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PRESS RELEASE

**USAID-FUNDED SMILING SUN FRANCHISE PROJECT
HOLDS CONFERENCE ON PROMOTING PUBLIC-PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIPS**

DHAKA, JANUARY 11 -- As the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Government’s premier development agency celebrates the 50th anniversary of its founding in 1961, the USAID-funded Smiling Sun Franchise Program (SSFP) held a conference event yesterday called “Public Private Partnership Conference: Promoting PPPs and Sharing SSFP Experience and Lessons Learned.” USAID Bangladesh’s Mission Director, Richard Greene, chaired the event with Professor Dr. A. F. M. Ruhul Haque, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, as the chief guest. The conference was organized in partnership with Chevron.

Since 2007, SSFP has expanded the availability of sustainable NGO-operated health services and products in partnership with the Government of Bangladesh to achieve its population and health targets. Through USAID support, SSFP provides high quality, affordable care including maternal and child health services, family planning, diarrhea management and TB prevention and treatment. More than 30 million people were served last year through its network of over 325 clinics using over 6,500 health workers at the community level.

The Public Private Partnership Conference brought together a select group of Smiling Sun’s potential and existing partners, representatives from the Government of Bangladesh, USAID, the donor community and other relevant stakeholders. This event underscores the importance of U.S. President Obama’s Global Health Initiative in Bangladesh, which promotes strategic public-private partnerships to increase host country ownership and sustainability to support the common goals of helping Bangladesh achieve its Millennium Development Goals in health. Over the past four decades, the U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided over \$700 million to the health sector and over \$5 billion across key development sectors in Bangladesh.

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Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8855500, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)