

## Unveiling the Reality of Child Marriage in Rural Bangladesh: A Critical Discussion

On February 19, 2025, Nijera Kori hosted a crucial discussion session in Dhaka, delving into the complexities of child marriage in rural Bangladesh. The event centered around the organisation's latest research findings, revealing a multifaceted picture of this persistent issue.

The research, presented by Dr. Lubna Jebin and Dr. Hashibul Hassan, highlighted a concerning trend: while child marriage rates have seen a general decline, a recent surge during the COVID-19 pandemic underscores its enduring presence. The study identified a web of contributing factors, from poverty and social pressure to limited education and entrenched gender norms. For example, the research found that girls in char areas are particularly vulnerable due to lack of educational opportunities.

A lively discussion followed, featuring insights from Maheen Sultan, Senior Fellow of Practice and Head of Gender and Social Development Cluster at BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) and Farah Kabir, Country Director at ActionAid Bangladesh. They emphasised the need for a multi-pronged approach, tackling not just the economic drivers but also deep-rooted social norms and harmful practices. The discussion highlighted the importance of:

- **Empowering girls:** Providing them with education, skills, and agency to make their own choices.
- **Challenging patriarchy:** Addressing harmful gender norms and promoting equality.
- **Community-level interventions:** Raising awareness, fostering dialogue, and building support systems.
- **Strengthening legal frameworks:** Ensuring stricter enforcement and closing loopholes that enable child marriage.

Khushi Kabir, Coordinator of Nijera Kori, concluded the session with a powerful call to action. She urged for a collective "war against patriarchy," emphasising the need for an intersectional approach that tackles the root causes of child marriage.

This event served as a critical platform for sharing knowledge, generating recommendations, and fostering collaboration. Nijera Kori's research [Available here] and the ensuing discussion provide valuable insights to guide future interventions and advocacy efforts aimed at ending child marriage in Bangladesh.

**Join the fight against child marriage!** Learn more about how you can support Nijera Kori's work at [<https://nijerakori.org>].



