bangladesh” project. The aim of the mid-term evaluation is to present a comparative analysis between baseline and midterm situation of the project based on the information and indicators as mentioned below. Therefore, we would like to collect some general information from you. The information will be used for the sole purpose of research work. Your name or identity will not be disclosed without your consent. Your information will help us create new knowledge. If you agree to participate and provide us with the requested information, then please give your consent below. You can decide to stop providing information at any time.

Do you agree to provide information?  Yes  No

[if NO, please terminate, but keep this form as it is]

Interviewer’s name:

Mobile Number:

Date of Interview

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Student	
Name of the University	1) Name..... 2) Dept..... 3) Level.....
Types of University	1) Public 2) Private
Location	1) Dhaka 2) Rajshahi
Interview Serial	
Interview Time	Starting: Finishing:

Part One: Background			
No	Question	Coding categories	Coding
1.1	Gender	Male	01
		Female	02
		Transgender	03
		Others (specify)	88
1.2	Age of Respondent (in Years)	.....	
1.3	Religion	Muslim	01
		Hindu	02
		Christian	03

		Buddhist	04
		Others (specify)	88
1.5	Ethnicity	Bengali	01
		Adivasi	02
		Non-Bengali	03
		Others (specify)	88
1.6	Current address		
1.7	Cell phone number		
1.8	Legal Guardian's phone number		
1.9	E-mail address of the respondent		
1.10	Extra-curricular activities	Clubs	01
		Associations	02
		Political Affiliation	03
		Others (specify)	88
1.11	Present Level	1 <sup>st</sup> Year	01
		2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	02
		Other's (specify)	88
1.12	Type of Earlier Educational Institutions attended	English Medium	01
		Bengali Medium	02
		Madrassah	03
		Vocational	04
1.13	Did you participate in the FRDC project	Yes No	
1.14	Which activity of the project were you part of? (Multiple response possible)	Learning session Peer learning Online quiz competition Website courses All of the above None	

### Part Two: Social Media Usage Time Allocation

#### 2.1 How often do you use these social media platforms?

Platform	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Facebook	01	02	03	04
WhatsApp	01	02	03	04
YouTube	01	02	03	04
Instagram	01	02	03	04
Tik Tok	01	02	03	04
Snapchat	01	02	03	04
Pinterest	01	02	03	04
Twitter	01	02	03	04
Online games	01	02	03	04
Others (Specify)	01	02	03	04

**Indicator OO1: % of targeted youth feel free to express their thoughts on critical topics on the internet platforms**

### Part Three: Freedom of Expression on Critical Topics on the Internet

No.	Questions	Coding Categories	Coding
3.1	Was the FRDC project booklet and courses relevant to your needs in terms of expression yourself freely critical topics?	Yes No I am unaware of the project	

3.2	What do you share most on social media? (Multiple responses permitted)	Photos of myself/my life's events	01
		My thoughts and ideas	02
		Socio-political news, articles, videos	03
		Inspirational quotes	04
		Learning/motivational contents	05
		Others (please specify)	88
3.3	In general, can you express your views on <b>political topics</b> on the internet feely (for both FRDC participants and non-participants)?	Yes No Sometimes Do not want to answer	01
3.4	Since being part of this project, do you find yourself expressing more on sociopolitical topics on the internet?	Yes No I am unaware of the project	
3.5	On average how often, do you post in social media?	Never	01
		Monthly	02
		Weekly	03
		1 time a day	04
		2-4 times a day	05
		5+ times a day	06
3.6	On a scale of 1-3 (1 being most free and 3 least free), do you think you are able to express freely on social media?	Mostly free	01
		Moderately free	02
		Least free	03
3.7	If point is 3, why you are not able to express freely on social media? (Multiple responses permitted)	I have poor internet connection	01
		My parents do not allow me	02
		I do not own a smartphone or laptop	03
		I do not have any social media account	04
		I worry about my safety if I post about my opinions freely	05
		Fearing social and political persecution	06
		Other (Specify)	88

