



Reducing Newborn and Child Death Through Public Private Partnership

Tama, a resident of Parokhali village in Khulna district, was devastated when her 15-day-old daughter was diagnosed with pneumonia-related complications and needed treatment, including immediate oxygen support. Following the instructions of the local doctor, she and her husband rushed the newborn to Khulna Shishu (Children) Hospital (KSH), situated eight kilometers from her village and got her admitted. Thanks to the newly installed oxygen supply system at the hospital, baby Sangita received a steady flow of medical oxygen and recovered.

Tama says, “I am happy that we decided to bring my daughter to Khulna Shishu Hospital and start treatment. If the oxygen support had not been given to her in time, it could have become fatal.”

Tama is one of many mothers who expressed the same sentiment about how their children’s lives were saved through the uninterrupted oxygen supply they received at KSH. On average, 25-30 children daily receive oxygen support at KSH, which treats children in the southern part of Bangladesh.

This 285-bed secondary-level private hospital for neonates and children was established in 1980 by the local elites of Khulna with philanthropic objectives to provide specialized services, such as a newborn intensive care unit, incubators, surgery, and urology, along with pathological lab and diagnostic services, child nutrition, and routine Expanded Program of Immunization services. The hospital mainly runs on the revenue generated by the facility, but the government provides a nominal subsidy to adjust its yearly expenses. Need-based donations of medical equipment from local elites and others work as assets for the hospital.

Upon the request of the local USAID Mission, the SIAPS Program, along with another USAID-funded project, the Social Marketing Company (SMC), jointly conducted an assessment of KSH to identify opportunities to make the hospital’s systems more capacitated and sustainable. The assessment showed that one of the major challenges for the hospital was its irregular and manual oxygen supply, which poses a potential risk to the lives of many newborns and children.

To address this challenge, SIAPS commissioned a central oxygen supply mechanism within the hospital area in February 2016 to strengthen the hospital’s newborn and child health service delivery systems. With SIAPS’ technical assistance, KSH introduced a web-based health information management system in the hospital to support evidence-based decision making and strengthened its medicine warehousing system. SIAPS also worked with KSH to develop a long term sustainable plan and marketing strategy for the hospital to be able to expand its current services and continue to save more lives in the future.



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Such collaboration paved the way for SIAPS to build a successful public-private partnership that has the potential to speed up progress toward ending preventable child and maternal deaths (EPCMD).

“I am happy that we decided to bring my daughter to Khulna Shishu Hospital and start treatment”, said Tama. “If the oxygen support had not been given to her in time, it could have become fatal.”



Tama with her daughter Sangita, who received treatment for potentially fatal, pneumonia-related complications.

Photo credit: Mohammad Hossain, SIAPS Bangladesh



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