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RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Youth Perspectives on
Climate Change and
Education in Bangladesh

Cover: Students make their way to school after heavy floods in Sariakandi Upazila, Bogra, Bangladesh.

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UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia
Lainchaur, Kathmandu,
Nepal

www.unicef.org/rosa

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January 2021

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CONTENTS



Objective

4



Sample and Methodology

6



Detailed Analysis

9



Findings

32

1

OBJECTIVE





OBJECTIVE

The survey was structured to examine the following:

- > **Youth experiences and perceptions** of climate change in their locality and surroundings.
- > Youth perceptions of **climate change learning and action opportunities at school** and in their community.
- > Youth experiences of, and involvement in, climate change **learning and action initiative(s) at school and in their community.**
- > Youth views on support **needs to empower them** to become effective and confident agents of change.

2

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY



SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY



25,826
respondents



8
countries



10
languages

Over **25,000 individuals** responded to the survey across the **8 countries** of South Asia.

The survey was available in **10 languages*** and conducted between August 7th and September 9th 2020.

Administered online:

- Through Facebook Messenger, Viber and WhatsApp.
- Respondents are those who have access to mobile technology or internet.

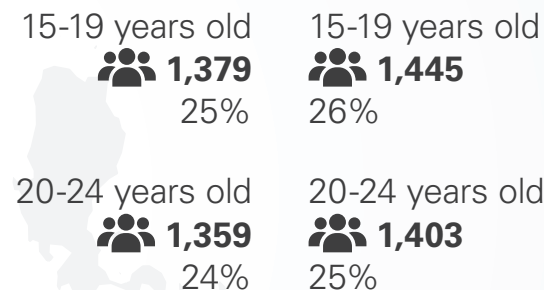
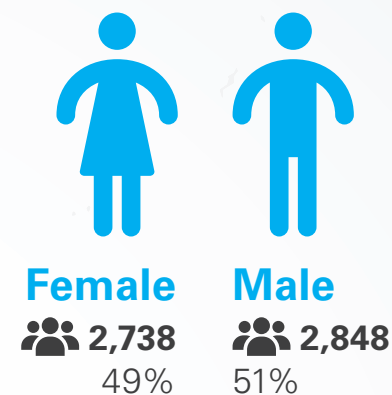
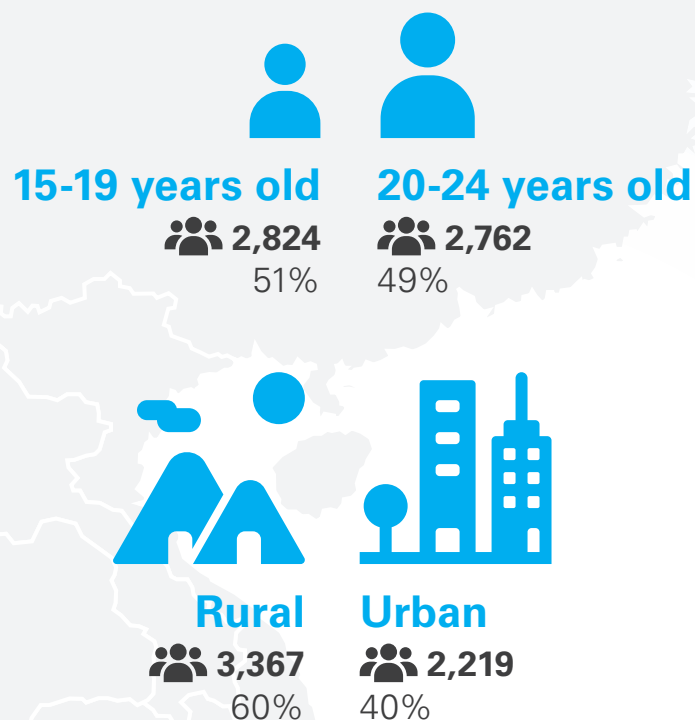
Cleaning steps included flagging cases that had erroneous entry, were outside the age range and empty cases:

- 4,231 cases were dropped.

*Dari and Pashto (Afghanistan), Bangla (Bangladesh), English (Bhutan), Hindi (India), Dhivehi (Maldives), Nepali (Nepal), Urdu (Pakistan), Sinhalese and Tamil (Sri Lanka).

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

Bangladesh



Weighting:

- **Iterative proportional fitting** was used to weight the sample intra-country to correct for non-response and selection bias across demographic factors.

- **Gender** and **age** were adjusted using 2020 population data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) database ILOSTAT.

Other Countries:

- For this country report, each response from Bangladesh is compared to the overall regional response from all respondents to the survey.

Limitations:

- **Demographic:** Respondents were not asked questions about socio-economic status, education or region.
- **Imbalanced response:** Given the incomplete demographic profile of the respondents, data presented should be interpreted “in-sample”, meaning that these attitudes are from a sample population with internet access, literacy both in terms of reading and ability to navigate internet-enabled devices, and willingness to opt-in to a survey.

- **Drop-off:** As with many online surveys, there was a consistent drop-off in respondents throughout the survey. Missing data were treated as missing at random (MAR) with the assumption that auxiliary variables in weighting adjusted for missingness. It is possible, given point 1, that there are additional factors related to drop-off. Moreover, a respondent who does not know about climate change is potentially more likely to drop off than those that know a lot about the subject. Results should be interpreted with this in mind.

*Based on first question (does not incorporate drop-off).

3

DETAILED ANALYSIS





SECTION 1: **PERSONAL PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

Respondents were asked about their knowledge of, and exposure to, climate change.



KNOWLEDGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Students were asked:

How much do you know about climate change and global warming?

Do you learn about climate change in school?

50%

of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they could explain climate change

77%

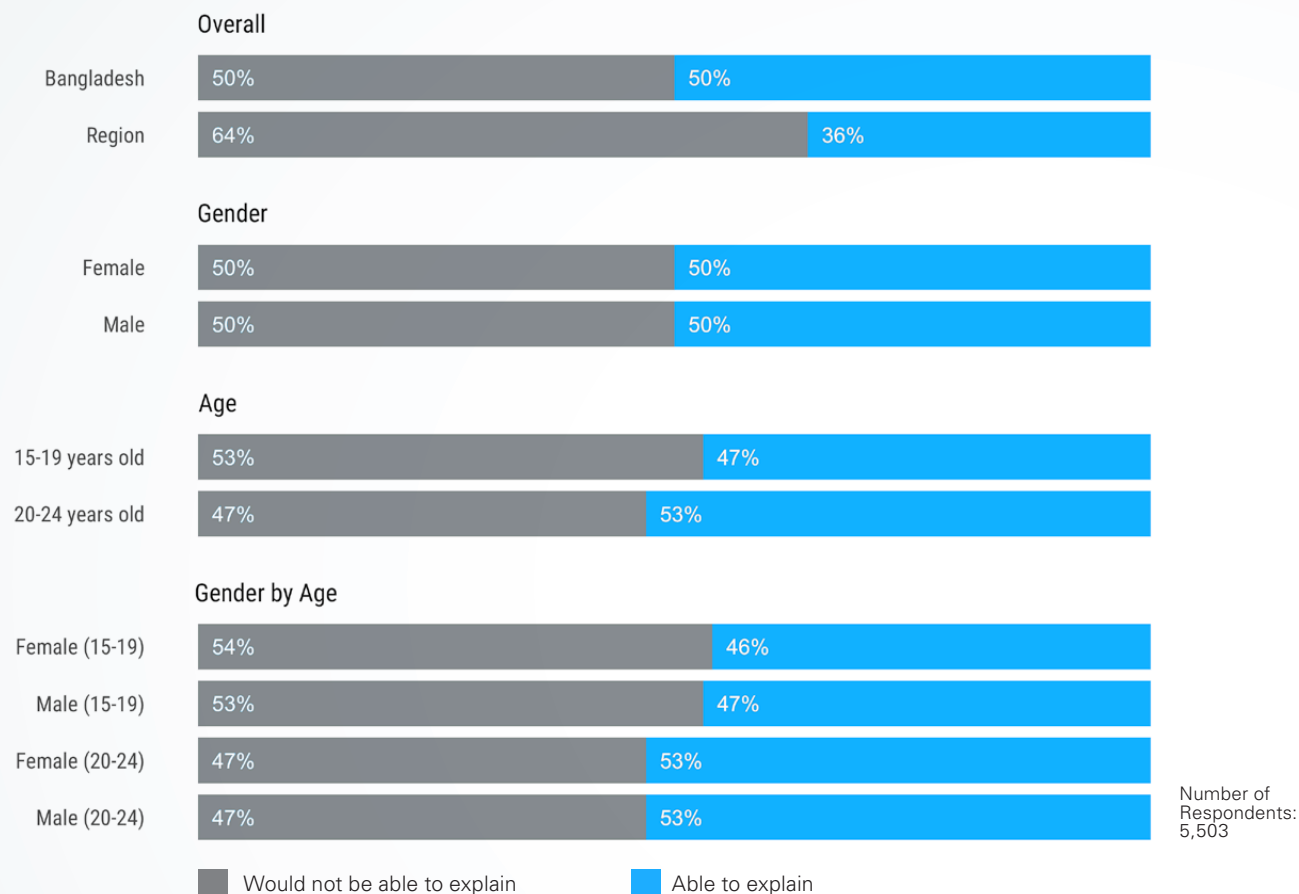
of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they “very often or often” learned about climate change in school

81%

A higher proportion of female respondents reported that they often learned about climate change in school compared to males (73%)

KNOWLEDGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

How much do you know about climate change and global warming?



- Overall, half of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they were able to explain climate change and global warming – this was greater than the regional figure of 36% and was the highest of all countries reporting.

- **Age and Gender:** Ability to explain climate change and global warming did not differ by gender, though it did by age – more than half of older respondents reported that they would be able to explain global warming.



