





*Nusrat Jahan*

**Nusrat Jahan** is a rural development practitioner and at present she is a doctoral fellow of 'New Media Studies' in Shanghai Jiaotong University, China, under Chinese Government Scholarship.

Nusrat obtained her graduation and post-graduation in Mass Communication and Journalism from the University of Rajshahi. Later on, she acquired a diploma course in Development Journalism for Non-aligned and other Developing Countries at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi, under the ITEC/SCAAP programme of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and awarded 'IIMC award for International Understanding' for securing the top position.

She also achieved professional training on Television journalism, Visual Storytelling: Best journalistic practice for Bangladeshi Women journalist, organized by Bangladesh Center for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) and The Gaylord College of journalism and mass communication, University of Oklahoma, USA, funded by US State Department. Prior, she achieved six month Fellowship course on 'Journalism for Female Graduates' arranged by 'News Network' & supported by Netherlands based International Organization 'Free Voice'.

Nusrat has engaged herself conducting research in the field of communication, media, socio-economic and rural development areas and has a good number of scholarly research articles and publication. Her fields of research interest are communication for development and new media applications for women empowerment and rural livelihood improvement.



*Md. Mohiuddin*

**Md. Mohiuddin** is a development professional with more than fifteen years' experience in the field of rural development. He has obtained his bachelor and master's degree in Economics from the University of Rajshahi. He started his career as a lecturer of Economics in Alhaz Ershad Ali Women College, Rajshahi.

In his professional tenure, he has attended several international training courses. He attended Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and OTOP to CIRDAP member countries training course in Thailand, International Executive Development Programme on Promotion of Micro Enterprise (POME) training course in Hyderabad, India and Sustainable Rural Development training course jointly funded by Koika- AARDO at Republic of Korea. He has joined number of seminars including "Seminar on Agriculture Management for Bangladesh" sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce and organized by Hubei Vocational College of Bio-Technology in Wuhan, the People's Republic of China.

Mohiuddin, as a researcher, conducted several research project and published research articles related to rural economics and agricultural development. His specialization is in economics, project implementation and rural development.

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**The Research Team**

## Executive Summary

**H**ealth awareness is mandatory to live a healthy life. To develop health awareness communication is necessary. Bangladesh has achieved a remarkable development in health sector even in the rural areas. The study was aimed to identify effective communication channel in creating health awareness of rural people as well as to know the health seeking behavior of rural people and lastly to assess the impact of national health program and services exists in rural villages. A total of 150 respondents were selected randomly from 4 villages of 4 different upazilas under Rajshahi and Shirajganj districts of Bangladesh. Data was collected by face to face interview using prefixed questionnaire. Among respondents all are agreed about the importance of health information regarding different health issues like sanitation, pre and post maternal healthcare, immunization through vaccination and importance of family planning. Both government and non-government organizations are working in the study areas by providing health awareness messages however, government is doing a good job by providing healthcare services rather than NGO's. Respondents reported various sources of information channels regarding health. Radio, television, doctor, pharmacy, Thana Health Complex (THC), GO and NGO health worker, folk events, friends or relatives, opinion leaders, posters and leaflets are the major sources of information to them. The result indicates that, most of the respondent opined about effectiveness of interpersonal communication in creating health awareness though they are also award by the mass media and other communication channels. Communication channels were categorized in formal and informal information sources. In terms of formal information sources, doctors (62%) are the most reliable formal source of health information mentioned by the respondents whereas the most popular informal communication source in the study areas are village doctor (51%). It is noticeable that, 63 percent of the respondents aware about Thana Health Complex as government public health service provider. In terms of respondent's health service taking behavior it is found that, hospital is the trusted place where majority of the respondents goes to get information and services for vaccination (94%), family planning (50%) and pre and post maternal health service (58%) respectively. However, 89% of the respondents noticeably get sanitation information from nearby pharmacy. Besides, clinic is the most often visited place for the respondents (49%) for other diseases like skin problem, seasonal health problems such as fever critical injuries and so on. In case of respondent's communication with sources regarding different