

3rd Bi weekly knowledge sharing Virtual Seminar Session

Date: 5th March 2024 (Tuesday)

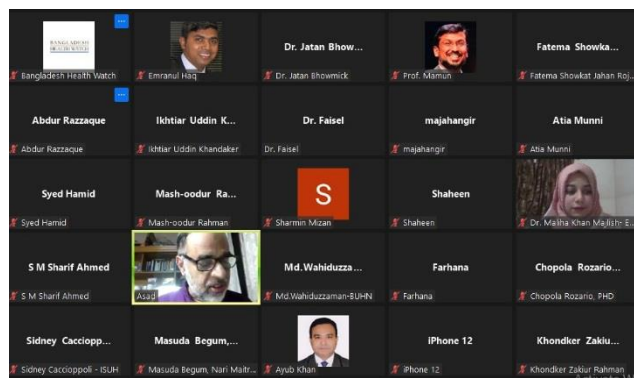
Time: 20:00 – 21:30 BST(GMT+6)

Topic: Urban Health and Climate Resilience

Seminar Report

"Harmony in Health: Insights from the Third BUHN Virtual Seminar on Urban Health and Climate Resilience in Bangladesh"

The Third Bi-weekly Knowledge Sharing Virtual Seminar Session on Urban Health and Climate Resilience, orchestrated by the Bangladesh Urban Health Network (BUHN), unfolded on March 5, 2024, spanning from 8:00 PM (BST) to 9:30 PM (BST) through the Zoom platform. The seminar's comprehensive agenda encapsulated various segments, honoring *Md. Ashadul Islam*, Former Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), as the Chief Guest, *Professor Syed Abdul Hamid* from the Institute of Health Economics, University of Dhaka, and *Dr. Sharmin Mizan*, Deputy Project Director (Service Delivery) at the Project Management Unit, UPHCSDP-II, as the panelist. *Dr. Ikhtiar Uddin Khandaker*, Director (Health Program) at CARE Bangladesh, and *Fatema Showkot Jahan Rojy*, Senior Deputy Director at Partners in Health and Development (PHD), gave presentation on "Urban Health Program: CARE Bangladesh Experience" and "Enhancing Climate-Resilient Urban Health in Bangladesh" respectively. *Dr. Maliha Khan Majlish*, Senior Technical and Development Officer at Eminence, steered the event, ensuring a seamless flow of insightful discussions and presentations.



The Seminar commencing with a Welcome Speech by *Dr. Magrub Jahangir*, Health Officer at UNICEF and Technical Support Team Member of BUHN, extended a warm greeting to the participants and underscored the critical nature of the seminar's focal point, especially in the context of climate change and vulnerability prevalent in Bangladesh.



Urban Health Program: CARE Bangladesh Experience
5th March 2024

The first Presentation, *Dr. Ikhtiar Uddin Khandaker*, Director (Health Program) at CARE Bangladesh, presented the "Urban Health Program: CARE Bangladesh Experience," highlighting the organization's urban shift in the garment industry, showcasing impactful projects that improved healthcare, working conditions, and reduced absenteeism through involvement of factory management and community support groups, leading to increased productivity and quality,

while emphasizing gender empowerment for female workers and support for migrants. Furthermore, *Fatema Showkot Jahan Rojy*, Senior Deputy Director at Partners in Health and Development (PHD), presented on "Enhancing Climate-Resilient Urban Health in Bangladesh," addressing the escalating impact of climate change, highlighting the prevalence of diseases in densely populated areas, emphasizing challenges for women, migrants, and vulnerable groups, and proposing a comprehensive operational framework for climate-resilient health systems, including leadership, governance, a skilled climate-informed workforce, and risk assessment, while stressing the importance of client feedback and continuous quality improvement and outlining future initiatives, including climate-induced health risk assessments in urban slums and ongoing projects funded by Pathfinder International, Swedish SIDA, and UNICEF.