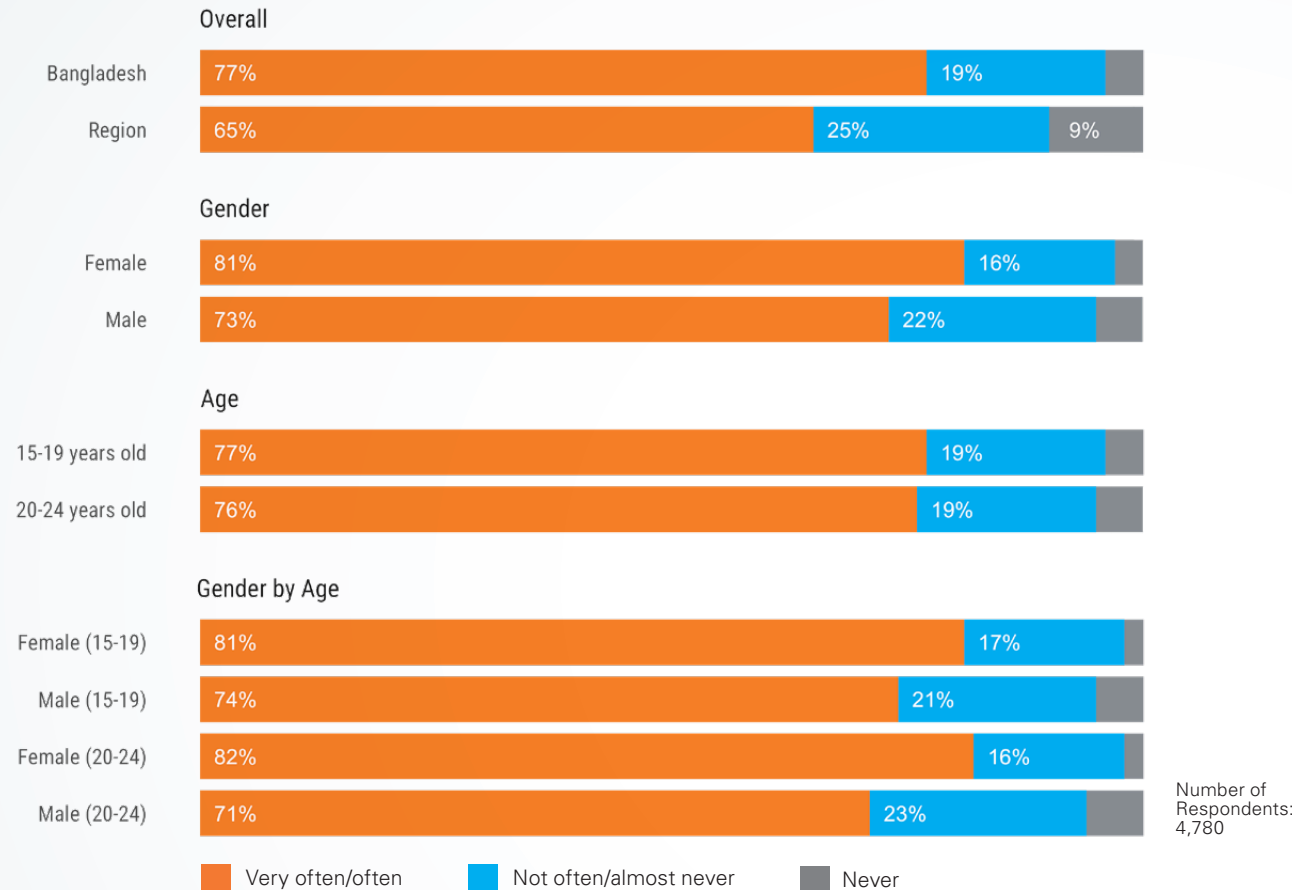
“Global warming is increasing at an ever-increasing rate of daily greenhouse gas emissions. This is a main outcome of the progress of industrialization in developed countries. As a disaster-prone country in the world, Bangladesh is a major victim of climate change. And this change is also causing huge damage to educational institutions. It is impossible to go to school during floods and we have to face various obstacles including extreme temperatures and storms. Preventing this global catastrophe requires the concerted efforts of each country.”

Age 20, female respondent from Bangladesh



CLIMATE CHANGE IN SCHOOL

Do you learn about climate change in school?



- Overall, 77% of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they “very often or often” learned about climate change in school. This was greater than the regional response (65%) and the third highest out of the eight countries surveyed.

- **Age:** The proportion of respondents stating that they learned about climate change “often or very often” did not differ by age (76-77%).
- **Gender:** A higher proportion (+8%) of female respondents reported that they very often/often learned about climate change in school compared to males. This proportion did not vary by age.



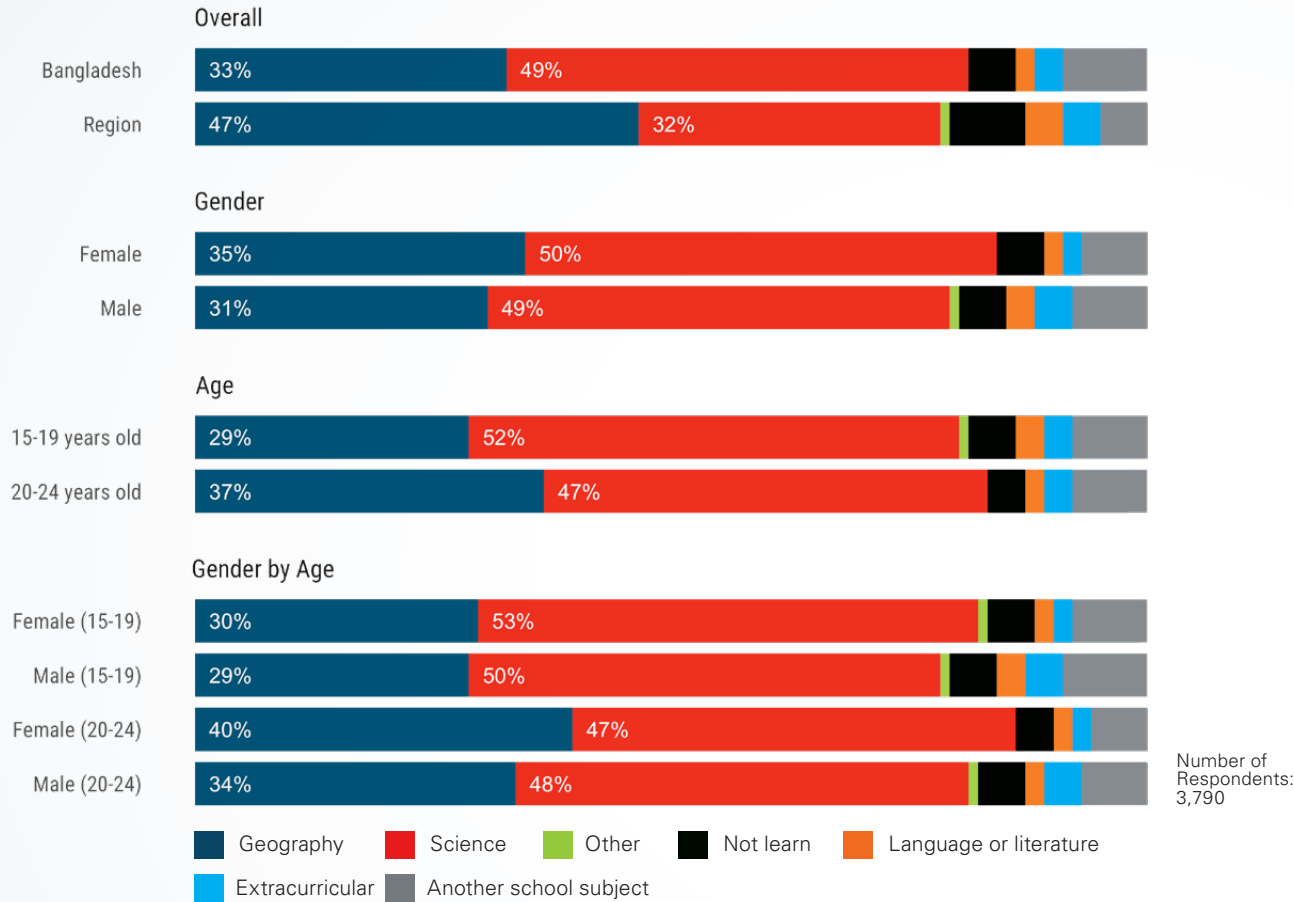
“If I think back to my childhood, I would not have heard of such disasters like floods, river erosion, dams breaking every year. But lately, these disasters have been happening almost every year. I think climate change is the main reason for this. Although I can’t see the horrors of these disasters because I live in the city, I can feel how these disasters are taking people away. Because of these disasters, the dreams of thousands of students cannot come true. So if this problem is not solved, the world will have to pay the ultimate price in the future.”

Age 16, male respondent from Bangladesh



CLIMATE CHANGE IN SCHOOL (SUBJECTS)

How do you learn about climate change in school?



- Overall, almost half of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they learned about climate change in their Science class, while a third stated that they learned about it in Geography.

- This is the inverse of the regional response. Bangladesh is one of three countries where a majority of respondents reported Science rather than Geography as the class in which they learned about climate change.



WORRY ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Students were asked:

Are you worried about climate change and what it means for the future?

70%

of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they were at least a little worried about the future effects of climate change

