

## New Study Finds Further Proof that Newborn Vitamin A Supplementation Can Save Young Lives in Bangladesh

DHAKA, July 24, 2008 – The Micronutrient Initiative (MI) was a lead participant at the New Born Vitamin A Supplementation (NBVAS) Seminar in Dhaka today where a study released new evidence that providing low doses of vitamin A to newborns can increase significantly their chance of survival.

The seminar, organized jointly by the Directorate General of Health Services, The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, JiVitA/John Hopkins University, MI USAID A2Z Project, BRAC and Helen Keller International, sought to increase the understanding of the benefits of vitamin A to newborns.

Results were presented from a study undertaken among 16,000 newborns in Gaibandha and Rangpur districts by the JiVitA Project under the leadership of Johns Hopkins University. The study concluded that giving a single dose of vitamin A of 50,000 international units (IU) within two days of life reduced the mortality rate of children under six months of age by 15%.

These results echo other studies in Nepal, India and Indonesia that also showed mortality reduction in newborns given the dose of vitamin A.

“MI is pleased to be associated with these studies and is encouraged by these new results,” says Dr Zeba Mahmud, National Program Manager, MI Bangladesh. “For more than a decade, MI has helped save millions of lives through vitamin A supplementation to children aged 6 to 59 months. Knowing that these life-saving methods can be adapted for newborns will mean more lives saved and MI is very committed to scaling-up this new promising public health intervention.” adds Dr. Mahmud.



**Dr. Zeba Mahmud, National Program Manager of the Micronutrient Initiative in Bangladesh makes a speech at the NBVAS Seminar**

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