FINANCIAL INCLUSION REPORT

BANGLADESH 2025



Bangladesh Bank
NFIS Administrative Unit (NAU)

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MESSAGE

The Government of Bangladesh has formulated the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) to achieve the primary objective of ensuring financial inclusion for all adults by June 2026. This strategy acknowledges the significant role of financial inclusion in empowering marginalized groups by providing access to essential financial services, credit facilities, and financial literacy. Through these initiatives, the government seeks to promote a more equitable, prosperous, and inclusive society.

Over the past decade, financial inclusion has emerged as a central topic in Bangladesh, with notable advancements driven by the expansion of Digital Financial Services (DFS). These services have significantly empowered marginalized communities to manage their finances more effectively. Bangladesh has demonstrated leadership in financial inclusion through the implementation of the Agent Banking system and DFS, including initiatives such as MFS, the establishment of Digital Banks, and the introduction of 'Bangla QR'. These efforts seek to foster a cashless environment and enhance financial inclusion by integrating micro-merchants into the digital payment ecosystem.

The Financial Inclusion Report (FIR) Bangladesh, 2025 provides a comprehensive overview of financial inclusion in Bangladesh. It examines inclusion by gender, age, and location, and reviews related issues. The report analyzes sectoral inclusion, demographic trends, the impact of digital financial services, financial literacy initiatives, and progress on the NFIS. By highlighting both achievements and challenges, it supports informed decision-making and strategic planning to enhance financial inclusion.

Finally, I express my sincere appreciation to NFIS Administrative Unit (NAU) and to all respondents who generously contributed their financial inclusion data and demonstrated unwavering dedication in preparing this Report. This document offers a comprehensive and concise overview of the efforts, achievements, and challenges encountered in the field of financial inclusion. It also advocates for proactive measures to ensure ongoing progress in this essential area, emphasizing the significance of sustained advancement for the benefit of all.

মো. মোস্তাকুর রহমান

Md Mostaqur Rahman FCMA
Governor, Bangladesh Bank

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We extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Md. Habibur Rahman, Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank, for his unwavering support and guidance. His contributions have been instrumental in shaping this report. NAU is especially thankful for the tireless dedication and invaluable contributions of Mr. Rup Ratan Pine, Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank, whose efforts have significantly enhanced this report. We are also grateful to all individuals who reviewed and refined this report.

Finally, NAU express gratitude to all individuals who contributed information to this report and acknowledges those mentioned above, as well as others whose support, though not explicitly cited, is equally appreciated.

Executive Summary

Bangladesh continued to strengthen its financial inclusion ecosystem in 2025 as it approached the final year of implementing the NFIS 2021–2026. The Financial Inclusion Report 2025 presents a comprehensive assessment of the country's progress as of December 2025, highlighting achievements in expanding access, increasing usage, improving service quality, accelerating digital transformation, and promoting inclusive finance across all regulated financial sectors. According to the Bangladesh National Financial Inclusion Survey 2025, 64.5% of adults were formally financially included, demonstrating continued progress in reaching women, youth, rural populations, farmers, and other underserved groups.

Bangladesh's financial inclusion ecosystem is supported by 61 banks, 35 FCs, 677 MFIs, 13 MFSPs, 82 insurance companies, 1,227 CMIs, and a nationwide network of cooperative societies, under the regulatory oversight of Bangladesh Bank, MRA, IDRA, BSEC, and DoC. The collective efforts of these regulators and FSPs have significantly strengthened the breadth, depth, and quality of financial inclusion in Bangladesh.

Digital finance remained the key driver of inclusion in 2025. MFS expanded to 250.24 million accounts, including 105.67 million female accounts, with annual transactions exceeding BDT 2.04 trillion, supported by more than 2.03 million agents. Agent banking continued to deepen rural outreach through 20,501 outlets, 85.5% of which are located in rural areas, serving 25.83 million accounts. The banking sector maintained over 200 million deposit accounts, while no-frill accounts, school banking, social safety-net accounts, and farmers' 10 Tk accounts continued to connect previously excluded populations with the formal financial system.

Across the financial sector, finance companies expanded access to credit and savings products, while the MRA-regulated microfinance sector served 45.92 million accounts through 27,720 branches, playing a pivotal role in supporting low-income households, women, agriculture, and rural livelihoods. The IDRA promoted inclusive insurance through life, micro, health, agricultural, and non-life insurance products with increasing digital service delivery. The BSEC advanced financial inclusion by promoting digital investor

services, financial literacy, market transparency, and wider participation in capital markets, while cooperatives continued to improve financial access and economic opportunities for millions of members, particularly in rural communities.

Women's financial inclusion advanced through WFID Dashboard, which recorded increased female ownership of deposit accounts, sustained gender parity in agent banking, and improved access to CMSME finance. Youth financial inclusion, financial literacy, sustainable finance, climate-resilient finance, and consumer protection also received greater policy emphasis. Overall, 2025 marked another year of steady progress in advancing an inclusive, technology-enabled, and resilient financial system through the collective efforts of regulators, financial service providers, cooperatives, and development partners.

NFIS implementation also advanced steadily, with 53 targets (76%) of the 69 fully achieved and the remaining 16 targets (24%) under active implementation by December 2025, with no target remaining uninitiated. Sustained collaboration among regulators, financial institutions, and development partners will be essential to accelerate the remaining reforms and build a more inclusive and sustainable financial ecosystem for Bangladesh.

Acronym

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFI	Alliance for Financial Inclusion
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
BASA	Bangladesh Association for Social Advancement
BB	Bangladesh Bank
BBADCF	Bangladesh Bank Agricultural Development Common Fund
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BGD	Bangladesh (ISO country code)
BGD e-GOV CIRT	Bangladesh Government's e-Government Computer Incident Response Team
BPO	Bangladesh Post Office
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (now simply BRAC)
BSEC	Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission
CCAM	Customer Complaint Address Module
CDIP	Centre for Development Innovation and Practices
CDM	Cash Deposit Machine
CIRT	Computer Incident Response Team
CMI	Capital Market Intermediary
CMSME	Cottage, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
COVID	Corona virus Disease
CRF	Credit Risk Fund *(context-specific)*
CRFS	Comprehensive Rural Finance Study
CRM	Cash Recycler Machine
CSE	Chittagong Stock Exchange
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFS	Digital Financial Services
DPS	Deposit Pension Scheme
DSE	Dhaka Stock Exchange
ECCMA	Electronic Commerce Code Management Association
FC	Finance Company
FCBs	Foreign commercial banks
FICSD	Financial Integrity and Customer Services Department
FID	Financial Inclusion Department
FSP	Financial Service Provider
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GRS	Grievance Redress System
G2P	Government-to-Person
HBFC	House Building Finance Corporation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRA	Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority

IFC	International Finance Corporation
IT	Information Technology
ISBs	Islami Shariah based banks
KYC	Know Your Customer
LIC	Life Insurance Corporation
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MFS	Mobile Financial Services
MFSP	Mobile Financial Service Provider
MRA	Microcredit Regulatory Authority
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NAU	NFIS Administrative Unit
NBFI	Non-Bank Financial Institution
NFIS	National Financial Inclusion Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPSB	National Payment Switch Bangladesh
PCBs	Private Commercial Banks
PKSF	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation
POS	Point-of-Sale
PSD	Payment Systems Department
SBAs	School Banking Accounts
SBs	Specialized banks
SOCBs	State-owned commercial banks
SD	Statistics Department
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFD	Sustainable Finance Department
SICIP	Skills for Industry Competitiveness and Innovation Program
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TMSS	Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha
WFID	Women Financial Inclusion Data

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Financial inclusion remains a major policy priority for Bangladesh as the country moves toward the final stage of implementing the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS), 2021–2026. In 2025, the focus is no longer limited to expanding access to financial services; equal importance is being placed on regular usage, service quality, affordability, consumer protection, and digital readiness. An inclusive financial system is essential for supporting poverty reduction, employment generation, women's empowerment, rural development, CMSME growth, and overall economic resilience.

Bangladesh has made steady progress in bringing a larger share of the population into the formal financial system. Wider service networks, simplified account-opening procedures, technology-based delivery channels, targeted financing programs, and stronger institutional participation have made financial services more available to underserved communities. These efforts have particularly benefited rural populations, low-income households, young people, women, farmers, and small entrepreneurs. At the same time, the rapid growth of digital finance has created new opportunities for building a cash-light, efficient, and more accessible financial ecosystem.

However, several issues still require attention, including low financial literacy, gaps in digital skills, uneven rural infrastructure, gender-based barriers, limited use of formal savings and credit products, cyber security risks, and consumer protection concerns. Addressing these challenges is important to ensure that financial inclusion creates meaningful benefits for people and businesses, rather than only increasing the number of accounts.

This Financial Inclusion Report 2025 presents an updated overview of Bangladesh's financial inclusion progress, key achievements, existing barriers, and future priorities. Based on data and inputs from financial sector regulators and service providers, the report reviews the state of financial inclusion through the dimensions of access, usage, and quality. It also highlights the role of digital financial services, women's inclusion, youth inclusion, CMSME finance, rural and agricultural finance, financial literacy, consumer protection, and sustainable finance in achieving the broader objectives of the NFIS.

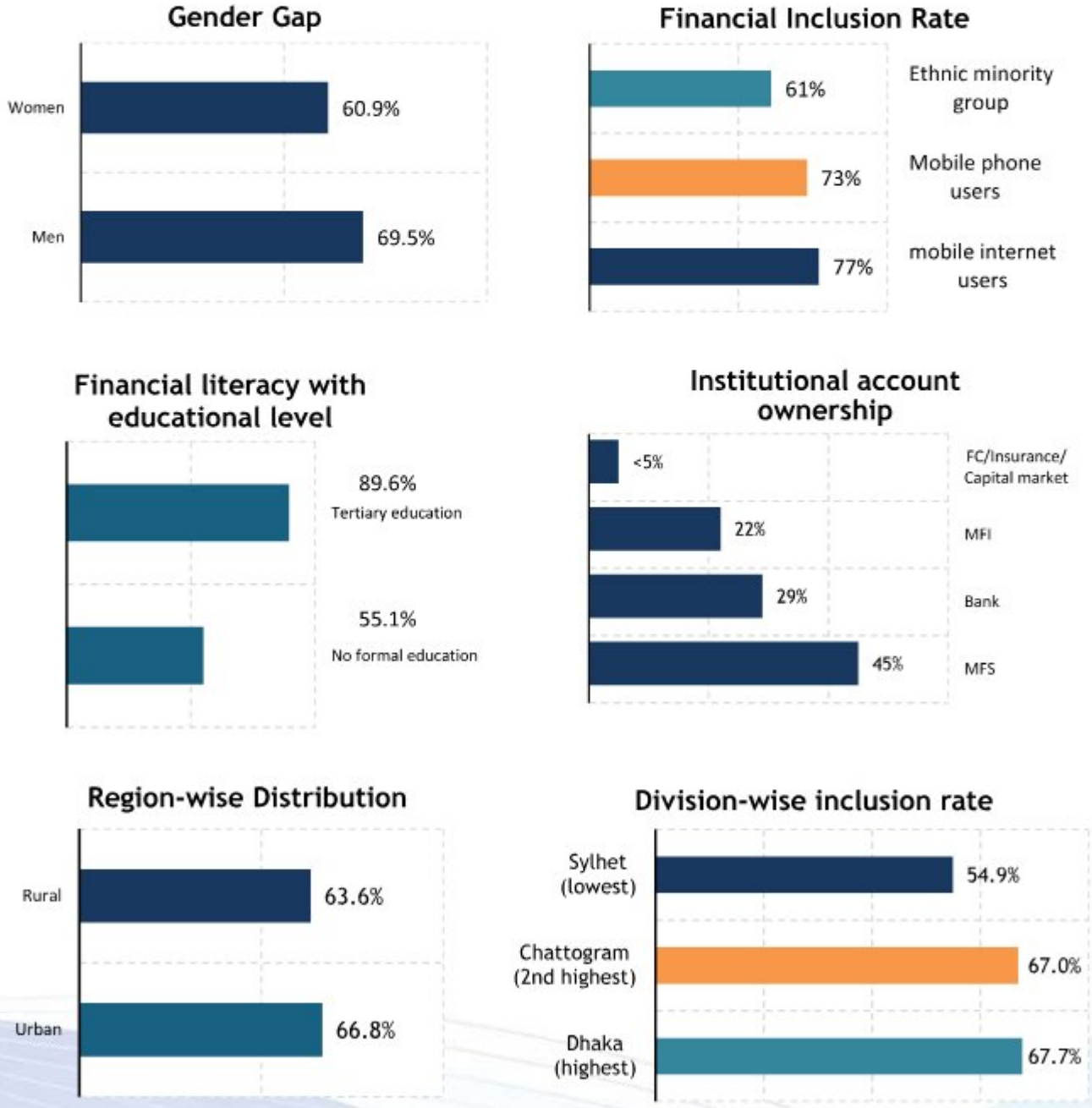
CHAPTER 2

Current State of Financial Inclusion

2.1 Status of Financial Inclusion in 2025

The National Financial Inclusion Survey 2025 places the overall rate of formal financial inclusion at 64.5 percent of the adult population. The figure marks continued progress in access while indicating that a substantial share of adults remains outside the formal financial system. Below figure 2.1 is a summary of the key findings of the survey:

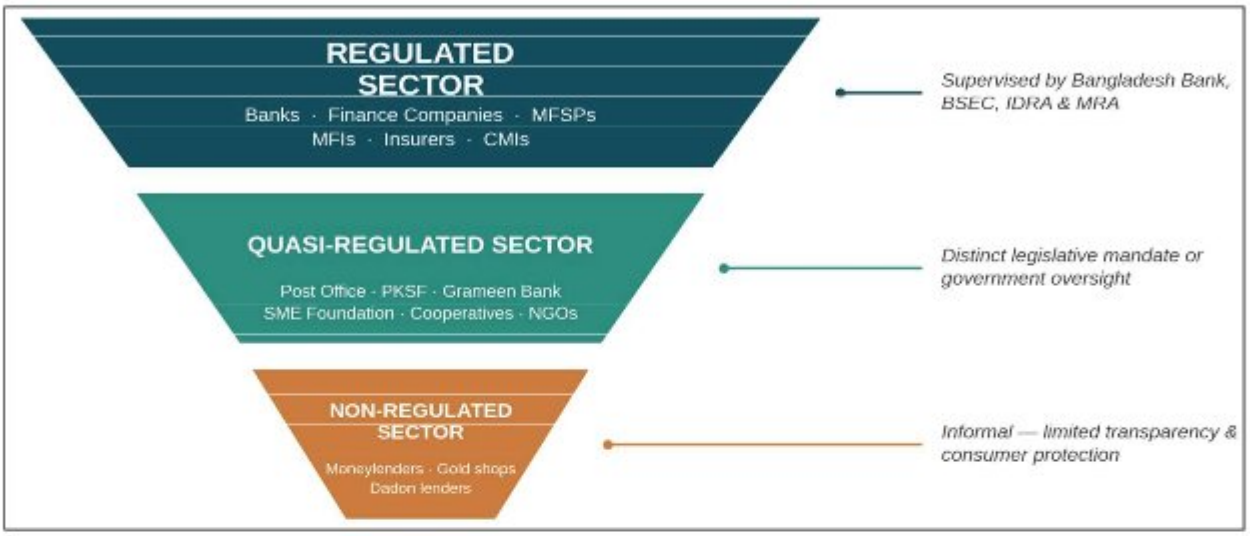
Figure 2.1: Findings of National financial inclusion survey, 2025



2.2 Financial sector landscapes

Bangladesh's financial system has three main segments: the **regulated**, **quasi-regulated**, and **non-regulated sectors**. Together, they support savings, credit, investment, digital payments, enterprise growth, and financial inclusion.

