



Photo Credit: SHN

Advancing Universal Health Coverage Activity (AUHC) in Bangladesh

About

The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) **Advancing Universal Health Coverage (AUHC) Activity** is a six-year, research and development project designed to transform the Surjer Hashi Network (SHN)—formerly known as Smiling Sun—into a sustainable, gender-sensitive, and pro-poor social enterprise aiming to provide quality and affordable health services for the population of Bangladesh. The AUHC activity contributes to the Government of Bangladesh's universal health coverage (UHC) commitments by supporting the health needs of low-income families, particularly through improved, high-quality maternal and child health, nutrition, tuberculosis, noncommunicable diseases, and family planning services; and ensuring effective reach for urban and remote people, particularly women, adolescents, and children.

Primary healthcare services provided through the SHN and Green Hill (GH), another local organization supported by the project, affirm USAID's longstanding commitment to ensuring affordable and accessible healthcare to those in need. With support from the AUHC Activity, the SHN operates **134 clinics covering 54 out of 64 administrative districts** across the country, while Green Hill operates **18 primary care clinics** that provide services to patients in **hard-to-reach communities** in the remote Chittagong Hill Tracts region.

Project Objectives

USAID's AUHC Activity has the following objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Develop and implement a program to transform SHN into a centrally managed, sustainable private social enterprise.
- **Objective 2:** Adopt proven innovative approaches to create new strategies to expand access to and uptake of essential health service packages.

Project Name

Advancing Universal Health Coverage (AUHC) Activity

Chief of Party

Parvez Asheque

Duration

October 2017 through December 2023

Contract Amount

\$83,704,694

Prime Contractor

Chemonics International Inc.

Consortium Partners

- Population Services International
- Thinkwell LLC

Local Partner Organizations

- Surjer Hashi Network
- Green Hill

- **Objective 3:** Develop and implement sustainable financial systems to facilitate expanded coverage and ensure equitable access to health services.
- **Objective 4:** Improve the quality of care.
- **Objective 5:** Improve program strategies drawn from lessons learned (cross-cutting).

Select Project Achievements and Highlights

Building a successful private social enterprise.

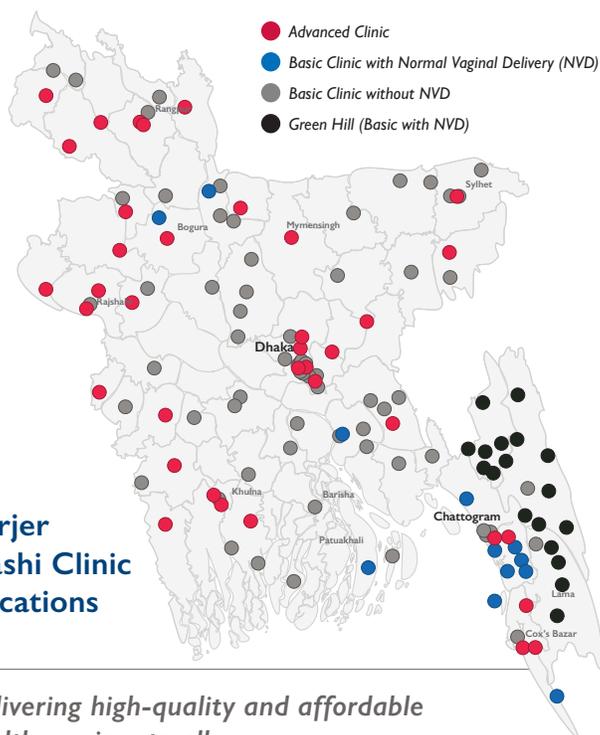
- **Founded** the SHN Enterprise and governance structure which transferred 369 clinics' HR, assets, and management from 25 NGOs to operate as a single entity.
- **Strengthened** SHN's centralized capacity utilizing USAID'S Non-U.S. Organization Pre-Award Survey (NUPAS) framework to target organizational capacity building in financial management, procurement, human resource systems and optimization, project management, and organizational sustainability.
- **Developed** a fully centralized accounting system (Tally) and client-centered MIS across the network; introduced an electronic medical record (EMR) system in 134 clinics.

Improving access to and uptake of essential healthcare.

- **Institutionalized** a clinical operation manual to standardize services across the network of clinics.
- **Forged** strategic private sector partnerships with Praava Health, Medipath Lab, Marico, DOT Glasses, Truenat solutions, and Bkash to broaden service offerings and diagnostics.
- **Supported** 133.8 million service contacts offered in SHN and GH clinics in four years.

Ensuring a sustainable financial future for Surjer Hashi Network.

- **Built** SHN's staff capacity in financial forecasting and analysis to independently develop clinic-by-clinic revenue, cost projections, and conduct profit/loss analysis.
- **Increased** SHN's average network-wide cost recovery from 38% in 2017 to 56.5% in 2022.
- **Standardized** minimum pricing and targeted discount policies across the network to support SHN's goal of creating access to affordable quality healthcare services, while ensuring its sustainability.
- **Developed** a road map for SHN to build organizational capacity to access impact investments and venture capital.



Surjer Hashi Clinic Locations

Delivering high-quality and affordable health services to all.

- **Institutionalized** a quality improvement system (QIS) to systematically improve care throughout the entire SHN network.
- **Trained** 476 staff in infection prevention, quality assurance, clinical management, tuberculosis counseling, safe delivery, nutrition, and more.
- **Strengthened** service delivery by offering specialist services, extended hours, and shortening wait time by 30 to 35 minutes.
- **Commissioned** 130 ultrasonogram (USG) machines (70 in color).

Applying best practices and lessons learned for continued success.

- **Conducted** research initiatives including a Market Landscape study, a functionality assessment of community service providers, a satellite spot sustainability assessment, and analysis of Cesarean-section indications and outcomes that have informed evidence-based business decisions for SHN.
- **Prepared** service reports for the Bangladeshi Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to inform national level planning.
- **Captured** program learnings and results through newsletters, technical briefs, partner convenings, reports, press, and journal articles; "Caesarean Section Indications and Outcomes: The Surjer Hashi Network Experience" submitted for publication in an international peer reviewed journal.