30%

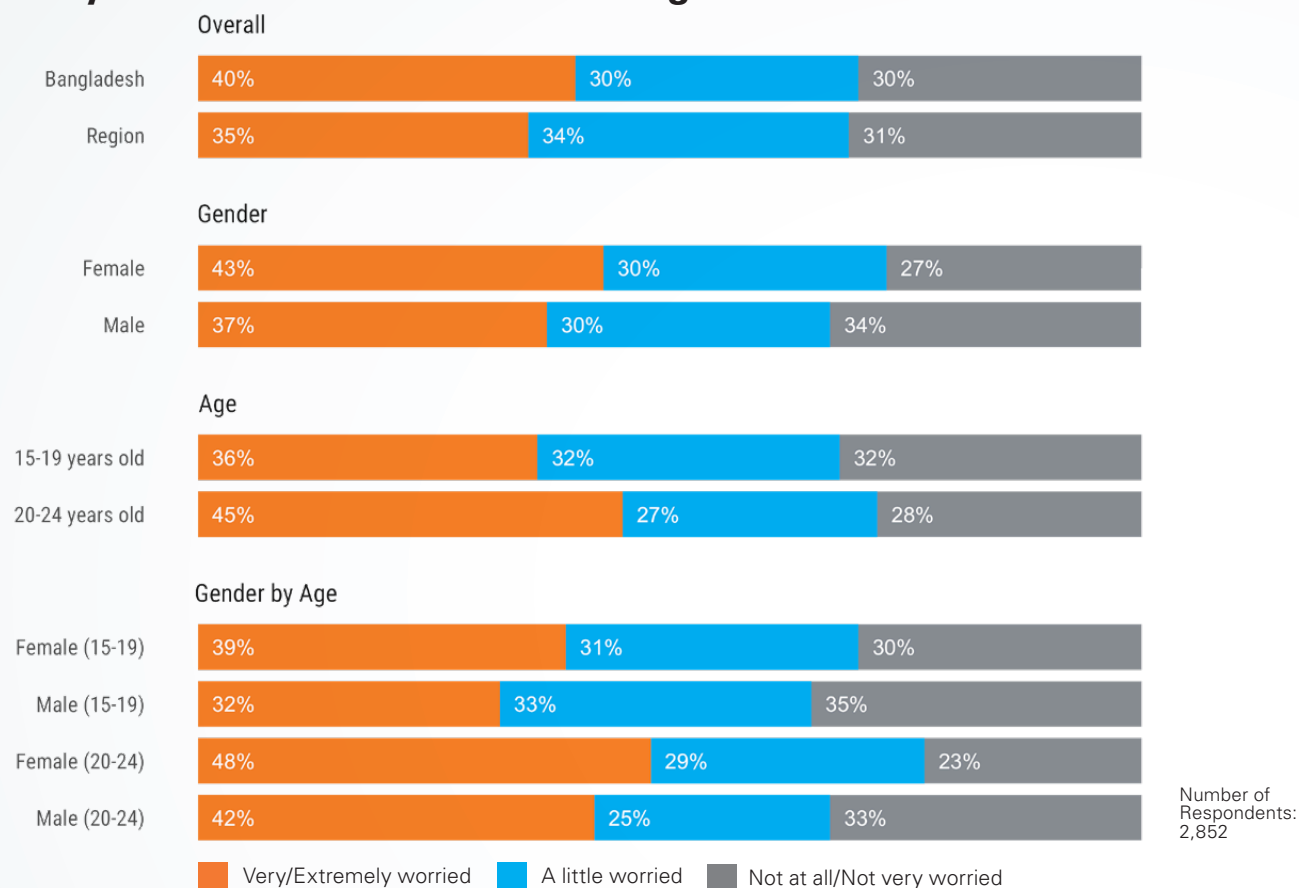
of Bangladeshi respondents stated that they were not at all or not very worried about climate change

40%

reported that they “very or extremely” worried about the impact of climate change

WORRY ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Are you worried about climate change and what it means for the future?



- Overall, 70% of Bangladeshi respondents were at least a little worried about climate change and its impact on the future, which is in line with the regional response. Bangladesh had the fifth highest proportion of respondents reporting being worried.
- Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to state that they were at least a little worried about climate change than their male counterparts (+6%).
- 45% of older respondents reported that they were “very or extremely worried” about climate change vs. 36% of younger respondents.



“Climate is having a devastating effect on our environment day by day and everything around us in this environment. As a result of this adverse change in climate, we are not able to travel to school and college properly, we are dropping out of school and it is having a bad effect on our mindset.”

21, female respondent from Bangladesh



INTEREST IN LEARNING

Students were asked:

What do you most want to learn about climate change?

54%

of Bangladeshi respondents said that they wanted to learn about “all” aspects of climate change

15%

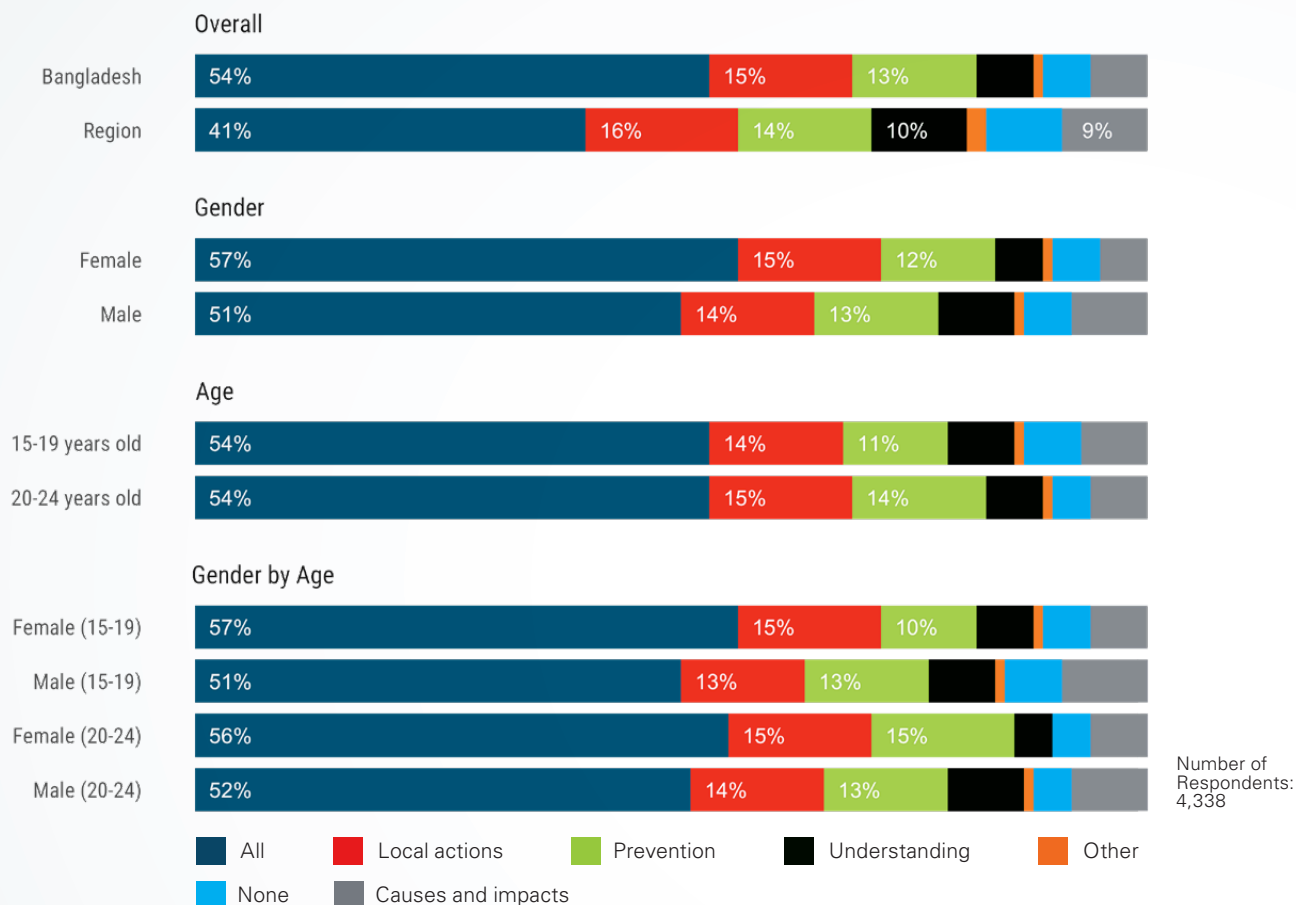
of respondents stated that they were interested in “local actions”

5%

stated that they had no interest in learning about climate change

INTEREST IN LEARNING

What do you most want to learn about climate change?



- 54% of respondents said that they wanted to learn about “all” aspects of climate change. This is higher than the regional response of 41% (+13%). This is the second highest response among the countries surveyed.

- 5% of Bangladeshi respondents stated that there was “nothing” they wanted to learn about climate change – this was lower than the 8% of respondents in other countries.



“Climate change has increased river erosion in my village, causing school and college buildings to collapse or become dangerous. As a result, rural children are dropping out of primary education and moving to cities. Many girls are being engaged in child marriage.”

Age 22, female respondent from Bangladesh





SECTION 2: **POLICY AND LEADERSHIP**

Respondents were asked about who they believed should be responsible for addressing climate change.



RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION

Students were asked:

Who should be taking the most action to address climate change?

Do you think your government will take actions to address climate change after the COVID-19 pandemic?

65%

of Bangladeshi respondents believed that governments should take the most action

18%

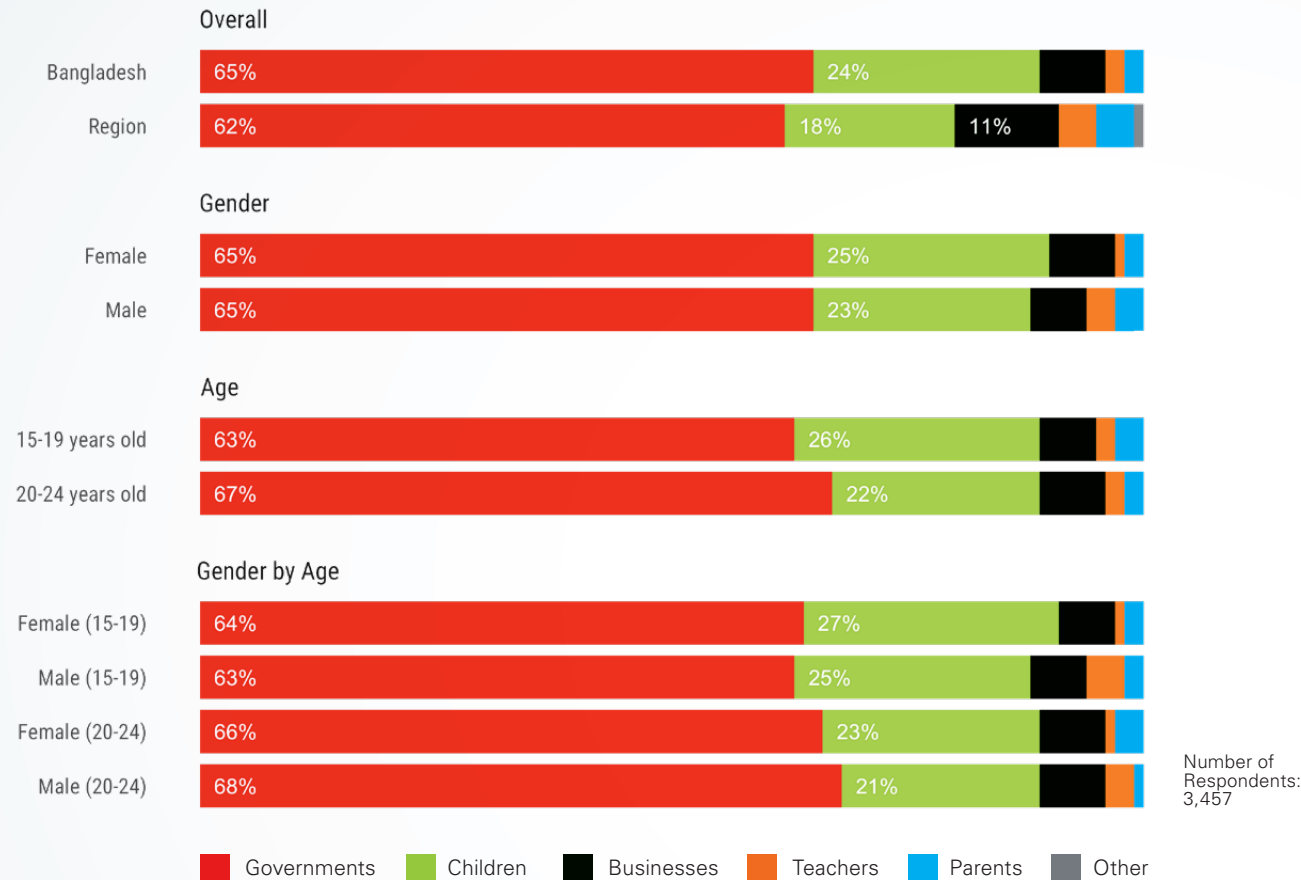
of respondents stated that children should be taking the most action to address climate change

64%

believed that the government would, would likely, or would definitely do something to address climate change after COVID-19

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION

Who should be taking the most action to address climate change?

