



Press Release, 14th October 2016

Right groups on countrywide observation of the International Rural Women Day

Demand for effective sexual and reproductive health education and services especially for adolescents

Dhaka, 14th October 2016: Today in a press conference held at the National Press Club organized by the National Committee on the Observation of the International Rural Women Day, a countrywide network of civil society right groups, urge mass people, respective private and public sectors to ensure sexual and reproductive rights of the adolescents girls. According to the organizers the committee and their members in 64 districts will observe the World Rural Women's Day this year on 15th October through organizing rallies, seminars, honor to the especial rural women for their extraordinary contribution for public, drama to raise the awareness on the aforesaid issue.

The press conference titled '**Sexual and Reproductive health rights of the adolescents: Our Commitment**' was presided by national committee Chairperson Shamima Akhter and it was moderated by Secretariate Coordinator Ferdous Ara Rume. National Committee member Tamanna Rahman presented the written statement on behalf of the organizers. Among others member of the national committee Asif Iqbal, Munsiganj district committee chairperson Advocate Sohana Tahmina, national committee secretariat coordinator Mustafa Kamal Akanda.

In the written statement Tamanna Rahman said, according to the World Health Organization, people of age between 10-19 are considered as adolescents. About one fourth of total population of Bangladesh is adolescents. Our future is depended upon their effective education, life skills and health. During their puberty adolescents can realize some physical changes.

Ferdous Ara Rume said, during this critical time education on sexual and reproductive health care is very much important. It is also a right of adolescents to get care of sexual and reproductive health, but due to lack of awareness, shyness and lack of proper openness adolescent feel it quite hard to discuss and to get proper time during the puberty.

Advocate Sohana Tahmina Said, many people think that, adolescents don't need to know everything on this. Many doctor ask adolescents to take their parents or brothers with them for their treatment, and that is why girls don't go for health care affected form shyness. Still, in many communities, adolescents willing to know about puberty, sexual and reproductive health care is considered as immoral. This type of culture keep girls to seek information or health care. They can't take decision for their own.

Asif Iqbal said, investment for the sexual and reproductive health of the adolescents can repay immediately. It can ensure more school attendance, it can also increase productivity in the house and working places. Educational institutes must facilitate sexual and reproductive care for adolescent girls, so that they can be ale to protect them sexual, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy. School curriculum should include this.

Mustafa Kamal Said, parents, family member can play a vital role to ensure health care and health rights of the adolescents. Not guardianship, rather friendly attitude of the family members can be effective during this time.

Shamia Akhter said, during the puberty adolescents get the reproductive ability and that is why this is the critical time to be careful and to get health care. Our schools can play very important rule in this regard by introducing education on this issue.

Reported by: Mustafa Kamal Akanda, mobile +8801711455591.