**Indicator OO2: % of targeted youth feel confident to make positive changes in the society through participating in democratic process using digital space**

<b>Part Four: Positive Changes Through Participation in Democratic Processes Through Social Media</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Coding Categories</b>	<b>Coding</b>
4.1	Were the knowledge handbook on digital citizenship and the learning sessions useful in informing you about positive participation on social media?	Yes No I am not aware of the handbook or learning session	
4.2	Why do you use social media platforms? (Multiple responses permitted)	Entertainment	01
		Getting information	02
		Meeting new people	03
		Sharing information about myself	04
		Participating in forums/discussions on critical issues of the country	05
		Seeing what my friends and relatives are doing	06
		Following e-commerce business	07

		To follow the FRDC social media campaign	
		Others (please specify)	88
4.3	When a friend/social media friend becomes victim to bullying, what do you do? (Multiple responses permitted)	Ignore, it is none of my business	01
		Help report the account of the bully	02
		Take initiative to create awareness against bullying	03
		Refer them to the FRDC course materials/ handbook	
		Take legal action	04
		Other (please specify)	88
4.4	Which of the following are you more likely to participate in online? (Multiple responses permitted)	Online fundraising for a cause	01
		Online civil society protest (e.g., against rape, road accident, etc.)	02
		Online petitioning for a cause	03
		Changing your profile photo to show Support for a cause	04
		Online e-learning portals and quiz competitions on topics that help me become a good citizen	
		None of the above	05
		Other (please specify)	88
4.5	Which of the following are you more likely to follow? (Multiple responses permitted)	Celebrity news, videos, commentary, etc.	01
		Live videos of e-businesses (online clothing page, buy and sell, etc.)	02
		NGO/CSO webinars on various social issues	03
		Political talk shows	04
		Skill learning programs (such as FRDC e-learning courses)	05
		None of the above	06
		Other (please specify)	88
4.6	Are you confident enough to make positive changes in the society through participating in democratic process using social media?	Yes	01
		No	02
		Sometimes	03
		May be	04
		Do not want to answer	05

**Indicator SO1: % of targeted youth show positive change in behavior (appropriately and lawfully) when they interact in the digital space**

<b>Part Five: Appropriate and Lawful Interaction on Social Media</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Coding Categories</b>	<b>Coding</b>
5.1	Were the learning sessions and handbook of the FRDC project useful in informing you more about lawful interaction on social media?	Yes No I am not aware of the project and activities	
5.2	Since your exposure to the FRDC learning sessions and handbook, do you think you are likely to interact more appropriately in the digital space than before?	Yes No I am not aware of the project and activities	
5.3		Often	01

	I stop and think about everything before I share on social media	Sometimes	02
		Never	03
5.4	I make unkind comments on others' post	Yes	01
		No	02
		Sometimes	03
5.5	People I interact with make unkind comments on others' post	Often	01
		Sometimes	02
		Never	03
5.6	Do you post inappropriate photos (personal sexual content, something which hamper others' privacy)	Often	01
		Sometimes	02
		Never	03
5.7	People you interact with post inappropriate photos	Often	01
		Sometimes	02
		Never	03
5.8	Do you post photos of others/tag them in photos without their consent	Often	01
		Sometimes	02
		Never	03
5.9	Do you use fake accounts	Yes	01
		No	02
5.9	People you interact with have used or use a fake account on social media	Often	01
		Sometimes	02
		Never	03
5.10	Do you suggest people you interacted with who do unlawful acts on social media not to do it?	Yes	01
		No	02
		Sometimes	03

**Indicator SO2: % of youth report changes in overall knowledge on how to express themselves freely, appropriately, lawfully, and safely in the public sphere**

