



# ENGLISH in ACTION

Changing Learning. Changing Lives.



# Goal and Target

## Project Goal

- Contribute to economic development in Bangladesh by providing English as a tool for better access to the world economy

## Project Target

- Improve English language skills of 25 million primary and secondary students and adult learners by 2017

To reach and impact on

**25 million** Bangladeshi

school pupils and adult learners

# Project Components

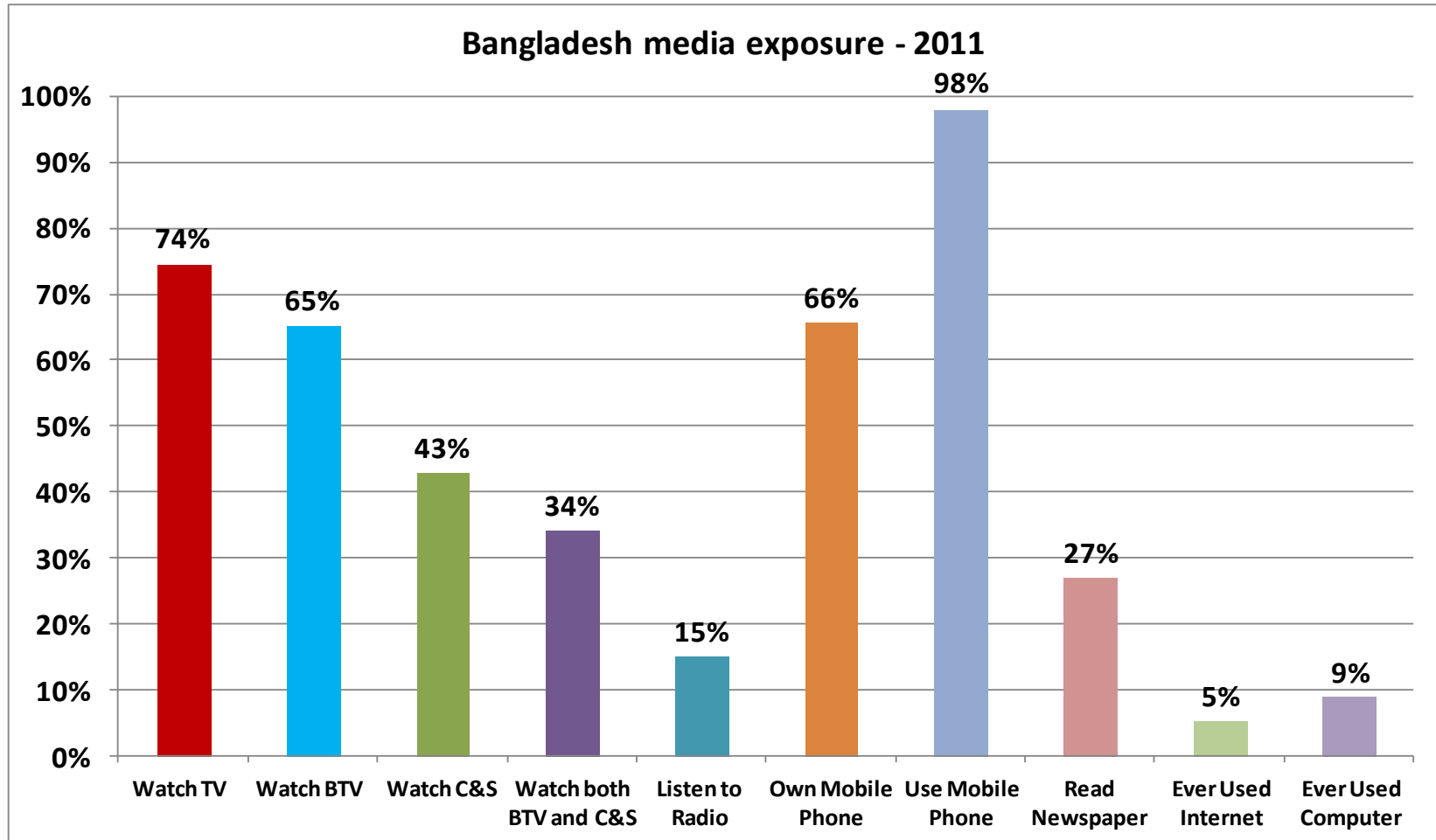
**There are two project components:**

- Schools Initiative
- Media and Adult Learning Initiative

Both use mobiles as a device for content delivery.



