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GoB-WHO Coordination Meeting- Reviews Progress, Sets Future Priorities



A number of MoHFW and WHO staff participated in the meeting.
Photo: WHO staff

On 8 May 2025, the Government of Bangladesh and WHO convened the first biannual GWCC meeting at the Ministry of

Health and Family Welfare in Dhaka. Chaired by Mr. Md Saidur Rahman and co-chaired by Dr. Ahmed Jamsheed Mohamed, the meeting reviewed progress, challenges, and strategic priorities.

Discussions covered implementation of the 2024–2025 Programme Budget and planning for 2026–2027 under WHO's GPW 14. WHO Bangladesh reported a budget increase to USD 65.45 million, with 72% utilized. Successful interventions included the national TCV campaign, AMR surveillance, and Rohingya health services. Both parties reaffirmed commitment to SDG 3 and health

Bangladesh takes a UNITED STAND against NCDs!



A significant number of senior officials from over 25 ministries participated in the advocacy meeting.
Photo: External Photographer

Bangladesh confronted a critical health challenge:

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) accounted for 71% of all deaths, with half occurring prematurely, posing a serious threat to achieving the SDG targets. Recognizing the urgency, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, with technical support from WHO, convened a landmark high-level policy advocacy meeting in Dhaka on 3 June 2025.

The event brought together secretaries from more than 24 ministries and other senior officials, demonstrating strong multisectoral commitment. Hon'ble Cabinet Secretary Dr. Sheikh Abdur Rashid emphasized the urgent need for coordinated efforts to integrate NCD prevention into national policies. Health Services Division Secretary Mr. Md. Saidur Rahman announced a joint declaration, which was unanimously endorsed, paving the way for unified action.

WHO Representative Dr. Ahmed Jamsheed Mohamed commended Bangladesh for its "significant and welcome paradigm shift" in advancing multisectoral collaboration. The meeting built upon Bangladesh's Multisectoral Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2018–2025), with the goal of achieving a 30% reduction in premature NCD mortality by 2030.

World No Tobacco Day 2025: Strengthening Commitments to End Tobacco Use



Guests with the awardee honored for contributions to the fight against tobacco.
Photo: WHO Staff

On May 31, the National Tobacco Control Cell (NTCC) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in collaboration with WHO and partners, organized a national event at Osmani Memorial Hall to mark World No Tobacco Day under the theme “Unmasking the Appeal: Exposing Industry Tactics on Tobacco and Nicotine Products.” Ms. Nurjahan Begum, Hon’ble Health Adviser, called for stronger tobacco control laws and a tobacco-free Bangladesh to reduce health burdens. Speakers highlighted the harmful impact of tobacco cultivation and industry exploitation. Dr. Rajesh Narwal, Acting WHO Representative, praised Bangladesh’s progress, including proposed amendments to tobacco control laws and the ban on e-cigarette imports, and congratulated the National Board of Revenue for receiving the WHO Director-General’s Special Recognition Award 2025 for its commitment to tobacco control.

Youth Rise to End TB: Bangladesh Launches Bold Declaration for Change



Deputy WHO representative is with the participants of Youth2EndTB Townhall and Action Planning Workshop.
Photo: External Photographer

Tuberculosis (TB) remains one of the world’s deadliest infectious diseases, claiming 1.3 million lives each year. In Bangladesh, young people aged 15–34 shoulder much of this burden—but they are also emerging as powerful agents of change in the fight to end TB.

Last week in Dhaka, the momentum was undeniable as more than 150 youth leaders, public health experts, and policymakers

gathered at the Youth2EndTB Townhall and Action Planning Workshops, hosted by WHO Bangladesh. The outcome: the Bangladesh Youth Declaration to End TB—a bold and actionable roadmap that places youth leadership at the center of national TB elimination efforts. Academic institutions such as IUB and BRAC University are stepping up as vital partners in this youth-driven movement. Through the WHO 1+1 Youth Initiative, young leaders are mobilizing their peers, raising awareness, and demonstrating that youth-led action is a driving force for national progress.

