



PRESS RELEASE

New US-UK-Bangladesh Partnership to Expand Healthcare Services for the Poor

DHAKA, June 10— The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) have joined together to make quality healthcare more widely available for poor families through the Smiling Sun network of health clinics. Under the new partnership, DFID will provide an additional US \$29 million to the \$54 million USAID NGO Health Service Delivery Project. As a result, Smiling Sun clinics will be able to reach several million additional people with basic health services that focus on improving women's and children's health in urban areas.

Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare AM Badruddoza, USAID Mission Director Janina Jaruzelski, and the Country Representative of DFID Bangladesh Sarah Cooke announced the collaboration at a launch event in Dhaka. Joya Ahsan, a renowned Bangladeshi actress and former brand ambassador for Smiling Sun clinics, was also in attendance to advocate for better healthcare for the poor.

In her remarks, Jaruzelski applauded the new partnership. "By joining forces, USAID and DFID, working hand-in-hand with the Government of Bangladesh, will enable the long-running and exceedingly popular Smiling Sun health clinic program to reach new heights and ultimately benefit millions more women and children who urgently need healthcare," said Jaruzelski.

"Improving the health of poor mothers and their babies is a priority for the UK government. Through our urban health program, UK aid will continue supporting the poorest women to give birth safely, under skilled care, giving mothers and babies the best opportunity to thrive and helping to prevent such tragic and unnecessary deaths," added Sarah Cooke.

Smiling Sun clinics provide essential healthcare services at the door step for the poorest people in Bangladesh through a network of 26 NGOs, 350 clinic locations and more than 6,000 community health workers. The program also complements Government of Bangladesh efforts to reach the poor with high-quality healthcare at low or no cost. This collaboration is also part of DFID's broader urban health program in which the UK government will be supporting new partnerships to increase access to quality primary care, especially maternal and newborn health and nutrition services for the urban poor. The partnership will include USAID and Marie Stopes Clinic Society Bangladesh, and will collaborate closely with BRAC urban health services.

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The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided over \$6 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. In 2013, USAID provided nearly \$200 million to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh. USAID supports programs in Bangladesh that: promote democratic institutions and practices, expand food security and economic opportunity, improve health and education services, and increase resiliency to climate change through adaptation and low carbon development.

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