# Why Mobile?



# Schools Initiative

# Teacher Education in Bangladesh

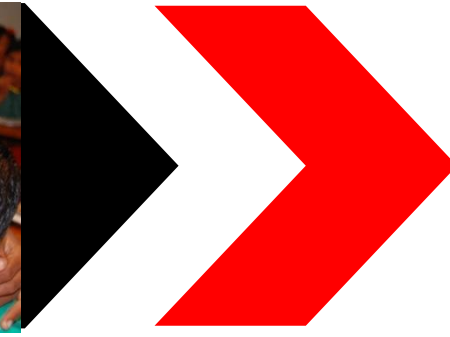
## Weakness in structure, content, delivery:

- One shot training
- Away from classroom reality
- Little coordination between and among different structures
- Lack of implementation
- Back log of untrained teachers

# Schools Initiative: Primary and Secondary

Target

**75,000** teachers,  
**10 million** students  
**34,500** schools



# Schools Initiative

## Aim

- Changes in teachers' practices
- Enhanced English language proficiency of both students and teachers

## Strategy

- New learning activities for use during classroom teaching
- Continuous support for teachers:
  - Face to face contact
  - Print, audio video materials

Aligning all materials with existing **government** prescribed

**textbooks**



# Teacher Professional Development

- Mobiles are used to deliver audio materials directly to students
- Mobiles are used to deliver audio and video materials to teachers for their own professional development

