



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

SECOND TIME'S THE CHARM

Engineer at textile mill returns to work after completing treatment for multi-drug resistant TB



With the availability of medication for multi-drug resistant TB through a community health worker in his area, Anwar Hossain was able to complete his treatment regimen while living at his home in Narayanganj.

Md. Anwar Hossain is a 38-year old father of two who hails from the district of Narayanganj. As an engineer at one of Bangladesh's many textile factories, Anwar prides himself in supporting his family and helping his two sons gain a quality education. Naturally, then, he was dismayed when he learned that he may no longer have the ability to take care of them.

Seven years ago, Anwar was diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB). He underwent a treatment regimen and believed he had beaten the disease. Last year, however, he began to feel ill once again. After visiting a nearby clinic, doctors diagnosed him with multi-drug resistant TB (MDR TB), which can occur when there is an interruption in TB treatment. This form of TB takes longer to treat and requires specialized drugs, which are more expensive and can require the patient to remain hospitalized for an extended period of time. His job, his family, and his life were all in jeopardy as a result of this new diagnosis.

The USAID-funded TB CARE II project is working to stop the spread of TB in Bangladesh, with a particular focus on combating MDR TB, which is considered a dangerous threat to the nation's progress in fighting the disease as a whole. The project works with the National TB Control Program (NTP) to ensure that treatment—including that of drug-resistant forms—is available in community-based health facilities.

This allows patients to complete the treatment process while living at home instead of a hospital, where their families are able to support them physically and mentally.

After receiving the initial rounds of injections at a regional hospital over the first few weeks of treatment, Anwar was able to return home to his family in Narayanganj. There, he completed the 1st phase of his TB treatment routine under the supervision of his local care provider, who visited him every day to administer the medication. After completing of the first phase of treatment, Anwar is no longer considered to be contagious, and does not have to worry about spreading the disease to others. He is continuing the 2nd phase of treatment under same local care provider and has been able to return to his position at the textile factory.

Throughout the 1st phase of treatment, Anwar was grateful to have the support of his family and community, who welcomed him back home after his stay in the hospital. He was also pleased to return to the textile mill, where despite his TB status, his employers accepted him back into the workplace.

Now, Anwar is happy to have a second chance. Thanks to the availability of treatment for drug-resistant TB in his area, Anwar is once again fully able to provide a livelihood for himself and his family.