

World Pneumonia Day 2019 in Bangladesh



Pneumonia is killing more than one child every hour in Bangladesh

Pneumonia is the world's leading infectious killer of children, claiming the lives of more than 800,000 children under the age of five every year, more than 2,000 every day. This deadly disease claimed the lives of 12,000 children under the age of five in 2018- that is one child every hour. Through Universal Health Coverage and equitable access to quality primary health care it is possible to prevent, diagnose and treat pneumonia. Global Action Pan for Pneumonia and Diarrhea (GAPPD) aim to end two major preventable deaths by 2025, targeting to bring deaths from pneumonia to 3 per thousand live births for under 5. Although Bangladesh has made commendable progress through its' Expanded Program of Immunization, there is still 4 per 1000 live births, under five mortality rate due to pneumonia in 2018.

Save the Children has been working on the national child survival program- Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) program since its initiation in 2010, with the Government of Bangladesh, UNICEF, Child Health Research Foundation, icddr,b and other organizations. After years of advocacy, Save the Children and its partners successfully integrated PCV into routine EPI, and now has over 97% coverage across Bangladesh. However, there are still pockets of deprived and marginalized population who has limited access to basic quality health services for vaccination and diagnosis and treatment of common childhood illnesses. As a result of which, 49 deaths per 1000 live births occur amongst the poorest households compared to just 28 deaths per 1000 live births amongst the richest households in 2019.

To build strong health systems, increase coverage and deliver UHC, Bangladesh needs to increase domestic public health expenditure towards a target of 5% of GDP from the current 3%, prioritizing primary health care. Bangladesh spent \$6 on health per person in 2016, whereas the global targets on health financing as per WHO standards is a minimum of \$86. The country has a 72% out of pocket expenditure in 2016, which is one of the highest in the world.

As a global call to action to prevent children dying from pneumonia, Save the Children and UNICEF are working in partnership to fight one of the greatest health challenges of the world- childhood pneumonia. Commemorating World Pneumonia Day 2019, Save the Children and UNICEF mobilized the Government of Bangladesh and other key stakeholders working on this issue at a roundtable discussion to highlight the importance of revitalizing the IMCI program and strengthening case management at the facility level.

Ending children dying from pneumonia by 2030



The discussion began with an appreciation to the Government's efforts in improving child health, particularly from preventable diseases. The very successful immunization program including pneumonia vaccines have contributed to the reductions in pneumonia deaths significantly. However, lack of trained providers at service delivery points for the management of child pneumonia, inadequate care seeking from appropriate provider, unavailability of antibiotic and oxygen for case management, pockets of immunization, inadequate financing for IMCI program are some of the key challenges still prevailing.

The discussion also emphasized on the importance of IMCI corners to increase community mobilization, and focus on risk factors of pneumonia. The stakeholders highlighted on influencing policies and practices in strengthening regulatory mechanisms for non-formal providers since almost half of the total child pneumonia cases are seeking care from non-formal providers. All these are much needed to deliver the Sustainable Development Goal pledge to 'end preventable child deaths by 2030'.

A pneumonia communication package developed by Save the Children and UNICEF developed to stir social and behavioural change across the country and approved by the Government, was also launched through the roundtable event at the national level.

On 29-31 January 2020 in Barcelona, Spain, over 300 participants – including ministers and senior planners from high-burden countries, major development donors, UN and multilateral agencies, non-government organisations, corporate and philanthropic leaders and the pneumonia research community – will come together in "Fighting for Breath: The Global Forum on Childhood Pneumonia". Save the Children and UNICEF will take this opportunity to build a bold agenda, influence the Government to make a commitment urgently as national and international actions for saving the children whose lives are at stake.

Media Engagements in Bangladesh

Save the Children and UNICEF organized a [roundtable discussion at Prothom Alo](#) which is one the leading dailies in Bangladesh. A full page news coverage was done in Bengali were by the newspaper, along with [online English version](#) and [short video of the roundtable](#) on social media channels.

Representatives from Save the Children and Government of Bangladesh participated in radio talk shows at Radio Shadhin 92.4 FM and Dhaka FM 90.4, in a joint call to action to stop children dying from pneumonia



Bangladesh had an extensive media coverage, in over sixteen newspapers in both English and Bengali. Some links are provided below:

[Pneumonia killed 12,000 children last year](#) (The Daily Star)

[Pneumonia kills 4 children every 3hrs in Bangladesh](#) (Dhaka Tribune)

[One child dies of pneumonia every hour in Bangladesh: UNICEF](#) (The Business Standard)

নিউমোনিয়ায় দেশে প্রতি ঘণ্টায় মারা যায় গড়ে একজন শিশু (বণিক বার্তা)

বছরে এখনও মৃত্যু ২০ হাজার শিশুর (সমকাল)

বাংলাদেশে ২০১৮ সালে নিউমোনিয়ায় ১২০০০ শিশুর মৃত্যু (আমাদের সময়)

Save the Children engaged in social media to create awareness on the protection, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of children who become ill from pneumonia in Bangladesh. On World Pneumonia Day, as a part of creating awareness on Pneumonia Centenary Commitments within Bangladesh country office, 1500 staff had auto generated World Pneumonia Day background wallpapers. There was also a Pneumonia Day Quiz for everyone at the office.