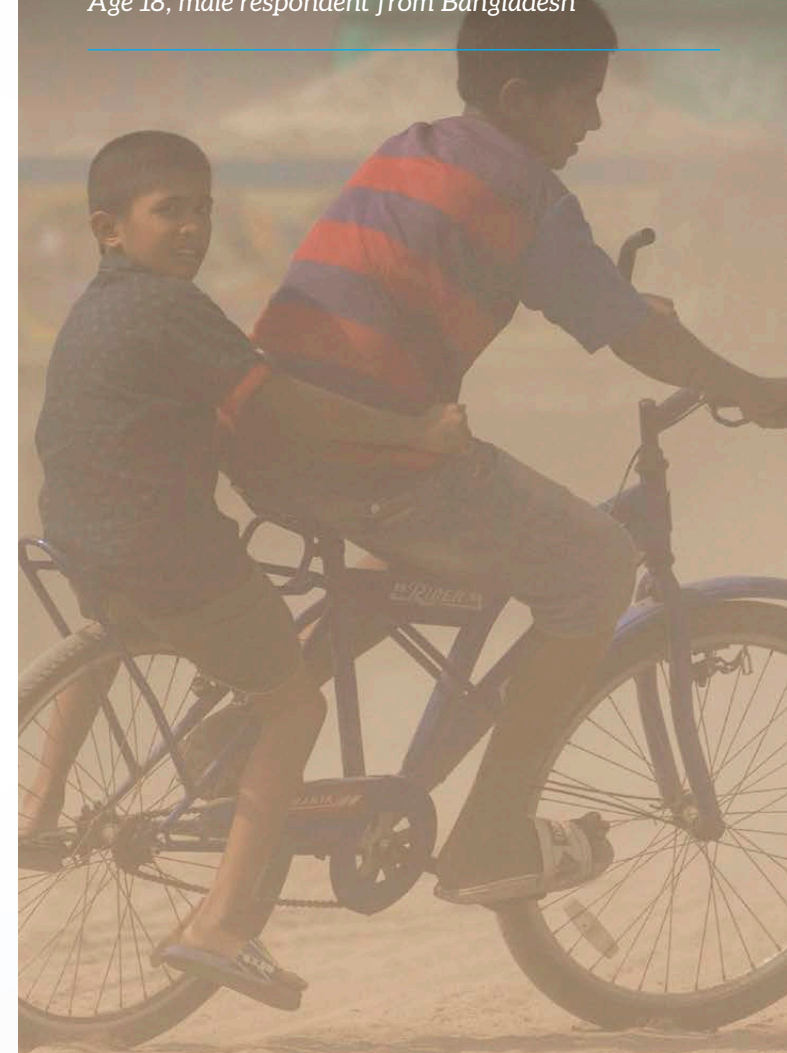


- Overall, 65% of Bangladeshi respondents stated that governments should be taking action on climate change.

- **Gender and age:** This held across gender and age, with a slightly higher proportion of older respondents stating that governments should be responsible compared to younger respondents.

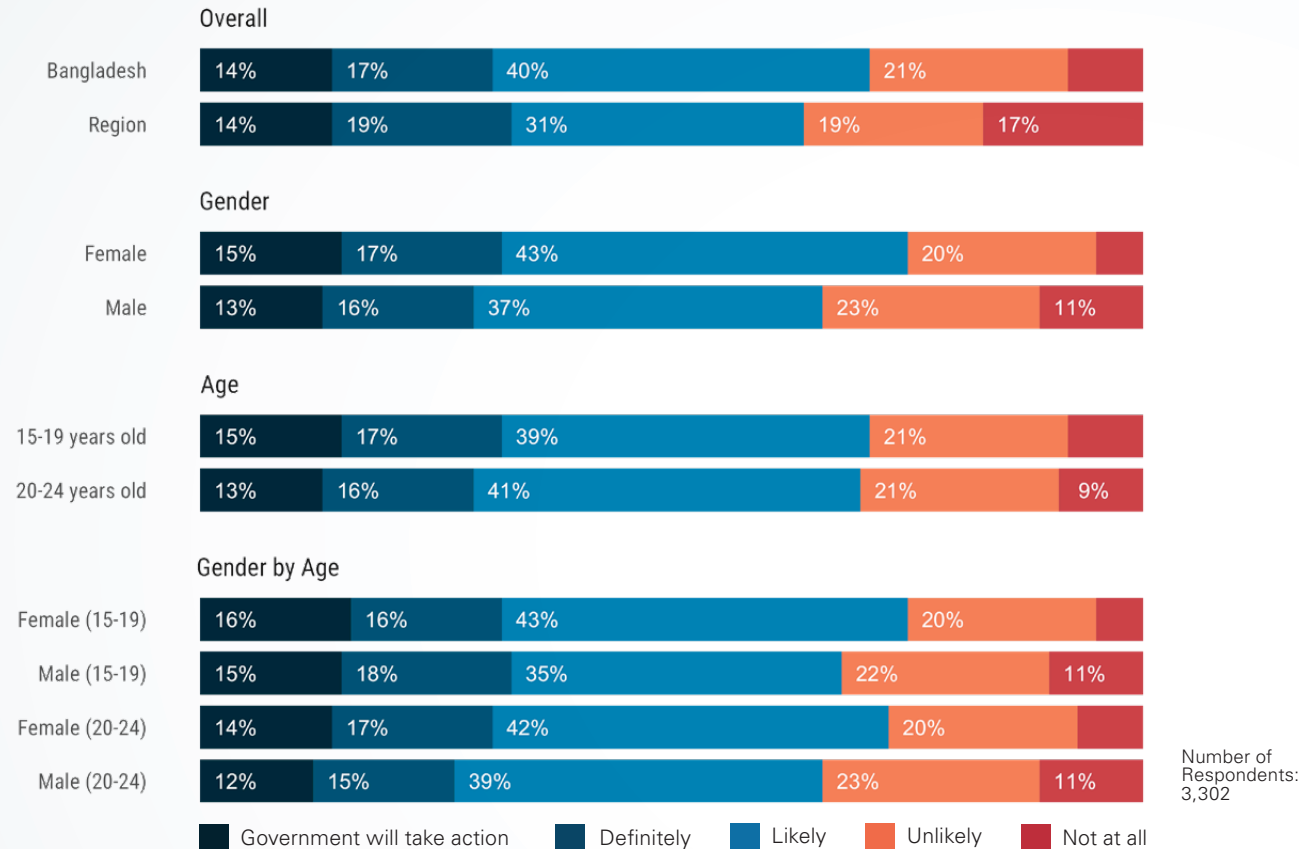


“I’m worried about the effect of climate change in the future because it could be very dangerous in the future. That is why the government should pay more attention to this issue and devise strategies to protect the country from it.”
Age 18, male respondent from Bangladesh



GOVERNMENT ACTION

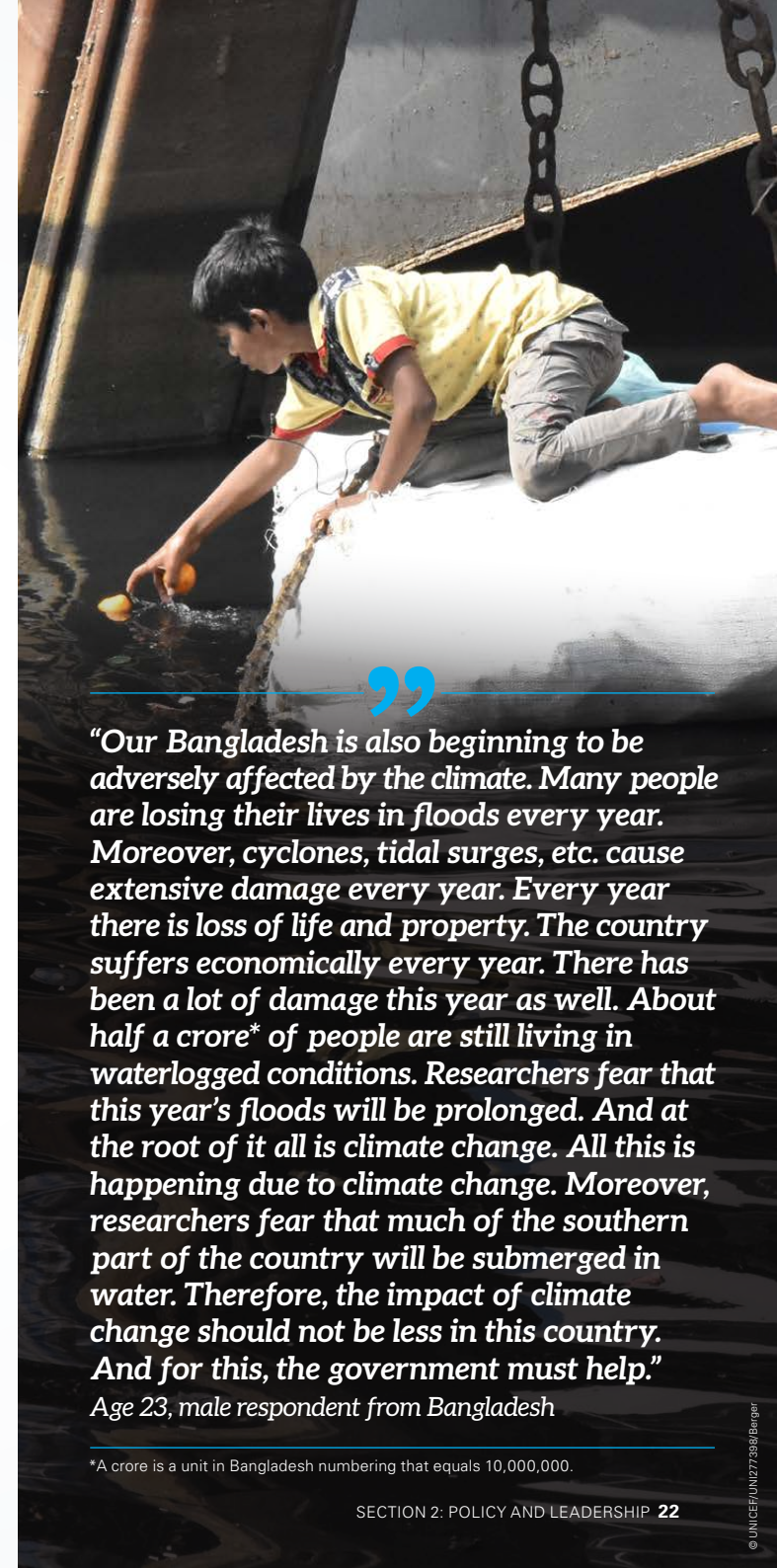
Do you think your government will take action to address climate change after the COVID-19 pandemic?