Part Six: Knowledge on Digital Etiquettes			
No.	Questions	Coding Categories	Coding
6.1	To what extent, were the contents of the learning sessions and handbook on digital citizenship of the FRDC project useful in enhancing your knowledge on digital etiquettes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not helpful</li> <li>- Moderately helpful</li> <li>- Very helpful</li> <li>- I am not aware of this project or its activities</li> </ul>	
6.2	Have you informed your friends, peers, or family members of the e-learning website courses or the handbook?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes</li> <li>- No</li> <li>- I am not aware of this project or its activities</li> </ul>	
6.2	Do you share passwords of your social media accounts with friends/family/others	Yes	01
		No	02
		Refuse to answer	03
6.3	How do you feel about giving private information (address, phone number, age, etc.) to people you have only met online?	I am very comfortable	01
		I am somewhat comfortable. Only after a certain period of interaction	02
		I am never comfortable	03
7.3	What constitutes cyberbullying? (Multiple responses permitted)	Impersonation (an act of pretending to be another person for the purpose of entertainment or fraud)	01
		Spreading rumours online	02
		Threatening someone online	03

		Trolling someone	04
		All the above	05
		I never heard of the term 'cyberbullying'	06
7.4	What constitutes hate speech? (Multiple responses permitted)	Expressing prejudice about a particular religion/belief	01
		Expressing prejudice about any sexual orientation	02
		Expressing prejudice about any ethnic minority, geographical/regional origins	03
		Leaving hateful comment on someone's post/blog	04
		Inciting violence through status/post/blog/video	05
		All the above	06
		I never heard of the term 'hate speech'	07
7.5	What constitutes cyber-sexual harassment? (Multiple responses permitted)	Sending unwanted inappropriate pictures of yourself to someone	01
		Leaking/sharing someone else's pictures/videos	02
		Persistently stalking someone	03
		Persistently sending messages to someone in the absence of response	04
		All the above	05
		I never heard of the term 'cyber-sexual harassment'	06
7.6	How do you know if the information you receive on social media is right or wrong? (Multiple responses permitted)	I share posts that my friends/family share	01
		I double check any information on google or other sources	02
		I use my own discretion based on my knowledge and experience	03
		I only share posts from authentic pages	04
		If a post has many likes, comments, views, or shares, it must be right or authentic	05
		Other (please specify)	06
7.7	Have you heard of the Digital Security Act 2018 of Bangladesh?	Yes, I have some idea	01
		Yes, I am fully aware	02
		No, I have never heard	03
7.7.1	Under the Digital Security Act 2018 one can be punished for the following: (Multiple responses permitted)	Propaganda against the Nation, the Liberation War, the Father of the Nation	01
		Cyber-terrorism	02
		Defamation	03



		All the above	04
7.7.2	Under the Digital Security Act 2018 the following are also punishable offences: (Multiple responses permitted)	Actions that ruin communal harmony	01
		Actions that attack religious sentiment	02
		Publishing frightening or aggressive information	03
		All the above	04
7.8	If you see a possible fake news, what do you do with it?	1) Share it if it is posted by someone I know 2) Ignore it 3) Try to find out its authenticity by checking other sources	
7.9	Answer only if you <b>have not been</b> a part of this project: do you think there is a need for you to learn about how to properly use the digital space and know about the relevant rules and regulations?	Yes, I require this skill No, it is not useful for me I am unsure	

Thank you very much for participating in this questionnaire survey. We appreciate it a lot.

## FGD GUIDE

### FGD with Students

#### Interventions:

1. Were you part of the project intervention? Do you think it enhanced your knowledge on digital citizenship education? What worked during the sessions and what could be improved?
2. Were the topics relevant to your need? Was the handbook useful (if you have received and read it)

#### Approaches:

3. Did you take part in designing digital citizenship knowledge toolkit? What are the contents of the toolkit? Do you think the contents of the toolkit is addressing your needs? If yes, to what extent?
4. To what extent, the trainers of training, peer-to-peer learning, and small group learning session are effective?
5. What sorts of information and knowledge do you receive from the e-Learning Portal?
6. Have you used the knowledge earned through this project to support any peer?
7. How would you continue your role to contribute to create digital citizen and promoting a safe and secured digital space for freedom of expression? If yes, how do you propose to do that?

