

## Advocating for improved child survival from Pneumonia in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress for child survival and achieved MDG 4 well ahead of time. The Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) program of Bangladesh has contributed effectively in achieving the goal along with good immunization coverage and other interventions. Now the target is to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) has appropriately designed the 4th Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program of Bangladesh to meet the country's prime focus on improving newborn survival for which a well-functioning IMCI program is much required.

A coalition of partners, popularly known as IMCI working group had been very instrumental in the process of IMCI implementation.

In Bangladesh in 2016, Pneumonia killed around 17,000 children under 5 years of age which is approximately 16 % of all under 5 child death. Even though the country has a well-structured IMCI program in existing public sector health care delivery system and Pneumococcal vaccines have been introduced in the routine immunization program,



there still remains a gap in preparedness for IMCI service delivery, availability of medicines, adequate care seeking behavior of the community and some geographical variation in immunization coverage.

In this context, Save the Children is working to revitalize the IMCI working group which will be actively contributing to child survival from pneumonia through its' coalition of partners. Save the Children in collaboration with UNICEF facilitated MOHFW in the organization of a meeting, participated by WHO, USAID, professional organizations, academicians, research organization, local and international NGOs.

The group gained broader consensus on depicting IMCI as a strategy which goes beyond trainings to integrate monitoring and accountability, implementation, synchronization of medicines and overall strengthening of the system. The representatives from the MOHFW highlighted the importance of quality of service and its coverage through a well-governed and accountable approach so that all stakeholders comply with policies and procedures. The stakeholders have taken a collaborative effort in discussions related to strengthening IMCI in Bangladesh, including IMCI in the education curriculums, professional examinations, increased availability of resources and training materials. Under the lead of

MOHFW, the group initiated the development of the country's annual costed IMCI implementation plan which will contribute to the reduction of major causes of child survival including Pneumonia.

Save the Children has been supporting MOHFW for the child survival initiative and will continue support to the ministry through National Newborn Health Program and IMCI along with other key stakeholders for revitalizing the IMCI working group. Thereby, strengthening country's IMCI program implementation for survival of children from Pneumonia in Bangladesh.



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