Figure 2.2: The three-tier architecture of Bangladesh's financial system, from fully supervised institutions to informal providers.



The **regulated sector** includes banks, finance companies, mobile financial service providers, microfinance institutions, insurance companies, and capital market intermediaries. These institutions are supervised by Bangladesh Bank, BSEC, IDRA, and MRA.

Table 2.1: Access Point Information of the Financial Sector, Dec-2025

Banks	Finance Companies	Mobile Financial Services
Total branches 11,418	Total branches 299	Number of MFSPs 13
Rural branches 45.39%	Rural branches 20.73%	MFS agents 2,030,515
Online branches 100%	Online branches 26.08%	
Rural sub-branches 43.39%		

Microfinance Institutions	Capital Market Intermediaries	Insurance Sector
Number of MFIs 677	Total CMIs 1,227	Life insurers 36
Total branches 27,720	TREC holder / broker-dealer branches 889	Non-life insurers 46

Source: Banks, FCs, MFSPs, MRA, BSEC

Table 2.1 illustrates the institutional footprint of the financial sector as on December 2025, spanning banks, FCs, MFSPs, MFIs, CMIs and insurers. Banks maintain the most extensive physical network, with 11,418 branches and full online connectivity, underscoring their continued position as the backbone of formal financial access. Mobile financial services, despite operating without a traditional branch network, compensate through an extensive agent base exceeding 1.5 million touch points, reflecting the sector's reliance on agent-driven, low-cost distribution to reach a wide population base. MFIs, by comparison, maintain more modest branch networks, suggesting these sub-sectors continue to serve a narrower, more specialized client base. Taken together, the table indicates a financial system in which scale is achieved through complementary channels-branch banking, agent networks, and digital rails-rather than any single institutional *type.*

Deposit Accounts by Provider Type

Banks hold the largest share of deposit accounts, with rural penetration varying widely by provider type.

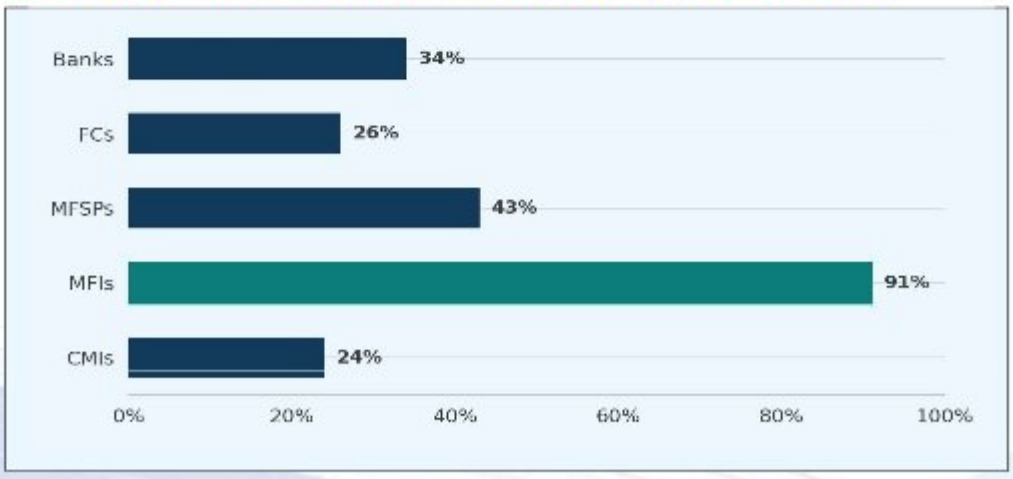
Table 2.2: Number of Deposit Accounts by Provider Type, Dec-2025

FSPs	Rural	% Rural	Urban	% Urban	Total
Banks	83,565,171	42.0%	117,301,784	58.4%	200,866,955
FCs	172,992	23.0%	574,929	77.0%	747,921
MFSPs	—	—	—	—	250,240,000
MFIs	—	—	—	—	45,920,968
B/O Accounts (CMIs)	—	—	—	—	1,258,542

Data source: Banks, FC's, MFSPs, MRA, BSEC

The account structure shows that banks remain the largest formal provider, although their accounts are more concentrated in urban areas. Finance companies have an even stronger urban focus, reflecting their limited rural reach. Meanwhile, the large account volumes of MFSPs and MFIs indicate their growing importance in financial inclusion, but the absence of rural–urban breakdowns limits a complete assessment of their geographic outreach.

Figure 2.3: Share of Female Account Holders by Provider Type, Dec-2025



No-Frill Accounts

Table 2.3: No-Frill Accounts by Category, Dec-2025

Category	Rural Accounts	Urban Accounts	Total Accounts	Total Deposits (million BDT)
School banking accounts	2,484,327	2,271,260	4,755,587	19,947.04
Farmers'10 Tk accounts	7,034,914	2,222,189	9,257,103	8,198.30
Social safety net accounts	7,477,022	2,385,018	9,862,040	16,829.29
Extreme poor accounts	1,988,325	524,937	2,513,262	2,200.93
Street urchin accounts	13,826	28,385	42,211	5.70
Other no-frill accounts	2,118,773	1,889,233	4,008,006	46,103.93
Total	21,117,187	9,321,022	30,438,209	93,285.19

Source: SD, BB

Figure 2.4 Cumulative Deposits by No-Frill Account Category, 2025

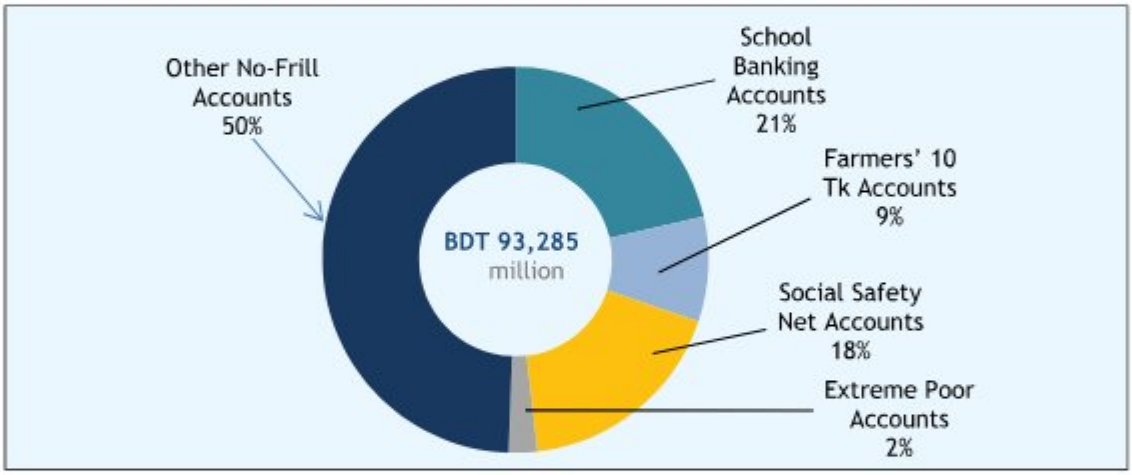


Table 2.3 and Figure 2.4 together show that no-frill banking in Bangladesh has achieved substantial outreach, with 30.4 million accounts holding deposits of BDT 93,285.19 million as of December 2025. Social safety net and farmers' BDT 10 accounts account for the largest number of accounts and are concentrated mainly in rural areas, reflecting their role in government transfers and agricultural inclusion. Deposit distribution, however, follows a different pattern: other no-frill accounts hold nearly half of total deposits, while school banking accounts also maintain relatively high balances compared with their account numbers. This indicates that although government-linked accounts are effective in widening access, other no-frill and school banking products appear to support more regular saving. The limited coverage of street-urchin accounts and the comparatively lower balances in accounts for extremely poor customers also show that meaningful usage remains uneven among the most vulnerable groups.

2.2.1 Agent Banking: Expanding Financial Access

Agent banking extends formal financial access into rural areas, where 83.9 percent of outlets are located in rural areas.

Table 2.4: Agent Banking Outlets and Accounts, Dec-2025

Category	Urban	Rural	Total	Rural Share
Outlets	2,974	17,527	20,501	85.5 %
Total accounts	3,974,446	21,858,535	25,832,981	84.6%

Source: FID, BB

Table 2.4 confirms agent baking's role as a critical last-mile delivery channel, with 20,501 outlets and 25.8 million accounts recorded as at December 2025. The overwhelming rural concentration of both outlets (85.5%) and accounts (84.6%) demonstrates that agent banking has been deployed specifically to serve areas where conventional branch banking remains commercially unviable. This rural-first orientation distinguishes agent banking from other formal channels and positions it as a key instrument for narrowing the rural-urban financial access gap.

Institutional Composition of Agent Banking

PCBs operate the largest agent networks; SOCBs scaled back sharply between Dec-2024 and Dec-2025. Tables 2.5 and 2.6 present the institutional distribution and financial performance of agent banking services by SOCBs, PCBs, and ISBs till December 2025.

Table 2.5: Agent Banking by Institution Type, Dec-2025

FSPs	Agents	Outlets	Accounts
SOCBs	150	150	51,478
PCBs	11,238	16,190	18,319,995
ISBs	3,939	4,161	7,461,508
Total	15,327	20,501	25,832,981

Source: FID, BB

Table 2.6: Loan Disbursement and Deposits via Agent Banking (million BDT) in 2025

FSPs	Loans	Deposits
SOCBs	0.00	776.91
PCBs	323,822.30	228,341.11
ISBs	26,409.58	268,083.60
Total	350,231.88	497,201.62

Source: FID, BB

Agent banking remains an important component of Bangladesh's current financial inclusion landscape, with most activity concentrated among PCBs and ISBs. PCBs account for the largest agent network, customer base, and loan disbursement, while Islamic banks hold the highest volume of deposits. SOCBs maintain only a marginal presence. This pattern reflects the stronger operational scale, wider outreach, and greater customer adoption of agent banking services among private and Islamic banking institutions.

2.3 Trend Analysis

2.3.1 Banks and Finance Companies

Bank access infrastructure stayed broadly stable, with modest branch growth and a shift toward digital channels.

Table 2.7 : Access Point Penetration of Banks, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

Indicator	Dec-2024	Dec-2025	% changed
Number of institutions	61	61	-
Total branches	11,362	11,418	0.71%
Rural branches	5,220	5,183	9.03%
Sub-branches	4,530	4,939	-1.20%
% rural branches	45.94%	45.39%	-
% online branches	100.00%	100.00%	-
% rural sub-branches	51.07%	43.39%	-
ATMs	12,859	12,713	-1.14%
CDMs	298	77	-74.16%
CRMs	6,970	8,483	21.71%
POS terminals	125,641	142,773	13.64%

Source: SD, BB

Table 2.7 tracks the evolution of bank access-point infrastructure between December 2024 and 2025. The expansion of sub-branches, full retention of online connectivity, and continued growth in CRMs and POS terminals reflect a deliberate shift toward digital and semi-digital channels as a complement to traditional branch banking. The modest decline in the share of rural branches and rural sub-branches, despite an increase in absolute branch numbers, indicates that recent network expansion has been somewhat more urban-weighted, a trend worth monitoring against the sector's broader rural inclusion objectives.

Table 2.8: Access Point Penetration of Finance Companies, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

Indicator	Dec-2024	Dec-2025
Number of institutions	35	35
Total branches	262	299
Rural branches	62	62
% rural branches	23.66%	20.73%
% online branches	32.44%	26.08%

Source: FCs

Table 2.8 shows that finance companies expanded their branch network from 262 to 299 branches over the year, a meaningful increase in absolute terms. However, both the rural branch share (23.66% to 20.73%) and the online branch share (32.44% to 26.08%) declined, indicating that this expansion was concentrated in urban, in-person outlets rather than digital or rural channels.

Account Growth by Institution Type

PCBs and ISBs led account growth among banks; finance companies posted the highest growth overall.

