

Newsletter

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Universal Health Coverage Day 2023 Celebration!



WHO representative delivered his speech on the occasion
Photo: WHO/Salma Sultana

The 'Universal Health Coverage Day 2023' celebration occurred on Tuesday, 12 December 2023, at the hotel in Dhaka. This year's UHC day's theme is "Health for All: Time for Action". As the Chief Guest, Mr. Zahid Maleque MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, graced the occasion. Along with Mr. Md. Jahangir Alam, Secretary of the Health Services Division, Mr. Md. Azizur Rahman, Secretary of the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division, and Dr. Bardan Jung Rana, WHO representative to Bangladesh, was present as a Special Guest at the event.

#RC76



Together, we must continue to pursue the right of every person to the highest attainable standard of health and well-being.

DR POONAM KHETRAPAL SINGH

REGIONAL DIRECTOR,
WHO SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, emphasized on the importance of right to the highest attainable standard of health and well-being in the inaugural session of [#RC76](#).

Regional Director elect—Ms Saima Wazed!



Ms Saima Wazed has been nominated as Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia. Member countries today voted to nominate the next Regional Director during a closed meeting at the [#RC76](#).

Congratulations [#Bangladesh](#)



Regional Director handed over the crest to Honorable Health Minister. Photo: WHO/SEARO.

Bangladesh has been recognized as the first country globally to be validated for eliminating visceral leishmaniasis or kala-azar as a public health problem. In addition, Bangladesh has been complimented for eliminating lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem.

Regional Director Dr Poonam Singh felicitated Mr Zahid Maleque, Honorable Health Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Bangladesh, and presented awards for these two significant achievements. Bangladesh achieved the elimination target of less than one case per 10,000 population at the sub-district level in 2017 and sustained it despite disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

HPV Vaccination Launching!



Guest of HPV launching event are on the dais
WHO / Salma Sultana

A launching event for the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination campaign took place at the NIPSOM auditorium in Mohakhali, Dhaka, on Monday, October 2, 2023. The Government of Bangladesh organized this event with the support of WHO Bangladesh; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and UNICEF Bangladesh. This initiative aims to protect the health and future of millions of women and girls across the country by safeguarding them against cervical cancer, a disease that results in the loss of thousands of lives each year among women in the country. [Read more](#)

Operational Planning Meeting PB 2024-25

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) has arranged a full-day meeting involving Program Directors (PDs), Programme Managers (PMs), Deputy Programme Managers (DPMs), and WHO Technical Officers (TOs) to formulate the initial operational plan for PB 2024-25 at FARS Hotel in Dhaka on 05 October 2023. This operational plan, integral to developing the Program Budget for the PB 2024-25, was initiated in July of the preceding year. The process involved prioritizing outputs from the WHO General Programme of Work (GPW-13) result framework, taking into account the forthcoming sector program, Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS), and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) priorities. Since the commencement, numerous consultative procedures have been undertaken to shape the draft operational plans, culminating in their finalization during this meeting.



Guest of operational planning meeting PB 2024-2025
WHO/Planning Team

Prothom Alo Round Table Discussion



Guests of the Prothom Alo round table discussion on WHO 50 years Journey, WHO/ Prothom Alo

On the 75th anniversary of the World Health Organization (WHO) and its 50 years of service in Bangladesh, Prothom Alo conducted a "Round Table Discussion" on Tuesday 19 December 2023 at the WHO Bangladesh Country Office. To recognize the World Health Organization's contributions to Bangladesh and Bangladeshi people, the Daily Prothom Alo has organized this round table discussion. Representatives of public-private and development organizations present at the roundtable discussion and share their thoughts, interactions, reminiscence, achievements, and contributions of WHO Bangladesh. Based on the information obtained from the discussion, a supplementary has been published in Prothom Alo Daily. [Read more](#)

WHO and RedR's Joint Efforts in the Rohingya Response!



