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The Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation (SMEF)
Ministry of Industries, Bangladesh
State of SMEs in Bangladesh

- 99.93% of business/farm credits have been borrowed by women.
- 80% of all businesses are SMEs.
- 25% of SMEs are owned by women.
- 25% of industrial employment created by SMEs.
- 7.2% of entire labor force are engaged with the SMEs.
- 25% Contribution towards GDP.
Women Entrepreneurship: Some Issues to Consider

❖ Government is stern to achieve its Vision-2041 (to become developed country, followed by achieving Vision-2021 (achieved middle income country status in 2021). Government is also committed to achieve the goals and targets of SDGs
❖ As, fifty percent population are women (as per 2022 national survey), mainstreaming of women through employment & empowerment with social and economic development is prerequisite and priority task of the government
❖ In last ten years, poverty has been decreased significantly with increased rate of education (of women in particular as the government ensured free education up-to higher secondary/A-level)
❖ Government encourages the youth and students to become entrepreneurs (employer instead of employee) along with low cost credit/equity supports and different tax and VAT incentives
❖ Women entrepreneurs have just been doubled during last decade (126% increased)
❖ An enabling environment (ecosystem) for women entrepreneurship development has been created meanwhile--
❖ Women are now more eager to become entrepreneurs (friendly features)
Realities Background and Rational

❖ Women mostly live in villages where entrepreneurial facilities are still lagging behind
❖ Due to socio-economic perspective, women are still reluctant to move and stay away (from home) for availing entrepreneurial facilities (though they badly need- now a days)
❖ Government initiative to make Digital Bangladesh (started 2009), followed by Covid-19 impact, a paradigm shift has been created, particularly in case of small and medium sized businesses (and of course in women business)
❖ Online business with digital transaction have got momentum meanwhile--
❖ People are now interested/prefer (being habituated as well) to procure their products and services digitally/online what resulted e-commerce and online business very popular with significantly increase of e-commerce/online business in last years
❖ Women are now feel comport (an interested) to start and run their business from own home/area (though they face numbers of limitations and hurdles and so-- they need numbers of information, advisory/consultancy and facilitation supports)
❖ And all these things have generated a timely demand of –Dynamic Digital Hub- for women entrepreneurs.
One Stop Advisory, Information and Facilitation Center for Women Entrepreneurs in Bangladesh (Dynamic Digital Platform)
Bangladeshi women, seizing economic opportunities

Challenges
• In starting, sustaining and upscaling their businesses

Effect
• Women’s ability to gain relevant knowledge and information
• Leverage alternate operational models and solutions.

Bridging the information gaps
Connecting women entrepreneurs and their products to broader network
Making an essential mechanism for an enabling entrepreneurial journey for women.
Providing greater access to services
Streamlining processes

One Stop Information and Facilitation Platform for WEs
## One-stop Knowledge Hub

### Features

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online application for SMEF membership</strong></td>
<td>How to get business registration and trade license</td>
<td>Join trade fair</td>
<td>How to get financing</td>
<td>How to sell online &amp; offline</td>
<td>Find a mentor/Advisors/Referral</td>
<td>Upgrade your skills</td>
<td>Ask for counseling</td>
<td>Put your demand/question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating a database of SMEs by collecting data through a live form</td>
<td>Guiding the founders on the registration process and the requirements</td>
<td>Facilitating identification of online and in-person fairs &amp; events</td>
<td>Guiding the entrepreneurs on the requirements for availing financing opportunities</td>
<td>Preparing a yellow page of online marketplaces</td>
<td>Connecting founders with mentors, where they will receive guidance on business safety, business compliance, business growth, etc.</td>
<td>Enabling entrepreneurs to develop skills related to business operations and digital transformation</td>
<td>Providing emotional counseling while maintaining anonymity</td>
<td>Answering to the business queries and demands of the founders</td>
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A comprehensive design to help women entrepreneurs in facing challenges

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<tr>
<th>Challenges faced by Women Entrepreneurs</th>
<th>Online One-Stop Centre</th>
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<td>Business registration and legislations</td>
<td>How to get business registration and trade license</td>
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<td>Business operationalization and management</td>
<td>Find a mentor/advisor</td>
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<td>Capacity building</td>
<td>Upgrade skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing and promotion</td>
<td>How to sell online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
<td>How to get financing</td>
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Starting
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<td>Resource mobilization (Asset, Finance and Human)</td>
<td>Find a mentor/advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business mobility and digital transformation</td>
<td>How to sell online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business support schemes and policies</td>
<td>Online application for SMEF Membership and Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth financing</td>
<td>How to get financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market expansion</td>
<td>Join trade fair</td>
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<td>Compliance and legislation</td>
<td>Put your demand/question</td>
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<td>Financial planning</td>
<td>Upgrade skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business operationalization and management</td>
<td>Find a mentor/advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business community network management</td>
<td>Join trade fair</td>
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Sustaining
Journey

Online Portal
Content Development
Partnership Development
Capacity Building Training
Support
Launching

Inception
July 2022

Completion
March 2023
## Phases of One-stop Services for SMEs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>Phase II</th>
<th>Phase III</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Hub</td>
<td>Online and Brick &amp; Mortar Transaction</td>
<td>Online compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know-how</td>
<td>Online access to finance</td>
<td>Online incorporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to skills training</td>
<td>Online market place</td>
<td>Online tax filing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to assorted services required by CMSMEs</td>
<td>Brick &amp; Mortar One-stop Service Desk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information and knowledge useful for CMSMEs for operation, compliance, and growth</td>
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Contents in Phase 1

- Get Incorporated
- Access to Market
- Upgrade Your Skills (Training Information and Participation)
- Get Financing (Access to credit)
- News and Announcement
- Help Me (Need Help)
- Find a Mentor/Adviser (Mentorship)
- Finance and Accounts Organized (Accounts and Financial)
- SME and WE Resources
- Contact for any issues
- Use the OSS portal

Number of Contents in total - 131
Home Page

News & Blog Journey

Chamber of Commerce

Bank Journey
Expected Impact

- Benefiting massive numbers of women entrepreneurs
- New business generation through serving SMEs by service providers
- Financial inclusion
- Participation of women in business
- Reducing Cost of doing business
From SME Foundation, the apex agency for SME development, under the Ministry of Industries, what we are mandated to do and need to do for women entrepreneurship development (to fulfill their increased need and demands); we can’t hear and serve them all due to different reasons and limitation. But we strongly believe, after the one stop hub is in action, we will be able to serve more women throughout the country.

- We shall be able to get know of their issues, needs and asking and accordingly be able to take and implement necessary actions to solve and serve them.
- This will be a dynamic platform which shall be updated on regular basis. We have the plan to employ dedicated trained people for the hub. We have also took necessary programs to supplement the hub (development of expert pool, panel of BDS etc.)
- In future, through the next phases, we shall integrate respective regulators and services providers to make the hub more effective and useful to women entrepreneurs,
- And finally what I want to mention that it would not only useful for the women also for the male. So this hub will eventually be a unique hub for to be and existing entrepreneurs.
Thank you!