**Bangladesh Pharmacy Model Initiative**

**Incentive Strategy**

**Background and Objective**

MSH is working with Bangladesh’s Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) and the Pharmacy Council of Bangladesh (PCB) to ensure access to quality medicines and pharmaceutical services by developing an accreditation model for private sector medicine shops and pharmacies. The Bangladesh Pharmacy Model Initiative (BPMI) is funded by Joint Donor Technical Assistance Fund—a consortium of donors led by the UK Department for International Development. The first phase of this program includes designing the preliminary model, planning for targeted district implementation and evaluation, and building the capacity of national institutions, including DGDA and PCB, to move the BPMI implementation forward.

The BPMI builds on what is currently in place and working well in Bangladesh’s pharmaceutical sector. Changes have only been proposed when needed to meet the country’s objective of ensuring access to quality medicines and pharmaceutical services. During the first phase of BPMI, DGDA, PCB, and other stakeholders have approved the classification of two levels of accredited private sector drug outlets: Level 1 pharmacies attended by grade A pharmacists and Level 2 medicine shops attended by grade B or C pharmacists. In addition to having appropriately trained personnel, in order to become accredited pharmacies and medicine shops must also meet BPMI program premise standards. The Level 1 pharmacy premise standards are higher and more stringent than Level 2 standards.

As DGDA and PCB prepare to implement the BPMI program by training personnel and accrediting qualified pharmacies and medicine shops, we sought input from key stakeholders on shop owners’ existing challenges and what incentives might encourage pharmacy and medicine shop owners to accredit their shops.

**Objective and Overview of the BPMI Incentive Strategy**

The objective of the BPMI incentive strategy is to encourage pharmacy and medicine shop owners to become accredited under the BPMI program in order to facilitate the BPMI program uptake while enhancing the outlets’ quality and sustainability.

While multiple components of the BPMI program will likely appeal to pharmacy and medicine shop owners, owners’ primary concern is the profitability of their business. The BPMI program will offer owners a business skills training course designed to improve shops’ profitability, while also meeting clients’ needs. The business training includes modules on stock management, procurement, financial management, financing, and record keeping.

In addition to improving owners’ business skills, the BPMI program will improve consumer demand for services at accredited shops. The BPMI program rollout will include robust branding and marketing efforts to promote the benefits of visiting accredited pharmacies and medicine shops to access high quality medicines and services. Accredited facilities will be branded with an accreditation logo and a mixed media campaign will be launched in upazilas with a BPMI program. MSH will work with DGDA, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and other health stakeholders to involve accredited pharmacies and medicine shops in public health promotion campaigns or interventions, so that accredited pharmacies’ reputation as a reliable source for medicines at the community level improves as the BPMI program matures.

Pharmacy and medicine shop owners may need to renovate their shop premises to meet the minimum premises standards for accreditation. MSH will negotiate low interest loans with microfinance institutions and link them with owners who need financial support to join the BPMI program. Microfinance institutions will be available to answer questions at upazila-level BPMI program sensitization meetings so that owners can make financing decisions and begin renovations quickly.

To facilitate accreditation, MSH will work with DGDA and local officials to simplify and standardize pharmacy and medicine shop registration, licensing, and renewal processes. BPMI sensitization workshops will clearly define the process for the pharmacy owner—including forms, fees, and documentation required. The DGDA website will include an online portal, also accessible via mobile phone, where owners can get information on the accreditation process, submit applications, check registration or licensure status, receive SMS or email alerts prior to registration expiration, and update their shop information. This online portal coupled with efforts to build DGDA and local officials’ capacity to process applications efficiently will expedite and simplify the accreditation process.

Table 1 details an illustrative timeline for the incentive strategy.

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| **Table 1: Illustrative Timeline** |
| October 2016 | Business training materials complete |
| October 2016 | Accredited pharmacy and medicine shop logos completed |
| November 2016 | Business training offered as part of Level 1 pilot |
| November 2016 | Microfinancing institutions to identified  |
| February 2017 | Owners sensitized and linked with microfinancing institutions; DGDA online registration launched |
| March-July 2017 | Business training offered as part of Level 2 pilot |
| August 2017 | Branding and marketing campaign launched |