

Press release - For immediate release

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State Minister Shama Obaed Islam Highlights the Importance of Women's Leadership at UNOPS Bangladesh's National SDG Localisation Workshop

Dhaka (Bangladesh), 8 July 2026.— **Shama Obaed Islam, Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, today joined senior government officials, United Nations representatives, development partners, educators, youth leaders, and civil society organisations at the **Dissemination Session on "Building a Model for SDG Localisation: SDG 5 and SDG 16"**, organised by UNOPS Bangladesh at Pan Pacific Sonargaon in Dhaka.

The national workshop forms part of the Joint Programme, **"Enhancing Women's Political Leadership through SDG 5 and SDG 16 Localisation in Bangladesh,"** implemented by **UNOPS** in coordination with **UN Women** and in partnership with **Naripokkho**, with support from the **Joint SDG Fund**.

Building on successful implementation across Dhaka, Chattogram and Rajshahi, the dissemination workshop showcased key findings, lessons learned, and practical recommendations from the localised SDG model. Participants also heard inspiring stories from young women leaders, students, mentors, and educational institutions that have contributed to advancing women's leadership and strengthening inclusive governance at the local level.

The workshop opened with welcome remarks by **Sudhir Muralidharan**, Country Manager, UNOPS Bangladesh and Bhutan. **Navanita Sinha**, Deputy Country Representative, UN Women Bangladesh, delivered special remarks highlighting the importance of partnerships in accelerating progress on SDG 5 and SDG 16. **Maheen Sultan**, Executive Member of Naripokkho, presented on the SDG localisation model. Also present were **Special Guest, Nasreen Jahan**, Member (Secretary), Socio Economic Infrastructure Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission, **H. E. Dr. Abdelouahab Saidani**, the Ambassador of Algeria to Bangladesh, **Farida Akhter**, former adviser to the Interim government of Bangladesh and **Sister Kolpona Costa, CSC**, Headmistress, Holy Cross Girls' High School.

Addressing the event as **Chief Guest, Shama Obaed Islam, State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, said:

"Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires strong local leadership and meaningful participation of women in decision-making. Initiatives that empower young women today are laying the foundation for a more inclusive, equitable and resilient Bangladesh tomorrow."

Speaking as **Special Guest, Nasreen Jahan, Member (Secretary), Socio Economic Infrastructure Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission**, emphasised the importance of translating national commitments into local action.

"Localising the Sustainable Development Goals enables national priorities to be reflected in community-level initiatives. Strengthening institutional collaboration and investing in women's leadership are essential to building an inclusive and sustainable future."

The workshop reaffirmed the shared commitment of UNOPS Bangladesh, UN Women, Naripokkho, government institutions, and development partners to advancing SDG localisation through collaborative partnerships and locally led solutions. By empowering women and strengthening inclusive institutions, the initiative continues to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals while ensuring that no one is left behind.

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