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Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in saving children’s lives from drowning in Bangladesh

More than 32 children between the ages of 1-4 years old die every day in Bangladesh. That’s more than 12,000 children every year, making drowning the leading cause of death among children in that age group in the country. Lack of or inadequate supervision, high exposure to water hazards, lack of education and poverty are some of the major risk factors facing children.

As a direct response to the high burden of childhood drowning in this low-lying country, Bloomberg Philanthropies is launching the Saving of Lives from Drowning (SoLiD), Bangladesh project. The project draws on collaboration among three organizations, the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit (JH-IIRU); the Center for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB); and the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b), to not only prevent drowning deaths, but also address some of the key causes. Under the SoLiD project, two drowning prevention interventions that aim to minimize exposure of children to water hazards will be implemented—the provision of playpens and enrollment in Anchal (crèche or daycare) facilities. These two interventions will be provided to eligible children (9 – 36 months) in seven Upazilas (Matlab North, Matlab South, Manohardi, Sherpur sadar, Raiganj, Chadpur Sadar, and Daudkandi) of the country. The project will benefit over 270,000 households and also provide injury surveillance for more than 1.2 million people, with the goal of reaching 80,000 children with the interventions over a two-year period. In addition, the project is a strategic investment in early childhood development that will benefit the country for years to come.

The project will be officially launched on Thursday, February 27, 2014 with a national seminar at Sasakawa Auditorium, icddr,b, between 9 am and 12 noon. The chief guest speaker is Mr. MM Neazuddin, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and will feature special guests Prof. Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah, Pro-Vice Chancellor, BSMMU; Mr. Ganesh Chandra Sarkar, Director General, DGFP; Prof. Dr. Deen Mohd. Noorul Huq, Director General, DGHS and Dr. Kelly Henning, Director of Public Health at the Bloomberg Philanthropies. Welcome note will be given by Dr. John David Clemens, Executive Director, icddr,b and key note addresses will be presented by Dr. Shams El Arifeen, Director of Child and Adolescent Health icddr,b; Dr. Aminur Rahman, Director of the International Drowning Research Centre-Bangladesh, CIPRB; and Dr. Olakunle Alonge, the Program Manager for SoLiD at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. The joint-chief hosts for the seminar are Prof. AKM Fazlur Rahman, Executive Director, CIPRB; Dr. Shams El Arifeen, Director of Child and Adolescent Health, icddr,b; and Dr. Adnan Hyder, the project lead and Director of JH-IIRU and the event will be chaired by Dr. Abbas U Bhuiya, Deputy Executive Director, icddr,b.

For more information on the event please contact:

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