

# HSDNI'S 7<sup>TH</sup> SUSTAINABILITY COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE- 2023

Theme: SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC HEALTH

(Sub-themes: Food Security, Public Health, and Emergency Response)



# Live Simply Live Lively

Cooperation and collaboration for sustainability



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HSDNI AT TMU PRESENTS:

# HSDNI'S 7TH SUSTAINABILITY COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE-2023

## Theme: Sustainable Public Health

Sub-themes: Food Security, Public Health, and Emergency Response

Opening Speaker  
Dr. Nancy Walton



Associate Dean, Student Affairs, Graduate Studies, Toronto Metropolitan University

Keynote-Food Security  
Dr. Sarah Elton



Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology & Director, Food Health Ecosystems Lab, Toronto Metropolitan University



Director of Knowledge & Learning at Access Alliance (Toronto), and Adjunct Professor Faculty of LAPS at York University

Keynote-Public Health  
Dr. AKM Alamgir



Emergency Management Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management City of Toronto

Keynote-Emergency Response  
Stephanie Etkin

May 23, 2023-10 am-5 pm-Toronto Metropolitan University DCC, 7th Floor, Collab Space.



## INTRODUCTION

The **Holistic Sustainable Development Network (HSDN) International** is a non-profit organization that creates, coordinates, and disseminates research relating to sustainable development. Although we are based in Canada, we collaborate and work internationally, arrange conferences and seminars as well as publish research in our peer reviewed journals. Our aim is to disseminate relevant research and work experiences to the public and increase stakeholder participation in the practices and processes that impact sustainable development.

HSDN International, initiated in 2014 by the Environmental Policy Institute Graduate Candidates at Memorial University of Newfoundland, was pioneered by Jannatul Islam with the name “*Worldwide Holistic Sustainable Development Cooperation (WWHSDC)*”. Afterwards, Jannatul Islam moved to Toronto and continued the initiative under its current name and incorporated it in Canada under the leadership of Dr. Nasima Akter. The HSDN is defined by the motto “Live simply, live lively”. It is a growing organization of academics dedicated to increasing access to high quality peer reviewed literature on sustainable development. The HSDN is truly an international undertaking with executive members from Canada, Bangladesh, United Kingdom, Nigeria and Jamaica.

We create student club in potential locations to build the network and strengthen the sustainability movement. Currently we have student club in University of Toronto, Toronto Metropolitan University and Bangladesh.

HSDNI runs and mentors initiatives that include Toronto Bangla School, HSDNI Academy, Community Exchange Network, Journal for Worldwide Holistic Sustainable Development (ISSN), PROYASHEE Foundation, Community Sustainability Global and regular outreach activities year round.

HSDNI has been organizing sustainability collaborative conference periodically on current burning issues affecting community sustainability in different locations. In the continuation of this conference, Student club of HSDN International formed at Toronto Metropolitan University is hosting the HSDNI’s 7<sup>th</sup> Sustainability Collaborative Conference-2023 for Future Sustainable Societies.

**Theme of the year:** Sustainable public health

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## VISION

development goals through  
**collaborative movement**

## MISSION

Promote **socio-cultural, economic and environmental well-being** for all from grassroots to global level

## VALUES

Complementary regard for **human and environmental** subjects

## OBJECTIVES

- ➔ **Generate ideas** through local experiences and spread it globally
- ➔ **Identify and engage to the projects** related to the organization's goals
- ➔ **Accumulate efforts** to mentor or make projects successful within jurisdictions
- ➔ **Support** for class neutral development of policies
- ➔ **Communicating activities** of the organization and giving feedback to stakeholders
- ➔ **Expanding network** and cooperation worldwide to secure greater success in sustainable development

We invite you to join us as a participant, a teacher, a student, and a voice in this movement toward holistic sustainable development.

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### HSDNI'S 7<sup>TH</sup> SUSTAINABILITY COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE-2023

**DATE AND PLACE:** 9.30 AM ON 23<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 2023 AT TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY (FORMERLY RYERSON UNIVERSITY), IN DAPHNE COCKWELL COMPLEX (DCC) 7<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR (**PRESS SECURITY OR CONTACT#4373456722 TO ACCESS**)

