

Support for Poor Patients Program

Education and Development Research Council (EDRC), Bangladesh



Background and Rationale

The poor and vulnerable communities continue to face severe challenges in accessing quality medical care in Bangladesh. The cost in the private hospitals and clinics are very high and beyond the capacity of poor people. However, government hospitals provide limited free services and partial medicine support, but patients still bear significant out-of-pocket expenses, including diagnostic tests, medicines, transportation, and emergency costs.

The situation is particularly alarming for the poorest households. Many patients delay or avoid hospital visits due to lack of financial means, resulting in avoidable deaths and worsening health conditions. Pregnant mothers are especially vulnerable, as they often cannot afford the costs of pre-natal, post-natal, and delivery-related services, which increases maternal and child mortality risks.

Recognizing this gap, the **Education and Development Research Council (EDRC)** proposes to implement the “**Support for Poor Patients Program**” to provide direct financial and medical support to underprivileged patients in government hospitals. This program aims to reduce avoidable deaths, improve maternal and child health, and strengthen access to essential treatment for the poor.



Objectives

1. To provide essential medicine support to poor patients who cannot afford their prescribed treatment.
2. To ensure access to pre- and post-natal care for vulnerable pregnant mothers.
3. To cover delivery-related (including cesarean) costs for poor women in government hospitals.
4. To reduce mortality and suffering by supporting other critical medical expenditures of poor patients.

Target Beneficiaries

- **Poor and vulnerable patients** admitted to government hospitals.
- **Pregnant mothers** in need of pre- and post-natal services and delivery support.
- An estimated **2,500 patients and mothers** will directly benefit from this program.

Key Program Components and Estimated Budget

Component	Unit Beneficiaries	Unit Cost (USD)	Total Cost (USD)
1. Medicine support for poor patients	1,000	25	25,000
2. Pre- and post-natal services	500 mothers	50	25,000
3. Cesarean (C-section) delivery support	200 cases	75	15,000
4. Other medical support (diagnosis, etc.)	1,000 patients	20	20,000
Total Estimated Budget	–	–	85,000

Implementation Strategy

- EDRC will collaborate with selected government hospitals to identify and register poor patients and expecting mothers.
- Financial and in-kind medical support will be disbursed directly to patients or through hospital service counters.
- Priority will be given to emergency cases, maternal health, and life-saving treatment needs.
- Monitoring will be conducted through patient records, hospital feedback, and field visits to ensure accountability and transparency.

Expected Outcomes

- At least **1,000 poor patients** receive essential medicine support, reducing preventable deaths.
- **500 pregnant mothers** access pre- and post-natal care, leading to safer pregnancies and reduced maternal mortality.
- **200 cesarean deliveries** are supported, ensuring life-saving interventions for mothers and newborns.
- **1,000 patients** receive diagnostic and other medical support, improving recovery and reducing the financial burden on poor families.

Conclusion

The **Support for Poor Patients Program** is a life-saving initiative to ensure healthcare access for the most vulnerable communities in Bangladesh. With an estimated budget of **USD 85,000**, this program will provide critical medical and maternal health support, thereby contributing to improved public health outcomes and aligning with Bangladesh's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being).