Reaching hard-to-reach youth with SRHR messages in Bangladesh

SRHR research projects of NWO-WOTRO - SUMMARY BRIEF FOR BANGLADESH

INTRODUCTION

This summary brief is based on the collective learnings from the five SRHR research projects of NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development in Bangladesh. The research projects were conducted between 2015-2018, and were part of a three-country research programme supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Five research projects

1. **Digital Sister for Urban Youth:** using new technology for effective SRHR communication
2. **Breaking the Shame:** towards improving SRHR education for adolescents and youth
3. **The Campus Hero Cafe:** engaging young men and boys in the promotion of SRHR and the prevention of violence
4. **Migration, livelihoods and SRHR:** a triple case-study of young female migrants in Dhaka
5. **Psychodrama and transformative intervention in the SRH of young men in urban slums in Dhaka:** proof of a novel approach

30% of the Bangladeshi population are young, aged 10-24

INSIGHTS

- Urban youth, both poor & middle class, are not aware of the changes taking places in their bodies

- Shame, stigma, taboos, myths around SRHR constrain young people's access to reliable sources of information

- Stigmatisation of SRHR issues leads to high risk behaviours and practices by young people, especially men

- Different quarters of the society have different levels of knowledge/information on SRHR issues

- Reliable source of SRHR information is absent

- Young people are hungry for precise skill based knowledge which address their needs (e.g. how to use a condom)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Involve youth directly in programs; understanding the context of youth (including unmarried youth and young men) and involving them in designing interventions

Engage & empower parents, teachers, religious leaders and service providers to support young people in developing positive behaviours

Create a safe space for youth which is reliable, accessible, anonymous and sustainable

> "Our goal was to encourage those feeling helpless in their own situations to at least find the courage to speak to someone they trust. [This is] the first small but significant step towards getting the help they need."
> ---- Anushka Zafar, Digital Sister Project ----

"We want more"

Three of the research projects developed the app **"Amra Jante Chai"** or **"We Want to know"** for young people who want to learn more about gender, sexuality, femininity, masculinity and SRHR issues

Additional project resources

Report Cybercrime in Bangladesh
https://cutt.ly/Lu80cYz
Adventures of Mama Sex: Busting myths around men's sexual health
https://cutt.ly/Qu80Ohg
Breaking the Shame project
https://cutt.ly/Du80V7r
NWO WOTRO SRHR Programme site
https://cutt.ly/Ku82yZS