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Project Light

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Project Light

Abstract

My project is about creating an educational workshop with the help of my non-profit organization 'Voices Against Violence' back in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This workshop will target to raise awareness about gender equality and gender-based violence among the children living in financially underprivileged communities in Dhaka. It will specifically target 5th to 8th-grade students studying in NGO and government-based schools that are located in those communities. The workshop will be interactive and audio-visual in nature. It will be conducted by peer educators who will be trained in the curriculum. There are three main goals to be achieved through this workshop, which are: teaching the concept, importance, and practice of gender equality, developing a clear understanding of consent, and helping them to understand what gender-based violence is and how to identify and report it.

Keywords

gender workshop, gender equality Bangladesh, equality, rape culture

Disciplines

Gender and Sexuality | Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration

Comments

This poster was created based on work completed for FYS-108-1: Policy change through Agency and Activism, and presented as a part of the ninth annual CAFE Symposium on February 7, 2024.

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Project Light

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BACKGROUND

In the wake of the global pandemic, Bangladesh found itself grappling with a surge in gender-based violence, particularly incidents of rape. The root cause was the larger rape culture that our society was breeding and endorsing. And the most vulnerable stakeholder within that rape culture was children.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

- **Lack of gender equality** - There is little recognition of gender equality among young boys and girls because of social conditioning and norms.
- **Lack of comprehensive sex education** - Because of the absence of CSE, children are not exposed to the concept of consent, healthy relationships, bullying, harassment, etc. Therefore, they cannot identify acts that propagate gender-based violence.
- **Lack of identification and reporting** - There is less awareness on how to report gender-based violence to law enforcement agencies.

EXISTING SOLUTIONS

- **Government** - Various government policies focus on strengthening laws and regulations that prevent violence against children as well as gender-based violence.
- **Non-Government Organizations** - NGOs have been implementing grassroots projects to create awareness of reproductive rights, women's and children's rights, and gender equality.
- **Youth Non-profit Organization** - Rising youth non-profit organizations like Orodhho Foundation, Resistance- the Feminist Network are partnering with global partners like Malala Fund and creating comprehensive sex education programs for different schools and communities

ACTION PLAN

I plan to create an educational workshop with the help of my Dhaka-based non-profit organization 'Voices Against Violence'. The workshop will target to raise awareness about gender equality and gender-based violence among the children living in financially underprivileged communities in Dhaka.

3 TARGETS

- Teaching the concept, importance, and practice of gender equality.
- Developing a clear understanding of consent.
- Assisting to understand gender-based violence and how to identify and report it.

WORKSHOP

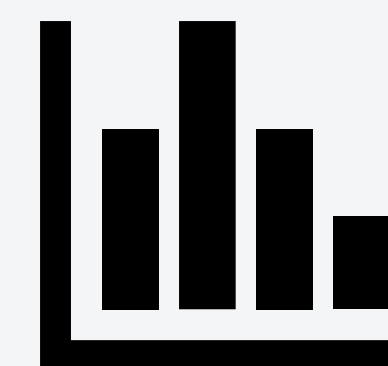
- The workshop is going to be a 1-hour interactive audio-visual workshop conducted by peer educators who will be trained in the curriculum.
- It will specifically focus on 5th to 8th grade students studying in NGO and government-based schools which are in targeted underprivileged communities in Bangladesh.
- After one month of the workshops we will conduct surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of the project by questioning students on their knowledge and possible change of behavior.

WORKSHOP DESIGN



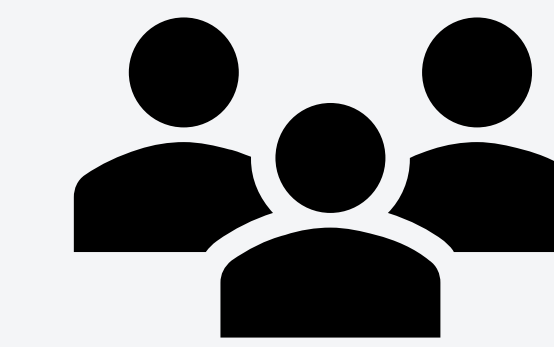
Interactive Content

Icebreaker activities, multimedia presentations, group discussions and role-playing exercises. Creation of relevant child friendly stories and storybooks.



