

NEWSLETTER

A Nationwide Contraceptive Crisis: Ipas Bangladesh Calls for Urgent Action



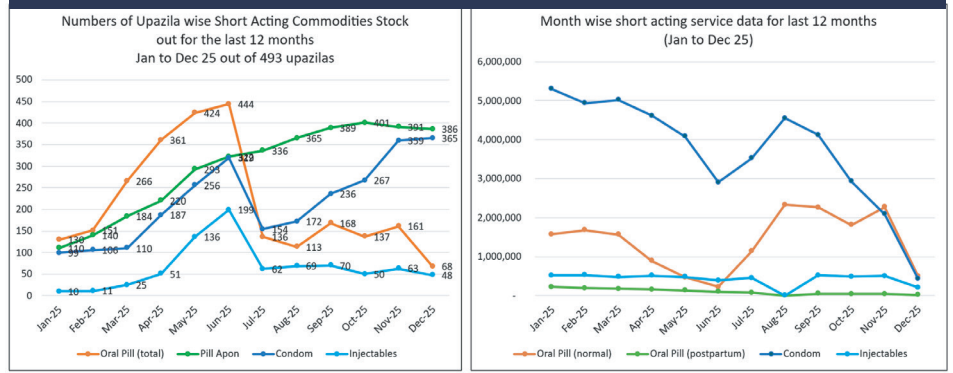
The shortages are estimated to increase the risk of

1,051,750
unintended pregnancies

2,281
maternal deaths

631,050
abortions

Stockout status versus service status in the last 12 month



The chronic shortage of reproductive health (RH) commodities is posing a heightened risk of unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and preventable maternal deaths across Bangladesh. In response, Ipas Bangladesh is strongly advocating to resolve a nationwide crisis of essential contraceptive commodities. The country is facing severe shortages, particularly of long-acting and reversible methods, leaving millions of women without access to implants, injections, IUDs, and, in some areas, condoms. Government data show widespread stockouts across public health facilities, which remain the primary source of reproductive health care for most women in the country.

sets—equivalent to just 0.5 months of supply. Twenty-one regional and central warehouses are experiencing stockouts. Additionally, 386 upazila stores (78%) are affected, with 293 experiencing complete stockouts and 93 at risk of potential stockouts, underscoring the critical need for immediate procurement and distribution measures.

While Ipas Bangladesh continues to respond to the crisis through advocacy and targeted project implementation, the scale of nationwide demand for contraception surpasses the capacity of any organization. Since the crisis began in 2024, the [ISRHR'D project](#) of Ipas Bangladesh has been working to address gaps in contraceptive commodities in Dhaka and its surrounding areas.

Live Contraceptive Stock Status

According to the government supply chain management portal, as of December 2025, the nationwide stock of implants stands at only 12,288

However, to restore contraceptive choice and access for women across Bangladesh, a strong and large-scale initiative from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is urgently needed to address the current shortage of reproductive health commodities.

Reinforce and Expand Trainers' Network

Sustained quality in family planning (FP), menstrual regulation (MR), and post-abortion care (PAC) depends on a skilled and up-to-date trained workforce. Ipas Bangladesh has long invested in building a strong cadre of trainers across the health system, based on project-supported areas and national priorities. To ensure these capacities are sustained and expanded beyond individual projects, Ipas brings

together experienced and newly trained trainers from secondary and tertiary-level health facilities. This workshop strengthened collaboration among trainers and revitalized the national trainers' network

HIGHLIGHTS



During the networking workshop
Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh

together trainers from different initiatives under a unified Trainers' Network that supports continuous learning.

As part of this effort, the Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Dhaka (ISRHRD) project organized a Trainers' Networking Workshop in October 2025, bringing

The network aims to keep trainers updated with the latest global evidence, international recommendations, and national standards related to FP, MR, and PAC services. Additionally, the platform fosters professional connections among trainers, creating space for open exchange of experiences, challenges, and best practices in both training delivery and service provision. Through the Trainer's Network, Ipas Bangladesh continues to contribute to a more competent, connected, and confident pool of trainers, ultimately supporting the delivery of high-quality, rights-based SRHR services across Bangladesh.



During the networking workshop
Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh

Pharmacy-Based MRM Care: A Digital Solution Connecting to OGSB Call Center

ACTIVITY

Access to accurate and confidential information on menstrual regulation with medication (MRM) remains limited at the community level. When the need for MR arises, many women first visit their nearest pharmacy. Meanwhile, the OGSB Helpline, based in Dhaka, offers free consultations by trained doctors on reproductive health issues, including MRM.

To bridge the gap between pharmacy-going women and qualified doctors, a [QR-code-based outreach](#) initiative was introduced under the “Improving the Journey of People Using MA/MRM in South Asia” project. The initiative is implemented with the

support of 40 pharmacies and 20 community health workers (CHWs). Through these pharmacies, women seeking MR services are informed about the OGSB call center and can access free, confidential consultations on the MR care using medication.