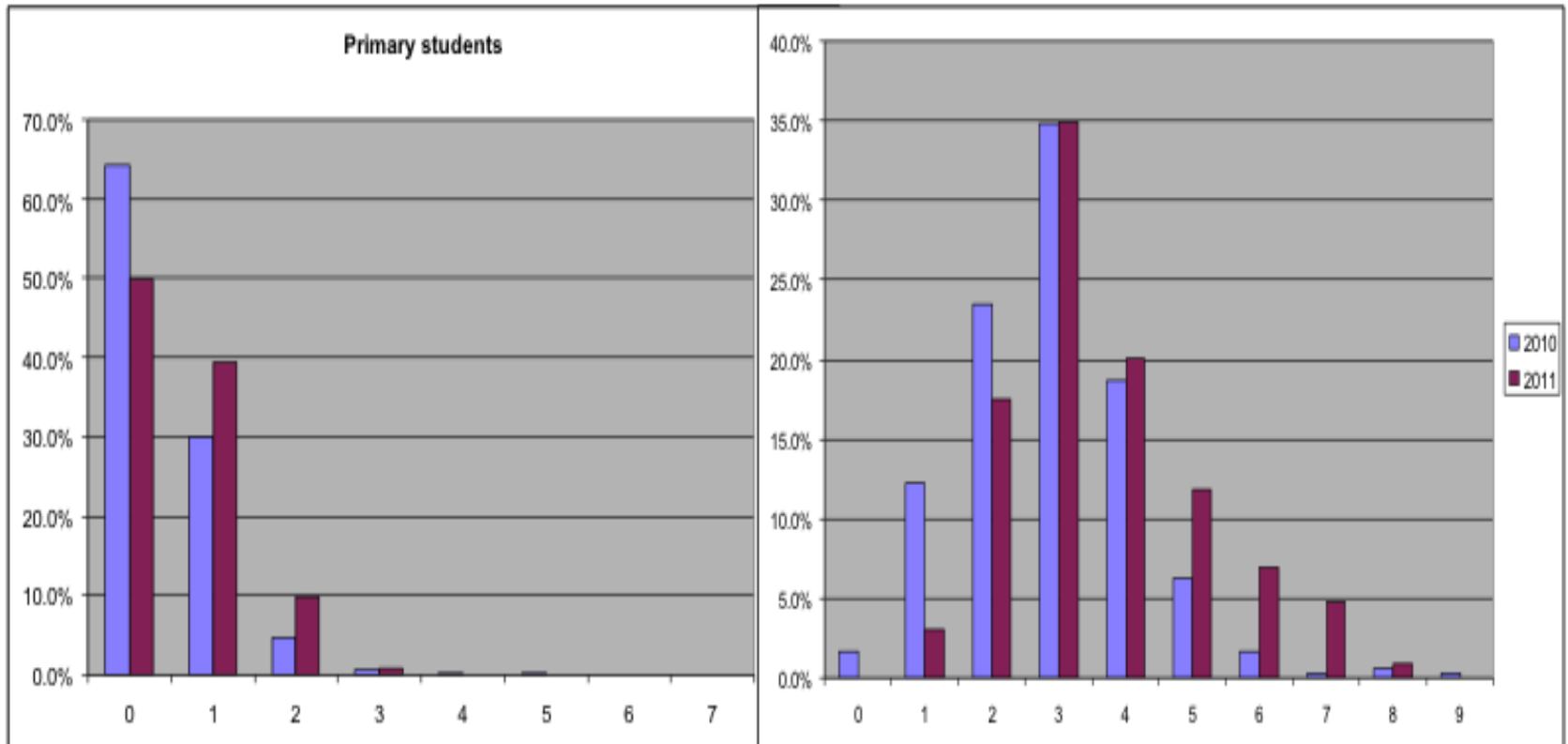


# Changes in classroom practice

- Baseline surveys (2009) showed teachers and students doing very little talking in their English lesson.
- Changes in classroom practice included:
  - Teachers and students generally talking more during lessons
  - Most of this talk was in English, one third of the lesson time for primary teachers and 50% for secondary
  - Student talk time for both primary and secondary was around a quarter (25%) of the lesson time.

(Source: Power et al, 2012)

# Primary students and teachers



(Source: Shaheen et al; 2013)

# Media and Adult Learning Initiative



BBC

জানা লা

চাইলেই পারেন!!

# BBC Janala

- **Two audience-focussed aims:**
  - Reduce barriers and improve perception of English learning
  - Provide accessible, affordable English language learning materials

# Multi-platform project

## Television



## Mobile



## Web & WAP



## English Clubs



## Audio CDs



## Print



# Multi-platform project

## Television



## Mobile



## Web & WAP



## English Clubs



## Audio CDs



## Print





# Why English language teaching?

- 84% of adults (15-45) want to learn English
  - To teach children
  - To get a (better) job
- 64% are embarrassed to speak English.
- 47% consider English to be too expensive to learn.
- 44% feel that English is difficult to learn.
- 38% feel that learning English is only available to those able to afford it.
- 28% feel unable to learn English.

## Scanning the market

- Higher end is well supplied – English learning apps
- SMS is popular and effective:
  - Cyprus: Vocabulary
  - Mongolia: English for work (Health sciences university)
  - India, Indonesia, China, Nigeria: Nokia Life Tools
  - Tunisia: English quizzes (US embassy, Tunis)
- Mobile web & SD-card content growing
- Voice-based services are rarer:
  - India: English Seekho (Tata Indicom)
  - Bangladesh: BBC Janala

## Voice, backed up by text

- Feature phones dominate market – particularly amongst BBC Janala target audience
- Target audience is not predominately text savvy
- Very few handsets support Bangla SMS – and no standard for Bangla phonetic English
- Target is communicative English – and that means speaking & listening
- SMS bound by 159 characters – limited amount of content

## Research led

- Formative research into needs and context
- Extensive pre-testing and piloting (content and user experience)
- Monitoring and responding to audience reactions and usage patterns
  - Navigation through service – one question at a time
  - Change of focus to progressive course
  - Lesson length
  - Level, amount, speed, repetition and accent of English content
  - Need for a “teacher”
  - Style and tone of Bangla
- Evaluating impact


## Other keys to success

- Partnerships – mobile operators & regulator → universal access
- Simple, memorable shortcode
- Affordability
- Strong, simple brand
- Cross-promotion and co-learning alongside other platforms
- Breadth and depth of quality content
- Bangladesh-specific content, created by experts

## Reach and impact

- 24 million have used at least one of our products and 42% have recommended a product to someone else
- More than 21 million calls to the mobile service
- Strong uptake from poorest 20% of population
- 6.8 million highly exposed
- 8.8 million feel they have learned some English
- 7.7 million say that they use the English they have learned
- Perceptions of difficulty and expense changing; while motivation increasing

Reach

 **24 million**  
(2011),

 **6.8million**  
highly engaged

# Challenges

- Getting target group to use the services (find value and motivation)
- Sustainability of materials and methodologies (storage, updating, redevelopment locally) and services (in absence of donor funding)
- Changes in technology (mobile web, higher-end handsets) and curriculum (textbooks)
- Government uptake and resourcing
- Replacing/ repairing equipment
- Maintaining and extending freedom of user experience without compromising usability
- Desire to extend media component to children's audience

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