

Next Generation Bangladesh

2015
and beyond

Optimistic next generation to lead Bangladesh towards prosperity

The Next Generation research series intends to bring the opinions and perspectives of young people in Bangladesh to the forefront of policy debates. The reports serve to harness the potentials of the Next Generation in building a nation that they dream of and long to achieve.

The first Next Generation report in Bangladesh, published by the British Council in 2010, sparked a much needed debate about young people and the future of the country. It was the first national youth survey of its kind and it provided us with a unique insight into the status, aspirations and attitudes of young people across the country.

'Next Generation Bangladesh 2015 and beyond' is a follow-on to the 2010 report and is placed in the context of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the action plans towards the SDGs are being framed, there is a definite need for the thoughts of Bangladeshi young people to be included in this process. Within this context, this Next Generation report looks into five important areas affecting young people's lives - governance, law and order, education and employability, environment, and health.

The 2015 report records inspiring optimism among the Next Generation. They agree with the country's current development direction, and they believe that in 15 years the country will be a more prosperous one than it is now. But they also see challenges. They are concerned about the political restlessness, infrastructure deficiency, lack of job opportunities, corruption and inadequate healthcare. The young people have also developed a level of apathy that keeps them from socio-political engagement. Yet they remain optimistic. They envision a democratic, equal and green future for Bangladesh, and they want to lead the country to that destination.

The report corroborates with other studies that highlight the young generation's optimism about a prosperous Bangladesh. On the other hand, the report provides unique insights into the different challenges that young people face in Bangladesh at depth.

This report was commissioned by the British Council, ActionAid Bangladesh and the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). The research was conducted by The Nielsen Company (Bangladesh). Institute of Informatics and Development (IID) prepared this particular brief based on the study.

The research involved a nationwide survey of the youth population, one-on-one interviews and a number of focus group discussions (FGDs).

Sources of data



5000

Young people
(15-30 yrs)
surveyed



15

In-depth
interviews



18

Focus group
discussions

Urban-rural distribution of respondents



20%

Urban



4%

Semi-urban

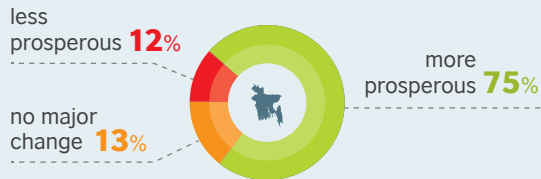


76%

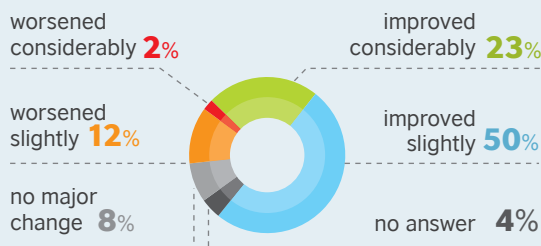
Rural

The next generation is optimistic about Bangladesh's future

As the young people* see, in 15 years from now, Bangladesh will be -



Over the last 5 years, job opportunities for young people in Bangladesh have -



Compared to last year, youth's own economic condition will -

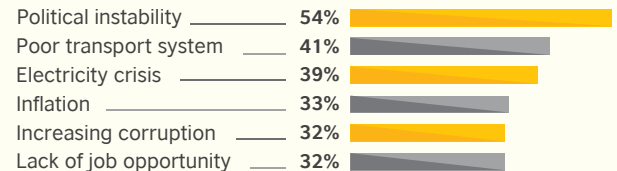


Young people think that overall Bangladesh is heading in -



Concerns remain over key sectoral issues

The major problems faced by Bangladesh today are -



Urban youth are more concerned with -

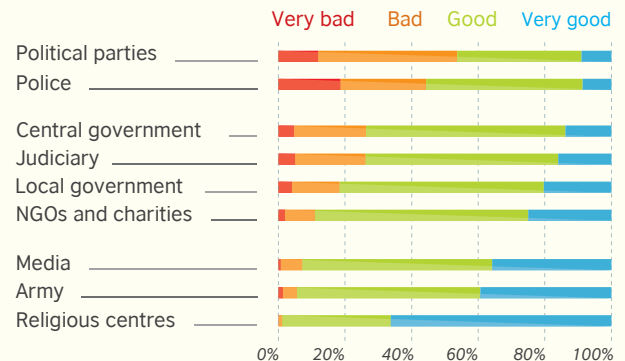
Political instability (65%)
Corruption (42%)