**THEME: SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC HEALTH**

**(SUB-THEME: FOOD SECURITY, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE)**

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION LINK: [HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/JHMLUPDFMYWEGOR8A](https://forms.gle/JHMLUPDFMYWEGOR8A)**

| Time   | Items                            | Details   |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Emcee by Subrina Buly, PhD Student &amp; Christopher Randall, MSc<br/>EnSciMan, Toronto Metropolitan University</b> |                                  |   |
| 9.30 am-10.00am  | REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST         |   |
| 10.00 am-10.05am   | LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT             |   |
| 10.05am-10.15am  | OPENING REMARKS                  | DR. NANCY WALTON, ASSOCIATE DEAN, STUDENT AFFAIRS, GRADUATE STUDIES, TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY  |
| 10.15am-10.25am  | INTRDUCTION TO HSDNI             | JANNATUL ISLAM, FOUNDER AND ED, HSDNI   |
| <b>SESSION-1: FOOD SECURITY</b>  |                                  |   |
| 10.25am-10.50am  | KEYNOTE SPEECH (FOOD SECURITY)   | DR. SARAH ELTON, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & DIRECTOR, FOOD HEALTH ECOSYSTEMS LAB, TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY   |
| 10.50am-11.10am  | PRESENTATION-1 (FOOD SECURITY)   | QAZI SHAFAYETUL ISLAM, PROGRAM COORDINATOR, BANGLADESHI-CANADIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES   |
| 11.10am-11.30am  | PRESENTATION-2 (FOOD SECURITY)   | AMANDA WEDGE, FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE  |
| 11.30am-11.50am  | SESSION CHAIR: FOOD SECURITY Q&A | DIANE DYSON, PRESIDENT OF EAST YORK GARDEN CLUB, WORKED FOR INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH & ADVOCACY AT DAILY BREAD FOOD BANK, PAST: CANADIAN URBAN INSTITUTE & TNG COMMUNITY SERVICES |
| 11.50am-12.30pm  | MEET AND MINGLE LUNCH BREAK      |   |



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| SESSION-2: PUBLIC HEALTH      |  |   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 12.30pm-12.55pm               | KEYNOTE SPEECH (PUBLIC HEALTH)           | DR. AKM ALAMGIR<br>DIRECTOR OF KNOWLEDGE & LEARNING AT ACCESS ALLIANCE (TORONTO) AND ADJUNCT PROFESSOR FACULTY OF LAPS AT YORK UNIVERSITY             |
| 12.55pm-1.15pm                | PRESENTATION-1 (PUBLIC HEALTH)           | DR. SHAFI BHUIYAN, PHD, MBBS, MPH, MBA, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, CLINICAL PUBLIC HEALTH, DALLALANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, CANADA |
| 1.15pm-1.35pm                 | PRESENTATION-2 (PUBLIC HEALTH)           | DR. MAHATAB UDDIN, BOARD OF DIRECTOR, BENGALI EMPLOYMENT AND INFORMATION SERVICES (BIES)  |
| 1.35pm-1.55pm                 | PRESENTATION-3 (PUBLIC HEALTH)           | MD. IDRIS ALI, PHD CANDIDATE, ENVIRONMENTAL APPLIED SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT, TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY   |
| 1.55pm-2.15pm                 | SESSION CHAIR: PUBLIC HEALTH<br>Q&A      | DOLY BEGUM, MPP, SCARBOROUGH SOUTHWEST & OFFICIAL OPPOSITION CRITIC FOR CITIZENSHIP, FOREIGN CREDENTIALS, AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES                    |
| 2.15pm-2.35pm                 | MEET AND MINGLE<br>SNACKS/PIZZA BREAK    |   |
| SESSION-3: EMERGENCY RESPONSE |  |   |
| 2.35pm-3.00pm                 | KEYNOTE SPEECH (EMERGENCY RESPONSE)      | STEPHANIE ETKIN, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, CITY OF TORONTO  |
| 3.00pm-3.20pm                 | PRESENTATION-1 (EMERGENCY RESPONSE)      | SULTANA JAHANGIR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATION   |
| 3.20pm-3.40pm                 | PRESENTATION-2 (EMERGENCY RESPONSE)      | DR. HASAN MAHBUB, (HE/HIM) PROFESSOR & PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST  |
| 3.40pm-4.00pm                 | SESSION CHAIR: EMERGENCY RESPONSE<br>Q&A | NETHAN SHAN, TRUSTEE, TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD   |
| 4.00pm                        | CLOSING REMARKS                          | DR. NASIMA AKTER, ED, BANGLADESHI-CANADIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DIRECTOR, HSDNI   |

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### Dr. Nancy Walton, Opening Speaker



Associate Dean, Student Affairs, Graduate Studies, Toronto Metropolitan University

Dr. Nancy Walton is the Associate Dean, Student Affairs, in the Yeates School of Graduate Studies, and an Associate Professor in the Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). She previously served as Director of the School of Nursing, as Director of eLearning, and as the Chair of the TMU Research Ethics Board (REB). Dr. Walton served for six years as the Chair of the Women's College Hospital REB and is currently the Deputy Chair of the Health Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada's REB, and an appointed member of the Panel on Research Ethics.

She has a PhD in Nursing with completion of the Collaborative Program in Bioethics from the University of Toronto (2003). She has published and presented on priority setting and decision-making in cardiac surgery, research ethics board composition, ethical and legal considerations in research on children and adolescents as well as the ethical concerns in the use of new mobile technologies in health care.

