



Summary Position Paper Community Clinics

National Thematic Forum

The National Thematic Forum is an apex body and a theme-based platform for civil society and grassroots/local organisations. It provides an opportunity for civil society representatives, government actors, and other stakeholders to engage in discussion and formulate recommendations exclusively dedicated to citizens' priorities in Bangladesh. Platforms for Dialogue (P4D) is providing capacity building support to the Thematic Forum.

Problems related to Community Clinics

Health is now universally regarded as an important indicator of human development. Bangladesh made a pledge to ensure 'Health for All' (HFA) in 2000 by providing Primary Health Care (PHC). However, the results of relevant established indicators suggested that Bangladesh would not be able to fulfil such a pledge due to the unsatisfactory PHC for rural communities in Bangladesh. In order to provide easily accessible primary health services, the Government of Bangladesh established Community Clinics (CC) in rural areas. Health services provided at the CCs, however, have not been as successful as many expected, and there are concerns over the quality of services provided at these community clinics.

Poor service at CCs is associated with multiple factors including:

- Staff not following the scheduled hours of operation, or even keeping the CCs closed on some days
- Poor infrastructure and facilities (i.e. toilet, water, electricity, communication, etc.)
- Insufficient equipment and medicine supplies
- Inactive/Inadequate capacity of Community Groups
- Lack of monitoring, supervision, and accountability
- Inadequate capacity of community health service providers
- Poor patients are not treated with respect
- Weak fund mobilisation
- Citizen's Charter is not displayed at CCs

Consequences of poor health services at CCs

- Target beneficiaries are not getting proper treatment and referral services
- Increased suffering and expenses of poor patients
- Reduced trust and confidence of CC services among rural people
- Community does not take ownership of local health initiatives and CC sustainability is uncertain
- Challenge to achieve SDG goals
- Rural people remain unaware of the CC services

Possible Solutions to Overcome the Problems

- Recruit qualified Community Health Workers at the CCs
- Ensure health workers' regular attendance at clinics
- Maintain a regular supply of medicine and essential medical equipment
- Develop and maintain proper clinic infrastructure
- Implement client-based tools for supervision, monitoring, accountability, and community engagement
- Strengthen capacity of the CGs and CSGs
- Ensure Multipurpose Health Volunteers (MHVs) are available to support CCs
- Ensure GO-NGO coordination and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Mechanisms
- Resource mobilisation of community contribution for the clinics
- Run awareness-raising campaigns about the community clinic services

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