



POLICY BRIEF



Public Private Partnership in Improving Access and Utilization of Health Care Services: Scopes, Opportunities and Challenges

Key Recommendations

1. Formation of a technical committee comprising of relevant stakeholders is required to ensure coordination.
2. Develop a comprehensive guideline specific for PPP in health.
3. Create a facilitating environment in the ministry.
4. Prioritise emergency care, waste management, diagnostic and imaging services, ambulance, laundry and cleaning services and unutilised physical facilities
5. Choose among for-profit commercial sectors, non-profit NGOs and private healthcare providers by seeking EOIs and assessing unsolicited proposals.
6. Consider needs and priorities by MOHFW while screening the EOIs and existing proposals.
7. Keep proposals aligned with both parties' interests and goal by fair assessments and feasibility studies.
8. Ensure transparency by identifying conflicts of interests while bidding process and pre-contract negotiation.
9. Consider small scale implementation with uniform risk-sharing and ensure post-contract monitoring.

Introduction:

Private sectors like NGOs, for-profit and non-profit organisations have significant contributions to health in terms of financing and managing healthcare services. In developing countries like Bangladesh, the private sector becomes more critical because, with limited resources, the governments struggle to ensure proper health care for everybody. That is why the public-private partnership can offer new opportunities by sharing risks, resources and finance.

Aim and objective:

This study aimed to find out the possibilities, scopes and challenges of public-private partnership (PPP) in health. The findings of the research will inform necessary elements to consider for developing guidelines and strategies to plan and implement PPP in the Ministry of health and family welfare (MOHFW).

Method:

A mixed-method approach was followed for the study combining desk review, case studies and qualitative data analysis. The findings in this report are generated from shreds of global, regional and local evidence obtained from the desk reviews, observations from the case study and qualitative data from the interviews and group discussions.

Findings:

Potential scopes of PPP in health lies in terms of extending the time of public healthcare services, minimising the cost of the overall treatment and enhancing the capacity of healthcare providers and managers. For the health sector, the government can implement PPP either by hiring private organisations, purchasing services or outsourcing or contracting doctors. Contracting out the underutilised health

facilities (such as 10/20 bedded hospitals) and robust referral system (such as through general practitioners recruited by the government) can help expand health service coverage in the country. Partnering with private entities to provide healthcare services to hard-to-reach areas, generic drug production and introducing health insurance can increase equity in health. Also, PPP can be implemented in case of the ambulance, security, laundry, cleaning and waste management service in the public healthcare facilities, diagnostics, dialysis, imaging, emergency services and capacity development of service providers.

Proper implementation of PPP in health requires to have an enabling environment at the policy level. Such an enabling environment can be facilitated by having a PPP guideline for health sector and a legal framework for private partners considering the alignment of values between the public and private sector. Also, institutional capacities in the form of training or guideline in the relevant sectors for the key actors are essential. In the whole process of implementing PPP in health, conflicts of interests must also be carefully considered to not only ensure transparency but also make it scalable and sustainable. Furthermore, PPP must not lead to any market distortion because of the collaboration instead encourage competitive health market in the country.

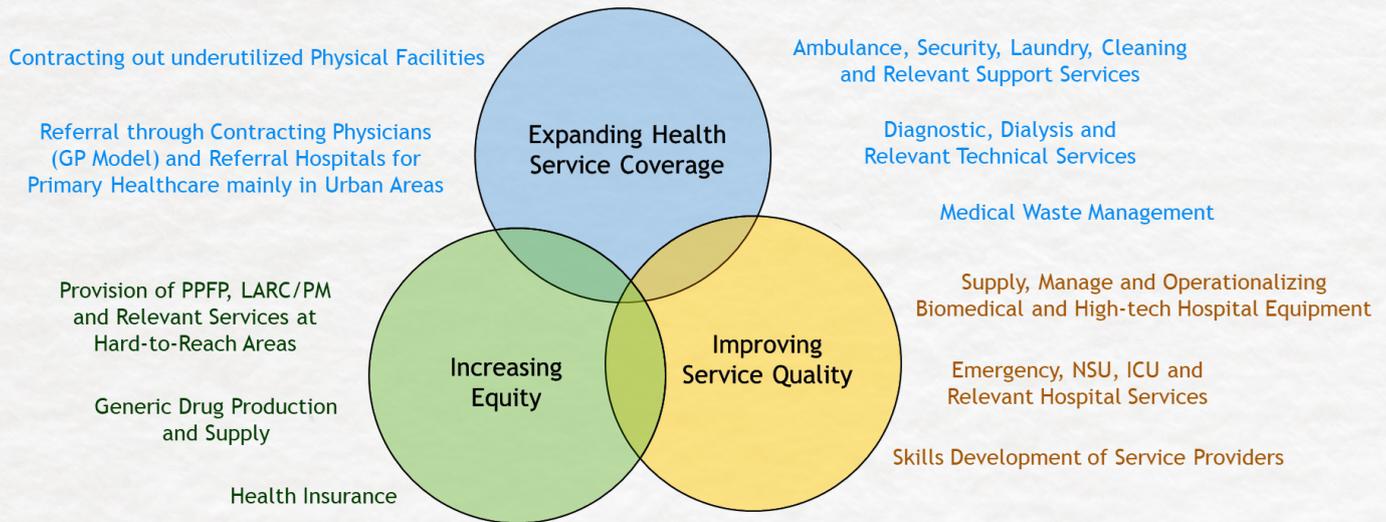
To overcome current challenges, the formation of a technical committee with relevant stakeholders in the ministries is essential. The involvement, leadership and guidance of this committee will ensure coordination in the process which is currently missing. A comprehensive guideline for PPP in health also needs to be developed by the Ministry of health that can guide both the technical committee and key stakeholders. Relevant stakeholders in both public and private sector can be sensitised through workshops. These workshops can help to prioritise the service domains where PPP should be considered and explored.

Challenge and Mitigation Strategies for PPP in Health

There are multiple challenges and risks which can be overcome by having mitigation strategies while planning and implementing PPP in health sector:

Issues	Challenges	Mitigation Strategy
Policy and Legal Framework	No dedicated act or policy for health specific PPP	A comprehensive guideline for PPP in health
	No framework for service or management-focused partnership projects	Incentive mechanisms created to encourage private partners
	More complex and time consuming to procure and manage	Facilitative policy, legal and institutional framework
Alignment of Values	Inability to maximize social benefits and welfare from a PPP project in health	Balanced subsidisation and incentivization for private partners
	Lack of service coverage in hard-to-reach and poor areas	Profit generation scheme for private organisations
	Out of pocket expenditure and equity in health	A combined investment mechanism for PPP in health
Institutional Capacity	Lack of capacity for contract performance management	Dedicated PPP unit in the ministry with trained professionals
	Lack of human resources to monitor PPP projects	Monitoring cell within the public partner
	Legal, finance and risk management for PPP projects	Training and capacity building of dedicated positions in the contracting authority
Conflict of Interest	Granting oneself or others unjustified direct or indirect advantages	Decision making through the approval of a technical committee dedicated to PPP in health
	Refusing to grant a beneficiary the rights or advantages	Open bidding process with transparent cost benefit analysis
	Committing undue or wrongful acts or failing to carry out acts that are mandatory	Provision of punishment or compensation in the contract of PPP project
Market Distortion	Distortion of a viable commercial health services market	Ensuring fair selection of the private partner by a competitive process
	Disrupted supply chain for health commodities	Careful consideration while distributing health commodities by NGOs

Scope of PPP in Health



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