### Jannatul Islam (MAEP), Introduction to HSDNI



PhD Student, EnSciMan, Toronto Metropolitan University, Founder and Executive Director, HSDNI

Mr. Jannatul is the co-founder of Toronto Bangla School that has been serving children for the last seven years to teach Mother Language and Culture to minimize the inter-generational gap. He founded Holistic Sustainable Development Network (HSDN) International that is striving for sustainability through collaboration and cooperation with like-minded individuals and organizations. Until now, HSDN International organized about 50 workshops and seminars and 6 international conferences. Moreover, this organization runs a journal for sustainability and published its 12 issues, a sustainability blog and a Facebook group name Social Exchange Network to exchange or give away extra to the community. Mr. Jannatul also registered a federal non-profit named PROYASHEE to establish a model eco-village for disadvantaged children and seniors who do not have anyone to take care or care about. PROYASHEE already took their first steps to build a model eco-village in Bangladesh and collected \$100000CAD till now while most of the money was spent for land acquisition.

Since he enrolled in Toronto Metropolitan University from September 2022, he became president of TMU Urban Water Student Leadership Committee, became a student member of Centre for Studies in Food Security, and registered HSDN International as a student club in TMU to collaborate for sustainability.



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# Session-1: Food Security

## Diane Dyson, Session Chair

Dyson is a social researcher, activist, and blogger interested in issues of neighbourhoods, schooling, and poverty.

She is currently the Director of Neighborhood Link, a large multiservice agency in the east end of Toronto. Prior to this, Diane worked at Woodgreen Community Services, United Way of Greater Toronto, overseeing a portfolio of member agencies, and at Ryerson University.

Diane's community contributions include work with the Federation of Metro Tenants Association, where she was on its Executive, Social Planning Toronto, the Ralph Thornton Centre, the Toronto District School Board's Equity Policy Advisory Committee and Inner City Advisory Committee, the Centre for Urban Health Initiatives. She has also worked with Action for Neighbourhood Change to provide training on non-profit board governance.



**President of East York Garden Club, Past Chair, HSDN International**

## Dr. Sarah Elton, Keynote Speaker



**Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Toronto Metropolitan University & Director, Food Health Ecosystems Lab**

Sarah Elton is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Toronto Metropolitan University and is the founding director of the Food Health Ecosystems Lab. She also holds an appointment at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health, where she completed her PhD in Social and Behavioural Health Sciences (2019). Dr. Elton and her team research the human-ecosystems-health nexus in the city through the study of produce supply chains and the foodscape, including informal markets and non-commercial spaces such as urban gardens. She won an inaugural Gairdner Foundation Early Career Investigator Award in 2021 and is the author of several books including *Consumed: Food for a Finite Planet*.

**Presentation Title: Tracking Toronto's Foodshed: Applying an ecosystems approach to health to Toronto's produce supply chains**

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### Abstract: (Dr. Sarah Elton)

Our research at Toronto Metropolitan University's Food Health Ecosystems lab has tracked the produce supply chains that flow through the Ontario Food Terminal, since the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to understand the role of this public institution in an urban food system dominated by multinational corporate actors, including supermarket chains. The presentation describes how the Terminal supports small and mid scale enterprises both as suppliers and distributors, the latter including informal produce peddler markets, providing for neighbourhood food access. Our findings underline the significance of small and mid-scale food systems infrastructure in the greater Toronto area. They also highlight the importance of social-ecological food systems thinking at a time when the province's response to the housing crisis has promoted land grabbing, rather than regional resilience.

### Qazi Shafayetul Islam, Presenter

Qazi Shafayetul Islam started his career as a research associate in a research and evaluation division (RED) of BRAC Bangladesh (one of the largest NGOs in the world). He worked for BRAC for ten years in public health and research and helped BRAC develop national-based programs like national TB control, national nutrition program, maternal and child health, non-communicable diseases, and other public health programs by researching and creating policies. He had research experience for 18 years in Nepal, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Canada. He is good at quantitative and qualitative research and applies them in different settings. He works with immigrants in Toronto and their challenges in resettling in Canada. He works as the coordinator for research and programs at Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services in Toronto and also works for the Dementia Care Home. He also supervises the students from universities and colleges. He has published 23 articles in peer-reviewed journals, papers, and monographs.