#### Change in Practice:

8. Have you proactively taken any step to encourage other members of their university or friends or family to learn more about digital citizenship, visit the project website and take the courses?
9. Do you use the learnings from the project handbook in real life? Have you changed your attitude and acted positively in the online space since this intervention?

10. Are you a member of the master trainer team under the project or do you initiate peer learning process with other students at the university? How do you facilitate the peer learning process and what is your experience?
11. What sorts of supports have you received from the project for increasing your skills and capacity for becoming a good digital citizen and enjoying freedom of expression on digital space? What benefits are you now enjoying because of receiving these supports and how?
12. What sorts of supports and cooperation do you receive from the teachers for the safe and secure utilization of digital space for expressing opinions? What specific roles do your teachers play on Cyber safety when practicing freedom of expression?
13. Do you have any suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of strategy/approach/process of the project interventions?

## **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **IDI with Faculty Members/Teachers**

#### **Interventions:**

1. What do you know about the “Fostering Responsible Digital Citizenship to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh (FRDC) Project” implemented by Dnet and FnF ? How have you taken part in this project?
2. Based on your experience with the project do you think that digital citizenship education is important? What do you individually and collectively perceive as barriers to integrating digital citizenship skills in practice of digital society? To what extent the project is addressing specific problems and needs of the cyberspace users?
3. To what extent you think the Digital Security Act is severely regulating the freedom expression? Have you got any opportunity to participate in any forum under this project to discuss this issue and propose changes?

#### **Approaches:**

4. Were the project approaches in teaching digital citizenship to students appropriate (learning sessions, peer learning sessions, website, handbook, social media campaign, etc.)? What can be improved or added?
5. Is the professional learning provided to you by the project appropriate? What types of professional learning do you think should be offered to the teachers/faculty members for implementation of digital citizenship skills among students?
6. How do you feel about contributing to a digital citizenship plan that could potentially be used at school, colleges, and university levels?

#### **Change in Practice:**

7. What sorts of support and cooperation did you offer to your students based on your exposure to this project? Have you shared the learnings from the teachers workshop with anyone (student, family, other colleagues, etc.)?

## **IDI with Staff Members**

### **Relevance**

- Do you think the project interventions and strategies are appropriate and relevant to address the needs and priorities of the target groups? To what extent does the project reflect the needs and priority of the target groups?
- To what extent the community involvement and participation was ensured in the design process, planning and implementation?
- Do you think the logical framework is coherent enough to achieve the results? Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?
- What mechanisms are in place for feedback to gauge satisfaction and enhance accountability to the target communities and how effective were they?

### **Effectiveness**

- Which project objectives and outputs have been well achieved and why? And which are not so well achieved and why?
- Have you received any capacity development training from the project? If yes, what things you learned from training? How are you putting what you learned from the training into practice?
- How do you assess the effectiveness of capacity building of the target people (youths, faculty members, teachers and media personnel)? What factors enabled progress in this area and what factors hampered progress?
- Can you give me an example of how the project has been using collected data for adaptive management (changes in program implementation based on findings on what's working and not working well)? Is there any information/data that you feel could be helpful in informing program implementation but is not currently being collected by the project?
- What challenges, constraints and unforeseen external factors have you encountered during project implementation? How do you address them?

### **Efficiency**

- Is the project making satisfactory progress in timely achievement of project outputs (as per log-frame), and related delivery of inputs and activities and to what extent?
- What measures are undertaken to ensure efficiency in use of funds, procurement, beneficiary support, budget utilization and financial monitoring?
- How was the coordination and collaboration with the stakeholders in planning of the project interventions and implementing the activities?
- Based on experience, which aspects of project implementation were highly efficient and why? Which aspects were not so efficient and why?
- How efficient is the projects partnership with partners and youth organizations/platforms?
- What efficiency related issues have you faced during implementation (meeting deadlines, cost control, partnership dealings, etc.) as difficulty? How have you tackled these issues?