- Overall, 71% of Bangladeshi respondents believe that it was at least “likely” that the government would take actions to address climate change after the COVID-19 pandemic. This was notably higher when compared to the regional response (64%) and represented the third highest in the region.
 - Conversely, 29% of Bangladeshi respondents did not think that the government was likely

to act, with 8% stated believing that they were “not at all” likely to take action.

- **Gender:** Three out of four female respondents (75%) believed that the government was at least “likely” to take action and appeared to be more optimistic than male counterparts (66%).
- This did not notably differ by age.



“Our Bangladesh is also beginning to be adversely affected by the climate. Many people are losing their lives in floods every year. Moreover, cyclones, tidal surges, etc. cause extensive damage every year. Every year there is loss of life and property. The country suffers economically every year. There has been a lot of damage this year as well. About half a crore* of people are still living in waterlogged conditions. Researchers fear that this year’s floods will be prolonged. And at the root of it all is climate change. All this is happening due to climate change. Moreover, researchers fear that much of the southern part of the country will be submerged in water. Therefore, the impact of climate change should not be less in this country. And for this, the government must help.”

Age 23, male respondent from Bangladesh

*A crore is a unit in Bangladesh numbering that equals 10,000,000.

SECTION 3: **IMPACT AND ACTION**

Respondents were asked about the ways climate change has personally impacted them, as well as ways they will act in the future.



EFFECT ON STUDIES AND COVID-19

Students were asked:

How has climate change affected your education/ studies?

What would you like to do to address climate change in the future?

78%

of respondents believed that climate change has had an effect on their studies

23%

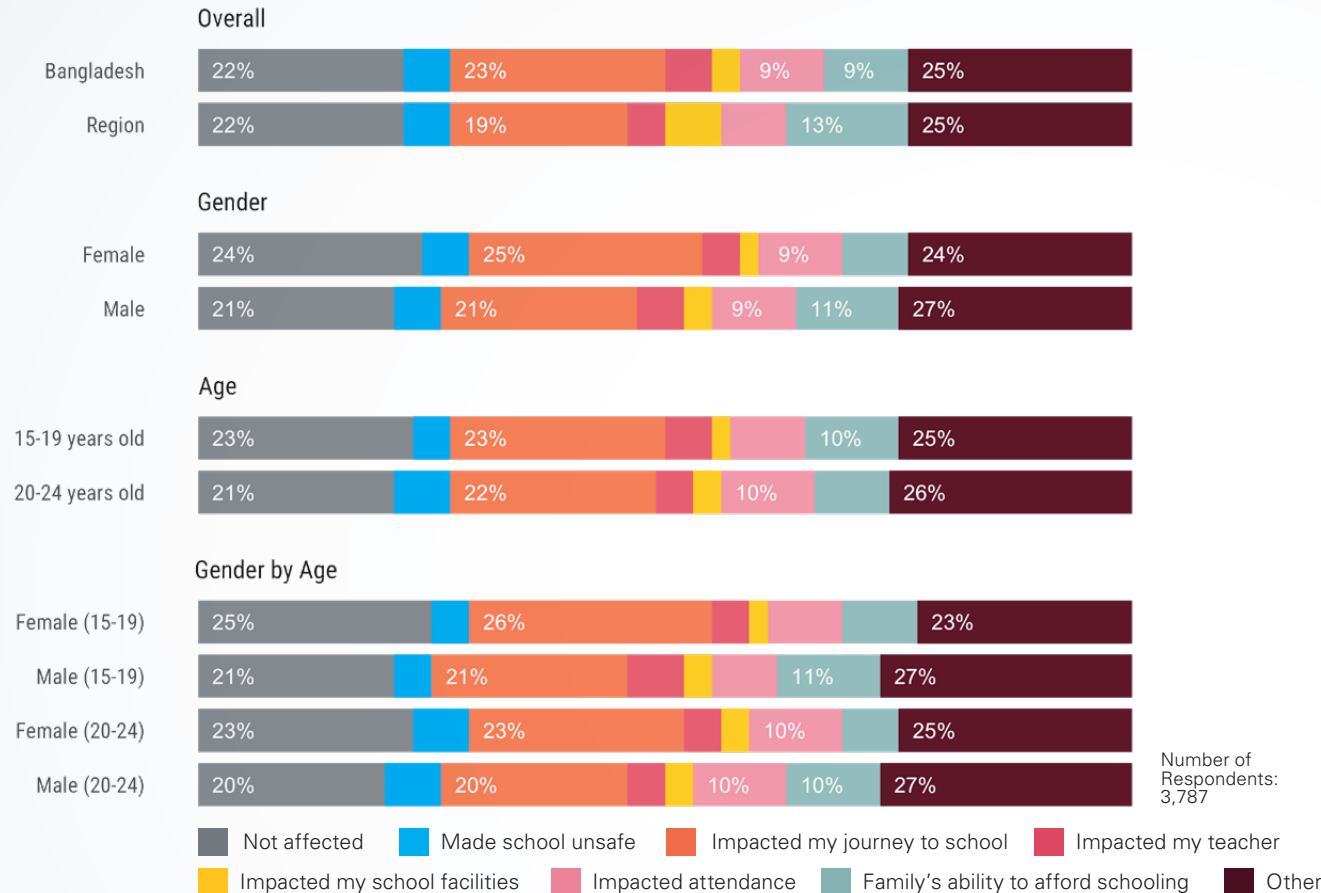
of respondents stated that it had affected their journey to school

32%

of respondents would like to join an organization

EFFECT ON STUDIES

How has climate change affected your education/studies?



- 78% of respondents believed that climate change has had an effect on their studies.
- 23% of respondents stated that it had affected their journey to school, 5% higher than the regional response rate.

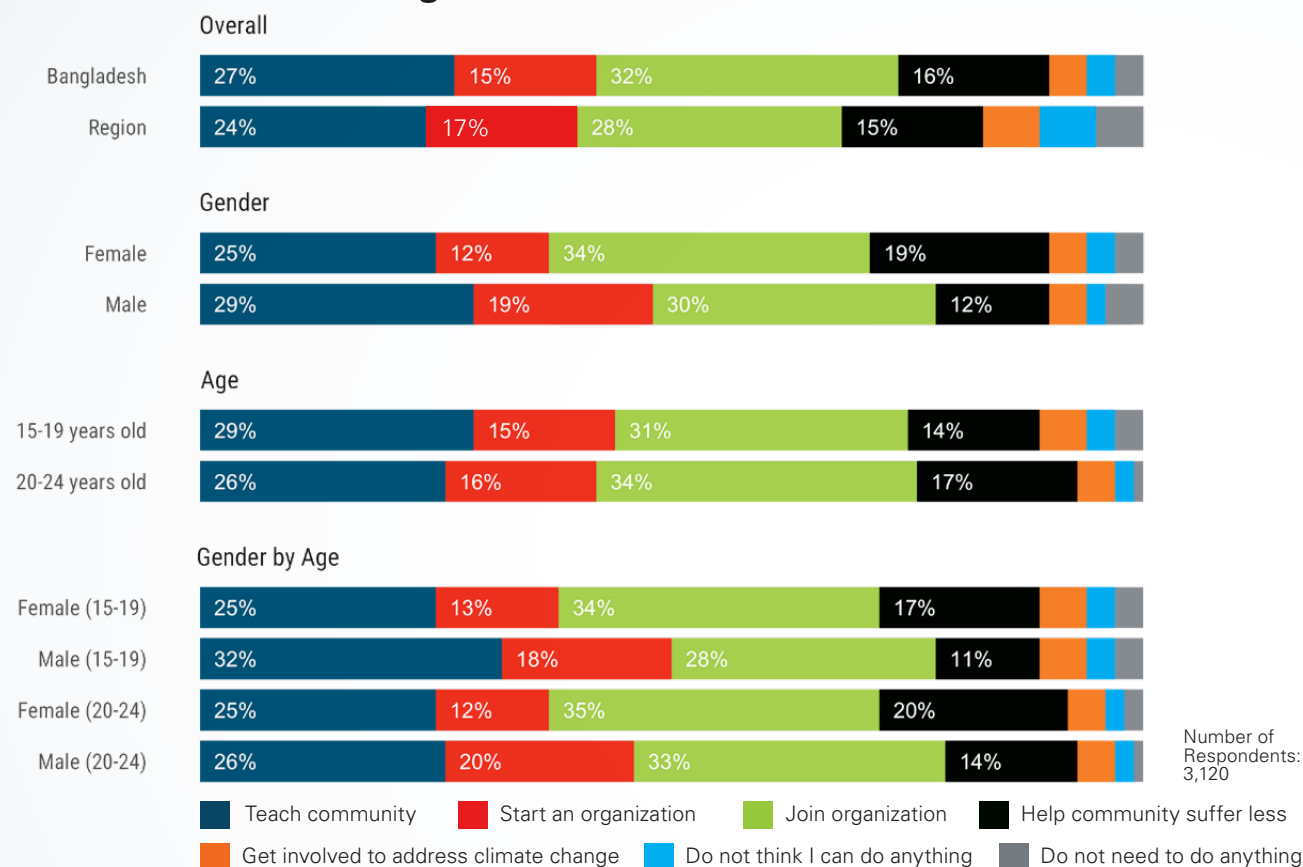
- These trends did not appear to differ across age groups.



