



Maya Apa - Anonymous Expert Advice

Maya Apa is an anonymous messaging platform connecting users to vetted expert advice, the first of its kind in Bangladesh.

ABOUT MAYA APA

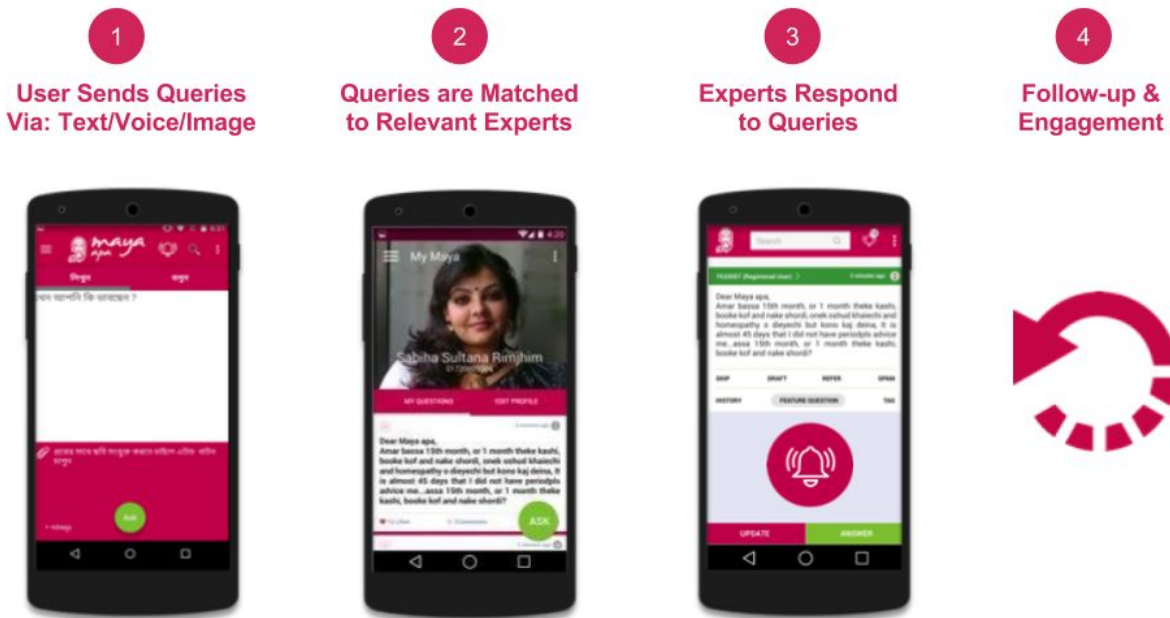
Maya Apa is a Bangladesh based technology company, trading as Mayalogy Ltd. Founded in 2011, Maya Apa has been committed to eliminating barriers to accessing expert advice on Health, Social and legal issues. In 2014, Maya Apa partnered with world renowned NGO, BRAC, to further develop the platform and reach more users in need. BRAC is currently a core partner and advocate of Maya Apa.

'Maya Apa' is re-inventing the way people in developing countries access specialist advice. Its intelligent technology connects users to expert advice 24/7, allowing anonymity. It has been helping anonymous user questions get relevant expert advice since 2011. The knowledge sharing/messaging platform is available on [Android](#), [Web](#), and [WAP](#).

The platform currently services 500+ questions a day, encompassing a wide range of topics, primarily; Public Health, Psycho-social and Legal. With a MoM growth rate of 10%+ it is constantly on the edge of chaos and looking to grow further.

In countries like Bangladesh, where there are many barriers to accessing reliable advice (particularly for women), the service is easy-to-use and very user friendly. Both men and women can ask questions in English, Bangla, Banglish and or Voice. Questions are then routed to a vetted network of experts (doctors, therapists etc.) through a real-time, uber-like backend.

HOW IT WORKS



Maya Apa app is available for [download](#) on Google Play Store. Once users ask questions, user queries are routed to a vetted network of experts (doctors, lawyers, therapists, etc.) through a real-time, Uber-like backend ensuring accurate, credible, and timely responses. These queries are received via typed message or voice recording, along with the option of attaching images related to user queries.

The algorithm, developed in house, ensures queries are matched with relevant experts (subject matter experts), who then send the user's detailed factual responses. In special cases and where relevant, Maya Apa's experts often refer users to local external specialists and organisations for further care, support and follow up.

Users are able to rate the quality of the resolutions they have received, as an audit measure for experts on the network. This entire process is constantly upgraded and maintained as part of the seamless service and commitment to our users.

WHY USERS KEEP COMING TO MAYA APA

An expert doctor, lawyer or therapist can often be out of reach due to financial, socio-cultural and geographic barriers. Particularly in countries like Bangladesh, there are many challenges to accessing reliable advice, Maya Apa is breaking countless barriers. Maya is bringing about tangible impacts in the lives of people in Bangladesh and the following testimonials are the testament to those -

"...services like Maya Apa are a light in the dark!" - COO Facebook, Sheryl Sandberg

"Maya Apa adds value by providing an immediate option through an intuitive and secure messaging service".

"Its anonymous, encouraging openness and giving us a voice – without the fear of judgement".

"Available 24/7, Maya Apa is the ultimate digital well-being assistant".

"Maya Apa has opened my eyes, who would have thought I could go to a doctor/lawyer or psychiatrist without leaving my home?"