**Coordinator, Research and Programs at Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services**

### Presentation Title: COVID-19 and Challenges in Food Accessibility and Security in the Priority Neighborhood, Toronto: We Need What Further

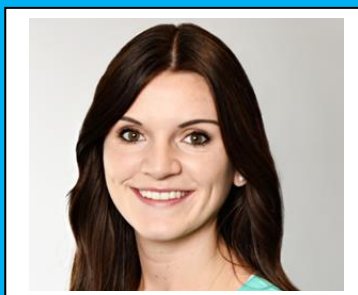
#### Abstract: (Qazi Shafayetul Islam and Dr. Nasima Akter)

The provincial and federal governments provided emergency funding to local community organizations to reduce food insecurity and improve food accessibility to people affected by COVID-19 by giving free food support. The study explored the challenges of community people and the local organizations in receiving and providing free food support and what was needed to achieve food accessibility and security in the priority neighborhood. Nine representatives of the local community organizations, 15 volunteers, and ten community members (food recipients) participated in the community conversation. They shared their experiences about challenges in food accessibility during COVID-19, and what we further needed to improve the food accessibility in the priority neighborhood. Lack of information about free food, language issues, the social stigma attached to requesting free food support, and fear of COVID-19 were obstacles for community members seeking free food support. On the other hand, the community organizations lacked knowledge of those who truly needed food assistance, adequate transportation, enough room to store food, and sufficient numbers of dedicated and qualified volunteers to assist with food distribution. Additionally, there was a lack of funds for community organizations to supply people with food. The local community organizations needed an assessment to understand the available resources so that local organizations could use the resources to improve food accessibility in the community. Furthermore, the organizations required coordination and cooperation with each other. In addition, the local organizations needed to work with community gardens, community kitchens, and food banks to support and meet the community's demands for improving food accessibility.

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### Dr. Amanda Wedge, Presenter



**Dr. Amanda Wedge,  
Coordinator, Scarborough  
Food Network (SFN)**

Dr. Amanda Wedge is the new Coordinator for the Scarborough Food Network (SFN). She recently received her PhD in History from the University of Toronto. Her areas of research include American history, conservation and wildlife legislation, and food studies scholarship.

Amanda also taught undergraduate courses for six years in the kitchen lab at the Culinary Research Centre at the University of Toronto Scarborough.

## Presentation Title: Food Security & the Scarborough Food Network

### **Abstract: (Dr. Amanda Wedge)**

Food insecurity is an issue faced by an increasing number of individuals living in Ontario. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity was already an issue for Ontarians, and unfortunately the pandemic only exasperated the situation. Data shows that in 2022, 2.8 million or 19.2% of Ontarians lived in a food-insecure household, and 688,000 of which, were children. Today, Scarborough residents are certainly feeling the effects of food insecurity, as more residents are accessing food banks than ever before. The Scarborough Food Network was designed to alleviate some of the pressures felt by individuals living with food insecurity in Scarborough, and also advocate for a more sustainable future. The network is comprised of non-profits, businesses, faith groups, educational institutions, local stakeholders and residents who are all working together to increase food security in Scarborough. Some of the key organizational members of the network include Daily Bread, Feed Scarborough, Second Harvest, Toronto Urban Growers, a number of community centres, and many other organizations. Some of the activities being done by our members to help raise food security in Scarborough include running food banks, free meal programs, cooking workshops, entrepreneurial training and working community gardens. Through our various programs and initiatives, our goal is to work collaboratively towards increasing food security across Scarborough.

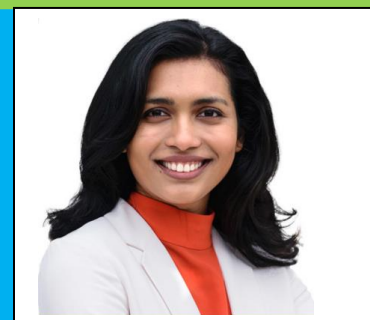
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**Session-2: Public Health**

**Doly Begum, Session Chair**

*Doly Begum is the Ontario NDP Member of Provincial Parliament for Scarborough Southwest. She moved to Canada as a child with her parents and younger brother, and has lived in Scarborough most of her life. She was first elected to the Ontario Legislature in June 2018 and is the first Canadian of Bangladeshi origin to hold elected office at any level in Canada. Doly was re-elected in 2022. At Queen's Park, Doly is the Co-Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition and Critic for Citizenship, Foreign Credentials, and Immigration Services.*



**Doly Begum, Member of Provincial Parliament, Scarborough Southwest Toronto**

*Doly was the chief coordinator of the province-wide Keep Hydro Public campaign that successfully stopped the privatization of Toronto Hydro and Wasaga Distribution. She is the former Co-Chair of the Scarborough Health Coalition and Vice-Chair of Warden Woods Community Centre, where she worked hard to make lives better for the people of Scarborough. Doly is a graduate of the University of Toronto and has a Masters in Development, Administration & Planning from University College London.*

**Dr. AKM Alamgir, Keynote Speaker**



**Akm Alamgir, PhD, MPhil, MBBS Director, Organizational Knowledge & Learning, Access Alliance MCHCS. Adjunct Professor, School of Social Work, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, York University, Academic Editor, PLOSOne journals.**