Table 2.9 : Rural / Urban Deposit Accounts by Institution Type, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

3.4:Year-on-Yea FSPs	Rural (Dec-24)	Urban (Dec- 24)	Total (Dec-24)	Rural (Dec-25)	Urban (Dec- 25)	Total (Dec-25)
SOCBs	29,696,706	25,394,632	55,091,338	30,761,064	26,516,424	57,277,488
SBs	17,196,493	1,355,622	18,552,115	17,529,919	1,974,312	19,504,231
PCBs	20,061,678	48,260,349	68,322,027	24,072,820	58,605,932	82,678,752
ISBs	9,854,535	27,440,605	37,295,140	11,192,612	29,421,065	40,613,677
FCBs	9,496	773,911	783,407	8,756	784,051	792,807
Total banks	76,818,908	103,225,119	180,044,027	83,565,171	117,301,784	200,866,955
FCs	120,268	484,336	604,604	172,992	574,929	747,921

Source: Banks, FCs

Figure 2.5: Growth rate of total accounts from December 2024 to December 2025

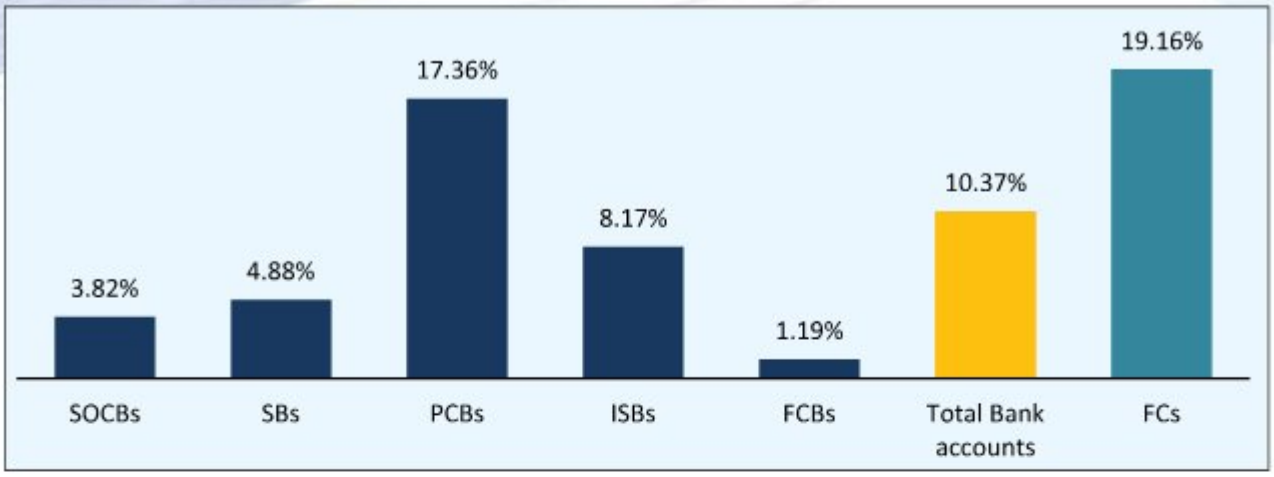


Figure 2.5 visualizes the year-on-year growth rate in deposit accounts by institution type, and the disparity across institutions is striking. FCs (19.2%) and PCBs (17.4%) recorded the fastest growth, likely reflecting more aggressive customer acquisition strategies and digital on-boarding capabilities. SOCBs (3.8%) and FCBs (1.2%) grew far more slowly, which may point to more conservative expansion strategies, legacy operational constraints, or a smaller addressable customer base. The overall bank-sector growth rate of 10.4% suggests that, in aggregate, deposit accounts are expanding at a healthy pace, but this growth is unevenly distributed among privately owned institutions.

Loan disbursement

Table 2.10: Total Loan Disbursement by Banks and FCs, 2024 vs 2025 (million BDT)

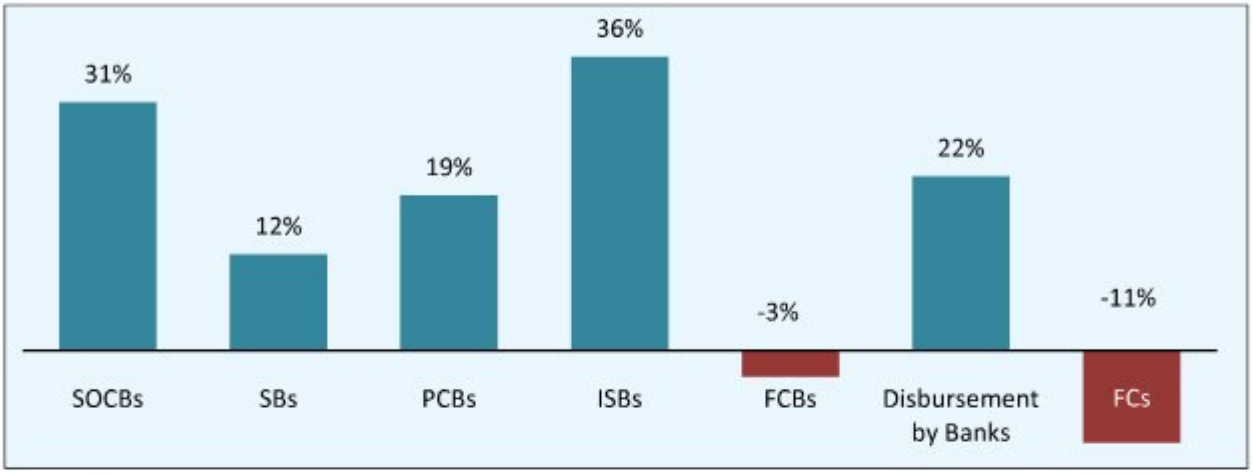
FSPs	Rural (2024)	Urban (2024)	Total (2024)	Rural (2025)	Urban (2025)	Total (2025)
SOCBs	37,435.12	127,867.76	165,302.88	43,000.72	195,885.34	238,886.06
SBs	52,341.09	9,787.64	62,128.72	54,145.23	16,380.42	70,525.65
PCBs	112,403.82	1,538,294.48	1,650,698.30	123,232.67	1,919,875.11	2,043,107.78
ISBs	37,701.84	426,032.20	463,734.04	51,996.10	677,499.49	729,495.59
FCBs	36.48	312,386.41	312,422.88	38.78	302,692.90	302,731.68
Banks total	239,918.35	2,414,368.48	2,654,286.83	272,413.50	3,112,333.25	3,384,746.75
FCs	11,331.32	50,531.06	61,862.38	14,384.73	41,104.43	55,489.15

Source: Banks, FCs

Table 2.10 sets out total loan disbursement by banks and FCs, and shows a marked expansion in bank lending, from BDT 2.65 trillion to BDT 3.38 trillion, an increase of over 27%. This growth was led by PCBs and ISBs, both of which posted strong gains in urban lending in particular, suggesting continued confidence in urban credit markets. FCs moved in the opposite direction, with disbursement falling from BDT 61.9 billion to BDT

55.5 billion, a contraction that may reflect tighter risk appetite, funding constraints, or reduced demand within their traditional customer segments. The divergence between the two sub-sectors suggests that credit growth in the broader financial system is increasingly being carried by the banking sector, with finance companies playing a diminishing role.

Figure 2.6: Change in Total Loan Disbursement by Banks and FCs, 2024 to 2025



No-Frill Accounts—Year-on-Year Comparison

No-Frill accounts fell slightly while deposits rose, pointing to higher average balances per account.

Table 2.11: No-Frill Accounts and Deposits, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

Category	Accounts (Dec-24)	Accounts (Dec-25)	% changed in	Deposits, million BDT	Deposits, million BDT (2025)	% changed in deposit volume
School banking accounts	4,380,159	4,755,587	8.57%	20,711.59	19,947.04	-3.69%
Farmers' 10 Tk accounts	9,877,927	9,257,103	-6.28%	8,985.93	8,198.30	-8.77%
Social safety net accounts	10,292,760	9,862,040	-4.18%	15,395.35	16,829.29	9.31%
Extreme poor accounts	2,542,366	2,513,262	-1.14%	1,577.15	2,200.93	39.55%
Street urchin accounts	37,698	42,211	11.97%	4.43	5.70	28.68%
Other no-frill accounts	3,953,620	4,008,006	1.38%	45,449.90	46,103.93	1.44%
Total	31,084,532	30,438,209	-2.08%	92,123.51	93,285.19	1.26%

Source: SD, BB

Table 2.12 compares number of no-frill accounts and deposit volume between December 2024 and 2025. While the total number of accounts declined modestly, from 31.1 million to 30.4 million, total deposits rose, from BDT 92.1 billion to BDT 93.3 billion, implying an

increase in the average balance per account. This suggests that, rather than reflecting a genuine reduction in financial inclusion, the decline in account numbers may be attributable to account rationalization or dormancy clean-up exercises, with remaining accounts showing improved engagement and deposit activity.

Institutional Composition of Agent Banking

PCBs operate the largest agent networks; SOCBs scaled back sharply between Dec-2024 and Dec-2025.

Table 2.12: Agent Banking by Institution Type, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

FSPs	Agents (Dec-24)	Agents (Dec-25)	Outlets (Dec-24)	Outlets (Dec-25)	Accounts (Dec-24)	Accounts (Dec-25)
SOCBs	736	150	736	150	1,063,036	51,478
PCBs	11,349	11,238	16,281	16,190	16,419,915	18,319,995
ISBs	3,947	3,939	4,232	4,161	6,595,279	7,461,508
Total	16,032	15,327	21,248	20,501	24,078,230	25,832,981

Source: FID, BB

Table 2.12 repeats the agent-banking institutional comparison presented in Table 2.6, reaffirming PCBs' dominance of the network and the sharp year-on-year contraction in SOCB agent and outlet numbers. It is necessary to mention that, due to the inactivity of a certain SOCB's agent banking, SOCB's declination is evident here. The consistency of this pattern across both presentations of the data underscores the extent to which the sustainability of the agent-banking model currently rests on the continued commitment of PCBs.

Figure 2.7: Change in agent banking services



Table 2.13: Loan Disbursement and Deposits via Agent Banking (million BDT)

FSPs	Loans (2024)	Loans (2025)	% change in loan dist.	Deposits (2024)	Deposits (2025)	% change in deposit
SOCBs	645.73	0.00	-	22,709.48	776.91	-97%
PCBs	218,577.43	323,822.30	48%	180,381.46	228,341.11	27%
ISBs	21,059.95	26,409.58	25%	216,467.20	268,083.60	24%
Total	240,283.11	350,231.88	46%	419,558.14	497,201.62	19%

Source: FID, BB

Table 2.13 restates the loan-disbursement and deposit data for agent banking shown in Table 2.7, again confirming PCBs' central role in both lending and deposit mobilization via this channel, and the near-total withdrawal of SOCBs from agent-based lending activity over the year.

2.3.2 Mobile Financial Services (MFS)

Total MFS accounts contracted sharply, but transaction values held stable, pointing to more active account usage.

Table 2.14: Overview of Mobile Financial Services, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

Indicator	Dec-2024	Dec-2025	% Changed
MFS agents	1,828,870	2,030,515	11.03%
Total accounts	238,676,153	250,240,000	4.84%
Female accounts	99,225,835	105,670,000	6.49%

Source: PSD, BB

Table 2.15: MFS Transaction Activity, 2024 vs 2025 (billion BDT)

Transaction Type	2024	2025	% Changed
Total number of Transaction	7.291	9.577	31.35%
Total Transaction value	17,383	21,831	25.58%
Government-to-person (G2P)	149	141	-5.36%
Utility bill payments	331	385	16.31%
Merchant Payment	828	960	15.94%

Source: PSD, BB

The data indicate continued expansion of Mobile Financial Services during the reporting period. The increase in agents and accounts reflects wider service coverage and growing customer adoption across the country. Female account ownership also increased, suggesting that MFS continued to support women's access to formal financial services.

Transaction activity also expanded notably, with total transaction value and transaction volume increasing during the period. Growth in Merchant Payment and utility bill payments indicates the increasing use of MFS for public service delivery and routine financial transactions.

Overall, the tables suggest that Mobile Financial Services remained an important driver of digital financial inclusion, with growth observed in service access, account ownership, female participation, and transaction volume

2.3.3 Microfinance Sector

MFI branches and accounts expanded, while outstanding loan volume declined modestly—a smaller average loan size.

Table 2.16: Overview of the Microfinance Sector, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

Indicator	Dec-2024	Dec-2025	% Changed
Number of MFIs	703	677	-3.70%
Number of MFI branches	26,806	27,720	3.41%
Total accounts	42,649,806	45,920,968	7.67%
Savings accounts	42,649,806	45,920,968	7.67%
Loan accounts	32,739,468	35,012,075	6.94%
Savings volume (in million BDT)	725,764.30	731,380.49	0.77%
Outstanding loans (in million BDT)	1,645,236.49	1,625,407.41	-1.21%

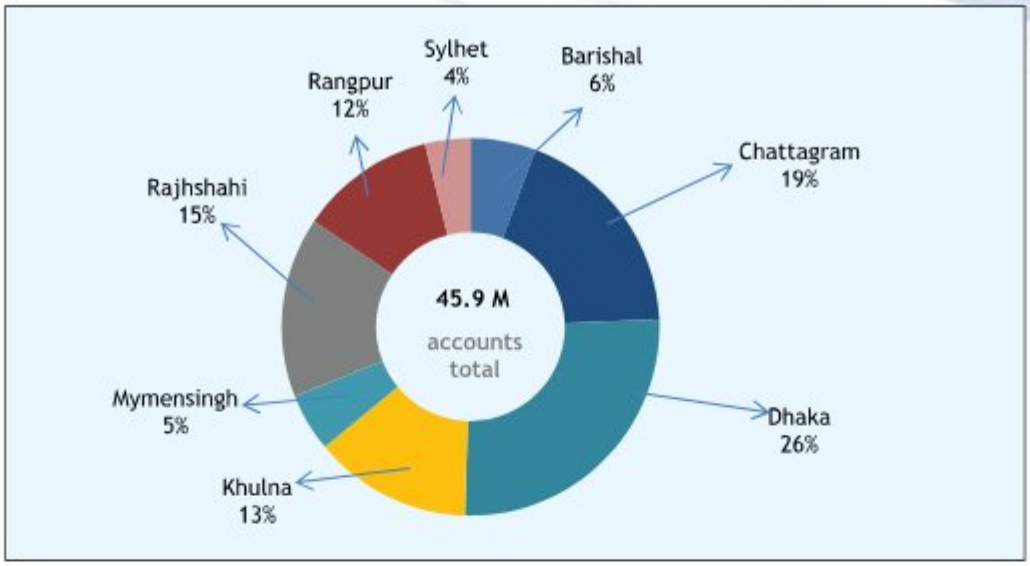
Source: MRA

Table 2.16 shows the year-on-year change in microfinance accounts and volumes. Both savings and loan accounts increased modestly between December 2024 and 2025, consistent with the account growth noted in Table 2.16. Savings volume grew only marginally, from BDT 725.8 billion to BDT 731.4 billion, while outstanding loan volume declined from BDT 1.65 trillion to BDT 1.63 trillion. The relatively flat trajectory of both volume measures, despite growing account numbers, reinforces the earlier observation that average balances and loan sizes per client may be shrinking, potentially reflecting a strategic push to deepen outreach among smaller, previously unbanked borrowers rather than expanding exposure to existing clients.

Division-Wise Distribution

Accounts concentrate in Dhaka and Chattogram, while Rangpur and Rajshahi show disproportionately large loan volumes.

