

THE BYETS PRESS

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Dutch Youth Ambassador Visits BYETS Training at Sewtech Fashions Ltd.

Dutch Ambassador for Youth, Education, and Work, Jurrian Middelhoff, visited Sewtech Fashions Limited, a key intervention site of the BYETS project, to observe the impact of skills training on Bangladesh's garment industry. He was accompanied by a delegation from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN), including Thijs Woudstra, Chargé d'Affaires for Education & Work; Sara van Hoeve, First Secretary of Economic Affairs; Erik Parigger, Programme Coordinator at RVO Orange Corners; and Mushfiqua Satiar, Senior Adviser at EKN, along with other representatives. Md. Abdus Sobhan, Executive Director of BEPZA, Chattogram, was also present during the visit.

During the visit, the delegation toured the factory's training centre, observing ongoing sessions and interacting with trainees about their aspirations. They also visited the production floor, where BYETS training graduates are employed, gaining insights into their experiences and the benefits of the programme.

The visit concluded with discussions on strengthening public-private partnerships to enhance workforce development. The delegation emphasised the role of such collaborations in making Bangladesh's Readymade Garments (RMG) industry more competitive and globally compliant while developing stronger trade relationships.



Adibul Islam, Senior Vice President, Shahi Export Pvt. Ltd. expressed their satisfaction, noting, "The Sewing Machine Operators training program has significantly improved workers' skills, productivity, and retention—key factors in strengthening long-term workforce planning. While the current training module has proven effective, customising it to address the specific needs of each factory will enhance its impact even further. Recognizing the lasting benefits of a skilled workforce, the factory is committed to continuing the initiative beyond the project's support. This commitment reflects a forward-looking approach that places people at the heart of sustainable growth."

From Factories to Digital Frontiers: Women Embracing New Opportunities



“Across the globe, women are less likely to work for pay, and, when they do, they make less.” Young women continue to face significant barriers to accessing education, skills development, and decent employment opportunities. Despite the growing recognition that economic empowerment is key to achieving gender equality and inclusive growth, many women are still left behind due to systemic challenges. Addressing this pressing issue requires targeted interventions by development projects that equip women with the necessary skills to enter and thrive in the workforce.

Therefore, the BYETS project is dedicated to enhancing the employability of young individuals, particularly women, by providing industry-relevant training. The project focuses on three key sectors— RMG, Agro-Processing (AP), and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). BYETS implements a structured approach to skills training through three intervention approaches: classroom-based ICT training in digital fields such as graphics design, web development, and digital marketing and software quality assurance (SQA); workplace-based training (WBT) in RMG and AP sectors by developing in-house master trainers and assessors, where training is conducted directly in factories; and a Dual Training System (DTS) model that combines classroom instruction with apprenticeships in AP factories, ensuring hands-on experience.

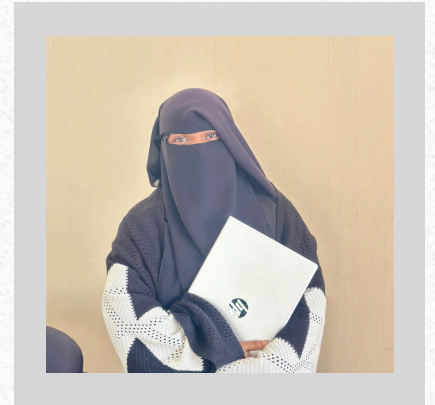
At Karim Textiles, BYETS has developed master trainers who are continuing to train workers on sewing machine operations. One such trainer is Lipi Banu, a single mother raising her young son alone. Lipi faced numerous hardships, including early marriage, financial struggles, and severe back pain that required costly painkillers. Despite these challenges, she persevered. After receiving BYETS training, she became a full-time trainer, supporting workers and production supervisors. **“I am grateful for the opportunity from the BYETS project,”** Lipi shares. **“Now, I get respect from everyone in the factory; they listen to what I have to say.”** Inspired by Lipi and other successful women, BYETS has introduced a new supervisory training wing in some of the partner factories to help women workers transition into leadership roles. BYETS currently has partnerships with 59 RMG factories across Dhaka and Chattogram.



Workers in RMG factories who aspire to become operators undergo a pre-assessment and are selected by the factory to receive training from master trainers. One such dedicated young individual is Masuda Khatun, who faced financial hardship before joining Giant Textiles as a factory helper. With no prior experience, she found the environment overwhelming. However, after receiving training in sewing machine operation, she was promoted to operator. Now, she aspires to become a Grade 1 operator and excel in her factory. **“I want to see myself as one of the best operators in the factory,”** she says with determination, attributing her progress to the skills and confidence gained through BYETS training.

In addition to RMG, BYETS has introduced WBT in large Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) and Jute factories, by training master trainers who then train workers on industry best practices. One such worker, Rojina Khatun of IFAD Multi Products Ltd., participated in a five-day training program covering workplace safety, hygiene, and operational efficiency. Rojina now applies these lessons daily which improves her performance at work. Also, the training helped her improve her soft skills. **“The training also helped me overcome my initial struggles with communication and confidence,”** she says. The training helped her better understand global food and safety standards and showed her why it's so important to follow the right steps carefully to make sure everything stays safe.

BYETS is facilitating skills development of youth across four divisions—Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, and Chattogram—to provide ICT training. Sabiha Khatun, a 22-year-old chemistry student from Rajshahi, enrolled in Digital Marketing training at the E-Learning and Earning Centre while juggling her studies and private tutoring. Previously unfamiliar with social media and digital platforms, Sabiha was amazed by the opportunities in digital marketing. **“Before the training, I had no idea how much the digital world had to offer. Now, I feel equipped to step into this space with confidence,”** she shares enthusiastically. She is currently working towards becoming a skilled freelancer in the field of digital marketing.

