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Sustainable rural ageing model: Evidence from Bangladesh

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*Workshop organised by Necla-Yasar Duru Gerontologi Merizi, Ibradi, Antalya - Turkey*

# **Sustainable Rural Ageing Model:**

## ***Evidence from Bangladesh***

Professor Hafiz Khan, *PhD*

Professor of Public Health & Statistics

College of Nursing, Midwifery, and Healthcare, University of West London, UK

&

Associate Professorial Fellow, Oxford Institute of Population Ageing, University of Oxford, UK

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## Outline:

- Sustainability model and why it is needed in gerontology
- Application of sustainability in rural setting in Bangladesh
- Response from various stakeholders
- Health and wellbeing benefits of sustainable rural model

# Sustainable ageing model

- Voice of older population should be given priority to make a positive change, i.e., listen to their need and expectations (Khan, 2018).
- Make sure that they are provided with adequate care and sustainable support.
- Integrating them in social activities and decision-making process within the local community.
- Ensuring their daily needs by liaising with local Government and non-governmental organisations.
- Establishing age-friendly practices in rural areas to sustain the health and well-being of older adults as well as the communities in which they live (McCullough & Bouldin, 2021).

## Key statistics on elderly populations in Bangladesh

|   | 2019       | 2050       |
|---|------------|------------|
| Population aged 60 and above (total)  | 13,109,000 | 36,871,000 |
| Population aged 60 and above (% of total population)                          | 8.0        | 21.9       |
| Older women aged 60+ (% of total population)                                  | 3.88       | 11.55      |
| Life expectancy (males)   | 70.48      | 78.11      |
| Life expectancy (females)   | 74.11      | 81.45      |
| Old-Age Dependency Ratio (Age 65+ / Age 15-64)                                | 7.7        | 23.5       |
| Rural older people (% of total population)                                    | 3.46       |            |
| Urban older people (% of total population)                                    | 1.4        |            |
| Older persons living alone aged 60 and above (% of total population aged 60+) | 1.77       |            |

## Impact of social change

In Bangladesh, older persons have a special position in the family, often asked for advice especially during major events, like marriage, name giving ceremonies etc. As well they have respected and valued in the society; treated as an important advisor in the family as well as community.

The situation is becoming changed due to change of social, psychological and economic standpoint. Social, economic and political viewpoint elderly population is now growing rapidly and it's a big concern for Bangladesh.

## General scenario in a rural in Bangladesh:

- Traditional family patterns are breaking down which change norms and values such as respect to elderly people in the family and the community.
- The society, typically, modern society has failed to keep the dignity and honor of the elders. This may be attributed to various reasons like individualistic attitudes, instability of family structures, devaluation of dignity, differences in incomes, and other social problems.
- Due to the social context of Bangladesh, most of women in rural and slum area do not own land and other property and they are on worse situation in the old age.
- Inadequate health and social care services including emergency care and mental healthcare.
- Lack of accessible transport communication.
- Unaffordable accessibility to services and better social integration.
- Lack of community-based initiatives to improve social integration of older people.
- Inadequate housing and local environment conditions to allow older people to 'age in place'.
- Absence of social care.

## Situation of elderly in rural Bangladesh

- ❑ No care center for older adults.
- ❑ Lower levels of investment in older adults' health and wellbeing.
- ❑ Little support from Government.
- ❑ Family care service provision becoming weakening over time.
- ❑ Elderly are becoming vulnerable in family either financially or physically.
- ❑ Many of them suffer from age related diseases such as visual impairment, difficulty in walking, chewing, hearing, osteoporosis, arthritis, cardiovascular, cancer, diabetes, COPD, and dementia.



# YPSA activities for elderly

- YPSA is a voluntary, nonprofit organization in Bangladesh started working on Elderly issue in the rural areas since 1985.
  - ❑ Establishing social centres (Aging –Friendly Spaces) for elderly people in every local authority area.
  - ❑ Providing old age allowances and assistive materials (walking sticks, commodes, blankets warm cloths, wheelchairs, umbrellas etc).
  - ❑ Provision of Special Savings and Pension Fund.
  - ❑ Recognising the contribution for the society made by the elderly persons.
  - ❑ Awarding children for looking after their parents.
  - ❑ Providing appropriate credit and IGAs-based training facilities to the poor elderly people.
  - ❑ Offering physiotherapy services & geriatric nursing to the elderly.
  - ❑ Rehabilitation of poor and distress elderly in community.