### **Sustainability**

- What strategies are foreseen under the project take to ensure sustainability and ownership of the interventions and outcomes? Do you think are effective for project phase out? If yes, how?
- Which of the interventions and outcomes are likely to be sustained after the completion of the project, and why? Which interventions and outcomes are not likely to be sustained, and why?

## **KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **KII with Media Personnel (Journalists (newspaper and TV)**

#### **Interventions:**

1. From your exposure to the project activities what do you know about “Fostering Responsible Digital Citizenship to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh (FRDC) Project” implemented by Dnet and FnF ? To what extent the project is relevant to address the problems and needs of the cyberspace users esp. the youth?

2. Do you think that the project interventions are appropriate and effective for educating the youth to change behavioural pattern; to do lawful interaction; and maintain digital etiquettes within the rules and regulations of the digital security laws of the country?
3. To what extent you think the Digital Security Act is severely regulating the freedom expression? Have you got any opportunity to participate in any forum (dialogue or meeting) with policy- and decision- makers to improve the digital safety and to balance the security concerns with the need for freedom of expressions? What were the proposals and what is the result?

**Approaches:**

4. Were the project approaches in teaching digital citizenship to students appropriate (learning sessions, peer learning sessions, website, handbook, social media campaign, etc.)? What can be improved or added?
5. Is the professional workshop provided to you by the project appropriate? What types of professional learning do you think should be offered to the media personnel for facilitating implementation of digital citizenship skills?

**Change in Practice:**

6. What sorts of support and cooperation do you offer to the cyberspace users for bringing in changes in behavioural pattern, lawful interaction, and digital etiquettes for the safe and secure utilization of digital space for expressing opinions within the rules and regulations related to technology use in digital society and how?
7. Do you think the youth are well aware of the safety issues while interacting on digital space and are able to interact respectfully? In this regard, how useful is this project intervention?

**Kill with Parents**

**Interventions:**

1. Has your child been part of the project “Fostering Responsible Digital Citizenship to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh (FRDC) Project” implemented by Dnet and FnF ? Have you visited the parent’s section on the website of the project? How much do you know about this project?
2. What types of support have you or your child received from the project to increase your awareness and knowledge on digital security issues? What benefits are you now enjoying because of receiving these supports and how?
3. What are your feelings about involvement with the project? Do you think there should be more scope for parents to be more involved in such initiatives and how?

**Approaches:**

4. Do you worry about your child’s interaction in the online space and their safety? Do you think the project interventions are helpful to guide your child in the proper direction? (learning sessions, peer learning sessions, website, handbook, social media campaign, etc.)? What can be improved or added?

**Change in Practice:**

5. Do you encourage your child to exercise freedom of expression, or you believe it is best not to speak about social issues on public platform for the sake of safety?
6. How do you guide and support your children and young people for cyber safety, and becoming responsible and active digital citizen? Do you think the project is handling well these issues related to digital technology to your satisfaction and how?

## KII with Policy Experts

- 1) Dnet in coordination with Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FnF) Bangladesh has launched a project “Fostering Responsible Digital Citizenship to Promote Freedom of Expression in Bangladesh (FRDC) Project” to contribute to a safe and secure digital environment for Freedom of Expression and critical thinking in Bangladesh. Do you think that the project interventions are appropriate for educating the people to change behavioural pattern; to do lawful interaction; and maintain digital etiquettes within the rules and regulations of the digital laws of the country?
- 2) To what extent the Digital Security Act is supportive for safeguarding the citizen? Do you think that there needs amendment in the Digital Security Act for making it user-friendly for democratic practices in the cyber/digital space for the freedom of expression? Are you aware of any proposal to any forum (dialogue or meeting with policy- and decision- makers) to improve the digital safety and to balance the security concerns with the need for freedom of expressions?
- 3) One of the key areas of this project is to work with policy makers and regulators to ensure that the legislative environment with particular attention on the Digital Security Act, becomes more enabling and encouraging for young people to express themselves freely and safely. How do you assess this initiative of the project?
- 4) There is a kind of fear and apprehension about the Digital Security Act among the common people. On the other hand, the Government dreams for a Digital Bangladesh. Do you think the project is trying to remove the fear among the common people by educating them on lawful, appropriate, and safe practice of freedom of expression and contributing to realize the digital Bangladesh, especially referring to the first handbook on digital citizenship in Bangladesh produced by the project?
- 5) What are your feelings about involvement with the project? According to your opinion what major factors can positively or negatively affect in achieving the project objectives? What sorts of cooperation and support are available at your level for effective operation of the project interventions?
- 6) What suggestions and recommendations that the project can apply for making a responsible and safeguarding digital citizen in cyberspace, you would like to make?

