



Breaking Barriers in Textile Engineering, One Thread at a Time



Name

Mahnaz Diba

Institution

**Bangladesh University
of Textiles (BUTEX)**

Field of Study

Textile Engineering

Current Status

Third-year student

www.shestem.org

2025



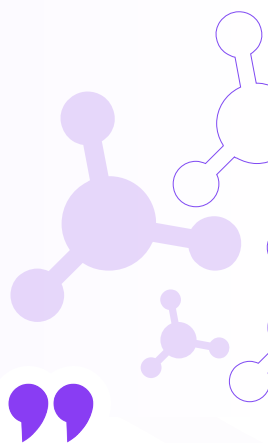
Mahnaz Diba's journey reflects quiet determination in a field where women are still navigating space and acceptance. As a textile engineering student, she chose a path that is both nationally significant and physically demanding. Through SheSTEM, she discovered not only practical skills but the confidence to lead, speak, and imagine herself as an active contributor to the industry.

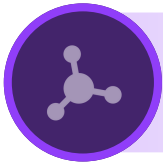
Diba's STEM Journey

Diba is currently a third-year student of Textile Engineering at BUTEX. She chose this discipline with a clear intention, to build a meaningful career in an industry that plays a central role in Bangladesh's economy, while also inspiring more women to enter this unconventional field.

She has long aspired to pursue higher studies abroad and is actively preparing to achieve that goal. Before that, she plans to gain professional experience for a few years, believing that hands-on exposure will strengthen both her skills and confidence.

"I want to create a footprint in this field in Bangladesh and inspire more women to choose it."





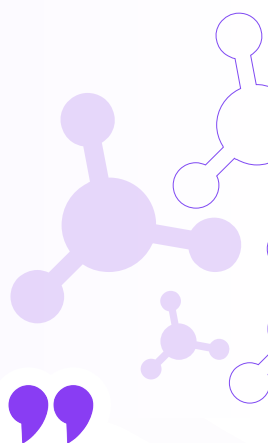
SheStem Experience

Diba's engagement with SheSTEM began with participation in academic and problem-solving activities, but her most defining experience came through a case-based business competition, BuTEX TexBiz focused on real-world industry challenges.

She stepped into a leadership role, motivating her teammates, guiding idea generation, dividing responsibilities, and supporting the final presentation. The team worked on a scenario involving a struggling textile company and proposed strategic operational and digital solutions to improve efficiency and sustainability.

Their ideas received positive recognition from industry professionals, earning the team a special mention as an emerging team, an experience that marked a turning point for Diba.

"Leading the team helped me realise strengths I didn't know I had."



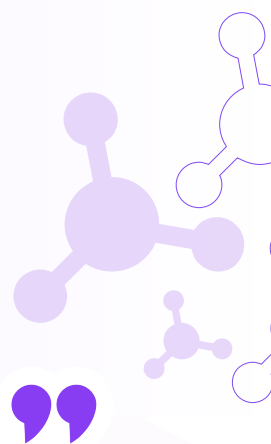


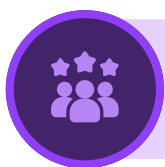
Confidence and Career Progression

Before joining SheSTEM, Diba rated her confidence in pursuing a STEM career at 3 out of 5. While she was committed to textile engineering, she often questioned whether she truly belonged in a field that is physically demanding and still largely male-dominated. Like many women in engineering, she carried a quiet self-doubt—less about her interest, and more about whether her voice and ideas would be taken seriously.

Her participation in SheSTEM marked a turning point. Through case-based problem solving and team-led challenges, Diba gradually began to see herself differently. Taking responsibility for motivating her team, guiding idea development, and contributing to final presentations helped her recognise her own leadership potential. Seeing industry professionals engage seriously with her team's ideas reinforced a belief that had once felt uncertain, that her perspective mattered. Today, Diba rates her confidence at 4 out of 5. While she acknowledges that challenges remain, she now approaches her future with greater clarity and resilience.

***“Seeing professionals take our ideas seriously
changed how I see myself.”***





Way Forward

Looking ahead, Diba recognises that gender bias remains a challenge in the textile sector, particularly for women interested in field-based roles. She is aware that physically demanding environments and long working hours are often seen as barriers for women.

However, she is determined to pursue hands-on roles and believes her upcoming internship will help her prepare for these realities. She identifies skill-based training, mentorship, and financial support for higher studies as the most important forms of support at this stage. Diba is fortunate to have strong family backing, especially from her father, who has always encouraged her ambitions without gendered limitations. Diba's journey through SheSTEM is one of steady growth and emerging leadership. The platform gave her the confidence to speak up, lead others, and imagine a larger role for herself in textile engineering. She hopes more young women will gain access to similar opportunities and build supportive communities that encourage each other to persist in STEM.

"I don't want to hold back just because the field looks difficult."





Kingdom of the Netherlands

