In pregnancy, anemia can be prevented by taking iron folic acid (IFA) supplements, increased dietary diversity, sleeping under a bednet, taking intermittent preventative treatment (IPTp) for malaria, handwashing, and taking deworming pills.

In 2014, only 31% of pregnant women in Bangladesh attended 4+ ANC visits.

55% of infants in Bangladesh are exclusively breastfed during the first six months after birth (2014).

In 2011, 54% of children 6-23 months of age consumed foods rich in iron*.

50% of children 6-59 months were given deworming medication in the past six months (2011).

17% of married adolescent girls expressed an unmet need for family planning (2014).

*A includes meat, fish, and eggs.

A multisectoral approach to prevent anemia will save lives and improve the well-being of mothers, infants, and children.

All data is from Bangladesh Demographic and Health Surveys, unless otherwise noted.
Anemia has substantial negative effects on the health and economic wellbeing of nations and communities. Children with anemia experience irrevocable cognitive and developmental delays and exhibit decreased worker productivity as adults. Globally, maternal anemia increases the risk of pre-term delivery and low birth weight, and iron-deficiency anemia underlies 115,000 maternal deaths and 591,000 perinatal deaths each year.

Prevalence of anemia among children 6-59 months and women 15-49 years, by region

Source: Bangladesh DHS, 2011

Prevalence of anemia in women and children in Bangladesh in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women 15-49 years of age</th>
<th>Children 6-59 months of age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mild</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women 15-49</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children 6-59</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The DHS hemoglobin levels used to diagnose anemia in non-pregnant women 15-49 years of age in grams/dL are: Mild 10.0-11.9; Moderate 7.0-9.9; Severe <7.0; Any <12.0. In children 6-59 months of age, the levels are: Mild 10.0-10.9; Moderate 7.0-9.9; Severe <7.0; Any <11.0.

Prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies in 2011-2012

- Vitamin A*
- Vitamin B12
- Folate
- Zinc*
- Iron*

*Values adjusted for inflammation by mathematical correction

Status of Policies or Strategies to Support Reductions in Anemia*

- IFA for pregnant women
- IFA for women of reproductive age
- IFA for adolescent girls
- Micronutrient powders for children
- Indoor residual spraying
- National policy on sanitation
- Long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) for household use
- Deworming for children
- Deworming for pregnant women
- Breastfeeding
- Iron and/or folic acid fortification legislation
- Dietary diversity for complementary feeding
- Malaria diagnosis and treatment

* Information from the Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action (GINA) or country documentation. The status of policies and strategies have been identified to the best of our knowledge. Revisions and updates are welcome.

Anemia is a Preventable Condition—Simple Interventions Can Have a Huge Impact

Increase iron uptake and stores

Contraceptive use has plateaued among married women from 2007 to 2014

Few children 6-23 months old were fed according to 3 key Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices in 2014

Relatively adequate iron stores may be due to iron in groundwater

Reduce iron losses and infection

Not enough children were given deworming medication in 2011*

Exclusive breastfeeding of children <6 months has increased from 2007 to 2014

Not enough households have an improved latrine/toilet*

Access to improved source of drinking water is almost universal

*Definition of ‘improved latrine’ has changed slightly across years. See Demographic and Health Surveys.

All data is from Bangladesh Demographic and Health Surveys, unless otherwise noted.
Multiple Sectors Play a Role in Anemia Prevention and Treatment
Stunting and anemia share similar risk factors and are responsive to many of the same interventions

Agriculture
- Increase income and reduce poverty
- Production of biofortified and iron-rich crops
- Small livestock/poultry
- Fisheries
- Dietary diversity

Health
- Iron supplementation
- Deworming
- Breastfeeding and complementary feeding
- Family planning
- Malaria prevention and treatment
- Delayed cord clamping

Water and Sanitation
- Improved latrines
- Handwashing
- Access to clean water
- Livestock management
- Infectious disease prevention

Education
- Female literacy
- Health education
- Hygiene education
- Family planning education
- Nutrition education

Data Sources:

Profile prepared September 2015.
This profile is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement AID-OAA-A-11-00031 (SPRING), managed by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI) with partners Helen Keller International, the Manoff Group, Save the Children, and the International Food Policy Research Institute. The contents are the responsibility of JSI and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

www.spring-nutrition.org