

MAYA

Business that participated in Cohort 4 of SPRING

SPRING is a business accelerator programme funded by DFID, USAID and DFAT. It works with businesses to develop products that impact girls' lives in 9 countries.

Coffey is the independent evaluator of SPRING. Coffey's Business Performance Evaluation is part of the overall evaluation and examines the effects of SPRING on business performance. It also looks at how businesses are reaching adolescent girls.

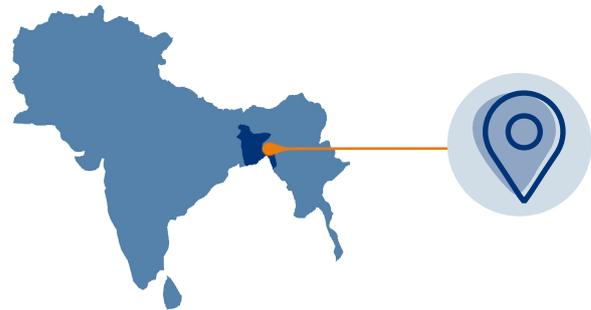
Female sexual and reproductive healthcare is still not accessible to all in Bangladesh. Additionally, women tend to make health decisions based on traditional beliefs that have little or no scientific evidence.

Maya hopes to fill this gap with its anonymous messaging platform that connects users with health advice.

This for-profit business aims to provide access to health information and consultations to working people (male and female), as well as women and girls of all socio-economic backgrounds.

Maya was founded in 2014 and operates in Bangladesh

It is in the process of expanding to **Pakistan** and the **UAE**, and is planning to expand to **Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and India** in 2020.



SPRING Prototype and Business Goals

Maya's SPRING prototype consisted of developing a better user interface and re-branding its app. Maya started as a blog focusing on female sexual and reproductive health issues and then evolved into a platform providing information and the possibility to speak anonymously with doctors and experts. The **Maya app** allows users to:

- Submit anonymous questions on health, wellness, emotional issues, and other topics. These are routed to vetted experts who respond through the app, engaging in personalised back-and-forth consultations.
- Receive formal, signed prescriptions.
- Access other users' anonymous questions and answers, allowing them to learn more about a given topic.

SPRING Support



Business Focused Support

This included conducting user research to better understand its target group and its needs. This was used to develop a new brand and physical presence through package cards sold in retailers. SPRING also helped Maya define a clear strategy for growth and develop new revenue channels.



Financial Support

Prototype Development Funding was not enough to develop new app features that specifically targeted adolescent girls, but it served to improve the existing application and to re-design its interface. It was also used to actively market the app through direct client interaction, and attract new users.



Girl Focused Support

A focus on women and girls was at the basis of Maya's vision before SPRING. Through SPRING's support in developing its app, Maya has the potential to develop even more services tailored to adolescent girls.

Use of Human Centred Design

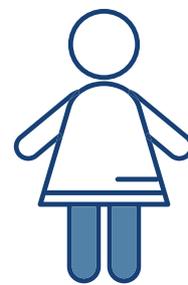
The introduction to Human Centred Design (HCD) was crucial. In applying HCD, Maya:

- Learned more about its users and identified solutions in response to their problems, such as providing prescriptions and developing an e-commerce platform.
- Understood that users wanted a level of support that could replace the need to physically go to a doctor.
- Found that users perceived the app to be female-oriented, therefore Maya changed its interface to be more appealing to both women and men.

Girl Insights and Emerging Signs of Impact

- The Maya app has shown to **increase girls' knowledge** about sexual and reproductive health. It also provides a platform to **tackle traditional thinking about health.**
- The app allows girls to **discuss delicate topics**, such as mental health or sexual health issues, in an anonymous way.
- **Maya helps girls learn about healthy behaviours**, such as better nutrition, skin care, dental care, and other health and well-being habits related to their daily self-care.
- **Maya allows girls with limited resources and time to quickly access health consultations**, particularly girls from rural areas, those who work, and those for whom visiting a doctor may be difficult.

Categories of Questions Asked on Maya App



33.80%

of questions asked related specifically to women's health



19.43%

of questions asked related specifically to men's health

Overcoming Challenges

Maya's aims for 2020 include: entering the Indian, Sri Lankan, and Myanmar markets, developing a content-specific product for adolescent girls, and forming partnerships with educational institutions. However, Maya still faces some challenges:

- Maya must find the right balance between free services and paid services to make profit, while not losing customers because of increased costs.
- At the moment, the app cannot be accessed by users aged under 16 due to Bangladeshi law because of its sensitive content.
- The anonymity of the app makes it difficult for Maya to understand its user profile - including age and gender.

Further Reading

Coffey (2019). Case Study Report – Maya. SPRING Evaluation, BPE – Cohort 4