Figure 2.8: Division-Wise Distribution of Microfinance Accounts



Source: MRA

2.3.4 Capital Market

Table 2.17 provides an overview of Capital Market Intermediaries (CMIs) and BO account trends between December 2024 and December 2025, highlighting institutional coverage, investor participation, gender distribution, and digital access

Table 2.17: Overview of Capital Market Intermediaries, Dec-2024 vs Dec-2025

Indicator	Dec-2024	Dec-2025	% Changed
Number ofCMIs	1,234	1,227	-0.57%
Total BO accounts	1,247,501	1,258,542	0.89%
% female accounts	24.46%	24.00%	-1.88%
% BO accounts via mobile app	2.77%	3.00%	8.30%

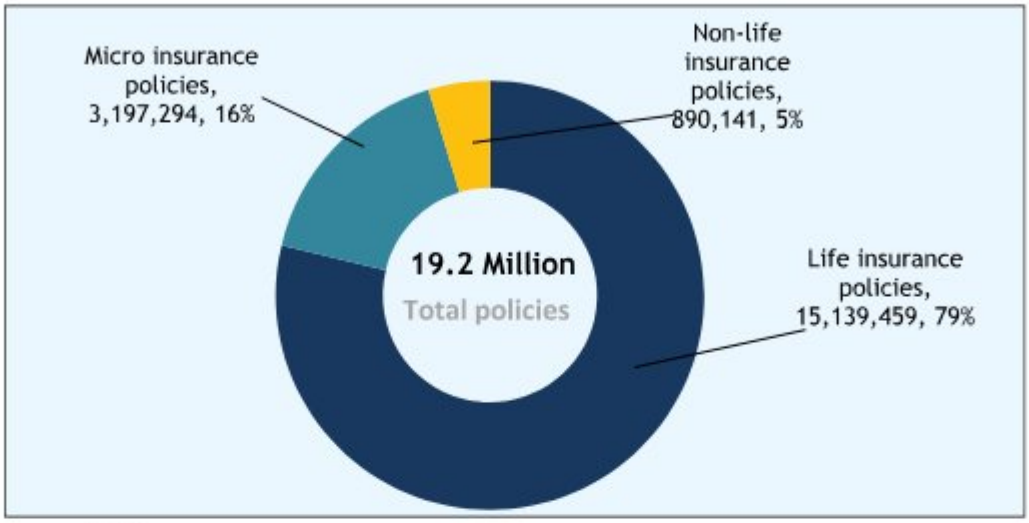
Source: BSEC

The capital market remained stable during the period, with a slight decline in the number of CMIs and a modest increase in BO accounts. Female participation remained consistent, while mobile app-based access showed gradual growth, indicating increasing digital engagement among investors

2.3.5 Insurance Sector

Life insurance dominates the policy base; digital servicing remains limited but is gradually expanding.

Figure 2.9: Insurance Policy Mix by Category, Dec 2025



source: IDRA

Table 2.18: Insurance Sector Snapshot, Dec 2025

Category	Male	Female	Others/ Enterprise	Total
Life insurance policies	7,266,165	7,873,294	—	15,139,459
Micro insurance policies	1,243,282	1,954,012	—	3,197,294
Health insurance policies	80	31	1,348	1,459
Agricultural insurance policies	—	—	67	67
Non-life insurance policies	—	—	890,141	890,141
Internet-based service users	11,624	11,215	62,775	85,614
Premium paid via MFS	8,855	9,572	—	18,427
Premium paid via bank	2,769	1,643	62,775	67,187

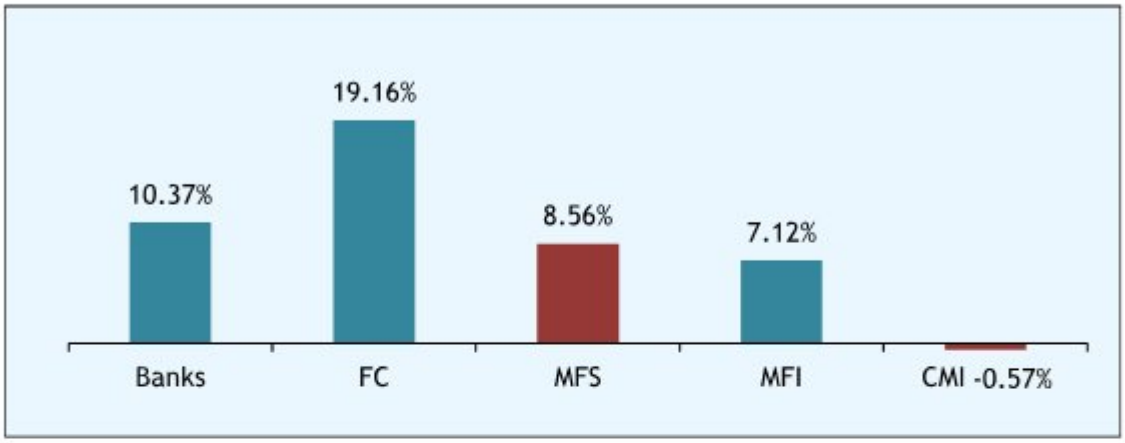
Source: IDRA

The data indicate that life and micro insurance products account for the majority of insurance coverage, with significant participation from both male and female customers. Female participation is particularly notable in life and micro insurance services. Digital engagement in insurance services remains at an emerging stage, with internet-based

users and premium payments through mobile financial services and banks indicating gradual adoption of digital payment channels. Overall, the findings reflect expanding access to insurance services and growing use of digital platforms for financial transactions

2.4 Summary of Year-on-Year Change

Figure 2.10: Change in Total Accounts by Financial Sub-Sector, Dec-2024 to Dec-2025



Source: Banks, FCs, MFSPs, MRA, BSEC

Above figure summarizes year-on-year account change across the financial sub-sectors and highlights a highly uneven growth pattern. FCs (19.2%) and banks (10.4%) expanded steadily, while MFS & microfinance institutions posted moderate growth (8.56% & 7.1% respectively) consistent with the consolidation trend noted earlier. Capital market intermediaries remained broadly flat (0.6%), reflecting the sector's slow-moving nature. The data show continued growth in customer accounts across most financial service sectors between December 2024 and December 2025. Mobile Financial Services (MFS) maintained the largest customer base, highlighting its significant role in expanding access to digital financial services.

CHAPTER 3

Progress of NFIS Implementation

The NAU is tracking the progress of all the targets under NFIS in quarterly basis. To translate the vision and objectives of NFIS into a concrete action plan, a set of 12 goals consisting of 69 targets have been marked to drive future developments in financial inclusion.

NFIS aims to enhance payment systems including service delivery channels, promote financial literacy, consumer empowerment and expand financial inclusion for women, populations affected by climate change, other underserved groups and senior citizens, while simultaneously strengthening the policy & regulatory framework, reinforcing risk management of financial inclusion initiatives and establishing a comprehensive data and measurement infrastructure.

Out of 69 targets of NFIS, 53 targets (76%) have already been fully implemented as on December 2025. These targets include access to quality financial services for the underserved people, enhancement of payment systems and digital banking, boosting up regulatory policies and fortifying insurance and microcredit sector.

Table 3.1: Comparison of NFIS targets implementation in 2024 & 2025

Status of targets implementation	December 2024	December 2025
Fully implemented	48	53
Partially implemented	19	16
Not implemented	2	0
Total	69	69

Figure 3.1: Summary of NFIS targets implementation as on December 2025



Another 16 targets (24%) are partially implemented. These Partially implemented targets are related to financial literacy, consumer empowerment, financial inclusion for women, populations affected by climate change, other underserved groups and senior citizens, and new technologies in the financial sectors. In conclusion, all of the targets are either done or in progress, which is a positive sign. Coordinated initiatives are needed to implement rest of the NFIS targets.

CHAPTER 4

Women Financial Inclusion

This chapter highlights key insights from the WFID Dashboard, illustrating how women's participation in formal finance evolved between Q4 2024 and Q4 2025. By tracking change across multiple delivery channels including no-frill accounts, and agent banking - the chapter will give a holistic view of where parity has been achieved and where gaps persist.

4.1 Deposits and Loans

A. Deposit Accounts — broad growth, persistent gender imbalance

Between Q4 2024 and Q4 2025, total deposit accounts in Bangladesh across all regulated institutions continued to grow. Women's participation increased in absolute numbers but remained below parity across most channels:

- **Bank accounts:** Women held approximately **55.0 million** deposit accounts in Q4 2024, rising to **64.1 million** by Q4 2025 (+16.5%). Women's share of bank deposit accounts edged up from **37.7%** to **38.5%**, continuing a modest but steady upward trajectory in formal banking inclusion.

- **Microfinance Institutions (MFI) accounts:** Deposit accounts rose from **38.8 million** to **41.9 million**, with women's share remaining at approximately **91%** (38.98 million female-held accounts). MFIs continue to serve as women's primary gateway to formal deposit services.

- **FC deposit accounts:** Approximately **0.18 million** female-held accounts by Q4 2025, which is 38.5% more than previous year.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Female-Owned Deposit Accounts Across Financial Institutions

FSPs	Female Accounts (Q4 2024)	Female Accounts (Q4 2025)	Increase (%)
Banks	55.0 million	64.1 million	16.5%
MFIs	38.8 million	41.9 million	7.9%
FCs	~0.13 million	~0.18 million	38.5%

Source: WFID Dashboard

B. Loan Accounts — credit expanding, yet structural gaps persist

The credit landscape saw mixed trends between Q4 2024 and Q4 2025. MFIs remained the dominant provider of formal credit to women, while banks and finance companies showed only marginal change in women's loan share.

- **MFIs:** Loan accounts expanded from **32.74 million** to **33.06 million** (+1%), with women maintaining a **91% female share** (32.00 million accounts). MFIs continue to account for the overwhelming majority of women's formal borrowing in Bangladesh.

- **Banks:** Bank loan accounts increased from approximately **11.0 million** in Q4 2024 to **13.5 million** by Q4 2025. Women's share, however, fell slightly from 20% to 18.6% — indicating that male borrowers captured a larger share of the credit expansion. Approximately one in five bank borrowers are a woman, underscoring persistent structural barriers including collateral requirements and stringent KYC processes.

- **Finance Companies:** FC loan accounts remained at approximately **0.14 million** total, with women's share at **14.6%** — marginally lower than prior periods and reflective of the continued concentration of FC lending in urban, asset-backed segments that are less accessible to women.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Loan Accounts of Female Borrower

FSPs	Female Loan Accounts (Q4 2024)	female Loans Accounts (Q4 2025)	Increase (%)
Banks	2.19 million	2.51 million	14.6%
MFIs	29.82 million	32.00 million	7.3%
FCs	18,585	19,273	3.7%

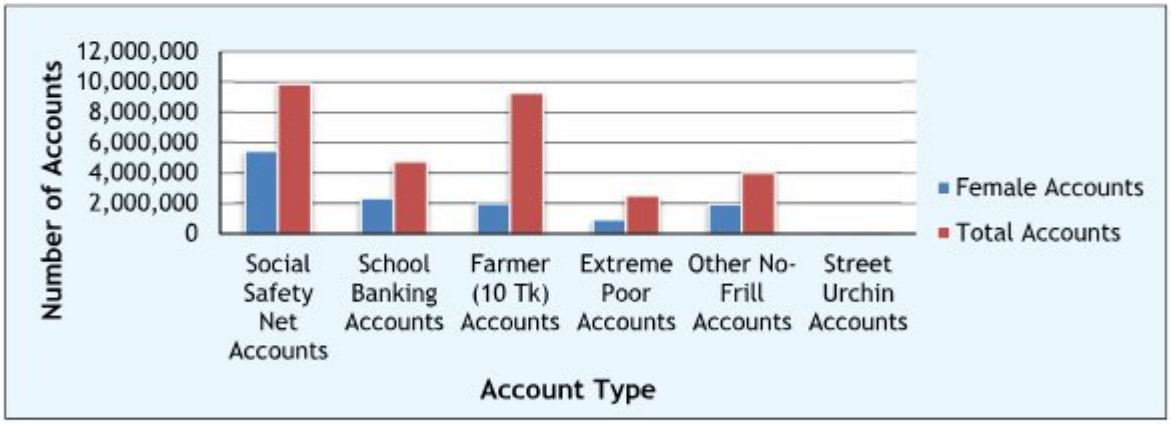
Source: WFID Dashboard

4.2 Account Ownership and Access Channels

A. No-Frill Accounts — stable base, widening value gap

Between Q4 2024 and Q4 2025, Bangladesh's no-frill account base remained broadly stable — edging slightly downward from **31.1 million** to **30.2 million** total accounts, while aggregate deposit value grew from **BDT 92.1 billion** to **BDT 93.2 billion**, indicating deepening financial activity among existing holders.

Figure 4.1: No-Frill Accounts Volume Comparison: Total vs. Female



Women's share of total no-frill accounts declined marginally from **42%** to **41%**, while their share of total account value improved from **34%** to **36%**. Although this suggests that average balances per female account have grown relative to the overall, women's deposit values still significantly lag those of men's, pointing to continued disparities in financial depth.

When split by geography, rural women continued to account for approximately 72% of female-owned no-frill accounts in both periods, yet held only 49% of female no-frill account value by Q4 2025. This persistent rural-urban value gap — stable across the two periods — calls for targeted policy interventions including rural digital literacy programmes, micro-enterprise linkages, and savings mobilization schemes designed for low-income rural women.

Table 4.3: Gender Distribution and Financial Characteristics of No-Frill Accounts

Indicator	Q4 2024	Q4 2025
Total no-frill accounts	31.1 million	30.2 million
Female accounts	13.0 million (42%)	12.4 million (41%)
Total value	BDT 92.1 billion	BDT 93.2 billion
Female value share	34%	36%
Rural female (% of female accounts)	72%	72%
Rural female value (% of female value)	47%	49%

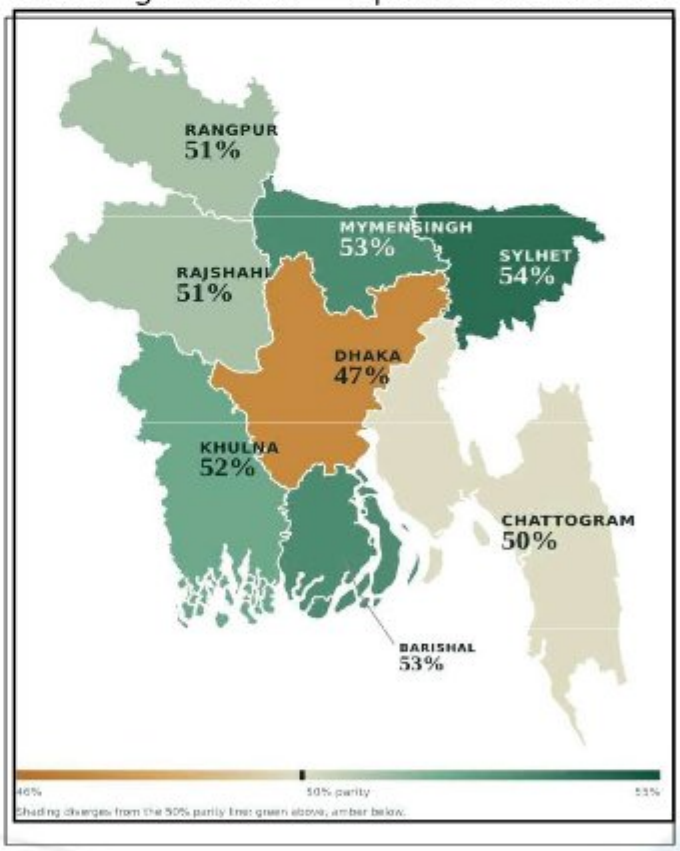
Source: WFID Dashboard

B. Agent Banking — gender parity maintained, slight regional variation

Agent banking continued to demonstrate its status as Bangladesh's most gender-equitable formal financial channel. By Q4 2025, women held 12.81 million deposit accounts — representing 50% of all agent banking accounts — up from 12.00 million (49%) in Q4 2024. Total agent banking accounts grew from 24.28 million to 25.83 million (+6.4%), with women's participation growing at a commensurate rate.

