



Providing Organizational Capacity-Strengthening Assistance to Youth-Led Organizations to Support the Achievement of Programmatic Objectives

Introduction

In Bangladesh, the government has committed to improving access to youth-friendly health services by creating Adolescent Friendly Health Centers. However, SERAC-Bangladesh, a local youth-led organization, recognized that many young people could not take advantage of the services because the centers closed at 2 p.m., when many young people were still at school. SERAC sought the support of PAI for organizational development so it could better advocate for the Adolescent Friendly Health Centers to stay open later.

Program Description

SERAC understood the benefits of the Adolescent Friendly Health Centers and knew that if the centers were open later, more young people could have access to the care that they need and want. PAI agreed that this was a necessary effort, and through PAI's YOUAccess Fund, it provided financial and technical assistance to SERAC.

Because PAI is committed to supporting youth-led organizations to achieve programmatic work and build stronger advocacy institutions, it also provided SERAC with funding to identify and address its organizational capacity-strengthening needs. After conducting an institutional assessment, SERAC decided it would benefit from an organization-wide advocacy workshop. While not everyone who works at SERAC is an advocate, understanding the importance and impacts of advocacy would help the whole organization function better. SERAC asked PAI to conduct an advocacy webinar for the organization, focusing on developing a targeted advocacy strategy and the types of activities required to achieve advocacy objectives. The webinar helped all SERAC staff better understand how their work, whether in finance, fundraising or programs, was linked to improving access to youth-friendly health services.

With support across the entire organization, SERAC successfully advocated for the Adolescent Friendly Health Centers to extend their operating hours.

“When we designed the program, we were given a lot more flexibility to include capacity building. We really had a good webinar with the capacity building of the organizational staff. It helped to make the program happen correctly. We had a productive workshop at the beginning of the project that helped to set us up for success.”

— S.M. SHAIKAT, SERAC-BANGLADESH

Results

SERAC successfully advocated for the Adolescent Friendly Health Centers to stay open for an additional three hours until 5 p.m., ensuring that more young people received access to adolescent-friendly reproductive health services.

SERAC staff increased their understanding of the importance of advocacy and how each of their roles in the organization contributed to programmatic successes.

Lessons Learned

Supporting all staff to understand their role in achieving the organization's mission helps achieve advocacy successes.

When provided with funding and technical support, youth-led organizations can significantly improve access to sexual and reproductive health information, services and supplies.



SERAC-Bangladesh
(A youth focused rights and development organization)

SERAC-Bangladesh is working to establish a human rights-oriented environment that provides spaces for achievable development in access to education, health, livelihood, policy support for women, children and youth, sustainable environment, economy and justice for the poor and vulnerable communities. More information can be found at www.serac-bd.org.

PAI works with policymakers in Washington, D.C., and our network of global partners to advocate for accessible, quality health care and advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, youth and at-risk communities. More information can be found at www.pai.org.

YOUAccess provides financial and technical support to youth-led organizations to advocate for increased funding and improved policies on adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights in low- and middle-income countries. More information can be found at www.pai.org/projects/youaccess.