# Sustainable framework for elderly

- Convincing people to participate in social activities
- Integrating various groups of people within the community
- Approach to develop age-friendly communities ensuring accessible transportation, affordable appropriate housing options, inviting outdoor spaces, quality community and health services, employment and volunteer opportunities, and access to social activities and public events etc
- Raising social awareness among all sections of people
- Optimising health and wellbeing

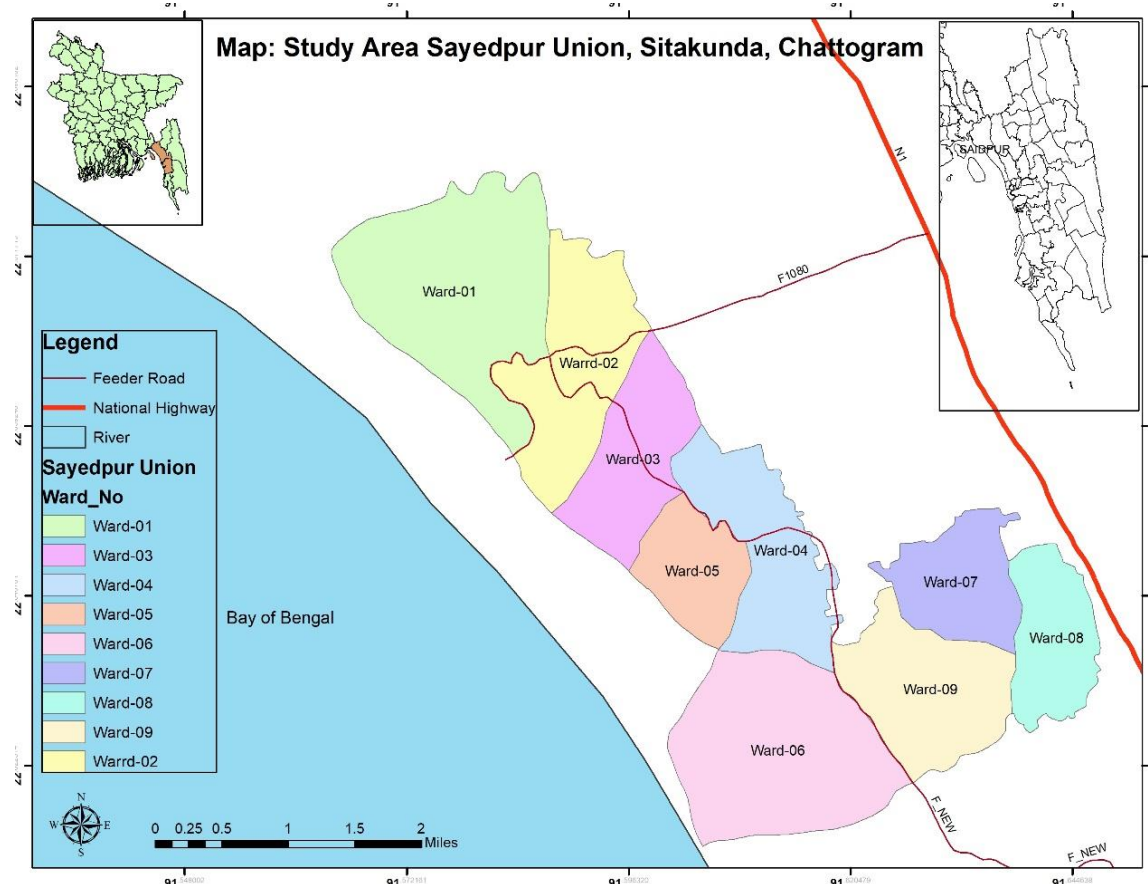
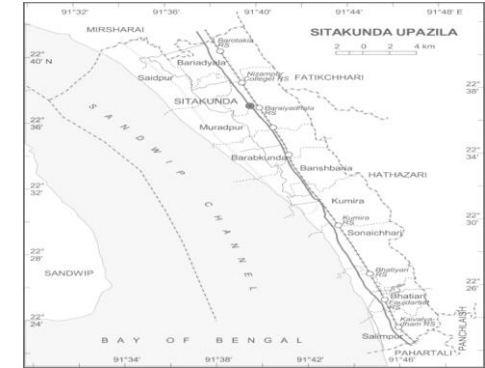
# Multisectoral involvement in sustainability:

- Local people within the community
  - Local community leaders
  - Local Non-Governmental organizations (NGO)
  - Local Governmental organizations
- 
- Country level policy for the welfare of older population
  - Country's political commitment for policy implementation
  - Country's legal response by protecting elderly from abuse and poverty
- 
- Global agenda on ageing populations
  - Global initiatives on awareness building through network and activities
  - Global funding on research and training in gerontology

