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|  | SAVE & LOGOUT  Team Name  Note that your team name will be publicly revealed.  Team Logo  Sakhi Logo[VIEW](https://my.reviewr.com/box-document-viewer?fid=4071335&showann=true&thumbs=true&logoUrl=/_resources/dyn/files/1429117zf222d704/_fn/transparent-placeholder-img.png&subid=5393886&token=eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJwcmluY2lwYWwiOiIxMTI1NjM0Iiwic3ViIjoiNDA3MTMzNSIsImlzcyI6InJldmlld3ItYXBwIiwic3VibWlzc2lvbiI6IjUzOTM4ODYifQ.46Ws9DW-bhaemC46Hv77yjziUhRIEwwoQB_8HvRITHk)REMOVE  While uploading a Team Logo is not required, please note that, should you choose to upload one, that image will be displayed publicly.  Keywords: Select all the keywords that apply to your business venture. Agriculture  Architecture  Artificial intelligence  B2B  B2C  Big Data  Biotech  Consumer Goods  Civic participation  Creative Arts  Design  eCommerce  Education  Emerging Markets  Energy  Environment  Entertainment  Fashion  FinTech  Food  Hardware  Health and Wellness  Horticulture  Information technology  Internet of Things  Media/Entertainment  Materials science  Medical Devices  Mobile  Peer to peer  Pets  Robotics  Social Enterprise  Social Media  Software  Smart Cities  Transportation  Wearables  Other  URL to your team and/or project website  Summarize the market and potential for creation and capture of value in 500 characters with spaces or fewer. This should be your elevator pitch  37 characters left  Sakhi, our multilingual AI chatbot, empowers over 44 million Bengalis through WhatsApp by providing verified menstrual hygiene information. By addressing knowledge gaps and social stigma, we significantly enhance healthcare outcomes for women and girls. With strategic partnerships in Bangladesh and India, Sakhi extends its impact beyond menstrual health, tackling various public health and election integrity challenges.  How did you learn about the $100K Accelerate Competition?  From a friend/classmate  Designate the Entity or Person(s) that would receive the prize money.  What problem are you trying to solve?  3500 characters left  Every day, more than 300 million women are going through their menstrual cycle. Many women and girls do not have the right information due to constrained education and the stigma around this subject. Only 6% of girls in Bangladesh have a menstrual hygiene management (MHM) education and 53% of adolescent girls know about menstruation before their first period.  Around 41% of Bangladeshi girls take an absence from their schools during their period, missing 2.5 days a month, on average. The popular WASH literacy-focused physical intervention succeeded in improving MHM education for women and girls in Bangladesh. However, it is extremely challenging to scale such physical interventions to large populations without significant investment of time and resources.  Many similar prior attempts have pursued physical deployment including school, peer, or healthcare provider-led camps, information kits, and education to influence psychosocial factors, and address harmful taboos and stigma. They often struggle to reach remote areas and may lack interactivity. Earlier digital solutions, such as mobile apps and websites, provide accessibility but may require internet connectivity, excluding marginalized communities.  We leverage large language models (LLMs) to scale literacy interventions.  What is your solution to this problem?  3500 characters left.  We present a Bengali WhatsApp chatbot to deliver a digital literacy intervention for improving menstrual hygiene management awareness among local populations in Bangladesh. We use large language models grounded in verified and accurate information to support community-based participatory research in partnership with local nonprofits and public health centers We have won a few small grants and demonstrated the viability of our prototype. We are deploying pilots already and the next few weeks are about converting our early-stage partners into paying customers.  Alongside a local partner, we propose a WhatsApp chatbot that generates responses grounded in accurate, verified knowledge from international health agencies.  The proposed WhatsApp chatbot leverages existing communication channels, ensuring widespread accessibility. We overcome these barriers by combining language models, local partnerships, and user-friendly platforms for effective and culturally sensitive menstrual health education.  Describe your target market and how you plan to monetize your solution.  3500 characters left Target Market Analysis Our primary target audience consists of individuals within rural communities across Bangladesh and India who would benefit greatly from improved menstrual hygiene management (MHM) awareness. This includes adolescent girls and women between ages 13–50 years old, along with their families and caretakers. Given the cultural sensitivity surrounding this topic, there may also be opportunities to engage healthcare providers and educators: for example, we are first launching in schools to test the utility of such a chatbot through an IRB-backed research study.  We considered factors like internet penetration rates, smartphone usage trends, and regional demographics when defining specific geographic areas where we can make a significant impact through targeted outreach efforts resulting in Dhaka and Shyamnagar in Bangladesh, and Jalgaon in India as primary sites. Additionally, collaborating closely with NGOs and government organizations focused on public health initiatives will provide valuable insights into underserved regions requiring MHM interventions.  