Regional patterns in Q4 2025 show a remarkably balanced picture nationwide, with female account shares ranging from 47% to 54% across all eight divisions:

Figure 4.1: Female Share of Agent Banking Accounts by Division, Q4 2025



Source: WFID Dashboard

Urban centres such as Dhaka (47%) and, to a lesser extent, Chattogram (50%) show slightly lower female shares, consistent with more competitive, high-value urban banking environments where male engagement is historically stronger. By contrast, rural-oriented divisions such as Sylhet (54%), Barishal (53%), and Mymensingh

(53%) exhibit higher female shares, suggesting that community-based agent banking is particularly effective in reaching women in less urbanised areas.

These numbers have remained stable since the prior period, confirming that agent banking has cemented its position as a gender-inclusive channel and are well-positioned to support the transition from basic account access to active savings and transaction usage.

4.3 Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (CMSME) Credit

The CMSME credit data for Q4 2025 reveals important trends in women's entrepreneurial access to formal finance. Against a backdrop of broad lending expansion — with male-owned enterprise disbursements of BDT 648.9 billion across all CMSME categories — women-owned enterprises received BDT 52.8 billion, representing 7.5% of total CMSME disbursements in the quarter.

Enterprise access: A total of 161,213 women-owned enterprises received CMSME loans in Q4 2025, compared to 267,424 male-owned enterprises. Women's share of total enterprise borrowers was 37.6%, representing a meaningful improvement over Q4 2024 (where women accounted for approximately 16% of CMSME borrowers in formal bank data). This significant jump in share reflects the expanded definition of CMSME borrowers captured in the 2025 Q4 data — incorporating MFI and informal sector linkages — as well as the impact of Bangladesh Bank's policy mandating 15% of CMSME lending for women-owned enterprises.

When analyzed by enterprise category, striking patterns emerge in women's participation:

Table 4.5: Gender Distribution of CMSME Borrowers by Enterprise Category

Enterprise Category	Female Enterprises (Q4 2025)	Male Enterprises	Female Share
Cottage	19,712	8,840	69%
Informal	66,987	25,778	72%
Medium	13,809	14,480	49%
Micro	26,074	83,962	24%
Small	34,631	134,364	20%

Source: WFID Dashboard

- **Cottage and informal enterprises:** Women dominate both categories, accounting for 69% of cottage enterprise borrowers and 72% of informal enterprise borrowers. In absolute terms, the informal sector is the largest category of female entrepreneurial borrowing (66,987 enterprises), reflecting the continued importance of home-based and community-level enterprises for women's economic participation.

- **Medium enterprises:** Women account for 49% of medium enterprise borrowers — near parity — a notable finding that may reflect the impact of Bangladesh Bank's

Refinancing Fund for Women Entrepreneurs (BDT 3,000 crore at 5% interest), which is exclusively available to women in this segment.

- **Micro and small enterprises:** Women remain underrepresented in both categories, holding 24% and 20% of borrower share respectively. Despite absolute growth, these segments continue to be dominated by male-owned firms, particularly in trade and manufacturing subsectors. The scale gap in disbursement amounts (women receive 7.5% of CMSME credit by value despite 37.6% of borrower count) reflects smaller average ticket sizes for women's enterprises and concentration in lower-value categories.

Portfolio quality: While aggregate portfolio quality data by gender is not fully available for comparison, the expanding participation of women across CMSME categories — particularly in the cottage and informal sectors — is consistent with historically strong repayment performance among women borrowers documented in MFI data (91% participation with sustained recovery rates). Continued data collection on recovery and outstanding amounts by gender across all CMSME categories will be critical for evidencing this trend at scale.

CHAPTER 5

Digital Financial Services in Promoting Financial Inclusion

Bangladesh's digital financial ecosystem has witnessed remarkable growth, fueled by supportive government policies, progressive regulatory initiatives, rapid technological innovation and increasing access to digital infrastructure. The widespread adoption of mobile phones, internet connectivity, and digital payment platforms has significantly expanded the reach of financial services across the country.

5.1 Growth of MFS

The year 2025 has seen a significant increase in Bangladesh's MFS sector, underscoring both its resilience and its expanding role in the national economy. The sector's reach widened further, with total MFS accounts rising from 238 million in December 2024 to 250 million by December 2025. The agent network also expanded from 1.8 million to 2.0 million, reinforcing accessibility across urban and rural areas.

Table 5.1: Highlights of MFS Growth

Metric	2024	2025	% Change
Total number of MFS Transaction (in billion BDT)	7.29	9.58	+31.35%
Total MFS transactions (in billion BDT)	17,383	21,831	+25.58%
Total MFS accounts (in millions)	238.6	250.24	+4.84%
Active MFS accounts (in millions)	88.89	76.87	-13.52%

Source: PSSD, BB

5.2 Comparative Shifts in Digital Channel

Over the last decade, the DFS landscape underwent significant structural transformation, marked by rapid growth in digital transaction channels and evolving consumer preferences. Among the various DFS platforms, internet banking and POS services emerged as the primary drivers of growth, reflecting increasing adoption of digital payment methods by both individuals and businesses. The expansion of these services highlights growing confidence in digital financial infrastructure and a shift toward more convenient, secure, and efficient transaction mechanisms. Collectively, these developments signal Bangladesh's steady transition toward a cash-light, digital-first economy, supporting the country's broader objectives of financial inclusion, digital innovation, and sustainable economic development.

Table 5.2: Comparison of Transactions through NPSB

Channel	Transactions	December 2024	December 2025	% Change
ATM	Number of transactions (in million)	6.36	7	+10.06%
	Amount (in billion BDT)	45	54	+20%
POS	Number of transactions (in million)	1.454	1.96	+34.8%
	Amount (in billion BDT)	5	7	+40%
IBFT	Number of transactions (in million)	5.27	10.75	+104%
	Amount (in billion BDT)	316	594	+88%
Bangla QR	Number of transactions (in million)	0.326	0.67	+105.5%
	Amount (in billion BDT)	1	2	+100%

Source: PSD-2, BB

5.3 MFIs as a Digital Distribution Channels

MRA has partnered with the IFC to modernize the microfinance sector. Paragraph 5 of the Bangladesh Mobile Financial Services (MFS) Regulations 2022 empowers MFIs to utilize Mobile Financial Service Providers (MFSPs) for loan disbursements and installment collections. Leading MFIs have already adopted these digital channels. Furthermore, BB channeled a BDT 30,000 million refinancing scheme through bank-MFI linkages to support COVID-19-affected low-income professionals, farmers, and micro-traders. Ultimately, a combination of proactive regulatory framework, policy support, and technological innovation is accelerating the adoption of DFS, successfully bringing rural and underserved populations into the formal financial ecosystem.

5.4 Bangla QR

Bangla QR is the national interoperable QR code payment standard introduced by Bangladesh Bank to establish a unified, secure and cost-effective merchant payment ecosystem. The platform enables customers of participating banks, MFSPs and PSPs to make merchant payments using a single standardized QR code irrespective of their financial service provider. By eliminating the need for multiple proprietary QR codes, Bangla QR has enhanced interoperability, reduced merchant acquisition costs and strengthened the efficiency of retail digital payments.

The Bangla QR ecosystem expanded substantially during 2025. As of 31 December 2025, 46 scheduled banks, 7 MFSPs and 4 PSPs were connected to the interoperable platform. Merchant onboarding reached approximately 9.63 lakh, reflecting the continued

expansion of digital payment acceptance among MSMEs, retailers and service providers across the country. All Bangla QR transactions are routed through the NPSB, ensuring secure processing and interoperability across participating institutions.

The growing merchant acceptance network has been accompanied by a steady increase in transaction activity. During 2025, Bangla QR processed approximately 6.47 million merchant payment transactions, amounting to BDT 27.71 billion. Monthly transaction volumes accelerated significantly during the second half of the year, reaching 1.30 million transactions in November, while transaction values peaked at BDT 8.42 billion in May. These trends indicate increasing customer confidence and broader acceptance of interoperable QR-based payments for day-to-day retail transactions.

Several policy measures have been adopted in 2025 to accelerate the expansion of the Bangla QR ecosystem. A major milestone was achieved on 1 November 2025 with the implementation of full interoperability among banks, PSPs, PSOs and MFSPs, enabling seamless fund transfers across registered bank accounts and digital wallets. Subsequently, instant settlement for Bangla QR transactions was introduced from 15 December 2025, improving liquidity for merchants, particularly small traders. In addition, merchant acquisition was strengthened through the Lead Bank model across districts, while coordination with local government institutions facilitated wider merchant onboarding. These initiatives have significantly enhanced the usability and attractiveness of interoperable QR payments.

CHAPTER 6

Youth Financial Inclusion

Bangladesh has prioritized youth financial inclusion as a key component of its national development agenda. With a large and growing young population, the country views financial inclusion not only as a tool for expanding access to financial services but also as a strategic investment in human capital development.

A flagship initiative supporting this objective is the School Banking Program, introduced by BB in 2010. The program provides students with an opportunity to engage with formal banking services from an early age, enabling them to develop practical financial skills and familiarity with modern financial products and digital payment systems. Beyond facilitating access to savings accounts, the initiative promotes financial literacy, encourages a culture of saving and instills values of financial discipline and responsible money management.

As of December 2025, 59 out of 61 scheduled banks participated in this program. These banks collectively manage 4,755,587 School Banking Accounts (SBAs)-an increase of 8.57% compared to the previous year. The total deposit under these accounts stands at BDT 19,947 million.

Table 6.1: Comparison of SBAs between 2024 and 2025

Metric	December 2024	December 2025	% Change
Total no. of SBAs	4,380,159	4,755,587	+8.57%
Total amount of deposits (in million BDT)	20,711.60	19,947.00	-3.69%

Source: SD, BB

6.1 Rural Outreach Expands

The percentage of SBAs is 52.24% in rural areas, which is slightly higher than urban areas (47.76%) but the percentage of deposits in urban areas (70.29%) is much higher than rural areas (29.71%).

Table 6.2: Area-wise School Banking Accounts and Deposits As on December 2025

	Rural		Urban		Total
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	
No. of Accounts	2,484,327	52.24%	2,271,260	47.76%	4,755,587
Amount of Deposits (in million BDT)	5,926.1	29.71%	14,020.9	70.29%	19,947

Source: SD, BB

6.2 Female Participation Strengthens

Gender distribution of SBAs is almost equally distributed between male and female students. As on December 2025, female students hold 48.77% of total SBAs.

Table 6.3: Gender-wise School Banking Accounts and Deposits As on December 2025

	Male		Female		Total	Gender gap
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage		
No. of Accounts	2,436,450	51.23%	2,319,137	48.77%	4,755,587	2.46%
Amount of Deposits (in million BDT)	10,950	54.9%	8,997	45.1%	19,947	9.8%

Source: SD, BB

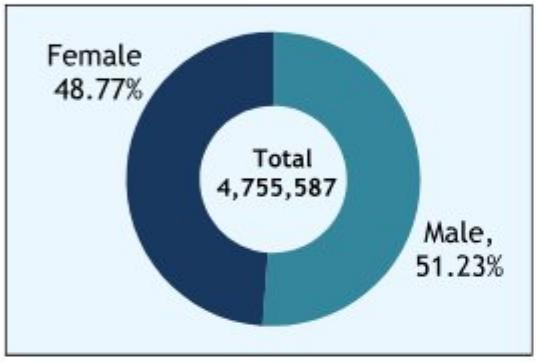


Figure 6.1 Percentages of Gender-wise School Banking Accounts

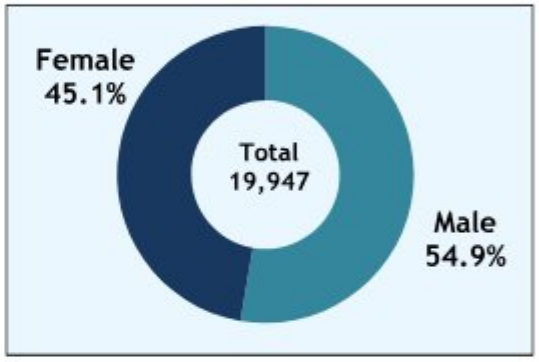


Figure 6.2 Percentages of Gender-wise School Banking Deposits

6.3 Conversion of School Banking Accounts to General Savings Accounts

SBAs can be converted to general savings accounts when students turn to 18 years of age. A significant portion of SBAs has been converted to general savings accounts after the students reached 18 years. In the October-December 2025 quarter, the number of accounts belongs to 18years+ students were 1,571,652 and 1,225,812 of them (approximately 78%) have been converted to general savings accounts.