Driving Health Reform: Unpacking the commission’s recommendation deliberate next step.



WHO representative is with Health reform Commission members.
Photo: External Photographer

The Health Reforms Commission submitted a landmark 322-page report to the Chief Advisor, proposing major changes including increased health financing, free primary health care as a constitutional right, a unique health ID, and improved access to essential medicines. The report was widely praised, and the Chief Advisor approved its implementation.

To facilitate internal understanding, WHO Bangladesh hosted a ‘Shastho Charcha’ on 15 May 2025, featuring presentations by Commission members Prof. Zakir Hossain, Prof. Dr. Liaquat Ali, Dr. Azharul Islam, and Dr. Ahsanur Rahman. They outlined key reform areas: health financing, HRH, access to medicines, and governance. WHO staff engaged in meaningful discussions on implementation pathways, challenges, and opportunities for a stronger, more resilient health system.

Lessons from Crisis: Stakeholders unite for Stronger Dengue Preparedness in Cox’s Bazar



The Additional Secretary (Public Health Wing), supported by the Director (MIS), DGHS, administers the first OCV dose to an infant in Camp 04.
Photo: Mehnaz Manzur, WHO

On 28 May 2025, WHO, in collaboration with the Civil Surgeon's Office of Cox's Bazar and RRRC, held an After Action Review (AAR) to evaluate the 2024 dengue outbreak response in Rohingya camps and host communities. The outbreak, the worst since 2018, saw over 16,500 cases and nine deaths. Over 40 stakeholders reviewed challenges including weak vector surveillance, fragmented environmental interventions, and limited cross-sectoral coordination. Key priorities included improving community-based surveillance, sanitation infrastructure, diagnostics, and inter-agency coordination. The AAR emphasized institutionalizing response protocols and translating lessons into action to strengthen preparedness and ensure a more effective response to future outbreaks. [Read more](#)

Enhancing Cholera Preparedness in Cox's Bazar: A Multisectoral approach



Nargis Akter, NPO - Water, Sanitation, Health and Environment, WHO, discusses strategies to improve cholera preparedness and response. Photo: Terence Ngwabe Che.

In collaboration with health and WASH partners, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Bangladesh conducted a multisectoral tabletop simulation exercise on 6 May 2025 in Cox's Bazar to assess and strengthen cholera preparedness and response in Rohingya refugee camps and surrounding host communities. The exercise brought together frontline professionals—including health managers, epidemiologists, medical coordinators, and WASH experts—to review the Acute Watery Diarrhoea/Cholera Preparedness and Response Plan, identify operational gaps, and reinforce intersectoral coordination. The simulation also incorporated key elements from the 2024/25 Cholera Action Plan and the Joint Assessment and Response Team (JART) framework to ensure alignment with global preparedness and response standards. [Read more](#)

Improving Vaccine Efficiency: Reducing wastage and Scaling up Coverage



A group of participants from government counterpart in the meeting. Photo: WHO staff

With WHO Bangladesh's support, a national workshop on vaccine wastage was held on 24 May 2025 at EPI HQ, DGHS. Chaired by Dr. SM Abdullah Al Murad and inaugurated by Dr. Shibbir Ahmed Osmani, the event brought together national and sub-national officials, WHO, and UNICEF.

Participants reviewed wastage data, with MR vaccine showing improvement—from 45.2% (2022) to 27.4% (2023), after switching to 5-dose vials. However, BCG wastage remained high at 82.6%. Best practices from Savar and Gazipur highlighted effective planning and stock management.

Recommendations focused on session optimization, IPC, training on MDVP, and digital tools. EPI committed to a national assessment and capacity strengthening to reduce wastage and improve immunization efficiency.