For monetization we are tapping into the following streams for working on a contractual basis with corporate businesses and nonprofits operating in these areas:   1. Subscription models: offering premium alerts and tracking through monthly and annual subscriptions for organizations. that have for instance been funded by donors and other major public health grants (Grand Challenges India). etc. 2. Govt. and Corporate sponsorships: CSR and partnership funding from tech companies invested in public health benefit programs and products like ours. This materializes in India through civil society groups like ArtPark at IISc Bangalore and the Ayushmaan Bharat Digital Mission, in Bangladesh through UNFPA, Spreeha, and other partnerships we are actively developing. 3. Data Analytics for Efficacy Measurement: Bundled data analytics for local nonprofit program efficacy measurement contribute a broader revenue stream allowing us to subsidize the chatbot. The analytics provided can be expanded to cover other public health programs with user consent permitting the sharing of anonymized data to track program efficacy and attitudes in local participants.  Monetization Strategy To convert pilot projects into long-term revenue streams, consider implementing various sustainable strategies while maintaining focus on social good outcomes:   1. Government Contracts: Partner directly with national ministries responsible for sanitation, water resources, and reproductive health programs; offer customized solutions based on region-specific needs at scale. 2. Corporate Sponsorships: Engage corporations committed to corporate social responsibility goals related to sustainability, diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental stewardship—they could sponsor educational campaigns tailored towards employees working remotely near project sites. 3. Subscription Model: Offer premium features accessible via subscription fees paid monthly or annually – think exclusive content libraries curated around advanced topics relevant only after an initial engagement has been established successfully over time. 4. Data Analytics Services: Leverage aggregated data collected during interactions with users to generate actionable reports highlighting key findings concerning behavior patterns, misconceptions prevalent amongst different age groups, etc., thereby providing value back not just locally but globally too - potentially attracting funding sources interested specifically in evidence-driven approaches aimed at solving complex societal challenges worldwide.   The Accelerate contest is all about creating your minimum viable product. Given that finalists are expected to participate in the MIT $100K Startup Fair, what prototype or demo would you be prepared to present?  We are prepared to offer a live demo of our prototype that we have painstakingly but successfully deployed on WhatsApp as a multilingual chatbot available to have conversations in Bangla (Bengali), Beng-lish (code mixed languages), or English. This demonstration can be offered on the judges' phones that have WhatsApp installed since we are nearly production-ready.  Text +919869456882 with the code 1234 to launch a conversation with our prototype. You will be rate-limited per day and restricted to a few conversations to start with. The bot may be down for maintenance as we are actively developing and stress-testing the backend infrastructure. A live demo is up at https://sakhi.simppl.org  3500 characters left  Why are your team members listed above the right people to be working on this?  1500 characters left  We are members belonging to communities affected by the social stigma and taboos in India and Bangladesh that came together as part of a research collective called SimPPL (https://simppl.org) and built Sakhi our chatbot to address problems close to home, based on our conversations with nonprofits working in public health, fact-checkers, investigative journalists, and digital media orgs. interested in online information sharing. Our motivation stems from recognizing the urgent need to address menstrual health challenges affecting millions of women and families with complex indirect effects on wellbeing. At SimPPL, before building Sakhi, we have worked with the Sunday Times, Deutsche Welle, Ippen Digital, New York Public Radio, Aadhar Bahuddeshiya Sanstha, Chambal Media, Jagran New Media, Lions Club, Heal Station Foundation, DigiSwasthya, and others collectively serving millions of consumers with both accurate and verified information as well as running nation-scale physical and digital public health programs.  Our team comprises members who are data scientists, ML engineers, political scientists, and social science researchers well-equipped to build scalable, interpretable ML tools including those with cutting-edge research experience with LLMs, publishing at EMNLP, ICML, NeurIPS, ICON, ACL, and NAACL. We have a combination of practitioners, researchers, and locals who are well aware of the problem and can articulate well what potential solutions might look like.  Swapneel Mehta: I am a postdoctoral researcher investigating platform governance and free speech at Boston University and MIT. I hold a Ph.D. from NYU's Center for Data Science, specializing in machine learning, causal inference, and their applications in combating online misinformation. I founded and lead SimPPL, a nonprofit research collective with the mission of improving trust on the social internet. We train undergraduate students to build responsible AI tools at scale, winning grants and awards from Google, Wikimedia, Amazon, Mozilla, and others. In a past life, I used to work on machine learning at Twitter, Slack, Adobe, Oxford, some startups, and CERN.  Smriti Bhaya: I am a Master's in City Planning Candidate at MIT, focused on resiliency planning and risk mitigation that is adaptable and equitable. My interests also lie in social entrepreneurship and innovation in the built environment. To this end through Purifyx, we are working to provide clean water solutions in rural communities of India with low-tech, low-cost passive technologies. With a background in architecture, I have worked on architectural, urban design and policy projects in India, on a range of public and private projects. |  |
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Adding Delta V Form details here