## Annex 5

### Lists of participants attended in FGDs, IDIs, KIIs and Case stories

FGDs are conducted with university students

SL.	Category of FGD Group	Number of Participants			District
		Male	Female	Total	
1.	Students, University of Jahangirnagar	4	7	11	Dhaka
2.	Students, University of Dhaka	3	3	6	Dhaka
3.	Students, University of Rajshahi	6	0	6	Rajshahi
4.	Students, Varendra University	6	0	6	Rajshahi
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>	

### IDI with Faculty members/Teachers and Project Staff

Sl.	Particular	
1.	Md Rabiul Islam, Teacher, University of Rajshahi	Rajshahi
2.	Radia Awal, Teacher, University of Rajshahi	
3.	Md Ashraful Islam, Teacher, Varendra University	Rajshahi
4.	Professor Dr. Ashik Mosaddik, Teacher, Varendra University	Rajshahi
5.	Rabita Rejwana, Teacher, Varendra University	Rajshahi
6.	Nasrin Sultana, Teacher, University of Jahangirnagar	Dhaka
7.	Ejaj ur Rahman, Teacher, Daffodil International University	Dhaka
8.	Shiblee Noman, Teacher, University of Dhaka	Dhaka
9.	A.S.M. Firojul Hasan, Teacher, University of Jahangirnagar	Dhaka
10.	Sabiha Farzana Moonmon, Teacher, University of Dhaka	Dhaka
11.	Elma Haque Sharan, Assistant Manager, Dnet	Dhaka
12.	Asif Ahmed Tanmoy, Programme Manager, Dnet	Dhaka
13.	Salwa Jahan, Programme Manager, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom- FNF Bangladesh	Dhaka

### KII with Policy Experts, Media Personnel, and Parents

Sl.	Name and Address of Key Informants
1	Kazi Shahed, Journalist, Bangladesh Protidin, Dhaka
2.	Zahida Parvez, Journalist, Sangbad, Dhaka
3.	Mahabuba Akter, Deputy Director, Advocacy, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Dhaka
4.	Zyma Islam, Reporter, The Daily Star, Dhaka
5.	Niha Goshwami, Senior Deputy Director, Ain o Salish Kendra; Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Dhaka
6.	Sadowa dash, Parents, Dhaka
7.	Mahmud Rana, Journalist, Jamuna TV, Rajshahi
8.	R.M Golam Rabbani, Journalist, Maasranga TV, Rajshahi
9.	Abu Saleh Rony, Journalist, Samakal Rajshahi
10.	Muktadir Rashid, Staff Correspondent, New Age Rajshahi
11	Tamanna Hoque Riti, Convener, Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB)
12.	Rajia Sultana, Parents, Rajshahi
13.	Government Representative, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs



### Case Story of beneficiaries

Sl.	Particular	
1.	Sayed Ibrahim Rifat, Student, University of Jahangirnagar	Dhaka
2.	Md. Gazi Imran, Student, University of Dhaka	Dhaka
3.	Md Sumon Reza, Student, University of Rajshahi	Rajshahi
4.	Radia Awal, Student, University of Rajshahi	Rajshahi
5.	Mitu Rani, Student, Varendra University	Rajshahi
6.	Abhishek Kumar Karmakar, Student, Varendra University	Rajshahi