



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

Increasing access to services

In the urban slums of Dhaka, Bangladesh, a large and densely populated metropolis, many women and adolescent girls lack the knowledge and services they need for their reproductive health. Poverty, social stigma, gender inequality, and inadequate or little-known resources all contribute to the problem.

To respond to this need, HealthBridge, alongside partners in Bangladesh, worked to improve the sexual and reproductive health of underserved women in Dhaka by addressing stigma, educating on family planning and early abortion, and connecting women with trained healthcare professionals.

Our partner trained and mobilized more than **1500** youth volunteers who organized community awareness sessions, school campaigns, health camps, and interactive theatre events, to raise awareness and promote action.

Some **225** outreach workers — health promoters affiliated with local urban clinics — were also trained to more adequately address sexual and reproductive health issues through their door-to-door visits and courtyard information sessions.

Reproductive health promotion messages were disseminated through print, digital, audio visual, and media channels.

A call centre was established as a channel for seeking information, counselling, prescriptions, and referrals to services. The hotline was promoted through the community outreach activities, printed materials, and social media.

Altogether, through the 5-year *Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Dhaka* project, HealthBridge increased access to information and services for more than **3.5 million** women and girls.

Community activities reach women and girls





Abir — the making of a leader

“I always wanted to work for people, but I didn’t know where to start or how to make a real impact in my community,” says Abir. So when he learned of an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution, Abir was more than ready.

After receiving training as a youth volunteer with HealthBridge’s partner in Dhaka, he became actively involved in community awareness sessions, door-to-door visits, health camps, and outreach campaigns promoting reproductive health services.

Abir’s determination paid off. Not only was he a strong advocate for women’s reproductive health and rights, but he also became a confident youth leader and role model for other volunteers... including his own family.

Inspired by his work, Abir’s sister joined the project as a volunteer, while his mother supported community awareness sessions, further strengthening outreach efforts within their community.

Abir’s contributions were recognized during the Exchange Sharing Meeting in 2026, where Abir received a Best Performer Award for his outstanding community engagement as a youth leader and advocate.

Outreach workers are the feet-on-the-ground of the health system in Bangladesh. They are present in the community, educating individuals and groups on health issues, administering vaccines, and referring local residents to the appropriate healthcare service for their needs.

HealthBridge worked with partners in Dhaka to train 225 outreach workers on family planning, early abortion, post-abortion care and gender-based violence. They were then able to raise awareness and direct women and girls to medical services in their area through courtyard sessions and door-to-door visits.

Youth volunteers, aged 16-24, were at the heart of the community outreach implemented by HealthBridge’s partner in Dhaka.

About 1500 volunteers received training on sexual and reproductive health and rights, communication, and facilitation skills. They delivered messages on menstrual hygiene, family planning, early abortion, and gender-based violence through peer sessions, community meetings, social media and school events.

Call centre

To improve access to sexual and reproductive health services, particularly among marginalized groups who are less likely to seek care, HealthBridge initiated a telemedicine call centre operated by a local partner.

The centre has received calls from women and adolescent girls about family planning, early pregnancy termination, post-abortion care, adolescent health, menstrual concerns, and spousal abuse. Male partners also use the service for information and guidance. Even people living outside the project’s targeted geographical area have called in.

The call centre service is ongoing and expanding to continue meeting a need for access to reproductive healthcare services.

HealthBridge — supported by the Government of Canada and working through partners in Bangladesh — implemented the 5-year “Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Dhaka” project to address the needs of underserved women and adolescent girls.