We have finalized one research pilot working with the queen of an indigenous tribe that speaks a dying language (Marma community), to launch a local intervention advancing digital literacy about menstrual hygiene. The IRB approval for this came through last week, and our partners in their community are preparing workshops at schools and community centers to launch the chatbot in rural populations.

The Spreeha Foundation, a local nonprofit, confirmed a few hours ago that they would like to launch our intervention at 6 healthcare centers they run and they have ethics approval to conduct this study in urban slums.

We create a 10x cheaper hygiene intervention than current costs for deploying in person programs, at numbers indicated by the UNICEF. They operate programs for 3 million children at a cost of 150 million dollars, and even conservatively, ours are much cheaper. We account for the costs of providing materials related to menstrual hygiene to our target populations in this estimate.

Our chatbot demonstrates viability beyond just menstrual health and hygiene since it is a retrieval augmented generation mechanism, and we can repurpose it to disseminate accurate and verified information about children's vaccinations, pre and post natal care, both of which are topics on which we are partnering with the Aadhar Bahuddeshiya Sanstha (nonprofit in rural Maharashtra, India) for a pilot in over 100 villages to be launched in 4 months, following our Bangladesh pilots. Our MoU is secured and we are supporting their data collection efforts in the months leading up to the pilot so we can better understand the target population (our team is on the ground as well since they're Mumbai-based and can travel to the interiors).

We can, quite realistically, revolutionize the way digital literacy in the global south is approached through evidence-backed interventions. We have confirmed a separate (related to misinformation) project partnership with the United Nations Office of the Secretary General and have an upcoming presentation to the World Bank on this subject of interventions.

We are at a pilot stage: we have built v1 of the tech that works and scales, from a technical standpoint. Month 1 will be about launching pilots and monitoring and evaluation, understanding whether our product is satisfying all of the consumer pain points we were planning to fix.

Month 2 will be about scaling the pilots across sites, testing the robustness of our assumptions as well as the technical capacities of our multilingual system.

Month 3 will be reporting and analysis from our customers and data acquisition systems to validate if the final results align with the trajectories from M&E efforts. It will include time to explore multimodal abilities if possible.

We have included some buffer time to allow us flexibility to deliver on these targets and by the end of the program we aim to be market-ready to launch a state-wide digital literacy interventional program at that point.