

Community-Led Initiative Against Drug Abuse and Online Gambling in Senpur Village:

Drug abuse and online gambling had become growing social concerns in Senpur village of Tala Upazila, Satkhira district, particularly among young people. The increasing involvement of youth in these activities was negatively affecting families and the wider community. During the Union-level Dialogue and Joint Action Meeting under the HOPE Project, CSO members identified drug abuse and online gambling as priority issues requiring immediate attention. Representatives from the Union Parishad, CSOs, and other stakeholders agreed that the problem could not be addressed through law enforcement alone and that community awareness and social engagement were equally important. As a result, it was decided to engage religious leaders in raising awareness through mosques and temples about the harmful consequences of drug abuse and online gambling while encouraging community members to take collective action. Following the dialogue, local Imams delivered awareness messages during Friday prayers, highlighting the social, moral, and legal consequences of drug abuse and online gambling and calling upon the community to play an active role in preventing these practices. Subsequently, a community awareness rally was organized in Senpur village under the leadership of local youth leader Bablu, with active participation from community members. Participants carried awareness messages and called on young people to stay away from drugs and online gambling.

This initiative demonstrates that collaborative action by CSOs, local government representatives, religious leaders, and community members can effectively mobilize communities to address social challenges. The awareness campaign and community engagement have strengthened local commitment to preventing drug abuse and online gambling and laid the foundation for a stronger community-based social protection mechanism.

