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# LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEM SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT (LHSS) IN BANGLADESH NEWSLETTER



Photo: LHSS Bangladesh

VOLUME I, ISSUE I | APRIL- DECEMBER 2021



## COLLABORATION WITH MOH&FW, MOLGRD&C, AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

In its nine-month journey, LHSS has built relationships with ministries, departments, and development partners to support its objective of supporting urban primary health care (PHC) delivery. Early engagement with the lead ministries for urban PHC, specifically the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW) and the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (MoLGRD&C), was an opportunity for senior officials to share valuable insights related to urban health structure. In addition, this early engagement allowed stakeholders

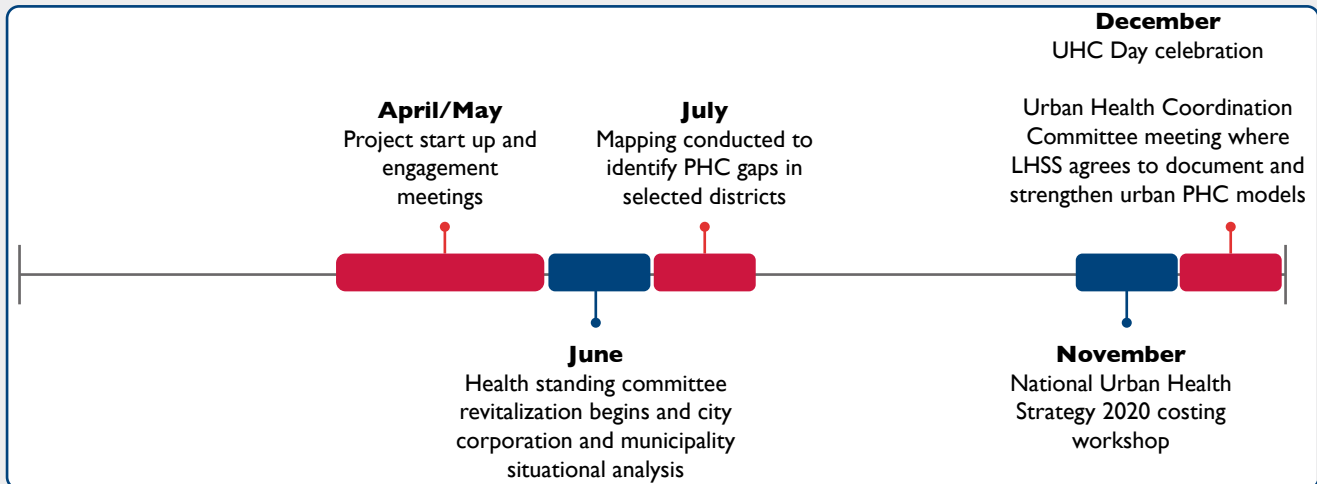


Meeting with Mr. Lokman Hossain Miah, Senior Secretary, Health Services Division, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW), Photo: LHSS Bangladesh

to identify opportunities to collaborate with LHSS as the program seeks to increase access to and use of PHC services.

From these meetings, LHSS received government concurrence to support its implementation of the National Urban Health Strategy 2020 through research, technical and





needs-based organizational capacity building, particularly for the health staff of Local Government Institutions (LGIs). Since then, LHSS has also engaged with other development partners, for example, ADB, UNICEF, US-CDC, and the World Bank, to identify synergies and avoid duplication.



### LHSS FACILITATES COLLABORATION TO COST THE NATIONAL URBAN HEALTH STRATEGY 2020

LHSS organized a consultative workshop on the costed action plan of the National Urban Health Strategy (NUHS) 2020 with other development partners on 17 November 2021 to share the preliminary results of a cost analysis of the NUHS and collate experts' comments and recommendations. The draft analysis resulted from a series of working group sessions that reviewed the strategy



Ms. Miranda Beckman, Acting Director, Office of Population, Health, Nutrition, and Education (OPHNE), USAID Bangladesh, delivers a speech at the beginning of the workshop. Photo: LHSS Bangladesh

to identify tasks and inputs for costing. The consultative workshop was chaired by Dr. Shehlina Ahmed, Senior Health Advisor, Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom, and attendees included USAID's Ms. Miranda Beckman, Acting Director, Office of Population, Health, Nutrition and Education (OPHNE), USAID Bangladesh.



### HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE REVITALIZED IN COLLABORATION WITH CITY CORPORATIONS AND MUNICIPALITIES

LHSS project supports local government authorities in activating Health Standing Committee (HSC) meetings at city corporations and municipalities as per the NUHS 2020. This revitalization will improve coordination across all urban health stakeholders to support advocacy, domestic resource mobilization, oversight, and governance of urban PHC. Between March and December 2021, LHSS organized 17 meetings in the district municipalities and five meetings in the city corporations of Dhaka, Rajshahi, and Sylhet Divisions. As part of this revitalization, LHSS restructured the committee's composition as per the NUHS to ensure regular attendance of 'co-opted' members, specifically, representatives from the MoH&FW and the MoLGRD&C. LHSS worked with the committee to develop and validate its terms of reference, particularly concerning PHC. Finally, LHSS worked with the committee to implement and validate a PHC facility mapping and gap analysis which had notable outcomes: the meetings facilitated the decision by two municipalities and one city corporation to reopen PHC facilities in the identified locations using their own resources.

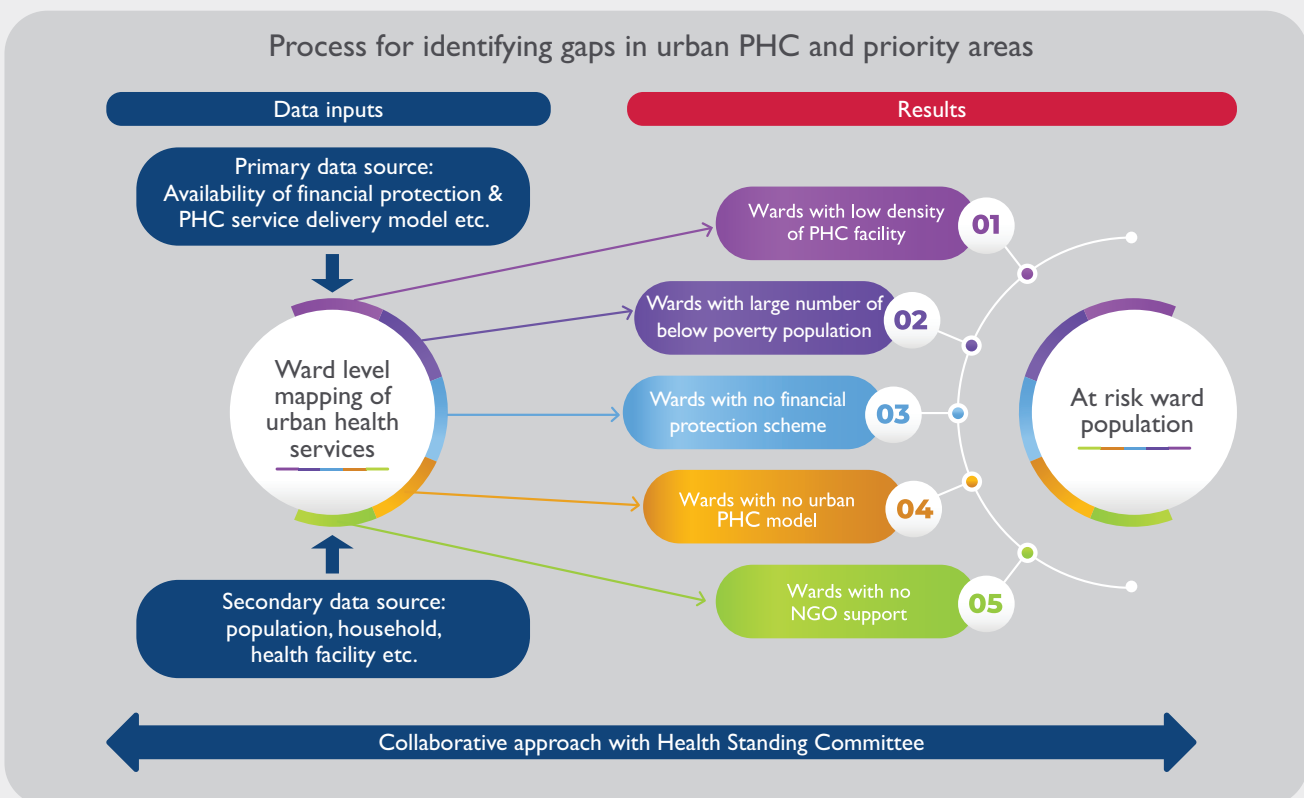


## PHC MAPPING IDENTIFIES ACCESS GAPS/NEEDS AND SUPPORTS THE DECISION TO REOPEN FACILITIES

The LHSS project mapped urban primary health care activities in two city corporations and ten district municipalities of Rajshahi and Sylhet Divisions to identify gaps and develop mitigation plans. HSCs validated the findings and then took action. The relevant HSCs drafted follow-up action plans for improving urban primary health care services in underserved areas based on the findings. The action plan strategies include 1) relocating satellite clinics, 2) revitalizing closed health facility structures, and 3) improving the management and distribution of skilled providers. LHSS used a conceptual framework to design the mapping tool – shown below. Additional work is being conducted with these data for further advocacy and prioritization of PHC.



Health Standing Committee meeting in Sylhet City Corporation led by Chief health Officer (CHO) Dr. Jahidul Islam (center left). The co-opted members from District Family Planning Office and local NGO/private organizations: Abul Mansur Ashzad (Upazila Family Planning Officer, Sylhet Sadar), Belal Ahmed (General Secretary, Sylhet Samaj Kallyan Sangstha NGO) Ummeh Kulsum Nipun (Program Officer, UNICEF) attended the meeting.