Rural youth are more concerned with -

Poor transport system (45%)
Electricity crisis (40%)

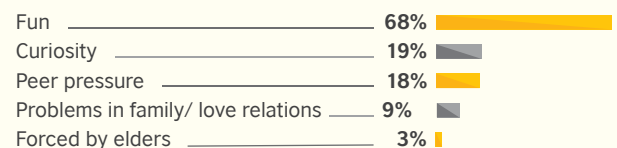


Perception about key institutions of Bangladesh -



66% of male and 53% of female youth are aware of sexual health issues

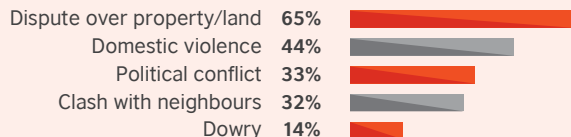
Among those who take drugs, main reasons for taking drugs are -



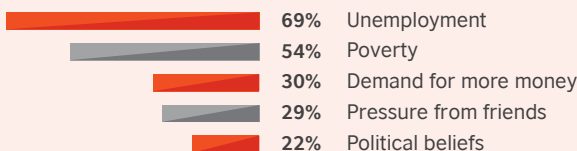
* Per cent figures presented in this report represent per cent of young people surveyed for this study, unless mentioned otherwise.

Social conflicts are linked to the economy and unemployment

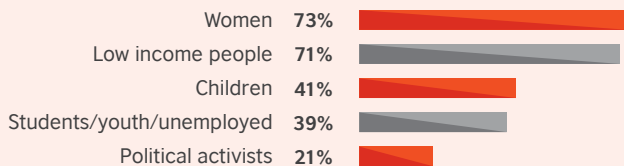
5 most common factors that cause conflict in the community -



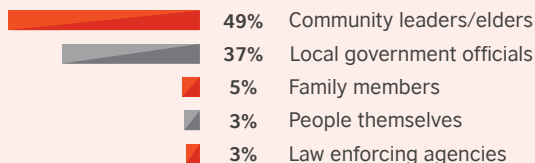
Top 5 factors that cause young people to get involved in violent acts -



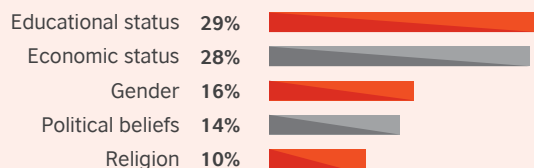
Main victims of violence are -



Conflicts are resolved by -



6% of youth have personally experienced discrimination. Most common reasons for discrimination are -



Education alone is not enough to fix high youth unemployment

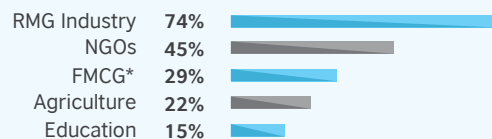
62% of youth have not earned income in the last 12 months

of which, **66%** are female and **34%** are male

Youth have late entry into employment

48% of youth who are 25-30 years old did not have earned income in the last 12 months

Sectors with higher job availability are -



Education has prepared them for job market -



Experience is more vital than education for job -



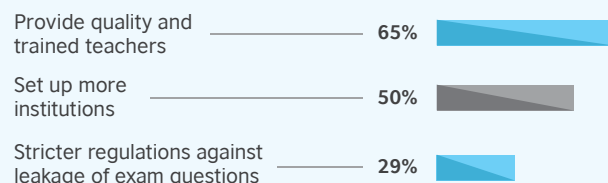
Quality of education is satisfactory -



ICT is not emphasized in education system -



Most common suggestions by youth to improve education system -



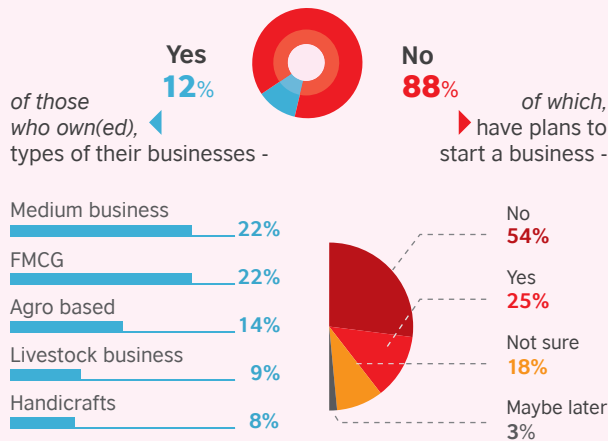
* Fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) are daily consumable low cost goods such as toiletries, soft drinks, etc.

