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World Bank approves $200 M to help Bangladesh improve primary healthcare services

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With high population density, climate change, and rapid urbanisation, new health challenges are emerging



The World Bank has approved $200 million to help Bangladesh improve primary healthcare services for treatment, prevention and referral for common illnesses including mosquito-borne diseases like dengue, and medical waste management in Dhaka North and South City Corporations, Chattogram City Corporation, and Savar and Tarabo municipalities.

The Urban Health, Nutrition and Population Project will establish a network of primary health centres offering a broad range of health, nutrition, and population services along with a direct referral system with secondary and tertiary-level facilities. About 2.5 million children under 5 in these urban areas will receive services.

The project will improve antenatal services for women, with a target of over 250,000 women receiving at least four checkups during pregnancy. It will also support hypertension screening and follow-up of about 1.3 million adults. To reduce out-of-pocket expenditure on medical care for the poor people, the project will renovate selected existing public health facilities, including government outdoor dispensaries, and family planning clinics.

The project will also focus on environmental health and preventive services like mosquito control, medical waste management, and behavior change communication to promote healthy lifestyles to prevent illnesses and mitigate the effects of climate change and air pollution on human health. It will support the development and implementation of a multi-sectoral strategy to manage infectious disease outbreaks in cities and municipalities. To prevent dengue, the project will introduce a climate-based dengue early warning system and outbreak response capacities as well as take measures to clear breeding sites.