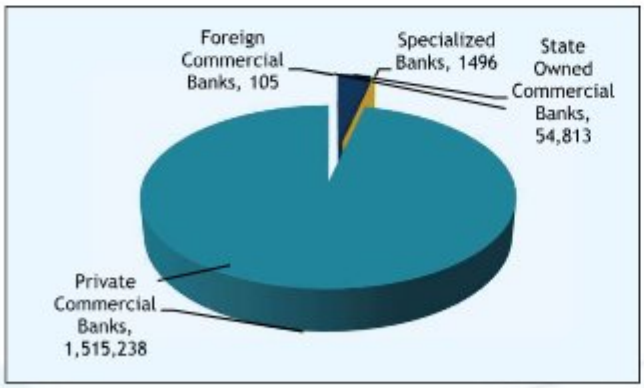


Figure 6.3 School Banking Accounts (Aged 18 years+)

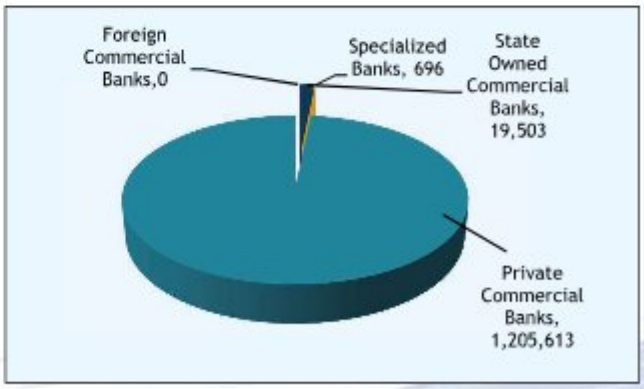


Figure 6.4 School Banking Accounts converted to General Savings Account

6.4 Banking Services for Street Urchins and Working Children

To promote financial inclusion among vulnerable children, instructions have been given to banks to extend financial services to street urchins and working children, enabling them to safeguard their earnings and cultivate a habit of savings. Children without parents or legal guardians are also permitted to open bank accounts through designated banks with the support of registered NGOs. In such cases, the participating NGOs assume full responsibility for account operations and the overall welfare of the account holders. These accounts are offered free of charge. As of December 2025, 18 banks, in collaboration with 49 NGOs, had opened 42,179 accounts for street children. The total balance held in these accounts stood at BDT 5.7 million, which is 28.67% higher compared to the previous year.

Table 6.4: Bank Accounts Opened in the Name of Street Urchins and Working Children

Metric	December 2024	December 2025	% Change
No. of Accounts	37,698	42,179	+11.89%
Amount of Deposits (in million BDT)	4.43	5.7	+28.67%

Source: SD, BB

6.5 School Banking Conferences

In 2025, a total of 13 School Banking Conferences were organized across Bangladesh under the lead bank arrangement. These conferences aimed to promote financial literacy and encourage savings habits among school students, while also enhancing their understanding of the important role they can play in the country's economic development.

CHAPTER 7

Agriculture and Rural Financing Initiatives

Numerous initiatives have been taken throughout 2025 to improve financial inclusion through agricultural and rural credit and other activities. These efforts helped expand access to finance, support sustainable farming and strengthen rural development.

7.1 Initiatives of Bangladesh Bank

7.1.1 Enhanced Agricultural and Rural Credit Target

BB has established an agricultural and rural credit disbursement target of BDT 420.75 billion for the fiscal year 2025–26, reflecting a 19.92% increase compared to the BDT 350.86 billion targets set for the previous fiscal year. It prioritized expanding credit disbursement to strengthen rural economies and support farmers. By increasing disbursement targets, strategically allocating funds, and facilitating refinancing schemes, greater financial access for agricultural stakeholders have been ensured. This initiative aimed to reduce financial barriers, promote investment in modern farming techniques, and contribute to the overall development of the agricultural sector.

Table 7.1: Agricultural Credit Disbursement by Scheduled Banks in 2024-25 (In Billion BDT)

2024	2025	Change (%)
350.86	420.75	+19.92

Source: ACD, BB.

7.1.2 Sector-wise Allocation of Agricultural Credit

It was made mandatory by BB to allocate 55% of the agricultural and rural credit disbursement target to the crop sector, 13% to fisheries, 20% to livestock, 2% to irrigation and agricultural machinery and the remaining 10% to agricultural production and other economic activities in rural areas, including production and service sectors. This policy supports food security through loans for import-substituting crops and modern farming techniques, strengthening rural economies and boosting productivity.

7.1.3 Initiatives Taken to Increase Women's Participation

BB emphasizes enhancing women's participation in agriculture by providing them financial support throughout 2025 to engage in income-generating activities. It aims to transform women involved in agricultural activities into valuable human resources through targeted loan distribution, enabling them to improve their economic conditions. Women in rural areas are encouraged to participate in sectors such as grain production, small-scale food processing, gardening, nurseries, seed production, post-harvest activities, bee farming, food processing, fisheries, livestock, and agribusiness ventures. This

initiative seeks to empower women financially, strengthen their role in agriculture, and contribute to overall rural economic development.

7.1.4 Expanding Formal Financial Access Inclusively

BB prioritizes financial inclusion for landless sharecroppers and small and marginal farmers, ensuring access to agricultural and rural credit. Special focus is placed on underdeveloped areas such as chars, haors, coastal regions, hilly areas, and former enclaves, aiming to reduce poverty and create jobs through loans for income-generating activities in agriculture and related sectors. It also promotes financial inclusion for physically challenged individuals by facilitating low-interest loans tailored to their specific needs. Banks and FCs are encouraged to relax conventional loan terms to support self-employment in agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. Loan opportunities extend beyond farming to bamboo and cane work, rice milling, nurseries, beekeeping, honey production, and small grocery shops, enabling disabled individuals to lead dignified, productive, and contributory lives in society.

7.1.5 Refinancing Schemes

BB has introduced several refinance schemes to support key agricultural and economic sectors, ensuring financial inclusion and stability. The Wheat and Corn Refinance Scheme, valued at BDT 10 billion ensures higher domestic food production, has helped a total of 71,632 individuals with BDT 6.83 billion up to December, 2025.

7.1.6 Other Significant Steps Taken:

- Agricultural credits can be disbursed based on local production potential, using field experience and relevant data from BBS, DAE, DoF, and the Crop Zoning System/Khamari App.
- Previously, financing under the Contract Farming method was limited to the crop sector; currently, it has been extended for the fisheries and livestock sectors.
- To ensure effective loan disbursement, banks may adjust crop-wise loan limits by up to 20% based on regional realities and farmers' needs, and provide up to 25% additional financing for off-season vegetable and fruit cultivation where necessary.

7.2 Initiatives of MRA

In 2025, the MRA partnered with IFC to modernize Bangladesh's microfinance sector through digital transformation initiatives. The programme aims to strengthen microfinance institutions (MFIs) and expand access to financial services for rural communities, small farmers, and low-income households. MRA is promoting digital financial services to improve financial inclusion and reduce reliance on informal lending, while also supporting the development of housing microfinance products for rural households. Additionally, the Authority is formulating policies and regulatory guidelines to ensure sustainable growth in rural and agricultural financing. Reflecting the sector's growing role in rural development, MFIs disbursed approximately BDT 2.77 trillion to more

than 40 million clients during FY 2024–25, while the sector's total fund base reached BDT 1.94 trillion as of June 2025.

7.3 Initiatives of PKSF

The PKSF has undertaken notable initiatives to agricultural expansion in Bangladesh by financing smallholders and agri-entrepreneurs through its Partner Organizations (POs). While facilitating access to technology, skills and markets, it also promotes climate-smart agriculture, value chain development, and agro-processing to enhance productivity, resilience, as well as sustainability. Within 2025, PKSF has disbursed BDT 103.68 billion agricultural loans to 1.40 Million farmer families. To enhance productivity and reduce the financial burden of smallholders, PKSF promote locally appropriate, cost-saving technologies. It also took initiatives i.e. strengthening agricultural value chains processing, packaging, to enables farmers to capture higher market returns as a part of multi-prolonged approach to modern, resilient agriculture. Finally, through research partnerships, livestock micro insurance, and disaster recovery loans, PKSF effectively integrates finance and knowledge to build a highly resilient, market-responsive farming community (Source: Annual Report 2025, PKSF).

CHAPTER 8

Contribution of CMSME in Financial Inclusion

8.1 CMSME as a Cornerstone of Inclusive Growth

The CMSME sector is the heart of Bangladesh's financial inclusion agenda. As the primary driver of employment and business activity, it bridges the gap between formal finance and millions of entrepreneurs, artisans, and self-employed individuals. In 2025, the regulatory framework for CMSME finance was significantly strengthened through landmark initiatives, including the consolidated CMSME Finance Policy and the new start-up financing framework. These policies, supported by various refinance schemes, have improved the environment for inclusive finance. Data confirms the positive impact of these initiatives while highlighting remaining gaps that require continued policy focus.

8.2 Policy Framework and Lending Targets

The policy architecture governing CMSME finance in Bangladesh has undergone significant revision in 2025, with SMESPD Circular No. 01/2025 establishing a consolidated and forward-looking framework that supersedes the 2019 CMSME Finance Policy. This new policy aligns with the National SME Policy 2019, the Industrial Policy 2016, and the NFIS targets, and introduces several landmark provisions designed to mainstream CMSME finance within the core lending strategies of all banks and finance companies.

The key provisions of the 2025 CMSME Finance Policy are:



These benchmarks represent a significant step toward institutionalizing inclusive CMSME finance — moving from ad-hoc scheme-by-scheme interventions toward a systemic

portfolio approach. BB further expanded the policy frontier by enabling start-ups to receive combined loan and equity financing of up to BDT 80 million, with 10% of start-up funds reserved for women (SMESPD Circular No. 02/2025). International MSME Day was observed on 27 June 2025 nationwide, reinforcing public awareness of the sector's importance.

8.3 Institutional Initiatives and Credit Support Mechanisms

Translating the policy framework into tangible credit flows requires a robust set of institutional mechanisms. BB operates a portfolio of refinance and pre-finance schemes that reduce the cost of capital for participating banks and FCs, creating strong incentives to extend credit to CMSMEs — particularly those in underserved segments. These schemes are the operational backbone of inclusive CMSME finance.

Table 8.1: Bangladesh Bank Refinance Schemes for CMSME Sector (2025)

Scheme	Fund Size (in crore BDT)	Fund Size (in Million BDT)
CMSME Sector Pre/Refinance Scheme	25,000	250,000
3000 Crore Small Enterprise Refinance Scheme	3,000	30,000
Agro-Based Industry Refinance Fund	1,400	14,000
New Entrepreneur Refinance Fund	100	1,000
Start-up Refinancing Fund	500	5,000

Data Source: SMESPD, BB

Beyond refinance mechanisms, several institutional measures are advancing CMSME financial inclusion at the delivery level:

- **Agent and MFI linkage lending:** Loans to cottage and micro enterprises (CMS segment) can now be distributed through approved agents, MFI linkages, and peer institutions — extending formal credit to entrepreneurs who may be geographically or socially distant from bank branches.

- **Women-led SME Fair (May 2025):** SMESPD organized a Women Entrepreneur-Led SME Fair from 8–11 May 2025 at the Bangla Academy premises, facilitating direct market access, buyer-seller linkages, and awareness of financial products for women-owned enterprises.

8.4 CMSME Inclusion Trends and Insights

8.4.1 Disbursement Volume and Enterprise Size Distribution

Total CMSME loan disbursement across all banks and FCs reached BDT 701.71 billion as of December 2025, reflecting the sector's continued role as the primary vehicle for enterprise credit in Bangladesh. Small enterprises dominate the disbursement portfolio at 58.9% (BDT 413.52 billion), followed by medium enterprises at 24.7% (BDT 173.21 billion).

Micro enterprises account stands for 13.6% (BDT 95.35 billion), while cottage enterprises and informal enterprises together represent the remaining 2.8%.

Table 8.2: CMSME Disbursement and Gender Participation by Enterprise Category (December 2025)

Enterprise Category	Total Disbursement (In Billion BDT)	Share of Total (%)	Female Disbursement (In Billion BDT)	Female Share (%)	No. of Enterprises (Female)
Cottage	8.69	1.2%	3.49	40.2%	19,712
Micro	95.35	13.6%	9.54	10.0%	26,074
Small	413.52	58.9%	23.19	5.6%	34,631
Medium	173.21	24.7%	9.50	5.5%	13,809
Informal	10.94	1.6%	7.12	65.1%	66,987
Total	701.71	100%	52.84	7.5%	161,213

Data Source: WFID Dashboard, Bangladesh Bank.

8.4.2 Sectoral Portfolio: Sub-Sector Breakdown for Women

The sub-sector composition of women's CMSME disbursements reflects both opportunity and structural concentration. Manufacturing leads with BDT 21.90 billion — 41.5% of the women's CMSME portfolio — serving 49,102 women enterprises engaged in production activities including garments, food processing, handicrafts, and agro-based manufacturing. Trade accounts for BDT 16.23 billion (30.7%), reflecting women's participation in retail, wholesale, and distribution networks. Services contribute BDT 14.71 billion (27.8%), spanning hospitality, beauty, health, education, and digital service enterprises.

Table 8.3: Women CMSME Disbursement by Sub-Sectors

Sub-Sector	Women Disbursement on Q4 2024 (In Billion BDT)	Women Disbursement on Q4 2025 (In Billion BDT)	Change (%)
Manufacturing	15.68	21.90	39.6%
Trade	15.86	16.23	2.3%
Service	17.37	14.71	-15.31%
Total	48.91	52.84	8%

Data Source: WFID Dashboard, BB

This sectoral distribution aligns broadly with the policy targets embedded in the 2025 CMSME Finance Policy (minimum 40% manufacturing, minimum 20% services, maximum 40% trading), and the women's portfolio is notably more manufacturing-weighted than might be expected — a positive signal for productive investment. The 41.5% manufacturing share within women's CMSME lending reflects the significant role of women in Bangladesh's cottage and agro-processing industries.

CHAPTER 9

Financial Literacy Initiatives

9.1 Strategic Drives of FS Regulators to Enhance Financial Literacy

Bangladesh Bank has placed significant emphasis on financial literacy as a critical pillar for achieving inclusive and sustainable economic development. Accordingly, it has identified the strengthening of financial literacy and financial education initiatives as a core objective in its Strategic Plan 2025–2029. This objective is aligned with the NFIS of Bangladesh, which identifies "Promote Financal Literacy and Consumer Empowerment" as one of its 12 strategic goals.

In 2022, Bangladesh Bank issued comprehensive Financial Literacy Guidelines for Banks and Financial Institutions to provide a structured framework for promoting financial literacy nationwide. Under these guidelines, banks and finance companies were instructed to undertake a range of institutional and outreach initiatives, including:

In addition, recognizing the potential of its School Banking initiative to enhance financial inclusion among young people, Bangladesh Bank issued directives requiring banks to engage with at least one nearby educational institution. Furthermore, to expand access to formal financial services among underserved populations, Bangladesh Bank mandated banks to offer no-frill accounts for marginalized groups, including farmers, low-income workers, and social safety net beneficiaries. Moreover, agent banking has evolved into a decentralized rural service delivery network, with more than 80 percent of agent outlets located in rural areas. This extensive outreach has not only expanded access to formal financial services but has also strengthened financial literacy and awareness among underserved communities across the country

9.1.1 Initiatives of BB

Under the Financial Literacy Guidelines, banks and financial companies have been conducting extensive general and target group-based financial literacy programs across the country. From January, 2025 to December, 2025, banks and financial companies have organized a total of 5,531 in-person financial literacy programs, reaching 285,587 participants, which is 17.21% more than previous year. These initiatives have significantly contributed to enhancing financial awareness and promoting responsible financial behavior among citizens.