"I use Maya Apa to help my community get expert advice; we're better informed now!" - Sabina Akter, Rangamati

WHY MAYA APA DOES WHAT IT DOES

In a society where information is difficult to access, getting credible advice on personal, health or psychosocial issues is taboo, Maya Apa leverages technology to provide a high quality on-demand expert advice, available 24/7 at fingertips, allowing both men and women to express problems, or connect to appropriate solutions freely. Since its inception, Maya Apa has worked with the mission of *"Easy Access to Expert Advice, When You Need It"*. It aims to close the digital divide by providing easy to use and relevant information for everyone in all parts of the country to ensure greater empowerment and equality, and in this way it's bridging the gender digital divide. It works -

- To ensure well-being for male, female and others;
- To help close the gap in healthcare and access to information; and
- To encourage using technology for problem solving.

MILESTONES

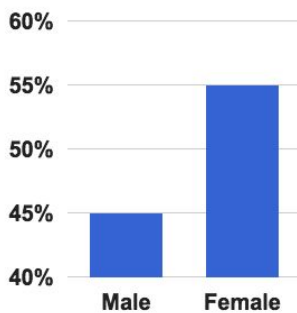
Recently, BRAC has invested in Maya Apa to target factory women in Bangladesh. Maya Apa has also partnered with the ICT Division of Bangladesh, Robi Axiata Limited, the second largest mobile network operator of Bangladesh, and Free Basics by Facebook to extend its services beyond the urban areas of Bangladesh and connect to rural communities who remain at the peripheries of digital inclusion.

Over 80 thousand app downloads have taken place since the launching of the app in February 2015. So far, more than 190 thousand queries have been answered. Currently, Maya Apa is answering over 500 questions daily. The site is being visited by over 2000 unique visitors daily who remain on the site for an average 7 minutes.

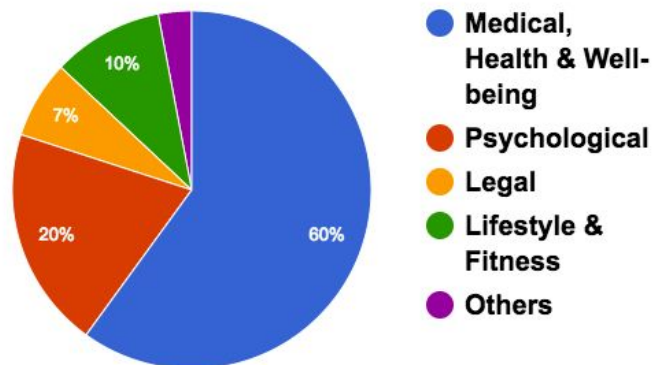
The team is currently working towards 10% week over week query growth to ensure greater outreach and service delivery to the far corners of Bangladesh.

A general overview of the Maya Apa users is given below, where the pie chart represents the types of questions it receives and the bar charts represents the demographic info -

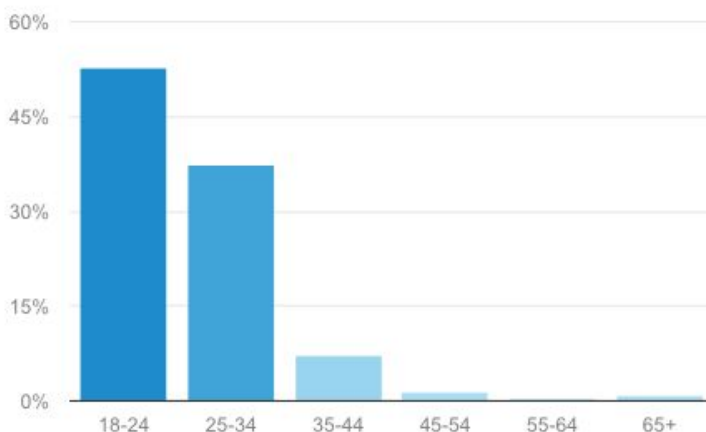
Male & Female Ratio



Types of Questions



Age Group



Noteworthy, when it comes to age group, the Male and Female ratio varies a lot. Within the age group between 18-24, the male and female ratio is 40:60. Whereas, within the age group between 25-34, the male and female ratio is completely opposite, 60:40.

All these statistics demonstrate how using Maya Apa service is changing the lives of people of different demographics. With time, Maya Apa now has become a trusted source for many that in turns bridging the gender digital divide in Bangladesh.

LOOKING AHEAD

Over the years, users have taken it as the One Point of service returning back to the platform wherever and whatever concerns or queries they have on their mind. But what has made this amazing journey possible, is the user experience, in which machine learning has played a crucial role. The engineering team is dedicatedly working on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) to apply more human intelligence into its products to make it a world class one.

Maya Apa is committed to taking digital healthcare and wellbeing services to the last mile users of Bangladesh. The team believes, the vulnerable women and young people will benefit immensely from Maya Apa help service by connecting them to doctors, lawyers and psychologists in a short turnaround time. Maya Apa wants to become a household name, a help service that everyone in Bangladesh can avail in case of any health, emotional or legal emergencies or challenges. It aims to serve thousands of users in a day and want be the “digital friend” especially to women and young girls in Bangladesh who remain vulnerable due to social stigma and barriers. To meet this aim, along with its existing platforms ([Android](#), [Web](#), and [WAP](#)), it is planning nationwide installation of digital kiosks from which anyone can access to expert advice anonymously overcoming the device constraints.

In Bangladesh, where a lot of topics are stigmatized or infrastructural barriers exist to access to expert advice, Maya Apa, an anonymous service connecting users to experts, might be one of the best examples of bridging the gender digital divide from a human rights perspective.