Youth entrepreneurship and civic engagement is still low

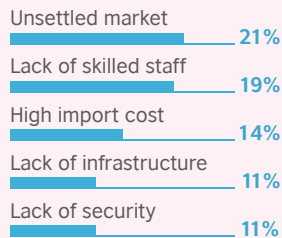
75% perceive entrepreneurship as risky

59% think access to credits or loans are difficult

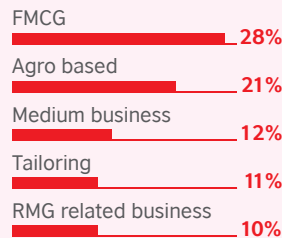
Does/did youth run their own business?



Of those who have businesses, they face challenges like -



Of those who have plans, type of business they plan to start

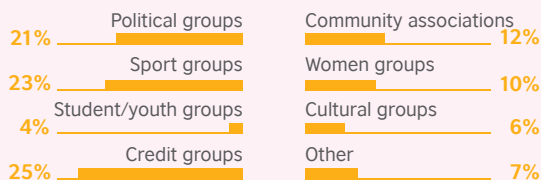


Socio-political engagement is rare among youth -

10% of youth have worked to address any local issues in the community

13% of them were actively engaged in community groups in the past 12 months

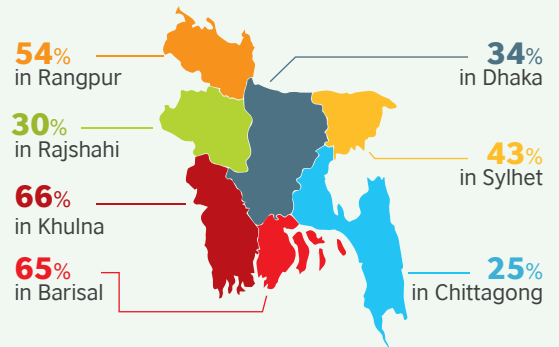
Youth participation in community groups -



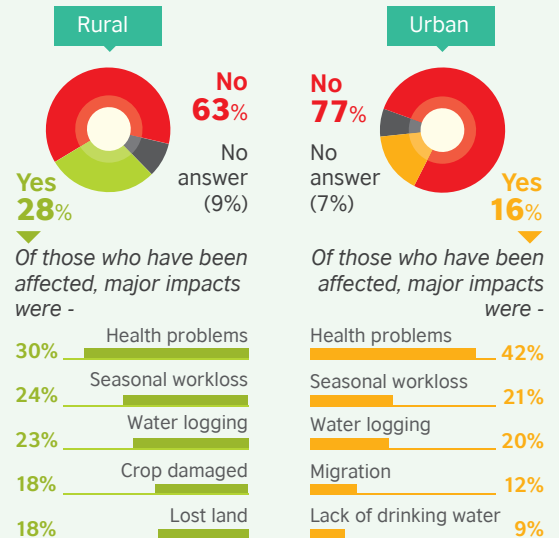
Climate change remains a regional concern

Concerns about the environment vary from region to region

Percent of youth who noticed changes in environment -



Percent of youth who have been directly affected by environmental changes -



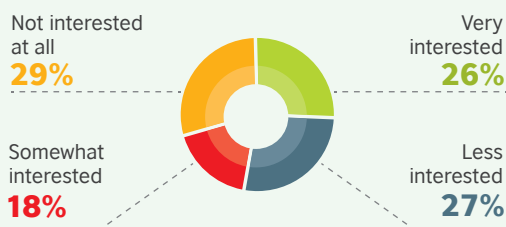
Institutions that work to conserve environment -



Young people want to lead Bangladesh towards prosperity

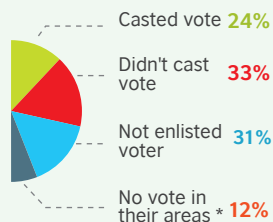
89% of youth find it important to have young leadership in various sectors of the society