Akm Alamgir earned a Ph.D. degree in evaluation, a Master's degree in epidemiology, and a Bachelor's in medicine. He is the Director of Knowledge & Learning at Access Alliance (Toronto), an Adjunct Professor at York University (Toronto), and an Academic Editor of the scientific journal PLOS One. He is a mixed-method community-based researcher on social determinants of health (ORCHID #0000-0003-4804-6609). He generates knowledge, creates learning materials, and builds the capacity of the stakeholders to utilize generated evidence to make a change. His funded research projects are on racism, refugees, youth mental health, and gender-based domestic violence. Along with over 50 publications, he wrote a post-secondary textbook on community medicine and public health. He reviews manuscripts submitted to the Journal of International Migration and Integration, PLOS One, and Health Promotion International. He was an "expert reviewer" of the Canadian government for the New Frontiers in Research Fund Transformation Competition applications. He worked as the Professor and Head of the Department of Community Medicine at Dhaka National Medical College, Bangladesh; and the Associate Dean of Health Sciences at the State University of Bangladesh.

## **Presentation Title: Public Health Ecosystem as a Determinant for sustainable living and Development**

**Abstract: (Dr. AKM Alamgir)**

The sustainability of the human race on this earth planet is intricately intertwined with the determinants of public health in multifaceted intersecting dimensions. They are inseparably connected and are conditioned by each other in the broader global ecosystem. Public health is considered an outcome with a temporal relationship with sustainability and also simultaneously a precondition for sustainability.

Sustainability starts when public health promotes from washing hands to inventing vaccines against communicable diseases that challenged the sustainability of homo sapiens on the earth. The global ecosystem was threatened by smallpox and polio which is under control now, sustainability was at risk when COVID-19 jeopardized the global systems from eatery to air travel. One microorganism shattered the macroeconomics of the world; sustainability of the human race was at stake. Public health took the global leadership to rescue human existence. Everyone everywhere in the world watched every moment for public health declarations, recommendations, and advancements in vaccines for the sustenance of their life and the continuity of their generation. This is the relationship and dependence of sustainability on public health through improving the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the human race in ways that do not put future generations at risk. Sustainability intersects public health through economic, environmental, and social dimensions.

Public health and sustainability intersect in the area of morbidity and mortality indicators, food insecurity, healthy lifestyles, water security and sanitation, economic empowerment and distributive justice, air quality, and quality housing and sense of belonging.

These two constructs are complementary rather than mutually exclusive

### **Dr. Mahatab Uddin, Presenter**



**Dr. Mahatab Uddin, Board of Director, Bengali Employment and Information Services (BIES)**

**Mahatab Uddin** is a postdoctoral research scholar whose scholarship concerns the interfaces of law and sustainable development. He was an international mobility scholar of the Danish Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology as such he accomplished his PhD in Public International Law on Climate Change and Sustainable Development from Aarhus University, Denmark. He accomplished his MSc in Sustainable Development from Uppsala University and LLM in Intellectual Property Law from Stockholm University, Sweden. He is the sole author of the book *Climate Change Law, technology Transfer, & Sustainable Development* (Routledge, 2022). He is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Guelph, Canada. Dr. Uddin also works as a private mediator and conflict resolution coach. He can be reached at – [mmu.adr@gmail.com](mailto:mmu.adr@gmail.com)

### **Presentation Title: Youths Suicide in Toronto Bengali Community: Challenges and Strategies**



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### **Abstract: (Nasar Ahmed, Golam Mostofa, Mahatab Uddin)**

A Report of the World Health Organization (Sep 2019) shows that every year around 800,000 people die due to suicide, and it is the third leading cause of death for 15–19-year-old population. Since teenagers are more prone to commit suicide or attempt to commit suicide all over the world, Bengali community living in Greater Toronto Area of Canada experiences the same. Hearsay is that within two years period (2016-2017), at least 13 young males (age group of 14 to 28) committed suicide in the Bengali community residing in Greater Toronto Area. Based on this context this study aims to reveal underlying causes of the concerned youth as well the strategies to solve this problem. This research is particularly based on three Focus Group Discussions with youth groups and parents. A total of 18 youth aged between 14-25 years and 10 parents who have children in these age group participated in the FGDs. The recruitment process of participants for this research was widely circulated through different social media across the community, and most participants were finally selected through the snowball method.