# Study Area for data collection

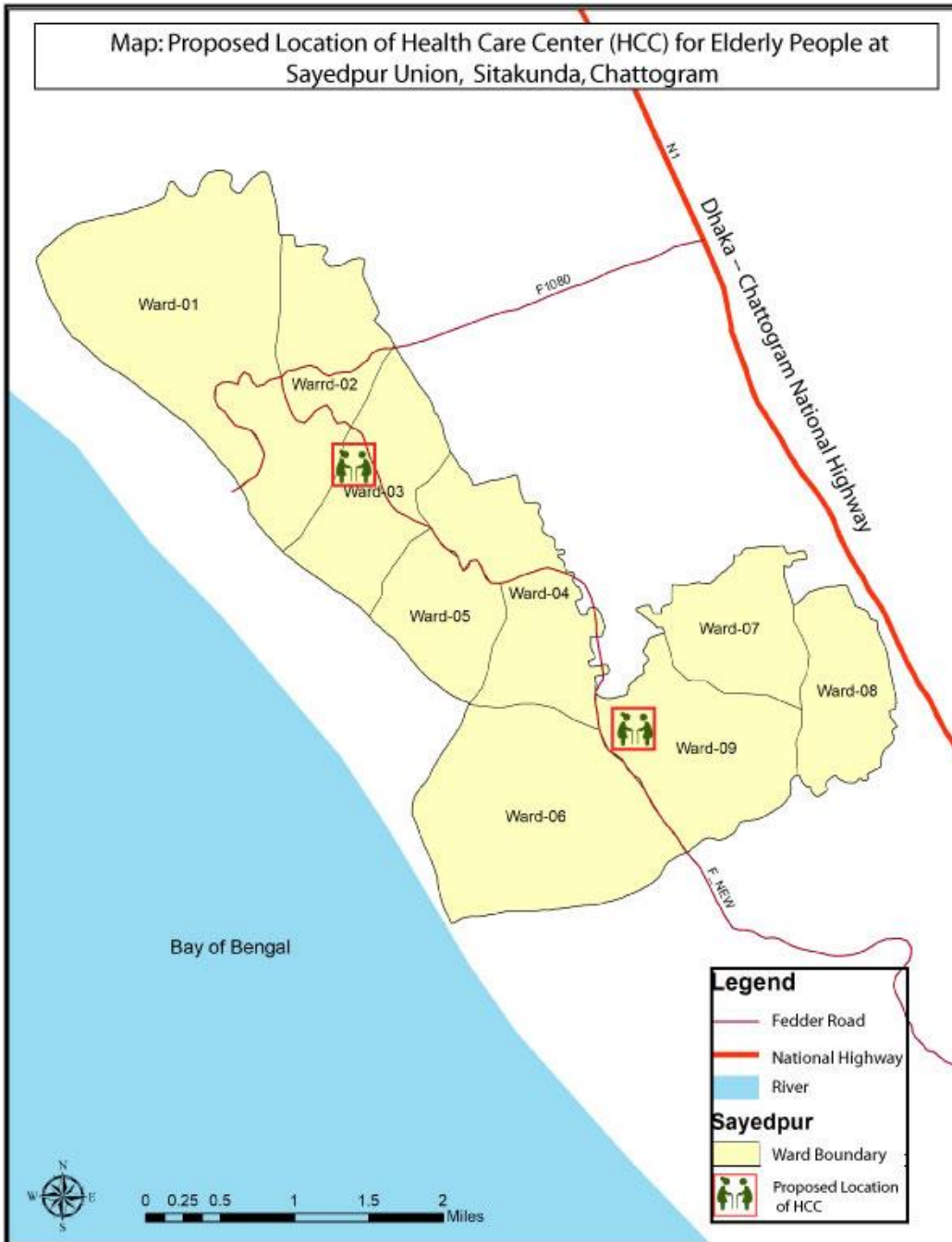
The research will be conducted at Syedpur Union at Sitakund Upazila in Chattogram district.

Geographically, this location bears a big significance as populations are mixed with ethnic identities (some are native Bengali and some portion have indigenous community).



This map presented the study area along with the Boundary of each ward (nine ward is consist of a union

Map: Proposed Location of Health Care Center (HCC) for Elderly People at Sayedpur Union, Sitakunda, Chattogram



| Name of ward | Elderly Population | Total Population | Percentage of Elderly people |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Ward no-01   | 173                | 248              | 2.2                          |
| Ward no-02   | 158                | 5500             | 2.9                          |
| Ward no- 03  | 162                | 4510             | 3.6                          |
| Ward no-04   | 132                | 5500             | 2.4                          |
| Ward no-05   | 156                | 4900             | 3.2                          |
| Ward no-06   | 250                | 10000            | 2.5                          |
| Ward no-07   | 131                | 4980             | 2.6                          |
| Ward no-08   | 129                | 3870             | 3.3                          |
| Ward no-09   | 177                | 4379             | 4.0                          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1468</b>        | <b>51482</b>     | <b>2.9</b>                   |

if elderly population is less than 8% of total population then we will propose two EHCC else three EHCC or where ward wise elderly population is 4% or nearly approximation



# YPSA Works with Elderly People



**Awareness-on-Diabetes-control**



**Eye-Camp-Registration-Male**



**Glass-distributed-to-OP**



**Disability friendly device distribution**



**Recreation-Female**



**Recognition of Elderly people**



## Project Activities



Monthly meeting of the old village committee



Leadership and communication training of senior leaders



Rally of International Day of the Year 2012



Deliverable aids to the elderly



# Project Activities



**Professor Hafiz T.A. Khan has distributed warm blankets and elderly people allowance to poor elderly people**





## References

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- McCullough, K. & Bouldin, E. (2021). Sustainable Aging: Building an Age-Friendly Rural Community, *The Journal of the Blue Cross NC Institute for Health & Human Services: Sustainable Health*. Appalachian State University. V. 1, March 23, 2021.  
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