Research

Focus on the execution of gender equality education and comprehensive sex education (CSE) in South Asian countries and guidelines for creating gender-based educational curricula for children.



Interview

Peer educators of non-profit organizations, program facilitators of NGOs, guardians of students living in underprivileged communities.

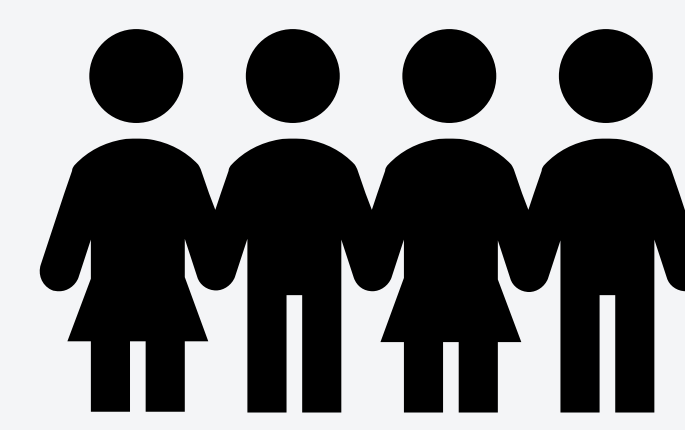


OPERATIONAL PLAN



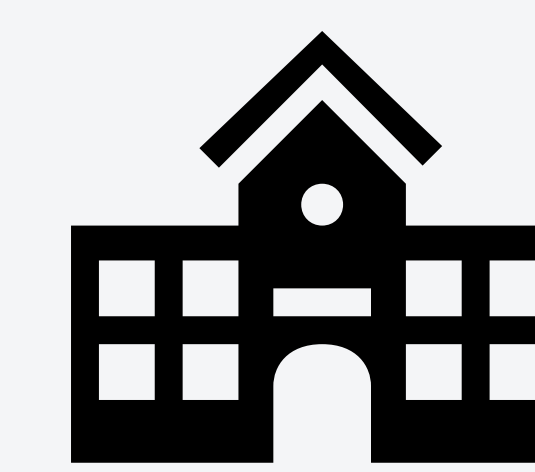
Training of Peer Educators

They will be trained in the curriculum by gender and educational experts in Bangladesh.



Pre-Pilot Test Batch

We will conduct a replication of the workshop facilitated by the peer educators in a real classroom setting to modify communication methods toward children.



Pilot Workshop

The primary selection will target 10 schools within Dhaka. After communication with the school authority, we will run the workshop in 5 schools for pilot implementation.

CHALLENGES

- **Societal Stigma** - Many underprivileged communities in Dhaka adhere to conservative cultural and religious values. Introducing sex education may be perceived as conflicting with traditional norms, leading to resistance and potential backlash. Careful consideration of cultural sensitivities is necessary to ensure that educational content is respectful and aligns with local values.
- **Inconsistent Learning** - Gender and gender-based violence are very complicated and sensitive matters to teach children as they have short attention spans and are very impressionable. A one-time workshop might not be sufficient for instilling sustainable practices among the children. However, through our survey and distribution of storybooks, we can expect to be in touch with the children and refresh their memory with the educational messages.
- **Funding** - Funding is crucial in this project to provide educational materials. Moreover, lunches and conveyance need to be provided as well. The students in these schools need to be provided with a materialistic incentive to show up to the workshops as they mostly work outside their school times. This is a common culture in such schools to bring the students to school for academic classes as well.

CONCLUSION

This action plan does not aim to solve the entire problem of rape culture in Bangladesh. This is a humble attempt to address the problems within a very specific community and stakeholder. The grassroots element of the problem allows us to make changes on a very micro level in society. However, no matter how small the change might be, it will contribute to eliminating stereotypes against gender-based violence and promote gender equality.

RESOURCES

1. Clarke D. (2010). Sexuality education in Asia: Are we delivering? An assessment from a rights-based perspective. Bangkok, Plan.
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3. Ruchira Tabassum Naved, Mahfuz Al Mamun, Kausar Parvin, Ashraful Alam Siddique (2019) A Baseline Study on Combatting Gender-Based Violence (CGBV) Project in Bangladesh. UN Women, Dhaka.

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