

Review of: "Strengthening Healthcare in Bangladesh: Challenges and Pathways to Equity and Quality"

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Dear authors, I have read the paper with great interest as many of the challenges that you describe are common to my setting. I would like to suggest that you do two things in particular. The first is to provide more information on the health system, the healthcare providers, and the funding mechanisms. An external reader cannot really understand the current status quo without more detail. You have described the challenges well, but there are so many that your suggested solutions become so broad that the implementation will be impossible even for a well-funded health system. I suggest that you step back and focus on one or two aspects so that any suggested interventions are feasible (and cheap as your services are funded by tax) and will make the most difference. For example, you mention that Bangladesh has made substantive progress against the MDGs. What was done that made this difference? I suspect it has to do with primary healthcare services and not the buildings of new hospitals. You can consider splitting this article into several articles that deal with the topic in greater depth. I, for one, would be interested to know more about the production of healthcare professionals, the skills mix, the intentions to work elsewhere, and the suggested (low-cost) strategies for skills mix and retention, for example. For example, does the private sector also train? Who? Are healthcare professionals (especially those who train through a public institution, which is normally subsidized) expected to do community service after graduation? This one strategy could assist with the dearth of qualified personnel in rural areas. Is there a strategy to recruit from rural areas, for example? Etc. In short, you have a wealth of information on a health system where not much has been published in recent years, but where some tangible change has occurred.

The article itself reads well and is clear. Good luck with this avenue of work, and I look forward to reading more (and in more detail) on the Bangladesh health system in the near future.