“Shastho Charcha” Series: Addressing NCDs – The Ticking Bomb, Mental Health & Injury Prevention



A group of participants in the Shastho Charcha session. Photo: External Photographer

With a view to enhancing technical capacity among over 320 WHO personnel, WHO Bangladesh organized the first technical session, titled Shastho Charcha, on 28 May 2025. More than 100 WHO personnel and government stakeholders—including Programme Directors and Programme Managers of the WHO Biennium Workplan for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), mental health, and injury prevention—participated in the session.

The theme of the session was **“NCDs – The Ticking Bomb,”** focusing on the burden, current interventions, challenges, and best practices (“best buys”) for the prevention and control of NCDs, mental health issues, injury prevention, and rehabilitation.

The session underscored the escalating burden of NCDs in countries like Bangladesh, which significantly impacts individuals, healthcare systems, and the national economy. Bangladesh is actively implementing strategic approaches to improve public health and socioeconomic outcomes.

The technical session on mental health covered key areas including strategic goals, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, disease burden and investments, recent publications, progress in leadership and governance, community-based services, capacity building, as well as promotion and prevention

initiatives. WHO's LIVE LIFE approach to suicide prevention and its current implementation in Bangladesh were also highlighted.

The injury prevention and rehabilitation session provided valuable insights into the burden of injuries, prevalent misconceptions, and the progress of ongoing initiatives. Comprehensive discussions addressed the burden of NCDs, intervention strategies, mental health progress, and injury prevention efforts.

The high volume of technical questions from participants reflected the session's success in fostering a culture of continuous learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, further strengthening WHO Bangladesh's capacity to build a healthier nation.

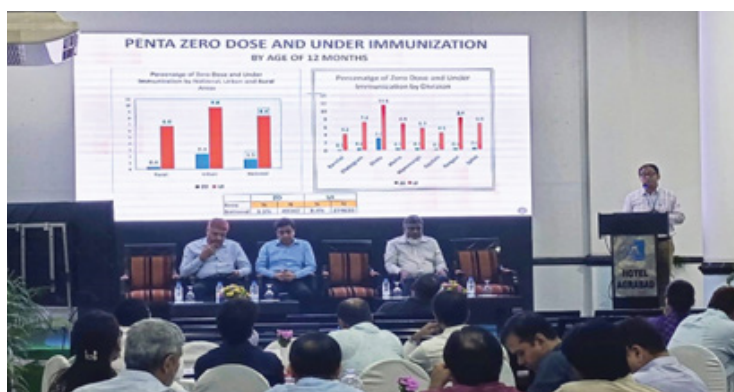
Boosting Cholera Protection for Rohingya Children



A young girl receives the 2nd dose of the OCV Vaccine in the Rohingya Camps.
Photo: WHO/Terence Ngwabe Ch

On 27 April 2025, the World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh and health sector partners, launched the second-round of a targeted Oral Cholera Vaccination (OCV) campaign in Cox's Bazar. This initiative aims to administer a second dose of the vaccine to Rohingya refugee children aged 1 to 5 years, building on the success of the initial mass vaccination campaign conducted earlier this year. Running from April 27 to 30, 2025, the second phase is focused on strengthening immunity among the youngest and most vulnerable population. [Read more](#)

Strengthen Immunization at Divisional Level



Guests are on the stage and participants are listening the speech in the meeting.
Photo: WHO staff

With support from the World Health Organization (WHO), a series of two-day divisional review meetings were held across all divisions in April and May 2025, focusing on routine immunization (EPI), measles-rubella (MR) elimination, vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs), and vaccine safety.

Chaired by the Divisional Directors of Health, the meetings brought together health managers from divisions, districts, upazilas, city corporations, the National EPI Programme, WHO, and development partners. Participants reviewed program performance data — including findings from the recent coverage evaluation survey — and shared experiences on local successes and ongoing challenges.