Regular follow-up with participating pharmacies and the call center helps assess the initiative’s reach, acceptance, and potential to expand MRM services, including digital support. While OGSB call center data show an increase in service-seeking calls after the introduction of this initiative, the findings also highlight the continued need to further strengthen awareness and access to reliable MRM information.



A pharmacy equipped with an OGSB call center connection QR

Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh



Trained doctor at the OGSB call center

Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh

Kick-off Meeting of Regional Interventions on SMA



All participants together

The five-day workshop of the project “Improving the Journey of People Using MA/MRM in South Asia” was held in Dhaka from 6–10 October 2025, bringing together 26 participants from Bangladesh, Nepal, and India. The workshop focused on understanding user

journeys, identifying service gaps, and developing practical, collaborative strategies to improve medical abortion services across South Asia.

Roundtable With Prothom Alo

Rapid urbanisation is straining Bangladesh’s health system and creating gaps in access to quality services for urban populations. To bring a spotlight to this critical issue, Ipas Bangladesh and The Daily Prothom Alo jointly organised a roundtable titled ‘Shaping Future Urban Health Systems in Bangladesh’ on 12 November 2025. The roundtable brought together key



Dr. Syed Rubayet speaking at the Round Table

Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh

policymakers and stakeholders, including representatives from the Health Reform Commission; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and its Health Economics Unit; Directorate General of Family Planning; the Chief Health Officers from the Dhaka South City Corporation and Dhaka North City Corporation; development partners from the Canadian High Commission, FCDO and SIDA; CSOs representatives from OGSB and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad; and an academic from the

Department of Population Science of Dhaka University. Ipas Bangladesh delivered the keynote presentation. The discussion aimed to identify long-term strategic decisions required to build a sustainable urban health system that ensures access and availability of quality health services for Bangladesh’s urban population.

[A full-page supplementary highlighting the roundtable was published on 27 November 2025.](#)

ADVOCACY

From Verdict to Action: Strengthening Advocacy to End the Two-Finger Test



Photo Courtesy: Blast

Although the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh declared the Two-Finger Test (TFT) unethical, unscientific, and traumatic in April 2018, a recent icddr,b study shows that it is still used in medico-legal examinations of rape survivors, violating women’s rights to privacy, dignity, and bodily integrity.

To facilitate dialogue on

action and accountability, the TFT CSO Forum, convened by Ipas Bangladesh and RLRC, jointly organized a high-level advocacy meeting titled “Action Required to Implement the High Court Directives on the Two-Finger Test Ban and Ensure Legal Protection for Survivors of Rape.” The meeting was held on 26 November 2025 in Cox’s Bazar.

Jointly organized by the CSO Forum for Strengthening a Sustainable SRHR Ecosystem in Bangladesh and the Rape Law Reform Coalition, the meeting focused on identifying implementation gaps, improving coordination, and strengthening accountability to ensure justice for survivors of rape and sexual violence. Participants from health, legal, law enforcement, government, and civil society shared experiences and proposed key advocacy priorities, including:

- Timely survivor registration
- Survivor-centered, ethical, clinical and medico-legal examination
- Adherence to legal directives
- Improved coordination between government and non-government actors

The meeting ended with a shared commitment to implement the law in practice and protect survivors’ rights and dignity through coordinated action.

SRHR Forum for RMG meeting organized by Ipas Bangladesh as the new secretariat

Ipas Bangladesh as the new secretariat of SRHR Forum for Ready-Made Garments (RMG) of DGFP organized its 11th Meeting on 30th December 2025 at DGFP office in Dhaka. The meeting was chaired by the Director General of DGFP, and 47 participants representing government, private sector, development partners, NGOs, INGOs and industry associations BKMEA and BGMEA were present. The key points of discussion were -sharing recent updates and activities by member organizations, identification of challenges, mitigation options and decision for way forward. The forum is an initiative of DGFP, as established as a multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen policy dialogue, coordination, service delivery, accountability, and learning around SRHR in the RMG sector.

CSO Forum Roundtable on Online Abuse Against Women



To strengthen policy dialogue on digital violence, the SRHR CSO Forum convened by Ipas Bangladesh, in partnership with The Daily Star, Ipas’s ISRHRD project, and icddr,b, organized a roundtable titled “Ending Digital Violence: Policy Priorities for Advancing Health and Justice for Women and Girls” on 8 December 2025 as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The discussion highlighted online abuse as a growing public health concern for women in Bangladesh, linked to depression, anxiety, and psychosocial distress. Government representatives, researchers, activists, and CSO members shared evidence, legal perspectives, and advocacy priorities, underscoring the need for coordinated action to ensure safer digital spaces and a stronger SRHR ecosystem.

