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**Taking a pulse on community participation in maternal health through community clinics in Bangladesh****Goutom Banik***Researcher, Bangladesh*

**Background:** Bangladesh started institutionalising community participation by setting-up community clinics (CCs) during the mid-90s. This paper presents the genealogy of CCs, the community participation mechanism embedded within CCs, and the case of 54 CCs of Brahmanbaria, Bangladesh, through the lens of maternal health.

**Methods:** We undertook a desk review to understand the journey of CCs, and a health facility assessment to assess the readiness, accessibility, and functionality of CCs. We also conducted a cross-sectional household survey in the study site in 2018 to determine the perception of recently delivered women on CCs. We performed descriptive analysis and multiple logistic regression to determine the association between the functionality of CC's community groups (CGs) and community support groups (CSGs) with women's perception regarding these groups' activities in the community on maternal health.

**Findings:** The integration of community participation involving CCs started to roll out through the operationalisation of the Health and Population Sector Programme 1998 – 2003. In 2019, 13,907 CCs were operational. However, as per our CC assessment in Brahmanbaria, there were gaps in the accessibility, readiness, and functionality of the CCs. Our household survey revealed that the perception of recently delivered women regarding the role of CG, CSG members, and these groups' functionality was significantly better when the group members met regularly.

**Conclusion:** The gaps of CCs are primarily induced by the shortcomings of the CCs' CG, CSG-based community participation model. Proper understanding is needed to address this problem which has many facets and layers, including political priorities, expectations, and provisions at a local level..

**Biography**

Dr. Goutom Banik has his expertise in the field of implementing and scaling up evidence based innovative maternal and newborn health interventions and enthusiasm in advancing the health of mothers and newborns in Bangladesh. He is also an expert in evaluating the maternal and newborn health programs and advocating for incorporating the data driven best practices in the government 5th yearly operational plan. Dr. Banik also works closely with the maternal newborn child and adolescent health operational plan of government of Bangladesh in quality implementation of maternal and newborn health services across the country as well as provide technical assistance in developing maternal and newborn-related strategies, guidelines, action plans, and training materials.