### **Other authors' Short bio:**

**Nesar Ahamed** is a Registered Social Worker in Ontario. He completed his Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) from Ryerson University, Toronto and Master of Social Science (MSS) with honors in Sociology from The University of Chittagong, Bangladesh. Nesar immigrated to Canada 2012 as a skilled social worker from Bangladesh and has since been living in Toronto. Nesar is working with the City of Toronto as a Shift Leader with Shelter, Support and Housing Administration supporting people living with homelessness in the city of Toronto shelters. He has a great community connection in Toronto and is very passionate to help people. He can be contacted at: [nesar.net@gmail.com](mailto:nesar.net@gmail.com)

**Golam Mostafa** is a Mental Health and Employment Support Professional in Ontario, Canada. He completed his Master of Social Science (MSS) with honors in Public Administration from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and Post Graduate Diploma in Democracy, Governance and Public Policy from Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Hague, Netherlands. He also completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Social Works from George Brown College, Toronto, Canada. He immigrated to Canada in 2010 as a skilled social worker and has since been living in Toronto. He is working full-time with Christian Horizons as a Transitional Support Professional providing behavioural support to the people experiencing mental health issues and conflict with the justice system. He serves the Bengali Employment and Information Services (BIES) as Director of Programs and Services on a part-time basis. He can be contacted at: [gmostafa\\_md@yahoo.ca](mailto:gmostafa_md@yahoo.ca)



## Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, Presenter

**Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, PhD, MBBS, MPH, MBA.** Dr. Bhuiyan is an internationally-recognized leader in global public health and education initiatives, with diverse experience in both developed and developing countries. He is an Asst. Professor of clinical public health at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health, Co-creator of MScCH pilot program for internationally trained physicians at DLSPH, U of T, co-founder of the innovative Bridge Training Programs for IEHPs and Inaugural Board of Directors of Association for Global Health (CAGH) and served in many more health organization. Dr. Bhuiyan holds positions as Adjunct Professor at Faculty of Community Services at Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada and Bangladesh University of Health Sciences.

He previously worked as a Scientist and Senior Health Research Manager for projects at OHTN funded by Ontario's Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care. He was instrumental in improving maternal, neonatal and child health promotion in Bangladesh as founding lead liaison of MCHTI development in Dhaka and the Maternal Child Health Handbook program in Bangladesh, which led to a UNFPA Fellowship for his MPH in Urban health study; MBA from Toronto Metropolitan University [TMU], Canada; he also secured PhD and post-doctoral JSPS study award from the Govt. of Japan at Osaka University. Dr Bhuiyan received his medical degree from the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh, an MPH from Mahidol University in Thailand, a PhD in Global Human Sciences from Osaka University in Japan and an MBA in Global Healthcare Management from the Ted Rogers School of Management, TMU Canada.



**Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan PhD MBBS MPH MBA, Asst. Prof. Clinical Public Health, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, U of T Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Community Services, Toronto Metropolitan University Board of Directors, Canadian Association for Global Health [CAGH]**

## Presentation Title: 'Healthy Aging' or successful aging for healthy living & happiness

### Abstract:

Healthy Aging, successful aging –and aging well directly impacts social development. Various reports shows, in OECD countries 1 in 12 people age over 65 in 1950 and moving forward 1 in 4 people are expected to be over 65 by 2050. In this presentation, I will explore the current status of aging and the arts locally and globally- how our society should proceed to address high quality affordable older people's life to value senior citizens. Historically when people come together and take time to learn from each other's experiences- it makes a big difference to inspire, motivate for empathy and happiness for healthy living.

We need to explore various research evidence how diversity, equity, inclusions and multiculturalism help support humanistic perspectives when people grow older. Growing old is not merely a physiological or biological phenomenon. The aging process also occasions complex interactions with history, ideology, and the human imagination. In this session we will explore older age from a humanistic perspective in a relevant and compelling way, the underpinning question: what is healthy aging?

## Md. Idris Ali, Presenter



**Md. Idris Ali, PhD Candidate,  
Environmental Applied  
Science and Management,  
Toronto Metropolitan  
University**

**Md. Idris Ali** is currently pursuing a PhD in Environmental Applied Science and Management at Toronto Metropolitan University. His research interests revolve around environmental quality, renewable energy, environmental economics, and globalization. He has made significant contributions to the field, with several publications in reputed Q1 journals.

**Presentation Title: Exploring the effects of environmental quality on public health expenditure in Canada: Cointegration and counterfactual analysis approaches**

### **Abstract: (Mr. Idris Ali and Dr. Brian Ceh)**

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between environmental quality (carbon dioxide emissions) and public health expenditure in Canada within the purview of economic growth, population growth, and foreign direct investment (FDI). Time series data from 1990 to 2022 were analyzed using a dynamic autoregressive distributive lag (DARDL) cointegration model to examine the co-integrating relationship among the variables and the effects of counterfactual shocks on the regressors. The results indicate that carbon emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>), economic growth, population growth, and FDI have a stimulating effect on public health expenditure in both the short and long run. Furthermore, a counterfactual analysis was conducted by introducing  $\pm 1\%$  and  $\pm 5\%$  shocks to the regressors to observe their impact on the dependent variable. Additionally, the Kernel-Based Regularized Least Squares (KRLS) machine learning algorithm was applied to assess the cause-and-effect relationship among the variables and analyze the marginal effects of the predictors at each point. The findings from the KRLS machine learning approach are consistent with and reinforce the results obtained from the DARDL estimation technique. Therefore, our study suggests that Canada should prioritize the promotion of renewable energy sources and energy-efficient technologies across various sectors, including transportation, industry, and energy production, in order to effectively reduce carbon emissions.