Multi-level Stakeholder observation of 16 Days Activism against GBV

Early marriage, domestic abuse, and lack of Gender-based violence, especially digital violence, continues to affect women and girls across Bangladesh. Ipas Bangladesh marked the 16 Days Activism against GBV 2025 through a series of coordinated, multi-level actions aligned with the global theme “UNITE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls”. To build national commitment, Ipas Bangladesh organised a multi-level stakeholder event on 3 December 2025 engaging 160 participants from government bodies, women rights commission, development partners, UN

bodies CSOs, activists and influencers against digital violence, academics, youth volunteers, Ipas partners. The event featured a keynote which was presented by Ipas Bangladesh, followed by expert presentations from UNFPA, UN Women, Network of Cyber Support for Women and Children, and a panel discussion with youth volunteers, Bangladesh women internet governance forum, psychiatrists, and media professionals. There was a collaborative oath to combat all forms of gender-based violence, with a special focus on digital violence.

OBSERVANCE



Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh



Observed at 12 CRHCCs in Dhaka

Awareness and response within health facilities are critical, and the campaign was observed at 12 Comprehensive Reproductive Health Care Centers (CRHCC) in Dhaka South and North City Corporation from 9-18 December 2025. Each CRHCC organised one event in their facility, engaging a total of 599 CRHCC and project supported PHCC staff, including program managers, clinic managers, doctors, counselors, and mid-level service providers. The objective was to increase awareness on GBV and emphasize the importance of addressing GBV issues faced by clients seeking health services at facilities.



Health Camps at the community level

At the community level, health camps were organised by the Improving SRHR in Dhaka project in three project areas reaching 160 community members. Supported By volunteers and general practitioners, the health camps raised awareness on gender-based violence, prevention, information on counseling and referral services, available service centers in the city, and government and OGSB online helpline numbers - encouraging communities to raise their voices against GBV.

Family Planning Gave Sathee Confidence and a New Way to Dream Again

Early marriage, domestic abuse, and lack of reproductive choice left Sathee (pseudonym), a 21-year-old mother of two, fearful of another unplanned pregnancy. Married at 16, her husband did not allow her to use any family planning method. She was referred to a general practitioner through a volunteer from the Improving SRHR in Dhaka project.

The general practitioner assured Sathee of privacy, safety, and confidentiality, enabling her to speak openly about the abuse she faced

“Now, I no longer live in fear of an unplanned pregnancy.”

- Sathee, 21-year-old



Dr. Asma Haque delivering essential SRHR services with care

Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh

and her desire to regain control over her reproductive health. She was counseled on her rights and the full range of family planning options and chose the injectable method. With counseling and reassurance, she gained confidence to begin the method.

Over time, Sathee returned regularly for injections and reported feeling healthier, more secure, and hopeful. Free from fear of unplanned pregnancy, she began small income-generating work, highlighting how family planning supports women’s dignity and autonomy.

The [ISRHRD project](#) of Ipas Bangladesh has trained 130 general practitioners to deliver comprehensive SRHR services. As part of this initiative, GP chambers are being transformed into ‘Women Plus’ SRHR centers, providing community-based services for women and adolescents in Dhaka, including those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

“I informed her about her rights and counseled on the full range of family planning options and services which were available to her. After careful discussion, Sathee chose the injectable method.”

***- Dr. Asma Haque
General Practitioner, Khilgaon***

When faith meets facts: An Imam’s journey in advancing sustainable SRHR services in Rohingya camp

Once skeptical of family planning and reproductive health services, Rohingya Imam Md. Noor Hossain believed contraception and abortion were prohibited in Islam.

Through the Ipas–UNFPA project based [Social and Behavioral Change Communication \(SBCC\) initiative](#), his understanding transformed after learning that Islamic teachings support decisions that protect life, health, and dignity. Through SBCC-focused capacity-building trainings led by Islamic Foundation Imams, Noor Hossain deepened his understanding of Islamic teachings and learned that Hadith guidance supports family planning and reproductive health decisions when they protect life, health, and dignity.



Photo Courtesy: Ipas Bangladesh

Rohingya Imam Md. Noor Hossain discussing family planning at the camp

Today, he uses Friday sermons and community sessions to promote FP from an Islamic perspective and has referred more than 25 people to health facilities for FP, MR, and PAC services.

Our Impact for the October to December Quarter

At Ipas-supported health facilities-

84,737 people received Family Planning services

2,284 people received Menstrual Regulation service

2,669 people received Postabortion Care service

1,418 people received support on Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Through community engagement programs, Ipas Bangladesh reached-

113,122 Bangladeshi people

12,472 Rohingya people

Check out the earlier edition 



Advisor: Dr. Sayed Rubayet

Editorial Board: Fawzia Nasrin, Dipika Paul, Farhana Jesmine Hasan, Dr. Kaneez Hasnain, Dr. Nasrin Romi, Tania Tasnin

Writing & Editing: Farasha Bashir, Monika Aahelee

Contributors: Dr. Ziaul Ahsan, Mohammad Mamun-Ur Rashid, Dr. Nasrin Romi, Dipankar Basak, Tasnia Ahmed, Samia Sharif, Farhana Jesmine Hasan

Coordination & Design: Monika Aahelee

Produced by: Ipas Bangladesh

For more information, please contact:
commsbd@ipas.org

<https://ipasbangladesh.org/>

House 428/A, Road 30
New DOHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1206
Phone: +880-222286583
+880-222286584; (Ext. 201)