“Climate change causes massive floods in our country every year. As a result, many schools and colleges in our country are submerged, due to which many people stop their studies. Many houses collapsed. Poor people are more helpless, which makes me think about it. I dream of doing something for my country and the world.”
Age 24, female respondent from Bangladesh

FUTURE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

If you had the necessary support, what would you like to do to address climate change in the future?



- Overall, a majority of Bangladeshi respondents (94%) said that they would like to do something to address climate change with the necessary support. This was higher when compared to the regional response (89%).

- Gender and Age:** Younger male respondents (15-19) expressed the most interest in “teaching community” compared to other groups (+7%). Female respondents expressed greater interest in “helping their community suffer less” compared to male respondents (+7%).



“Climate change is causing a variety of natural disasters, such as cyclones, floods, landslides, etc. As a result of these, we are losing our homes, education is being disrupted due to power outages in the villages, and altogether, schooling is becoming impossible due to floods.”

Age 20, female respondent from Bangladesh



SECTION 4: **RELATIONSHIPS AND CORRELATIONS**

Based on the responses received, relationships and correlations were explored to provide more insight about youth's beliefs and perceptions about climate change.



KEY QUESTION PAIRINGS

In an effort to better understand how knowledge of climate change affected students' beliefs and attitudes, **three relationships** were explored among Bangladeshi respondents*.



Can you explain climate change?

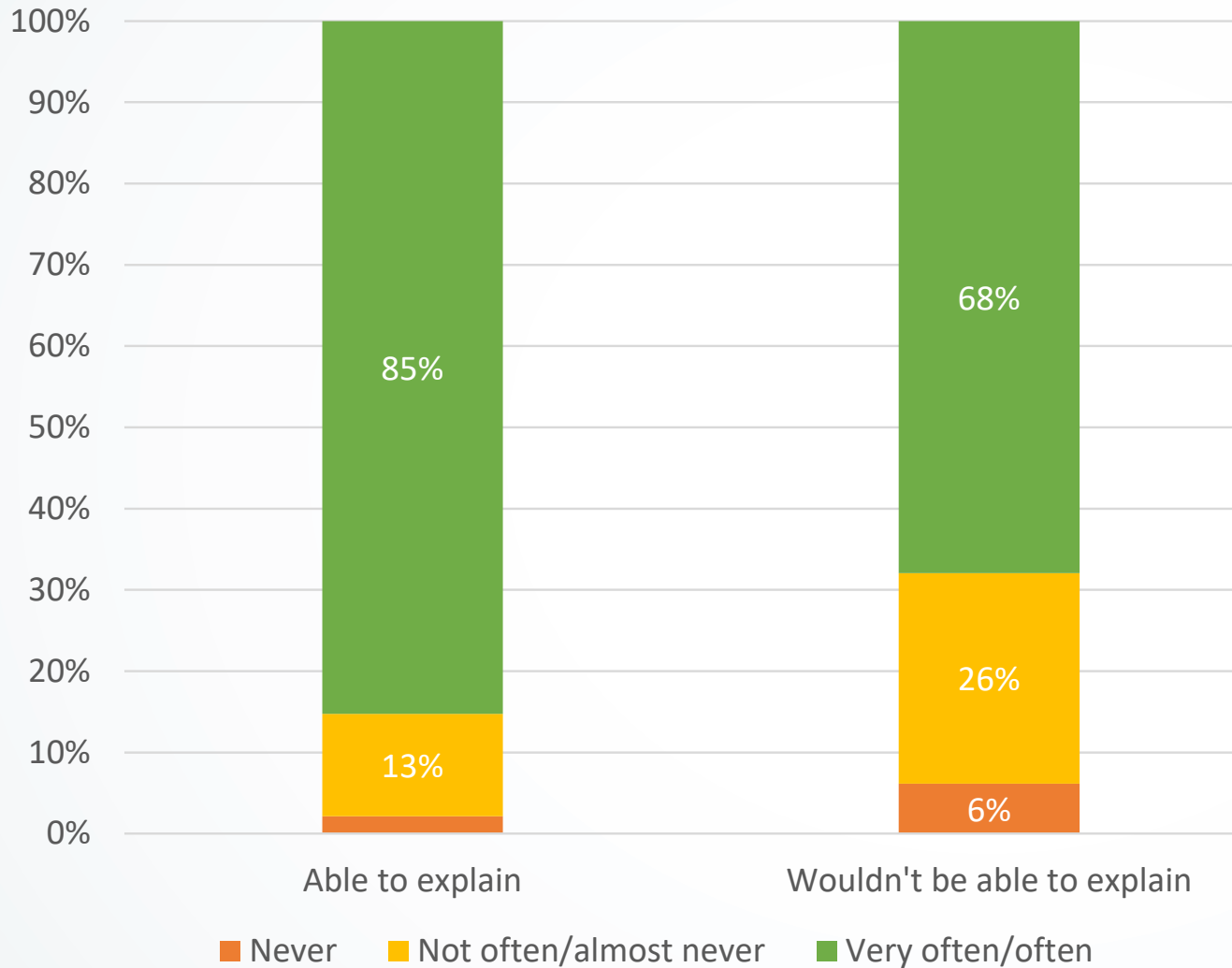
1. Do you learn about climate change in school?

2. Are you worried about climate change?

3. Do you believe the government will take action on climate change?

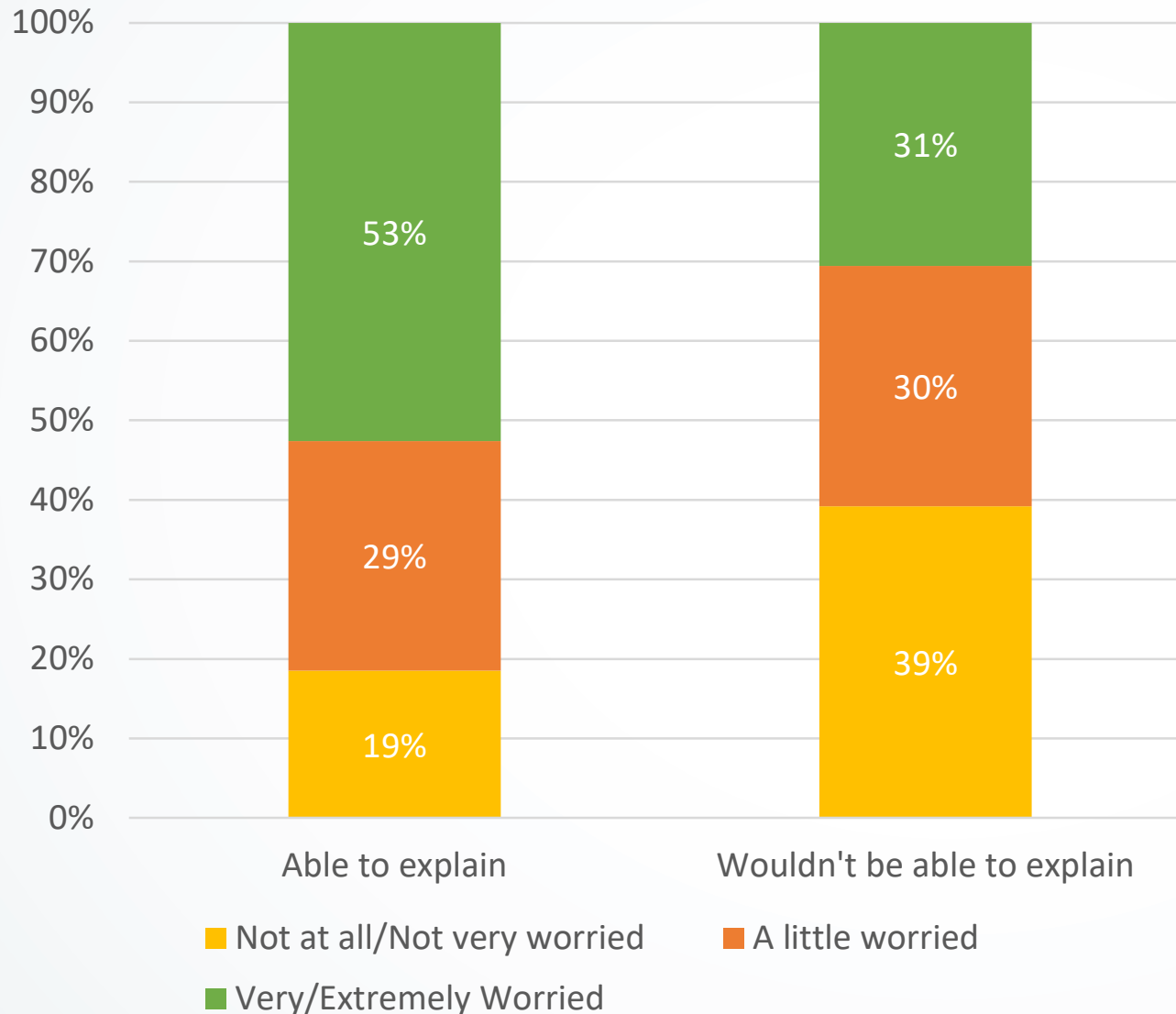
*Note: This analysis only contains respondents who answered both questions. This could bias the results by under-representing respondents who stopped the survey due to a lack of knowledge around climate change, so results should be interpreted with care.

KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE



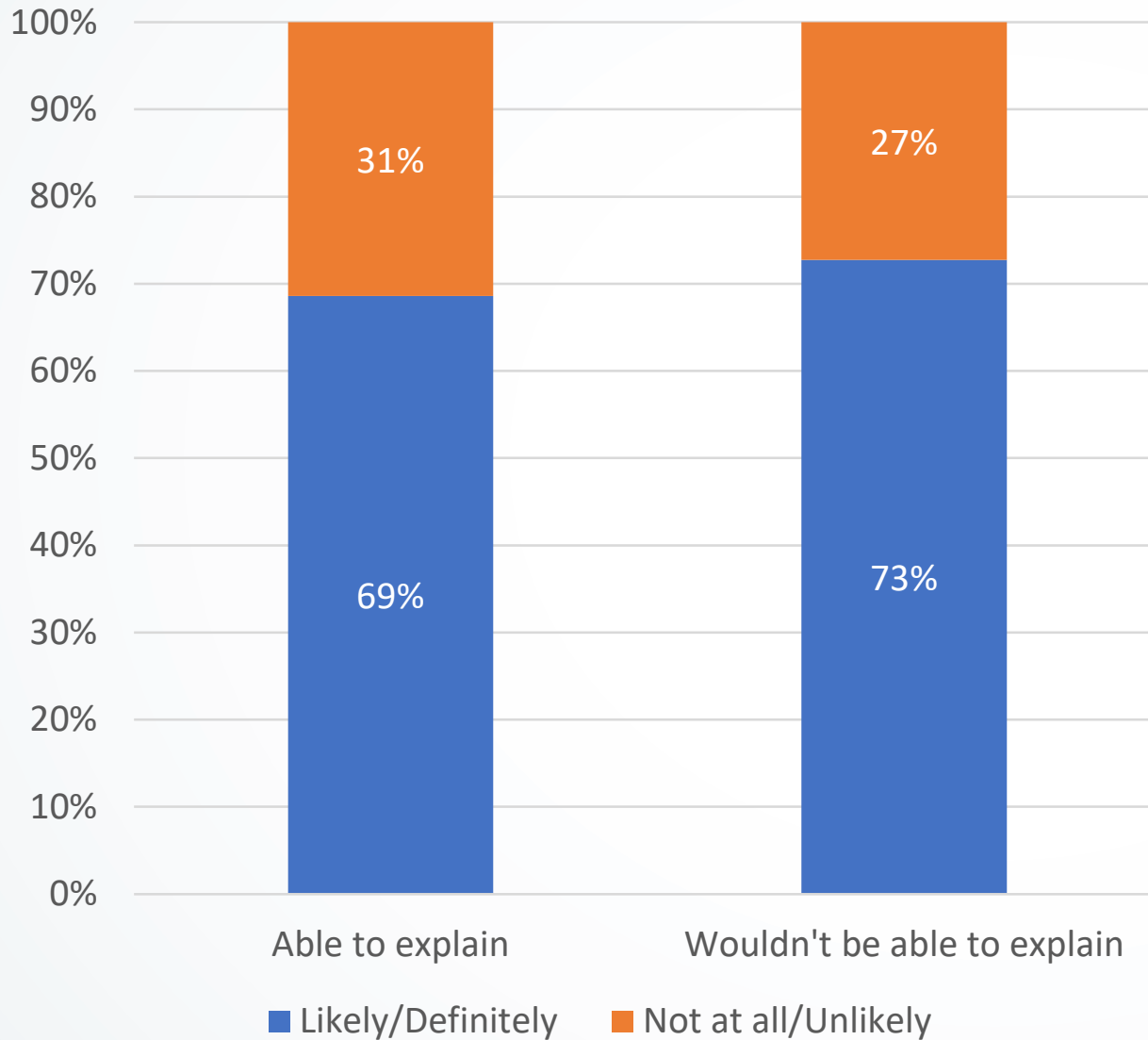
- Overall, among respondents who could explain climate change, 85% reported learning about it in school “often or very often”.
 - This was 17% higher than those that did not feel comfortable explaining (68%).
- Only 6% of respondents who reported being “unable to explain” climate change reported “never” learning about it in school.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORRY ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE



- Overall, those who were able to explain climate change were more likely than those that were not able to explain to state that they were “very or extremely” worried about the impact of climate change.
 - Among respondents able to explain climate change, more than half (53%) were “very or extremely worried” about climate change and its impact on the future. This was 22% higher than those that were not able to explain climate change.
- Conversely, 39% of respondents who were unable to explain climate change said that they were “not at all worried” about climate change.

KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF IN GOVERNMENT ACTION



- Overall, there was not a notable difference (<5%) between knowledge of climate change and a belief that the government would act to address it.

4

FINDINGS



FINDINGS

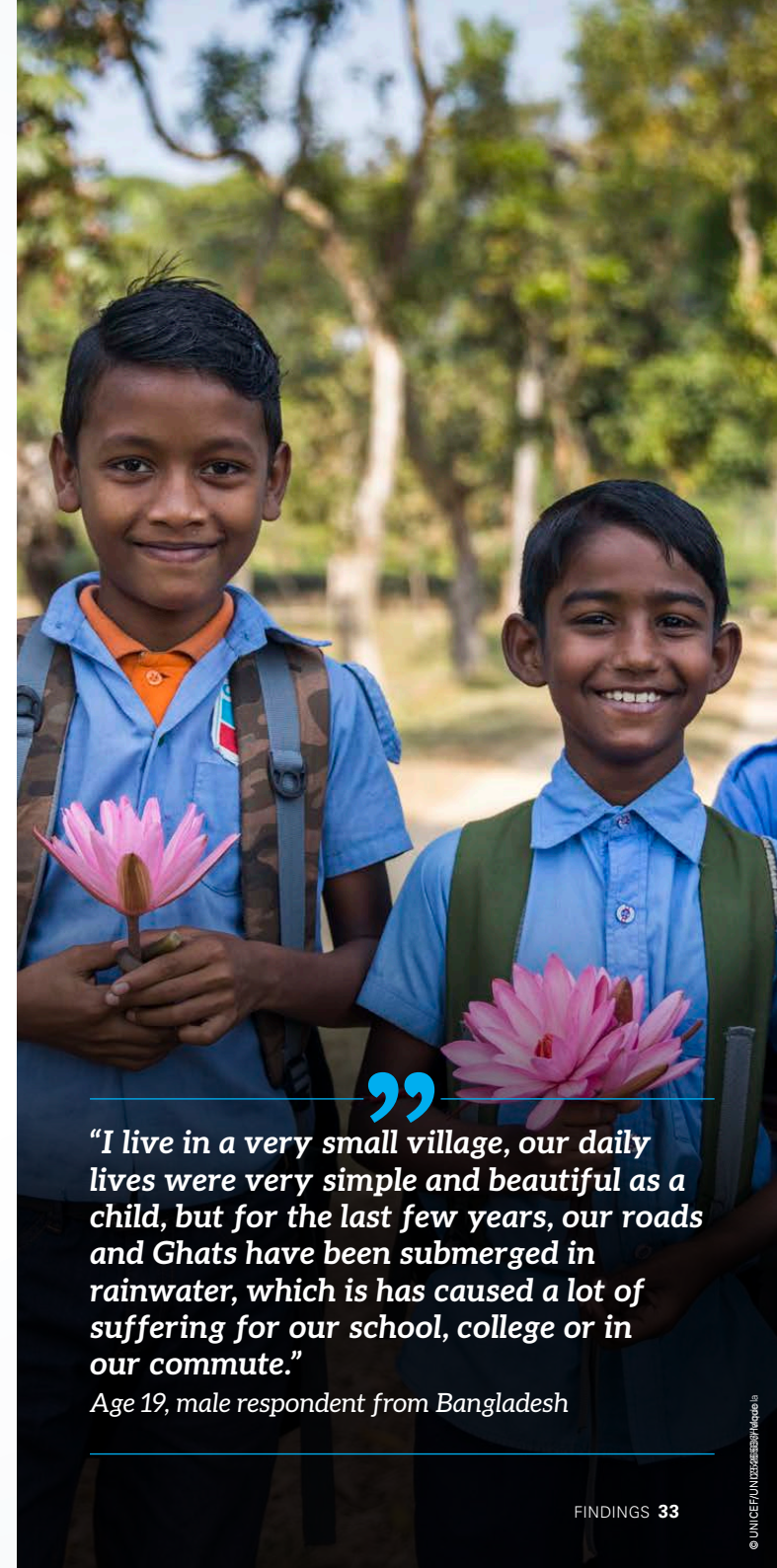
Half of the respondents reported that they were able to explain climate change, which, compared to the regional figure of 36%, was the highest of all countries in South Asia.

Knowledge and Capacity

Half of the respondents reported that they were able to explain climate change, which, compared to the regional figure of 36%, was the highest of all countries in South Asia. Although there was no significant difference in the ability to explain it by gender, there was a difference by age, where 53% of older respondents (20-24 years old) reported that they would be able to explain climate change while only 47% of their younger (15-19 years old) counterparts were confident in being able to do so.

In addition, 77% of respondents reported that they “very often or often” learned about climate change in school. This was greater than the regional figure (65%) and the third highest out of the eight South Asian countries surveyed. There was a difference by gender with a higher proportion 8% more female respondents reporting that they “very often or often” learned about climate change in school compared to males, but even 73% of males responded positively to this question.

Further research should be done around why a significant percentage of students did not report having learned about climate change in school, and around how effectively it is taught.



”

“I live in a very small village, our daily lives were very simple and beautiful as a child, but for the last few years, our roads and Ghats have been submerged in rainwater, which is has caused a lot of suffering for our school, college or in our commute.”

Age 19, male respondent from Bangladesh

FINDINGS

The majority of respondents in Bangladesh (70%) seem at least a little worried about climate change and its impacts, which is in line with regional figures for South Asia.

Almost half of Bangladeshi respondents reported that they learned about climate change in their Science classes, while a third stated that they learned about it in Geography. As climate change is a multi-disciplinary topic, it would be interesting to investigate to what extent the issues involved are covered across the curriculum as a whole and where the gaps are and how these could be addressed. Any further investigation should also consider the role of extracurricular activities, which can give students opportunities to act on local issues related to climate change, thereby using their knowledge, to inform their communities' responses.

The majority of respondents in Bangladesh (70%) seem at least a little worried about climate change and its impacts, which is in line with regional figures for South Asia. 43% of female respondents tend to be very worried about climate change and what it means for the future,



compared to 37% of their male counterparts. Similarly, 45% of older respondents (20-24 years old) reported being very worried compared to 36% of their younger counterparts.

Further research should be done about children and young people's concerns, worries and confidence around the topic of climate change by duty bearers (Ministry of Education, teachers), as the survey revealed that many students (even those that cannot explain climate change) had been exposed to the concepts in school and are worried about its impacts in the future. It is important that they should understand the challenges, but also feel that they can do something in partnership with others to mitigate these effects in future.