## Session-3: Emergency Response

Mr. Neethan Shan is a Canadian politician who is currently serving as a TDSB trustee for Ward 17. He represented Ward 42 Scarborough-Rouge River on Toronto City Council, the first Tamil Canadian to sit on council. Mr. Shan completed a BSc, Bed and Med from University of Toronto. He is Executive director, Urban Alliance on Race Relations. Mr. Shan fought for better transit and more resources in our schools, led environmental conservation actions to protect the natural heritage of Scarborough and joined the community to plant hundreds of trees along Morningside Creek, worked to protect our local endangered species, the redbreasted nuthatch, and its natural habitat. He is an avid supporter of the arts and I helped host the City of Toronto's Cultural Hotspot, and Nuit Blanche, in Scarborough.

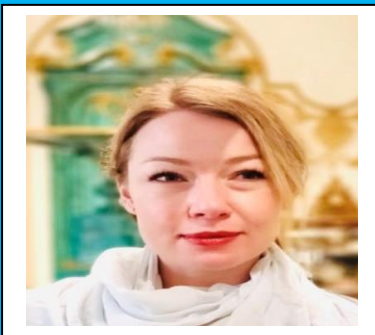
Mr. Shan was vice-chair of the National Council of Canadian Tamils and chair of the Tamil Heritage Month Committee, which he founded in 2009. He has served numerous other community groups including Better Ballot Initiative; Boreal Institute for Civil Society (project director); Canadian Tamil Congress; Community

### Neethan Shan, Session Chair



TDSB Trustee and Former  
Councillor, City of Toronto

### Stephanie Etkin, Keynote Speaker



Stephanie Etkin, Coordinator,  
Office of Emergency  
Management, City of Toronto

Stephanie Etkin is an Emergency Management Coordinator with the City of Toronto, Office of Emergency Management leading the Emergency Social Services unit. Over the past six years working in emergency planning and response, Stephanie has led over 25 responses within Ontario on behalf of government and non-profit agencies. Previously, Stephanie worked for 13 years with the Canadian Red Cross managing various programs including emergency management, refugee services, community health and wellness, homeless and at-risk homeless programming, volunteer resource management, philanthropy, and quality management departments. Stephanie holds an Honours Bachelor of Environmental Studies in Settlement Systems and Development, University of Waterloo and certifications from Rotman School of Management and Humber School of Business.

Presentation Title: Emergency Social Services during Critical Incidents

**Abstract:**

Home to a diverse population of nearly 2.8 million people, Toronto is Canada's most populous city and the fourth largest in North America. It is a global centre for business, finance, arts, and culture, and is consistently ranked as one of the world's most livable cities.

With a surge of growth over the past 20 years, it has brought new opportunities and challenges and Toronto must navigate the shifting landscape of emergency preparedness and response. From individuals, communities, and government services, we will look at how stakeholders provide emergency social services during critical incidents and steps to take as a collective to mitigate impacts.

**Sultana Jahangir, Presenter**

**Bio:** Sultana Jahangir has been a social service worker and social justice advocate for 25 years in Bangladesh, United States, and Canada. After immigrating to Canada she lived in Toronto's East Danforth area, which has a high concentration of low-income immigrant families, mostly Bangladeshi immigrants. Sultana led immigrant women from the area to create their own organization, South Asian Women's Rights Organization (SAWRO). Since 2007, she has served as SAWRO's Executive Director. Sultana has a Master's Degree in Political and Social Science from Dhaka University and has enhanced her skills through additional education in the United States and Canada.



**Sultana Jahangir, Executive Director, South Asian Women's and Immigrants' Services (SAWIS)**

**Presentation Title: Understanding the multidimensional impact of the covid-19 pandemic on health and safety of racialized immigrant women in East Danforth, Toronto.**

**Abstract:**

In Canada, the COVID-19 pandemic brought to light structural barriers that disproportionately impact marginalized and socially disenfranchised individuals especially racialized immigrants, who are often invisibilized and socially isolated. Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, South Asian Women's and Immigrants' Services (SAWIS), a community-based non-profit organization, has been leading consultations with its members in East Danforth neighborhoods of Toronto, as part of its service delivery and civic engagement.