A comparison of the financial literacy programs conducted by banks and financial companies in 2024 & 2025 is presented below:

Table 9.1 Financial Literacy Programs by Banks and FCs

Institutions	Number of FL Programs Organized in 2024	Number of FL Programs Organized in 2025	Change(%)	Number of Participants in 2024	Number of Participants in 2025	Change (%)
Banks	4,128	5,176	25.39	238,418	276,741	16.07
FCs	234	355	51.71	5,241	8846	68.78
Total	4,362	5,531	26.80	243,659	285,587	17.21

Source: FID, BB

Recognizing the importance of women's participation in the financial sector, Bangladesh Bank announced "Participation in Financial Sector is the Right of Women" as the financial literacy awareness theme for 2025. Based on this theme, banks and financial companies conducted awareness activities through both in-person engagements and digital platforms, including social media and institutional websites.

On 3 March 2025, banks and financial companies observed Financial Literacy Day through a wide range of awareness programs organized nationwide. In addition, banks and financial companies celebrated Financial Literacy Week 2025 from 17–23 March under the global theme *"Think Before You Follow, Wise Money Tomorrow."* During the week, various awareness initiatives were undertaken focusing on issues such as finfluencers, herd mentality, biased financial advice, and peer or social media pressure in financial decision-making.

Throughout 2025, Banks and FCs also regularly uploaded diverse financial literacy content under the dedicated "Financial Literacy" section of their respective websites. This approach effectively leveraged digital technology to expand the outreach and accessibility of financial education materials.

9.1.2 Initiatives of BSEC

BSEC in collaboration with stock exchanges, market intermediaries, educational institutions and other stakeholders, organized a wide range of investor education and awareness activities across the country throughout 2025. These included seminars, workshops, training programs, outreach campaigns, and investor education sessions covering topics such as investment planning, capital market operations, risk management, investor protection, and fraud prevention. BSEC also continued to expand access to financial knowledge through its Financial Literacy Portal (finlitbd.com) and actively participated in international awareness initiatives, including World Investor Week, promoting responsible and informed investment practices.

9.1.3 Initiatives of IDRA

IDRA has incorporated insurance literacy into its broader agenda of consumer protection and insurance sector development. Recognizing that insurance awareness is essential for strengthening financial resilience, IDRA promotes public understanding of insurance products, risk management and financial protection mechanisms through policy initiatives, awareness campaigns, and stakeholder engagement. The Authority also encourages insurance companies to undertake consumer education activities and supports awareness-building efforts under various sector development programs. Through these initiatives, IDRA aims to increase insurance penetration, enhance financial preparedness, and build public trust in insurance services.

9.1.4 Initiatives of MRA

MRA recognizes financial literacy as a key pillar of responsible finance and consumer protection within the microfinance sector. Through its regulatory and supervisory framework, MRA encourages MFIs to integrate financial education into their service delivery processes. Particular attention is given to promoting responsible borrowing, savings habits, prudent financial management and customer protection among low-income and underserved communities. Throughout 2025, MFIs operating under the regulatory oversight of MRA continued to deliver financial education through their regular client interactions and community-based outreach activities. These initiatives contributed significantly to enhancing financial knowledge and capability, while supporting sustainable financial inclusion and economic resilience at the community level.

CHAPTER 10

Sustainability & Resilience in Financial Inclusion

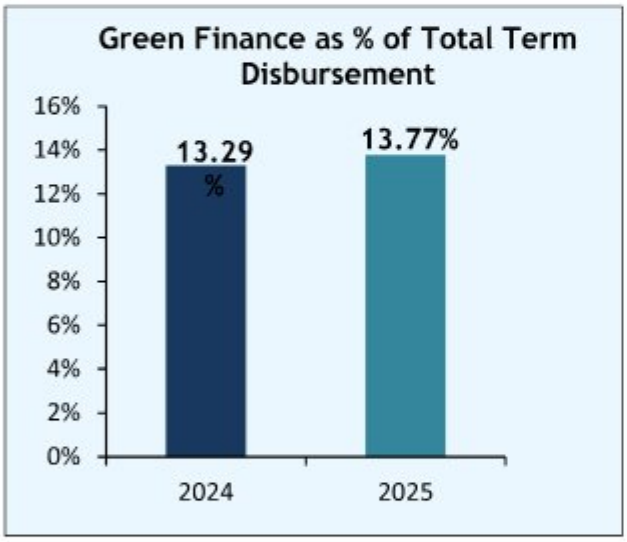
Sustainability and resilience have become increasingly important dimensions of financial inclusion. Guided by the NFIS, BB, and other financial sector regulators, financial service providers, and development partners have undertaken a range of policy, regulatory, financing, and capacity-building initiatives to strengthen inclusive access to financial services, enhance climate resilience, promote sustainable finance, and support the long-term stability of the financial ecosystem.

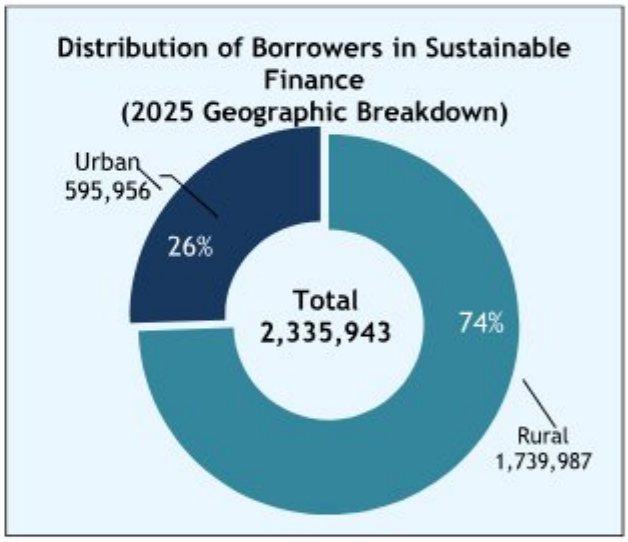
Table 10.1 Sustainable Finance (At a glance)

Loan Disbursement			(In Billion BDT)
Particular	2024	2025	Change (%)
Green Finance	306.54	303.69	-0.93
Sustainable Finance	4,594.84	4,479.83	-2.50

Data *Source*: SFD, BB

Figure 10.1 Advancement in Financial Inclusion through Sustainable Finance





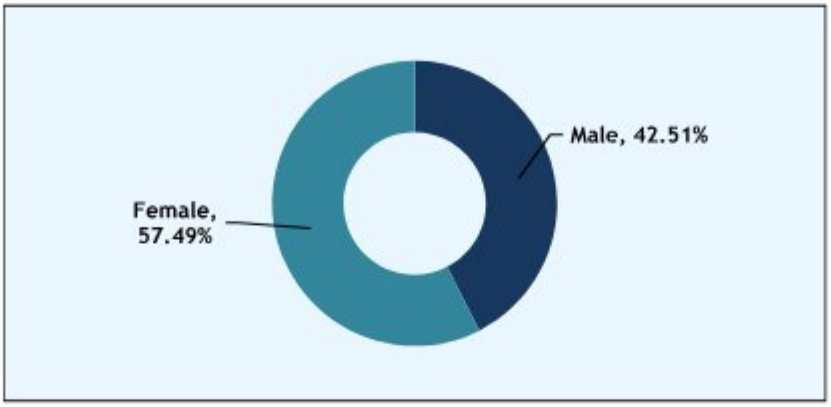
Data Source: SFD, BB

Green financing accounted for 13.77% of total term loan disbursements in 2025, representing a modest increase from 13.29% in the preceding quarter. This upward trend demonstrates the continued commitment of the financial sector towards environmentally sustainable investments and the transition to a greener economy.

The geographic distribution of sustainable finance borrowers in 2025 indicates a strong rural concentration, with 74.49 percent of borrowers residing in rural areas, compared to 25.51 percent in urban areas. This distribution underscores the importance of sustainable finance in reaching rural populations and supporting inclusive, resilient, and environmentally sustainable economic growth.

Sustainable financing sector in Bangladesh continues to be predominantly female, with women constituting 57.49 percent of total number of in 2025. The total number of women borrower in 2025 is 1.34 million in 2025, which was 1.68 million in the previous period.

Figure 10.2 Gender Breakdown for Borrowers in Sustainable Finance in 2025

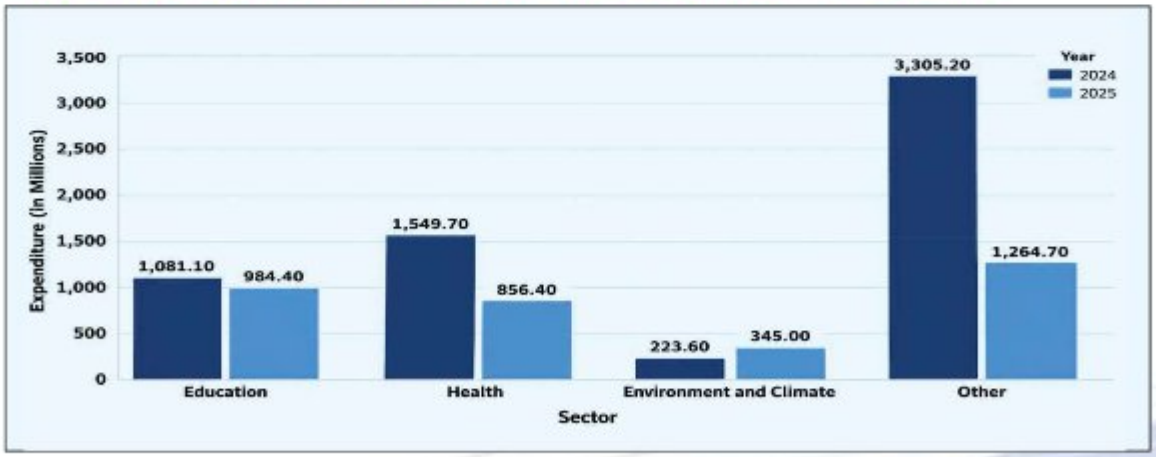


Data Source: SFD, BB

Comparison of Number of Borrowers in Sustainable Finance			
Particulars	2024	2025	Change
Male	6,58,096	9,93,092	50.90%
Female	16,80,133	13,42,851	-20.07%

The sector-wise distribution of banks' CSR expenditure indicates a continued commitment to social and environmental sustainability, although overall spending declined across most sectors in 2025 compared to 2024. Education and health remained the primary focus areas, reflecting sustained support for human capital development and social well-being. Expenditure on environmental initiatives increased from BDT 223.6 million in 2024 to BDT 345 million in 2025, highlighting growing attention to climate resilience and environmental sustainability.

Figure 10.3 Comparative Analysis of Sector-wise CSR Expenditure of Banks



Data Source: SFD, BB

Besides these initiatives, the BSEC has been actively promoting a sustainable and inclusive capital market ecosystem. In collaboration with development partners, BSEC has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen the sustainable finance framework, including establishment of key market infrastructure such as a Sustainable Finance Taxonomy, an Impact Measurement and Monitoring Framework (IMMF), and a Third-Party Verification Mechanism the development of thematic bond markets.

IDRA continued to strengthen the role of insurance in promoting resilience and financial inclusion through initiatives aimed at expanding climate-risk and agricultural insurance products for vulnerable populations. IDRA also promoted good governance, transparency, and digital transformation within the insurance sector to enhance consumer confidence and broaden insurance outreach.

10.1 Resilience in Financial Inclusion

Efforts to strengthen resilience within the financial sector have focused on ensuring that individuals, households, farmers, microenterprises, and other vulnerable groups have continued access to appropriate financial services that enable them to manage risks, recover from adverse events, and sustain their livelihoods.

- Digital channels continued to play a pivotal role in delivering social protection benefits, with more than 7.8 million beneficiaries receiving government allowances through MFS platforms during FY2025–26, expanding access to formal financial services among vulnerable and underserved populations.
- The Government continued to strengthen the Government-to-Person (G2P) payment system, ensuring that social safety net allowances are disbursed directly into beneficiaries' bank or mobile financial service (MFS) accounts, thereby enhancing transparency, efficiency, and financial inclusion.
- Collaborative initiatives undertaken by Bangladesh Bank, financial sector regulators, financial service providers, and development partners promoted climate resilience, financial literacy, consumer protection, and digital inclusion, contributing to a more adaptive, sustainable, and shock-resistant financial system.

CHAPTER 11

Bangladesh National Financial Inclusion Survey 2025

11.1 Rationale for the Survey

Bangladesh has achieved remarkable progress in expanding formal financial services under the NFIS, and moving beyond supply-side indicators offers an exciting opportunity to better capture the actual use, quality, and inclusiveness of these services. To address this gap, Bangladesh Bank, with support from the ADB, conducted the country's first nationally representative demand-side financial inclusion survey. The survey provides comprehensive evidence on access to and usage of financial services, financial and digital literacy, and the barriers faced by different socioeconomic and demographic groups, thereby supporting more effective, evidence-based financial inclusion policies.