The meetings also introduced the upcoming Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) campaign, drawing on lessons learned from the recent HPV vaccine rollout. WHO's continued support reflected its strong commitment to strengthening immunization systems and accelerating measles-rubella elimination in Bangladesh.

Multisource Collaborative Surveillance to Strength Pandemic Preparedness



Group photo of the workshop participants
Photo: WHO/Staff

With support from WHO SEARO and the WHO Country Office, Bangladesh has introduced Multisource Collaborative Surveillance (MSCS) to enhance public health intelligence and strengthen evidence-based decision-making. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the urgent need for an integrated surveillance approach that draws on diverse data sources—both within and beyond the health sector.

As part of the WHO South-East Asia Region's Strategic Framework for Strengthening Surveillance, MSCS was launched with a focus on influenza and other respiratory viruses, given their pandemic potential. A national workshop, held from 12–15 May 2025, brought together stakeholders from government, NGOs, academia, and sectors including human, animal, and environmental health. Participants discussed strategies to institutionalize MSCS and build national capacity for collaborative surveillance. The workshop outcomes will guide efforts to expand surveillance beyond influenza, strengthening pandemic preparedness and contributing to a more resilient and secure health system in Bangladesh.

Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures: WHO Bangladesh Marks World Health Day 2025



WHO Bangladesh celebrated World Health Day 2025 on 8 April with a vibrant Town Hall engaging staff from across the country! The event featured technical presentations, insightful discussions, and a fun quiz competition, all centered around this year's theme: "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures."

The focus on maternal and newborn health highlighted the importance of investing in the well-being of mothers and babies, the true foundation of a healthy society. Special thanks to our colleagues from sub-offices and divisional offices for their enthusiastic participation! [Read more](#) [Glimpse of the event](#)

Equipping Future Doctors with Tools for Health Communication Excellence



Participants are with WHO Deputy Representative and NPO communication at WHO office
Photo: WHO staff

Over the course of two impactful days, WHO Bangladesh hosted 30 dynamic medical students from the Bangladesh Medical Students' Society (BMSS) at its Country Office in Dhaka for an intensive Communications Workshop. Divided into two batches, participants from 30 medical colleges across the country explored the critical role of effective communication in advancing public health.

The workshop was facilitated by Ms. Salma Sultana, National Professional Officer (Communications), and honored by the presence of Dr. Rajesh Narwal, Deputy WHO Representative to Bangladesh. Key topics included public health messaging, advocacy, crisis communication, and strategies to counter health misinformation.

Through interactive sessions, real-life case discussions, and simulation exercises, students gained practical tools to become confident, people-centered communicators and advocates for health. This initiative reflects WHO Bangladesh's ongoing commitment to youth engagement and capacity building, nurturing the next generation of doctors to lead not only in clinical practice but also in fostering community trust and meaningful public dialogue.

Living No child Behind: Vaccination Continues Despite Floods in Remote Bangladesh



The team is on the way to the vaccination center.
Photo: WHO staff

In the remote, flood-prone area of Haglar Char in Jamalpur district, healthcare workers are going the extra mile—literally—to ensure no child is left behind when it comes to life-saving vaccines. Despite rising water levels caused by recent heavy rainfall, the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) team in Dewanganj Upazila continued their scheduled vaccination sessions without interruption.

Mr. Khurshedul Islam, a dedicated Health Assistant with 15 years of service, carried the vaccine carrier through submerged routes to reach children in need. "It's vital we keep up with vaccinations—floods can lead to disease outbreaks, and these vaccines protect our children," he said.

Supporting the effort, Dr. Saifullah, Surveillance and Immunization Medical Officer for Jamalpur, ensured cold chain maintenance, provided on-the-job training, and accompanied the team to monitor infection prevention and control (IPC) measures during the session. Following the visit, he met with Dr. Ahsan Habib, Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer, who reaffirmed their commitment: "We are all in this together—no matter what, we will continue our efforts."

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