Overarching findings have revealed 1) frustration with systems that systematically exclude racialized immigrants, thus compromising their health and safety 2) pressing need to support equal participation of marginalized communities in the democratic processes for policy decision making. Challenges and concerns noted by community women include delays for essential checkups and screenings, leading to worsening symptoms/condition; crowded clinics and increased wait times; inadequate primary health care support especially during the pandemic; limited age related and reproductive health services; and unsafe working conditions leading to risk of infection. Furthermore, employment precarity and financial insecurity forced individuals to be co-located in multigenerational homes, leading to crowding and contamination during the pandemic.

Drawing from the 'social determinants of health' framework and the community's lived experiences the presentation will highlight intersectional needs of precariously employed and low income racialized immigrant women. An anticipated outcome is an informed discussion around best practices for sustainable well-being of migrant women to help tackle health related vulnerability. This will be done by addressing its social and economic determinants like employment, housing, food security, child care, and gender-based issues.

Dr. Mahbub Hasan is an experienced social worker, educator, and international development worker with over a decade of experience in teaching and leading experiential learning at Centennial College and Toronto Metropolitan University.

With more than 25 years of experience in community development, social service administration, project management, and fundraising in Canada and Asia, Dr. Hasan has worked with prestigious organizations such as the University of Toronto, Centennial College, City of Toronto, CASSA, BCS, Action Aid International, VSO, and CIDA. His work has transformed the lives of students, newcomers, children, and youth from marginalized communities worldwide.

Dr. Hasan is skilled in strategic planning, project management, and partnership development in both higher education and social service sectors. He is also a published researcher in various fields such as social policy, affordable housing, and social entrepreneurship. As the host of "Podcasting Social Work," he provides a global platform for learning, sharing, and activism.

## Dr. Mahbub Hasan, Presenter



**Dr. Mahbub Hasan, Social Worker, Educator, Centennial College and Toronto Metropolitan University.**

Urbi has worked as a staff reporter for the *Toronto Star*, where she was one of the lead reporters on Ontario's nursing crisis series, "Critical Care". Her work has appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, *UofT Med Magazine*, and *The Represent ASIAN project*, among others. Urbi also leads workshops on media and community story-writing at the non-profit, Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS), located in and serving those living in the Toronto East communities.

Since February 2022, Urbi has served as a mentor to feminist leadership fellows who are a part of BCS's "Fight Misogyny, Achieve Gender Equality" campaign. Urbi's journalistic reporting work mainly focuses on health and education stories, as well as investigative journalism. She aims to bring compassion and empathy to her reporting and storytelling work. Urbi graduated from Toronto Metropolitan University in 2020.

## Urbi Khan, Co-Presenter



**Urbi Khan, Journalist, Storyteller, Freelance Feature Writer & Fact-Checker**

**Presentation Title: "Assessing the Impact of Racialized Feminist Responses in Combating COVID-19 and Gender Inequalities in Toronto: Sharing Experiences of Racialized Women and Girls"**



**Abstract:**

This seminar presentation will share the results of an evaluation conducted on the "Fighting Misogyny and Stereotypes against Racialized Women and Girls in Toronto" project. The project, implemented by Bangladeshi Canadian Community Services (BCS) and Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), aimed to combat gender inequalities and address the impact of COVID-19 on women's equality by providing resources, support, and partnerships for racialized women and girls. The evaluation utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the project's successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Specifically, a questionnaire was administered to 30 core project participants and 300 community members, while focus group discussions were conducted with youth and women's groups. Case study methods were also used to assess the experiences of partners and participants, and interviews were conducted with project staff members. The evaluation aimed to assess the project's success in achieving outcomes related to COVID-19's impact on women's equality, including access to programs and resources, establishing networks and collaborations, and creating inclusive policies and practices. The findings will be valuable for informing future efforts to address gender inequalities and respond to emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Dr. Nasima Akter, Closing Speaker**



**Nasima Akter, PhD  
(she/her) , Executive  
Director, BCS  
Past: Chair HSDNI**

Since 2010, Dr. Nasima Akter has been serving as the Executive Director of Bangladesh-Canadian Community Services (BCS) located in Toronto. Dr. Akter is a Certified Canadian Environmental Professional (EP). She has proven professional and leadership skills to work in diverse, international and multicultural settings and to work with multiple partners in the area of environment and development. Her specialities are Project Management; Community Development; Research & Development, Environmental Assessment, Monitoring, Education & Training, Site Assessment and Reclamation, Waste Management.

She formulated and introduced Medical Waste Management Rules for Bangladesh; assisted Government to develop different environmental policies. Skilled in design and implementation of training programs with relevant public and private sector agencies and facilitation of public-private partnerships aimed at environmental management, health and safety.

She taught at the James P Grant School of Public Health, and Department of Development Studies at BRAC University, Bangladesh. She has more than 26 years of progressive experience in environmental assessment, project management and research planed and organized the base line survey for Water Sanitation and Hygiene Program with 44,993 sampled households, 3,065 educational and 2,267 social institutes.