

Terms of reference

“Review govt. policies, strategies and programs in relation to MHM Interventions”

MHM and Bangladesh

A woman spends seven years of her life menstruating, making menstruation a natural and essential part of the reproductive cycle and thus of women’s health and well-being. Menstruation is a highly relevant theme as it is directly linked with health, hygiene, socio-economic participation and education of women. The proper management of menstruation thus significantly influences gender equality. With that being said, Article 19(3) of the Constitution of Bangladesh positively obliges the State to ensure equal opportunities and participation for women in every sphere of national life. In reality though, 41% of the school going girls in Bangladesh do not attend classes during their menstruation and 73% women miss their work for an average 6 days a month for infection caused by unhygienic menstrual management. According to Bangladesh National Hygiene Baseline Survey 2014, 86% of the surveyed households were found using old cloths during their menstruation and among these women a large number does not use soap for cleaning of those cloths and often dry in hidden places. On the other hand, only 6% of the surveyed girls receive any MH related education at school and 64% of the girls said they never heard of menstruation before menarche. 40% girls don’t attend school during their menstruation and among the remaining 32% doesn’t use the school toilet during their menstruation.

On top of this, cultural believes and social norms around menstruation restrict the participation of women and girls in society during menstruation. In addition, limited access to clean water, proper sanitation facilities and sanitary products make it difficult for women to manage their menstruation hygienically. As a result, many (young) women in Bangladesh face considerable physical and social challenges during their menstruation period. This has a severe impact on their health, well-being, and the realisation of their rights. With that being said, although women are by law entitled to equal opportunities and participation in society, in practice they are often excluded to live up to their full potential especially during menstruation. A lack of commitment at decision making level, lack of MH infrastructure at public & private spaces, insufficient allocation of resources & efforts, gaps between policy & practices and a lack of proper information and knowledge about menstruation among the masses are the major contributors, responsible for depriving women from accessing their basic rights and exposing them to severe health risks.

Ritu Interventions

Programme: Ritu – Promoting Hygiene Management in Bangladesh

Implementing Partners: Simavi (lead), RedOrange, TNO, BNPS & DORP

About Ritu: Ritu was launched with three specific objectives- (i) increase knowledge & improve attitudes and practice on MH of girls, boys, men and women, (ii) increase commitment towards MHM by the government and civil society in Bangladesh and (iii) women and girls have access to better MHM facilities at schools and affordable (biodegradable) sanitary napkins. And to achieve these objectives, Ritu uses an integrated threefold approach: (i) empower girls, women, men and boys (communities) to have a better understanding of MHM and engage in healthy behaviour, including accessing safe and quality MHM services, (ii) build an enabling environment in which government and civil society actors show more commitment towards MHM and (iii) ensure that affordable and sustainable MHM services are in place and utilised.

The Ritu programme approach on the one hand combines WASH and SRHR interventions in schools and communities to improve overall well-being of girls during their menstrual health. On the other hand, the

interventions are combined with a national communication campaign and the development of biodegradable sanitary pads. At field level, teachers and students from 89 schools and 37 parents from selected communities were trained on menstrual health and (how many?) MHM-friendly toilets were realized through a budget tapping method. And, along with the sessions at community and school level knowledge (e.g. take home materials¹) and awareness materials were also given to the teachers and the parents. The approach is an evidence informed mix of approaches that is carefully sequenced. Based on the idea that toilets need to be in place in order for girls to practice their newly learned behaviour, our interventions in schools are sequenced as follows: 1) kick-off in schools to inform teachers and students about the programme, 2) budget tapping process with students and School Management Committee to realize toilets, 3) training of head master and teachers. The quality and progress of the training of teachers and the implementation of the new knowledge and skills in the class room is carefully monitored by the partners and Simavi's Ritu team.

At national level, Ritu has launched an edutainment campaign (television reality show- best school for girls, TV commercial, Celebrity engagement) to raise mass awareness about menstruation and how to manage it properly. Moreover, Ritu has organized events & published policy briefs to share the programme's achievements and launched an online digital [platform](#) posting MH related questions and answers for its users. Along with these interventions, Ritu together with Square Toiletries Ltd. has conducted developed a bio-degradable sanitary napkin; based on a potato starch based polymer film that replaces the plastic sheet of the sanitary napkin. Square is currently testing the bio-degradability of the napkin and assessing the market feasibility.

In the past three and a half years, the programme has been able to gather a wealth of experiences. For instance, the sequenced and mixed approach has been successful in reducing absenteeism of girls from school during their menstruation. And thanks to the mass-media campaign, the Ritu was able to reach around 18 million people through social media, mass media, website, journalist fellowship and school campaigns, disseminating and educating the audience about menstruation.