Enhancing Climate-Resilient Urban Health in Bangladesh

Presented by:
Fatema Showkat Jahan Rojy
Senior Deputy Director
Partners in Health and Development (PHD)



The ensuing Panel Discussion witnessed *Professor Syed Abdul Hamid* from the Institute of Health Economics, University of Dhaka, commending CARE Bangladesh for its impactful and cost-effective work on climate change and health, expressing concern about the inadequate attention to health in policy documents and urged policymakers to heed suggestions from discussions. The discussion further unfolded with *Dr. Sharmin Mizan*, Deputy Project Director (Service Delivery) at the Project Management Unit, UPHCSDP-II, highlighted the vital integration of public health with infrastructure for mitigating climate impacts in urban areas, advocating for vulnerability assessments in construction and projects to ensure resilience against natural disasters, and discussed the role of the Urban Primary Healthcare Service Delivery Project, including initiatives like rainwater harvesting, energy conservation, and knowledge sharing to address climate-related health issues.

The Open Discussion/Q&A Session provided a platform for diverse perspectives. *Prof. Khondaker A. Mamun*, Founder of CMED Health, proposed the creation of a mapping system to identify areas of expertise within organizations, emphasizing the need for initiatives combating climate change and improving health. *Dr. Abdur Razzaqul Alam*, Consultant at UNICEF, thanked BUHN for the invitation and posed a specific question to *Fatema Showkot Jahan Rojy* regarding challenges faced during the implementation of the 'Green Hospital' initiative, especially in regards to service providers. In response, *Fatema Showkot Jahan Rojy* shared that they are in the designing phase of the 'Green Hospital' initiative in the Mongla Upazila Health Complex and highlighted the lack of direct policy guidelines for making communities resilient to climate change. *Dr. Jatan Bhowmick*, Project Director at Save the Children, sought clarity on the implementation of health service delivery at the district and village levels. *Dr. Magrub Jahangir*, Health Officer at UNICEF, clarified that while the Local Government Division has the primary responsibility for urban primary healthcare, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is not precluded from providing urban health services. *Emranul Haq*, Consortium Programme Manager at Concern Worldwide, emphasized the importance of raising awareness and initiating discussions about urban health and climate change resilience in Bangladesh. *Shaikh Masudul Alam*, Program Director of Bangladesh Health Watch, stressed the significance of clarity in the government's mechanism for urban health

and recommended the inclusion of specific recommendations in the upcoming Operational Plan (OP) for the benefit of the urban population.

The Seminar's climactic moment arrived with the speech by the Chief Guest, *Md. Ashadul Islam*, Former Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), underscored the importance of innovation in healthcare and environmental efforts, proposing the creation of a platform to address emerging issues, emphasizing healthcare's delicate nature, and advocating for collaboration with the local government and Ministry of Health, while suggesting the formation of a technical group to develop recommendations for the Minister of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives.

Finally, during the Closing Remarks, *Dr. Abu Jamil Faisal*, Chairman & Treasurer of Health

21, expressed gratitude to all participants for attending the seminar and proposed the formation of a small technical group to review ideas and recommend them to the MoHFW & MoLGRD&Co, suggested involving representative from the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change in future discussions, and emphasized the need to develop plans and programs addressing urban health and climate change issues.

In conclusion, the seminar served as a pivotal platform for disseminating knowledge and insights on the intersection of urban health and climate resilience in Bangladesh. The discussions and presentations highlighted the challenges faced, the innovative initiatives undertaken, and the crucial need for collaborative efforts to address the complex and interrelated issues of urban health and climate change. The decisions emerging from the seminar, ranging from promoting collaboration among organizations to advocating for policy guidelines and the formation of a technical group, reflect a collective commitment to fostering sustainable solutions for the well-being of urban communities amidst the challenges posed by climate change.



Bi-weekly Knowledge Sharing Virtual Seminar
Urban Health & Climate Resilience

Host:
Bangladesh Urban Health Network (BUHN)

Date: 5th March 2024
Time: 08.00 PM to 09.30 PM (BST)

Chief Guest
Md. Ashadul Islam
Former Secretary
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Presenters

Dr. Ikhtiar Uddin Khandaker
Director (Health Program)
CARE Bangladesh
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Panel Speakers

Dr. Syed Abdul Hamid
Professor, Institute of Health Economics
University of Dhaka

Fatema Showkat Jahan Rojy
Senior Deputy Director
Program in Health and Development (PHD)
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dr. Sharmin Mizan
Deputy Project Director (Service Delivery)
Project Management Unit, UPHCSOP-II

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