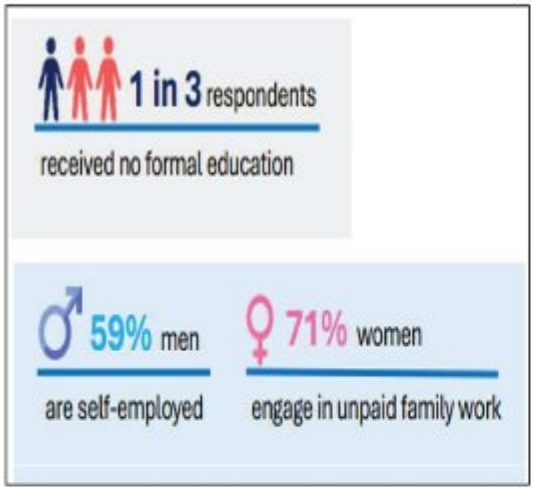
11.2 Sampling Methodology and Respondents' Profile

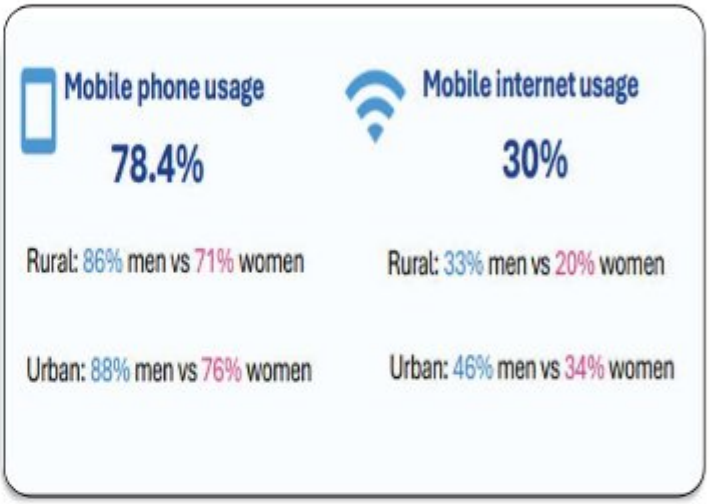
To ensure national representativeness and capture financial inclusion patterns across diverse population groups, the survey adopted a stratified two-stage cluster sampling design covering all eight administrative divisions and 64 districts of the country. In the first stage, a total of 432 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) were selected from a validated sampling frame developed by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), ensuring consistency and comparability with other nationally representative surveys. In the second stage, 16 households were randomly selected from each sampled PSU, resulting in a total sample of 6,912 households. Subsequently, one eligible household member aged 15 years or above was selected from each household using the Kish grid method, thereby ensuring the random selection of respondents and balanced representation of both men and women in the individual-level survey.

Figure 11.1 Sample Selection Process



The survey achieved a well-balanced gender distribution across different age groups, ensuring representative coverage of the adult population. The survey findings indicate that 33.5 per cent of respondents have no formal education at the national level, with educational deprivation being more pronounced in rural areas (37.5 per cent) than in urban areas (23.6 per cent). Employment patterns also vary considerably by gender, as men are predominantly engaged in self-employment while women are more likely to participate in unpaid family work. Furthermore, although mobile phone ownership is widespread among respondents, access to mobile internet remains relatively limited, highlighting the persistence of the digital divide in Bangladesh.





11.3 Financial Inclusion in Bangladesh: Access

Nationally, 64.5 per cent of adults aged 15 and above are financially included, meaning they hold an account with at least one type of formal financial institution, which includes Banks, MFSPs, MFIs, Insurance Providers, FCs, or CMIs.

Financial inclusion is higher among men compared to women. This gender gap remains consistent across both rural and urban areas. The inclusion rate increases with education, as account ownership rises from 55.1 per cent among adults with no formal education to nearly 90 per cent among those with tertiary-level education. Moreover, financial inclusion follows a non-linear pattern with age, peaking in the age group of 35 to 44, and then declining among older adults. MFS dominate as the main entry point to formal finance, while bank accounts remain less widespread and marked by gender and urban–rural divides.

Figure 11.2: Percentage of Respondents Within Each Education Level Who Are Financially Included

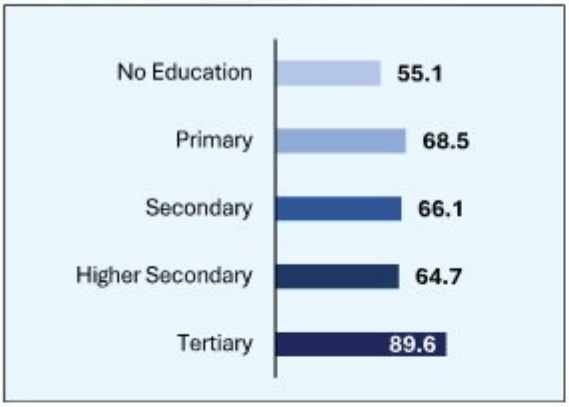


Figure 11.3: Percentage of Respondents Within Each Age Group Who Are Financially Included

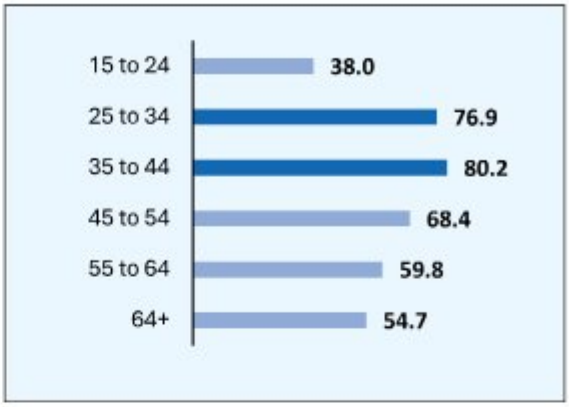
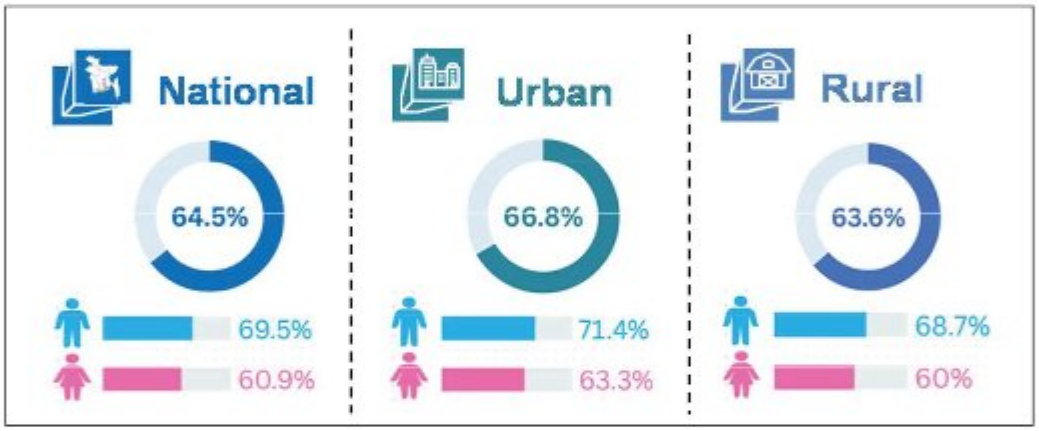


Figure 11.4: Percentage of Respondents Within Each Education Level Who Are Financially Included



11.4 Financial Inclusion in Bangladesh: Usage

The survey findings reveal that savings accounts are the most widely used banking product in Bangladesh, whereas fixed deposits and recurring deposit accounts remain relatively uncommon. DPS accounts are slightly more common among women. Likewise, savings is the most commonly reported reason for holding a bank account. Women are more likely than men to use bank accounts for receiving foreign remittances, and for savings purposes. Men, on the other hand, report higher usage of bank accounts for accessing loans and receiving wages or salaries. Among MFI accounts, the vast majority are micro-loans, making up 92 per cent of the total. Other loan types such as agricultural, enterprise, immigrant, and housing loans represent a very small share. Insurance accounts are overwhelmingly concentrated in life insurance, with health insurance, micro insurance, and other products forming only a marginal proportion. The majority of MFS users rely on their accounts to receive money. Women are more likely than men to use MFS for receiving social security benefits and remittances, while men are more likely to use accounts for mobile recharge.

Figure 11.5: Distribution of Account Type Among Bank Account Holders

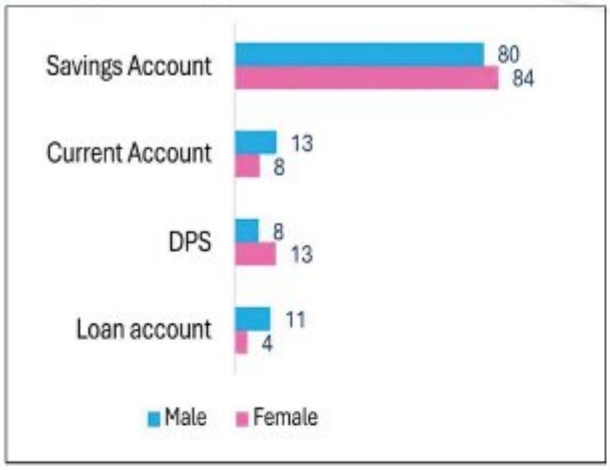
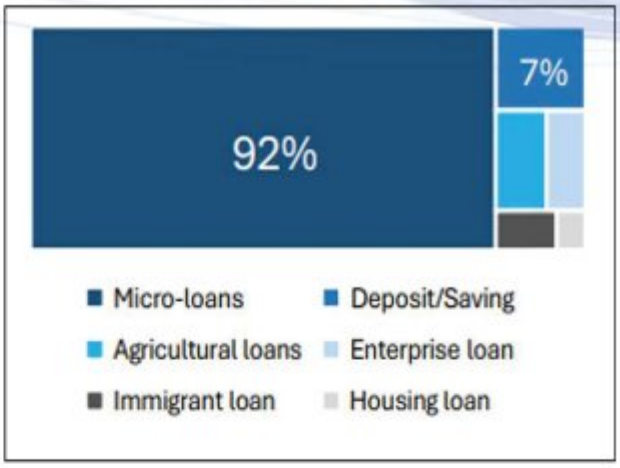
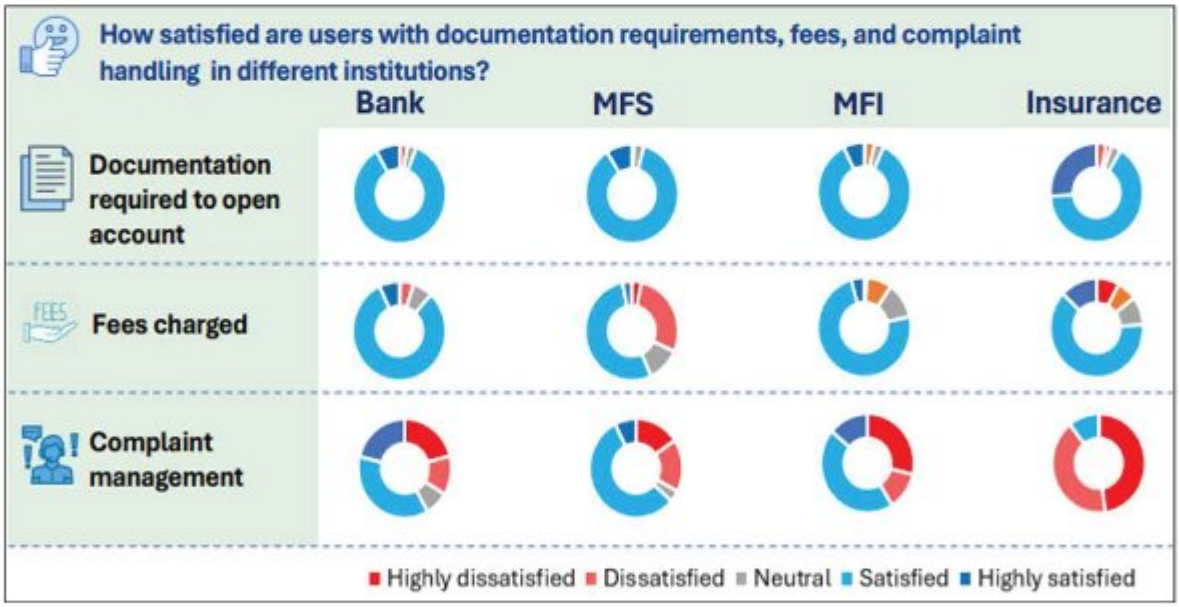


Figure 11.6: Distribution of Account Type Among Holders MFI Account



11.5 Perceived Quality of Financial Services

The survey findings indicate generally high levels of user satisfaction with the documentation requirements and service fees associated with banks, mobile financial services (MFS), and microfinance institutions (MFIs). However, satisfaction is considerably lower with respect to complaint handling and grievance redress mechanisms. Dissatisfaction is particularly pronounced among users of MFIs and insurance providers, whereas banks and MFSPs perform comparatively better in addressing customer complaints, highlighting the need to strengthen consumer protection and service quality across the financial sector.

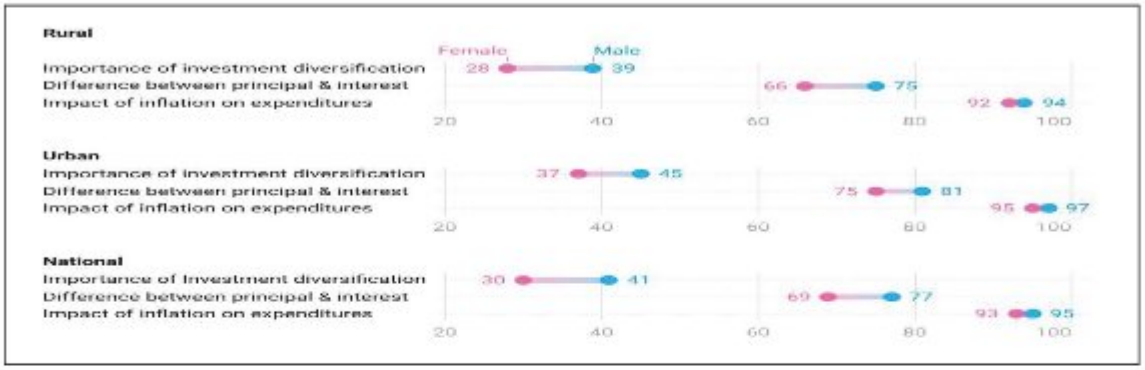


11.6 Financial Literacy and Awareness

The survey reveals notable variations in financial literacy across different financial concepts, gender, and geographic locations, with rural women consistently exhibiting the lowest levels of awareness. Nationally, 77 per cent of men and 69 per cent of women

could correctly distinguish between principal and interest, with urban respondents showing higher familiarity overall. Awareness of inflation's impact on spending was widespread, as 95 per cent of men and 93 per cent of women nationwide reported understanding these concepts. However, the concept of investment diversification was not widely understood, as nationally only 41 per cent of men and 30 per cent of women reported understanding this concept.

Share of respondents who understand key financial concepts (%)



11.7 Barriers in Accessing Financial Services

The survey identifies several key barriers that continue to limit the use of formal financial services in Bangladesh. Many individuals refrain from using financial services because they do not perceive a need for them, lack the required documentation, or have insufficient knowledge about available products and services. High service costs also discourage the use of deposit and loan products, while affordability constraints and limited trust in service providers are the primary barriers to insurance uptake. These findings highlight the importance of improving financial awareness, simplifying access requirements, enhancing affordability, and strengthening public confidence in formal financial institutions.



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