## JOINT MONITORING OF HEALTH CARE SERVICE CENTERS IN URBAN AREAS: A QUALITY INITIATIVE

HSCs are also responsible for implementing monitoring and oversight functions in their districts. The LHSS program is working with HSCs to strengthen the monitoring mechanisms for PHC to increase access to quality care. For example, on 29 December 2021, the Mayor, Secretary, Councilors, Medical Officer of Chapai Nawabganj Municipality, the Civil Surgeon, and the Deputy Director (Family Planning) visited the Surjer Hashi Clinic. Similarly, committee members of Rajshahi City Corporation and representatives of the Civil Surgeon office conducted a monitoring visit at Nagar Matri Sadan Kendra on 30 December 2021. This joint monitoring approach with the representatives of the local government office, Civil Surgeon and Deputy Director (Family Planning), the HSC co-opted members will strengthen the quality of urban PHC and urban health care service delivery in general.



Mr. Md. Mashiur Rahman, Secretary, and Dr. F.A. M. Anjuman Ara Begum, Chief Health Officer (CHO) of Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC), are monitoring the cold chain of a PHC facility, Photo: LHSS Bangladesh



## FIRST ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEW AND LEARNING WORKSHOP OF THE LHSS PROJECT

Annual reviews are a part of the LHSS project approach to support learning and adaptation to ensure interventions contribute to the overall project's objectives and goals. On November 15 and 16, 2021, the LHSS project organized an Annual Progress Review, Learning, and Planning workshop at BRAC CDM, Savar. Dr. Riad Mahmud, Policy and Technical Advisor, OPHNE, USAID Bangladesh, joined virtually and inaugurated the two-day session. Team members reviewed the work plan activities and discussed the linkages between activity interventions and intended results.



LHSS team at the Annual Progress Review, Learning and Planning workshop, L-R, Abu Sufian (urban health advisor) Nayan Hira (finance/admin. manager), TA Robin (MEL Advisor), Rumi Sultana (project officer), Saidur Rahman (former chief of party), Anwar Chowdhury (former advisor), Jashim Uddin (IT consultant) Abdul Motin (regional coordinator, Sylhet), Milton Biswas (office assistant), Alamgir Sikder (regional coordinator, Rajshahi), Kiron Reddy (admin officer) Photo: LHSS Bangladesh

The team reviewed and revised the key components of the activity's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan and project approach. The workshop participants reviewed significant Year 1 achievements, work plan deliverable status, performance indicators, and lessons learned. Then there was an overview of Year 2 interventions and tasks. The workshop also had a pause and reflect session on particular activities, which helped the team identify relevant line ministries at the early stage of the project for advocacy that can play a crucial role in ensuring government buy-in.

To learn more: [www.lhssproject.org](http://www.lhssproject.org)