About important political or national issues, youth are -

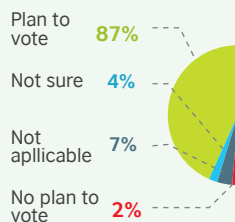


Youth participation in national elections -

Participation in 2014 election

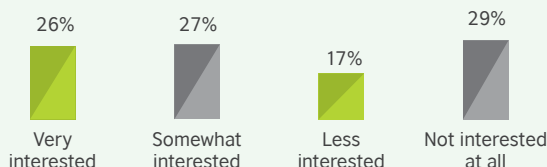


Plan to participate in the next election



85% of youth believe the young generation will make Bangladesh a better country. This belief stands irrespective of their interest in politics or important national issues

Of those who believe so,



87% of youth will support the political party that has a good policy for youth

* Candidates won uncontested.

Youth vision: A democratic, green and equal Bangladesh

Issues that are of key importance to young people -



Health care

99%

Access to good health care service

99%

Getting a quality education



Quality education



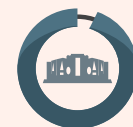
Safety

96%

Safety and security

98%

Having an honest and responsive government



Governance



Employment

95%

Finding employment

82%

believe democracy is more important than economic growth for Bangladesh



Democracy



Environment

87%

believe healthy environment is more important than economic growth for Bangladesh

81%

think girls should receive more scholarships than boys to reduce gender inequalities in education



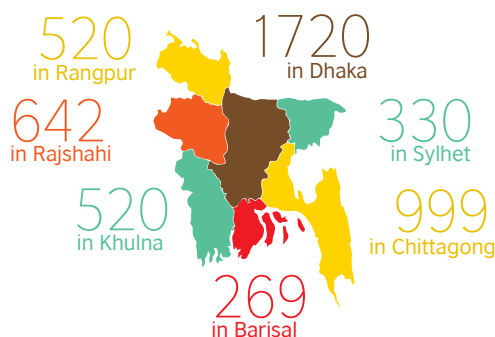
Equality

About the survey

Policy implications

Geographic distribution of respondents

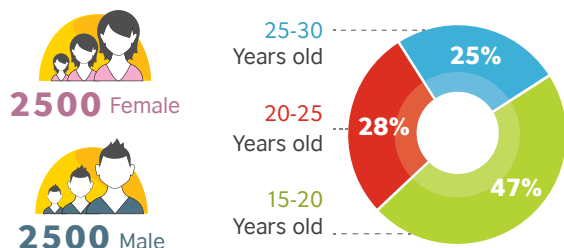
The survey covered all 7 divisions and 64 districts of Bangladesh -



The youth are the most vibrant, creative and productive strength of a nation. They are the reflection of hopes and aspirations of each nation and they bring the world together. Globally, the youth population has reached 1.8 billion - about a quarter of the world's total population. Considering the enormous size and potentials of this youth population, recent global development policies and planning have 'youth' as an overarching issue.

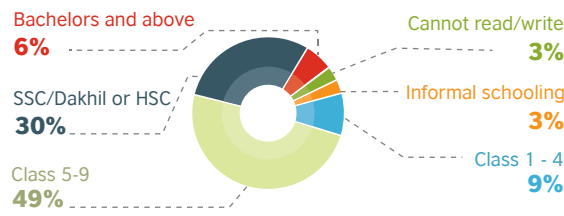
In Bangladesh, about one third of the 158 million Bangladeshis are young (15-30 years). Recognizing their potential, Article 15 (Part Two) of the constitution places the improvement of this productive force at the centre of the country's efforts to improve the standard of living of the whole population.

Gender and age of the respondents



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which expands upon the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ending this year, will drive Bangladesh's development efforts for many years to come. The SDGs consist of a set of goals and targets that maintain a particular focus on youth. Youth centric issues like inclusive and equitable quality education, healthy lives for all at all ages, full and productive employment, and climate change are highlighted in the SDGs. These issues are also reflected as the major concerns of youth in Bangladesh through the Next Generation survey.

Education of the respondents



Thus, these youth priorities should be echoed in the planning and policy documents of Bangladesh, including in the midterm planning documents like the Seventh Five Year Plan (SFYP) and annual program documents like the Annual Development Program (ADP). This will not only meet the constitutional obligation of the state, but will also align the development efforts of the country in light of the SDGs to secure a future which the next generation of the country will live and lead.