Ritu ensured inputs to improve the knowledge and attitude of the targeted girls, their classmate boys, their families and moreover their teachers; track budget for the appropriate MH friendly infrastructures at school and community; and influence the national stakeholders to uptake the learnings for national benefits.

Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of the assignment is to identify all the national policies (e.g. National Health Policy, National Education Policy etc.), strategies (e.g. National Strategy for Adolescent Health 2017-30, National Hygiene Promotion Strategy etc.) and programs (potentially or directly) related with Menstrual Health including Hygiene. The specific objectives are as below:

- a) Identify, review & revise the national level (WASH, SRHR, Education and Adolescent related) policies, strategies and (prominent) programs; should have (directly or indirectly) relation with Menstrual Health; to understand where MH is incorporated properly and where not.
- b) Conduct an analysis; comparing the identified gaps (in the first objective) VS Ritu's approach (the whole approach or suitable components) to understand Ritu's potential in addressing & minimizing the identified gaps.
- c) Suggest a pathway, showing how the related national level key stakeholders (government departments, practitioners, NGOs, private sectors) can be engaged to influence the policy-makers.

Proposal Related Suggestions

Technical Proposal

The proposed methodology will be considered as the most critical part of the technical proposal and will carry more than 50% of the scores during the proposal's evaluation. A detailed methodology developed based on the clear understanding of the assignment, with mention of required tools & techniques needed to implement the proposed methodology and equipped with a realistic work-plan will be treated as the key of the technical proposal. Along with the well thought-through methodology; the technical proposal has to include 1) a cover letter and 2) a resume of the consultant/s emphasizing similar work experiences.

Assignment's timeline

Simavi would like to propose that the assessment should be carried out in 21 days. The timeframe of 21 days is suggested as follows:

Date	Particulars
17 July 2019	Contract Signing
17 July 2019	Assignment's Briefing & Action Plan development Meeting
17-28 July 2019	Continuation of the Consultation
29 July 2019	Submission of Draft of the Deliverables
31 July 2019	Feedback Meeting
7 August 2019	Submission of the Final Deliverables

Financial Proposal

The financial proposal must be segregated into 3 major segments- (i) Consultants' remuneration/fees, (ii) reimbursable costs and (iii) applicable vat & taxes. Please follow the below format to prepare the financial proposal.

Particulars	Unit Required	Unit Cost	Total Cost in BDT	Remarks (if any)
A. Consultants' remuneration/fees (add as many column as required)				All sorts of HR costs will be stated in this segment
Sub-total (A)				
B. Reimbursable Costs (add as many column as required)				Travel, accommodation, food, stationary, Communication etc.
Sub-total (B)				
C. VAT & TAX (add as many column as required)				Applicable VAT & Taxes
Sub-total (C)				
D. Total Cost (A+B+C)				all-inclusive amount
Total amount in words:				

Deliverable

Final Report

The selected consultant will submit a final report (15-20 pages) following the date mentioned in the final contract. The table of content of the report will be finalized during the assignment's briefing meeting. Along with the final report the consultant will also submit a list of the "consulted" stakeholders (with details i.e. name, position, department, contact address etc.).

Qualifications of the Consultant(s)

1. Proven track record/significant experience with similar assignments (policy, strategy, program review)
2. Sectoral (i.e. MH/M, WASH, SRHR, education) knowledge and proven experience
3. Demonstrated experience of policy/strategy/program analysis in-collaboration with multi-stakeholders (e.g. govt. non-govt. practitioners)
4. Relevant university degree
5. Based in Bangladesh (no international travel will be paid)
6. Good written and spoken English skills

Application Process

The applicant has to submit the technical and financial proposal, following the instructions and guidelines provided in this ToR. Only e-mail submissions to the following e-mail addresses will be considered for the further processing: pritum.saha@simavi.nl and Janine.Bannwart@simavi.nl. Submission deadline is **14 July 2019**. For any further queries regarding the assignment please write an e-mail to the assignment manager Pritum Saha (pritum.saha@simavi.nl). Questions/queries are strictly to be submitted via email only.

Budget

The budget for the assignment is BDT 450,000 (Four hundred fifty thousand only) inclusive Tax & VAT and all other costs (e.g. transportation, subsistence and insurance). The detail (i.e. unit, unit cost etc.) breakdown (e.g. professional fees, reimbursable items etc.) of the budget in the financial proposal will be considered as mandatory.