FINDINGS

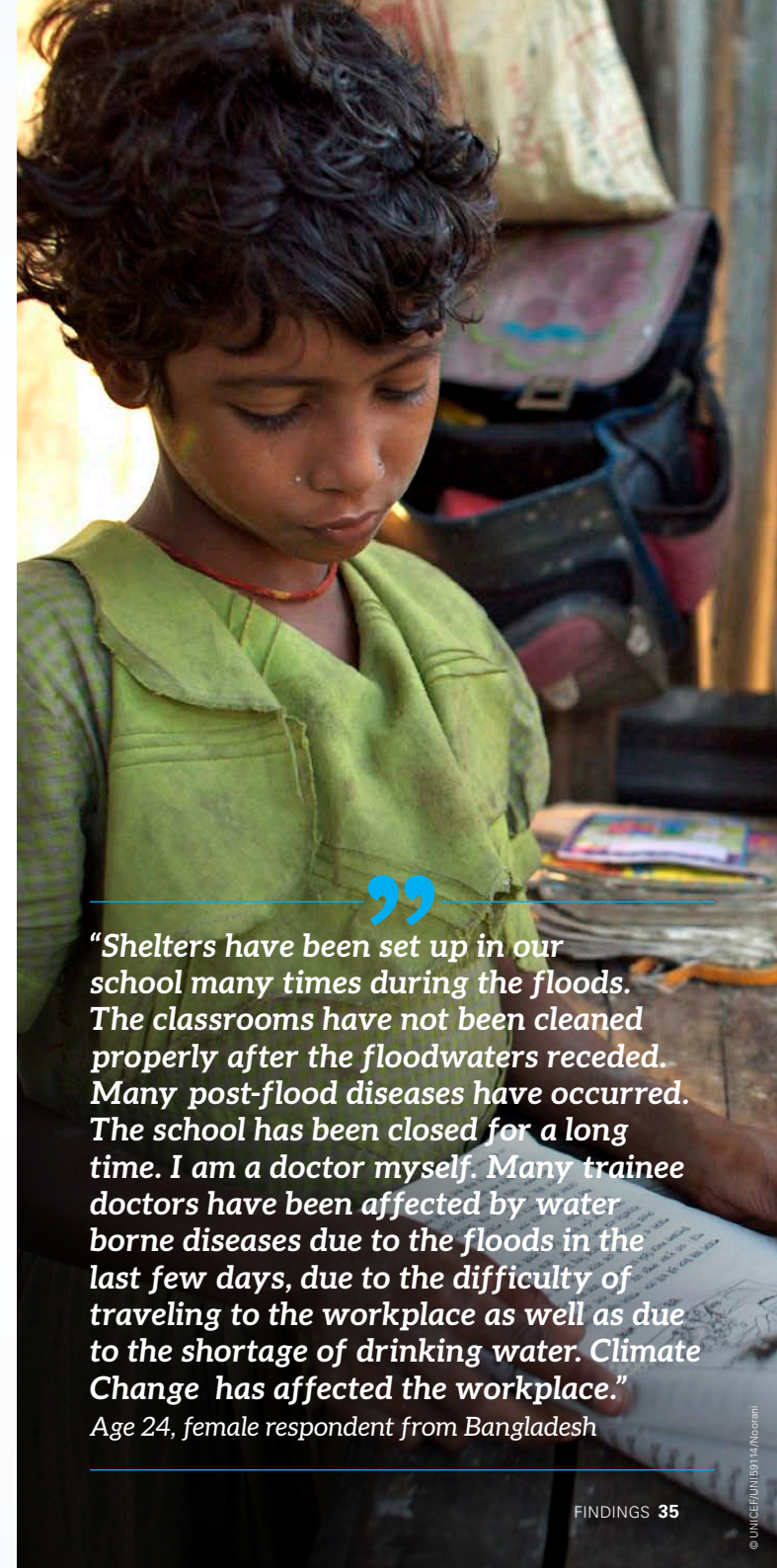
It is encouraging to note that 71% of respondents believed that it was at least “likely” that the government would take actions to address climate change after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Government as lead stakeholder

65% of respondents identified Government as the primary actor to be taking the most action on climate change and this trend held across gender and age. Interestingly, 24% of children identified themselves as important stakeholders, while 9% identified.

It is encouraging to note that 71% of respondents believed that it was at least “likely” that the government would take actions to address climate change after the COVID-19 pandemic. Only 29% of Bangladeshi respondents did not think that the government was likely to act, with 8% believing that it is “not at all” likely that government will act. This is a clear indication of the level of positive expectation overall that the government will lead the response on climate actions in Bangladesh.

It would be interesting to explore why such a small percentage identified business as having a key role to play in addressing climate change. This may reflect a limited awareness of the potential for cleaner approaches to industry and opportunities to advance new low-carbon services and goods to respond to climate change and the employability implications attached to this.



“Shelters have been set up in our school many times during the floods. The classrooms have not been cleaned properly after the floodwaters receded. Many post-flood diseases have occurred. The school has been closed for a long time. I am a doctor myself. Many trainee doctors have been affected by water borne diseases due to the floods in the last few days, due to the difficulty of traveling to the workplace as well as due to the shortage of drinking water. Climate Change has affected the workplace.”
Age 24, female respondent from Bangladesh

FINDINGS

54% of the respondents were keen to learn about “all” aspects of climate change.

Learning and action in a changing climate

54% of the respondents were keen to learn about “all” aspects of climate change. This is 13% higher than the regional figure, while 15% were content to learn about “local actions” and 13% about “prevention”.

78% of respondents believed that climate change has had an effect on their studies; 23% stated that it had affected their journey to school and 25% cited “other” reasons, including school drop-out related to flooding and impacts related to landslides and river erosion.

68% of respondents reported that they learned climate change in school but would not be able to explain it. This implies that new knowledge has not been fully internalized and suggests the need for

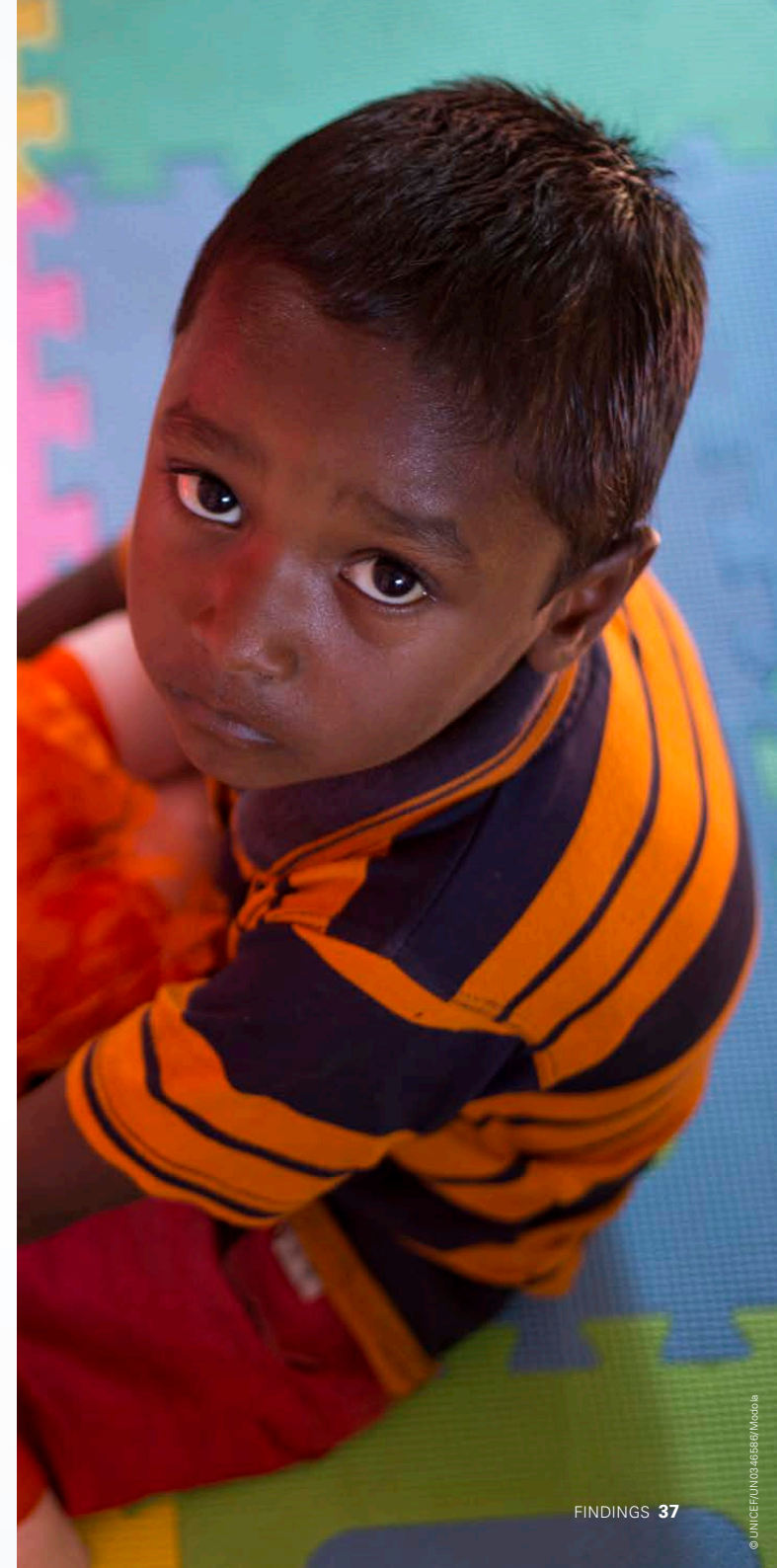


teachers and curriculum developers to explore which areas of climate change are not understood. The reasons could relate to the curriculum itself or pedagogical approaches. This also suggests the need for assessment of the extent to which students understand climate change and what role they and others may be able to play to address issues related to climate change using their understandings.

94% of respondents said that they would like to do something to address climate change with the necessary support. This was higher than the average regional response of 89%. 32% indicated a desire to “Join an organization” to address climate change, followed by 27% who cited a willingness to “teach the community”. This signals therefore a clear indication from respondents of their willingness

94% of respondents said that they would like to do something to address climate change with the necessary support.

to be part of the solution. This is a promising finding suggesting there is a groundswell of young people willing to support the leadership of government and others in developing and implementing strategies to address climate in Bangladesh.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Authors

Reis Lopez Rello, Climate Change Adviser, UNICEF ROSA

Jim Ackers, Education Adviser, UNICEF ROSA

Significant contributions were made by:

Fumiyo Kagawa, Research Director, Sustainability Frontiers

Frank van Cappelle, Education Specialist, UNICEF ROSA

JiEun Lee, Education Officer, UNICEF ROSA

Emma Hamilton Clark, Education Knowledge Management Consultant, UNICEF ROSA

Data Analysis

Randy Tarnowski, Consultant

Cary McCormick, Technology for Development Specialist, UNICEF ROSA

U-report South Asia Platform

Afrika Mukaneto, Consultant, UNICEF ROSA

Aasha Chhetri, Consultant, UNICEF ROSA



 **Report**
SOUTH ASIA
VOICE MATTERS



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Nepal

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January 2021