The WASH Officer, deployed by RedR & WHO national staff ensuring quality assurance in Water Quality Surveillance. WHO/WSO

The partnership between WHO and RedR Australia has been crucial in addressing the health needs of Rohingya refugees and the immediate host communities. Through initiatives like RCCE and WASH FIT, they have improved healthcare standards and fostered community trust and participation. The success of these programs underscores the importance of international cooperation and the use of varied expertise in humanitarian aid. Moving forward, the continued support from allies like RedR Australia will be essential in protecting the health and well-being of the world's most at-risk

High-level advocacy workshop on health-related SDGs



Guests of High-level advocacy workshop are on the dais.
Photo: WHO/HS

A high-level advocacy workshop was organized on health-related SDGs by WHO, jointly with HSD and MoHFW, on October 05, 2023. The workshop's objective was to inform high-level policymakers about Bangladesh's progress towards health-related SDGs to contribute to achieving the SDGs.

The workshop brought together government representatives from various agencies, UN agencies, and Development Partners. Ms. Nargis Khanam, Additional Secretary (Planning), HSD, chaired the workshop. Mr. Md. Akhter Hossain, Principal Coordinator (SDG Affairs), PMO, was present as the Chief Guest. Dr. Md. Anwar Hossain Howlader, Senior Secretary, HSD, MoHFW, was a Special Guest, while Dr. Bardan Jung Rana, WHO Representative, was the Guest of Honor.

Dr. Bardan Jung Rana, WHO Representative, acknowledged the country's efforts to achieve SDG targets in improving health and well-being for the people of Bangladesh while ensuring equity in health service delivery and health care financing. Dr. Md. Anwar Hossain Howlader, Senior Secretary, emphasized the innovation in the 5th Sector Programme. Mr. Md. Akhter Hossain stressed the importance of connecting the dots and policy coherence for SDGs.

Divisional Workshops on SDGs localization and local level planning

WHO in collaboration with HSD, MoHFW organized a divisional workshop on SDGs localization and local level planning on October 07, 2023, at Rajshahi. A total of 200 key stakeholders from MoHFW, local government, government officials from other ministries, local elite, private sector, NGOs and civil society participated in the workshop. The objective of the workshop was to create awareness and communicate efforts to promote advancement of health-related SDGs at local level. Dr. Dewan Muhammad Humayun Kabir, Divisional Commissioner called upon all sectors to join hands with the government

Advocacy and awareness campaign on World AMR Awareness Week

WHO Bangladesh, in collaboration with DGDA, orchestrated an impactful Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) advocacy event during World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW) 2023 in Dhaka, as well as the remaining seven divisions. Major General Mohammad Yousuf, DG-DGDA, chaired the program in Dhaka, and the event featured the inauguration of the AMR Animation, "Tinu Minu and Super Bug," aimed at educating the youth about antimicrobial resistance. It also emphasized recent regulations from the "Drug and Cosmetics Act 2023," introducing strict measures to prevent over-the-counter antibiotic sales and the AMC surveillance report from 2015-2022.

Representatives from DGHS, DSHE, academic and health institutions, development partners, livestock, and fisheries sectors contributed perspectives. The event concluded with a call for continued collaboration to combat AMR, marking the distribution of educational materials during WAAW 2023. In the remaining seven divisions, a rally and advocacy workshop was arranged.



Participants are contributing their inputs in the advocacy event.
Photo: WHO/AMR

Divisional Workshops on SDGs localization

as part of a 'whole of society approach'. Dr. Md. Anwar Hossain Howlader, Senior Secretary highlighted the importance of raising awareness about lifestyle, food habits, and food preparation.



Technical Officer, Health System conveyed WHO inputs in the event.
Photo: WHO/HS

WHO Health Emergency team visit to Bhasan Char!

To familiarize WHO Country Office staff further with the status of health service delivery for the Rohingya refugees a two-member team from the WHE Team visited Bhasan Char Island from 26–28 December 2023. During the visit, the team attended two events: the opening ceremony of the Surgical Camp and the inauguration ceremony of the health card distribution. The team has visited the 20-bed hospital, two integrated Primary Health and Nutrition Centres (PHCs), and a Health Post. The overall healthcare service delivery system for the Rohingya population was observed to be good. The 20-bed hospital provides secondary-level health care services, including EPI, OPD, and IPD, lab, Eye, Dental, and telemedicine. There is a plan to establish a Central Waste Management System. In this regard, UNHCR requested WHO to provide technical support.