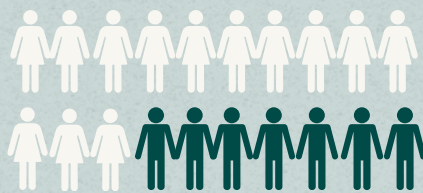


The inspiring stories from the women of BYETS project highlight the importance of targeted interventions to upskill women in the RMG, AP, and ICT sectors. In response, the BYETS project is committed to addressing the needs and rights of disadvantaged groups, including women, persons with disabilities, and marginalised communities. To build a more inclusive workforce, development initiatives like BYETS are not only investing in skills training for women across sectors but are also working to ensure their successful entry into the job market — helping them move towards greater self-sufficiency in life.

BYETS Through a Gender Lens

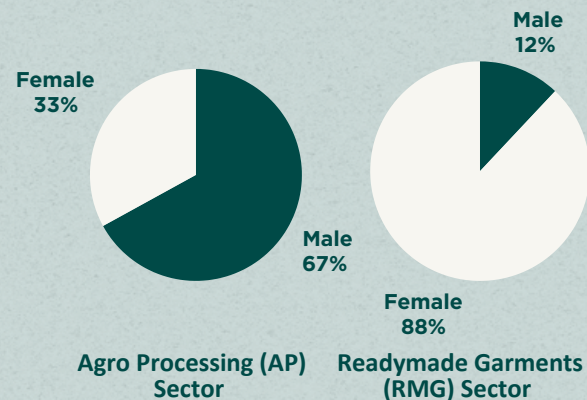
The BYETS project aims to ensure that women make up at least 50% of overall participants. The project designed interventions that promote social inclusion by facilitating enhanced opportunities and access to resources for all regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and economic status, including those who are differently abled.

As of March 30, 2025,
16,438 trainees have enrolled in training

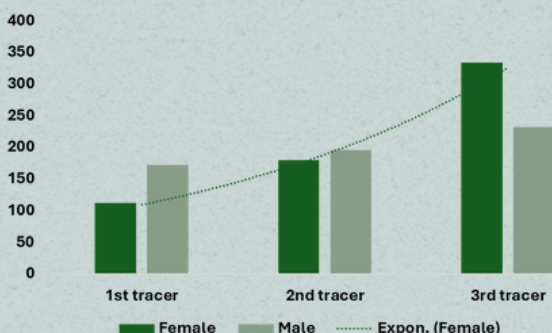


Among them, 66% are female and 34% are male trainee

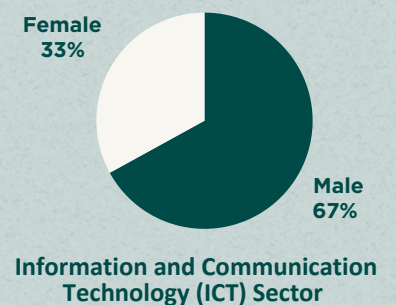
Female Trainee Enrollment Percentage in Each Sectors



Women Master Trainers and Assessors (in %) in BYETS Partner RMG Factories



Studies conducted by the project showed that the proportion of women becoming master trainers and assessors in BYETS-partnered RMG factories has steadily increased from 39% (in January 2024) to 59% (in January 2025), reflecting growing gender inclusivity in leadership and capacity-building.



Catalysing Global Connections for Agro-Processing SMEs

The BYETS project has partnered with CEMS Bangladesh, a sister concern of CEMS Global—an international company specialising in organising large-scale events—to co-host the Agro-Processing Global Gateway International Exposition. This expo will serve as a key platform for the AP industries, bringing together businesses of all sizes, sector stakeholders, and international buyers. Through its B2B exhibitions, CEMS Global creates opportunities for businesses to explore new markets, forge partnerships, and stay updated on industry trends and innovations.



With a strong focus on empowering small and medium enterprises (SMEs), this collaboration will facilitate access to showcase their products, services, and innovations to a global audience. By fostering global market connections, the expo aims to expand their business opportunities. Beyond networking, the event will encourage the exchange of best practices, innovations, and emerging market trends. It will feature interactive sessions on technology adoption, innovative solutions, and successful business models from global AP leaders, equipping local enterprises with strategies for growth and modernisation.

By bridging local AP industries with global stakeholders, the “Agro-Processing Global Gateway” marks a significant step in strengthening the sector. The event will facilitate access to businesses to advanced technologies and global partnerships, creating innovation and growth within Bangladesh’s AP industry.



BYETS Hosts Workshops to Advance ICT Training with NSDA-Validated Competency Standards

BYETS organised series of workshops— focused on conducting a comprehensive Task Analysis for the occupation of Software Quality Assurance (SQA) and developing a Competency Standard (CS) aligned with industry requirements and the Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework (BNQF).

The workshops aimed to provide a platform for key stakeholders, including representatives from the National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) and ICT-Industry Skills Council, ICT and software development firms, and institutions offering ICT-related training programs, to support the validation of the CS by NSDA.

Participants of the workshops provided valuable insights and recommendations to further refine the module. The module has since been revised and is currently undergoing the validation process at NSDA. This initiative aims to ensure that the module aligns with the national CS, making it widely accepted by employers in the field of SQA. Additionally, it ensures that the training follows best practices and industry benchmarks, enhancing its credibility. NSDA validation ultimately increases the module’s value for individuals seeking to enter or advance in the field.