Team Leader, HSER, WHO visited Primary Health and Nutrition Centres
Photo: WHO/WHE

Health ageing and health workforce profile drafted

Directorate General of Medical Education (DGME), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and with support from WHO Bangladesh, organized a stakeholders consultation workshop on the finalization of the healthy aging and health workforce profile in Bangladesh on 30 November 2023 at the Conference Room, Old DGHS Building, Mohakhali. About 40 mid to senior-level officials and experts from the MOHFW attended the workshop. Professor Dr Titu Miah, Director General, DGME, attended the event as Chief Guest. From WHO Bangladesh, NPO-HRH attended and facilitated the workshop.



Participants from the stakeholders consultation workshop
Photo: WHO/HS

Orientation seminar on promoting physical activity

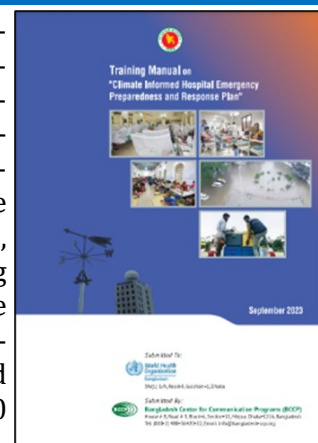


WHO Representative to Bangladesh delivered speech in the event.
Photo: WHO/NCDC

With the technical assistance of the World Health Organization, 'Orientation Seminar on Promoting Physical Activity' was organized by the Non-Communicable Disease Control Program (NCDC) of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) on 13 December 2023 in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel. Senior officials from different Ministries such as Youth and Sports, Local Government, Primary and Mass Education, Education, Housing and Public Works, Mass Communications, and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, actively participated in the seminar. Representatives from UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, and ILO; representatives from academia like BSMMU, and NIMH; media personalities; representatives from non-government and civil society organizations engaged in interactive conversations and dialogues focused on promoting physical activity across all age groups in our country. The seminar was chaired by Professor Dr Mohammad Robed Amin, Line Director of the NCDC. and Dr Bardan Jung Rana, the WHO Representative to Bangladesh attended the seminar as a special guest.

Climate-Resilient Hospital Emergency Preparedness Response Plan

With the technical assistance of WHO, the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research in close collaboration with Line Directorate Hospital Services DGHS, developed a training manual titled "Climate Informed Hospital Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan." 120 health professionals comprised of Hospital Managers, Doctors, Nurses, and allied staff of primary, secondary, and tertiary level hospitals received training based on this manual.



Mobile phone videography training for country comms colleagues!



Part of country communications are with Director General, WHO
Photo: WHO/HQ

WHO HQ audiovisual team has organized an in-person mobile phone videography training for country Communications and HQ staff. The country office communications colleagues supporting HQ in photo and video content production participated in this training. The duration of this mobile phone videography training was from November 20 to 23, 2023. Ms Salma Sultana, NPO-Communication from WHO Bangladesh, was invited to this training. During this visit, the country comms colleagues visited the WHO audiovisual recording studio and the WHO print, photo, and video archive. They attended meetings with the audiovisual team in HQ and other teams such as the social media team, donor relations teams, MEL team, digital health team, Emergency and innovation team, HIA team, and Polio comms team of HQ. They also met with Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director General, and Ms Gabriella Stern, Director of Communication. It was an excellent opportunity for the country comms staff to meet with different technical units of HQ and exchange their learnings.

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Part of participants attended in 16 days of activism
Photo: WHO/WSO

WSO implemented 16 days activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV)

With a focus on "Promoting self-care interventions in Women & Girls across the life course", WHO Cox's Bazaar Sub-Office implemented activities to commemorate the global campaign of "16 days of activism against gender-based violence. In collaboration with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) along with congruence from the GBV subsector led by UNFPA (GBV SS) and SRH WG, WHO implemented this activism to raise awareness among the target audience through disseminating healthcare-related messages. This campaign targeted female participants of three different age groups (10-18 years, 18 -49 years, and above 49 years of age) from both Rohingya and the surrounding host community and conducted interactive group sessions on diverse health issues at 5 Women and Girls Friendly Safe Spaces. In this activity, all key messages were tailored into the Rohingya language for Rohingya beneficiaries and in Bangla for the host communities.

Spotlight

[Dengue Situation Report](#)

[Bangladesh COVID 19 Situation Report](#)

[Early Warning, Alert and Response System \(EWARS\)](#)

[Prothom Alo Round Table discussion : WHO 50 Years Journey in Bangladesh](#)



Completion WHO 75 years celebration!
Social Media Campaign!