3. Primary Health Care (Healthcare Benefits Program)

**“He who has health has hope, and he who has hope has everything.”**

**Arabian proverb**

World Health Organization mentions, ‘Bangladesh suffers from both a shortage of and geographic maldistribution of human resources for health’. Even though such discrepancy is highly divided between urban and rural portions of the country, the lower-income group has always been the sufferers of lesser quality health services regardless of geographical distribution. Children are one of the most affected portions of the population in this scenario. According to an estimate of 2018 by UNICEF, WHO, The UN, and the World Bank, the under-five mortality rate in Bangladesh is 32 per 1,000 lives. In addition to that, UNICEF Bangladesh’s official website mentions that there are 36 million adolescents in our country consisting 22 % of the total population. UNICEF defines adolescence as the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. It is a transitional period that requires special attention. In our country, the knowledge and awareness of adolescent health among families and themselves are very limited. Especially girl-children suffer the most due to the cycle of poverty, discrimination, and violence among the low-income group.

Hashimukh Somaj Kallyan Songstha has understood the severity of this situation since its birth while working with the underprivileged population of the society. Which culminated in taking consideration of a healthcare project to start. Currently, the organization is focused to provide adolescent healthcare guidelines and quarterly health checkup campaigns for the students and their families of Hashimukh School. For female adolescents, the volunteers provide menstrual guidelines, information, counseling, and courage to handle the physical and mental pressure felt at this age. Occasionally female hygiene products are served to the girl students. For male adolescents, HKSK provides counseling and guidelines to make them aware of their physical and mental health.

HKSK quarterly health checkup campaigns for children and focuses on health issues such as stomach flues, skin diseases, and other seasonal flues. In these campaigns, medicine is distributed at free of costs. Also, parents and families are counseled to be aware of their adolescent members’ health issues in the family.

To ensure the nutrition supply regularly among children, HSKS maintains evening snacks distribution for the Hashimukh school’s children. During the six workdays, banana and bun, milk and bun, egg and bun are distributed twice in each week. Understanding the lack of safe drinking water in their home environment, Hashimukh School has installed a water purifying system at the school for students to have safe water. There was a significant improvement among student's health who used to suffer from stomach flues due to having safe water regularly.

HKSK also aware the children’s families about any government campaign of vitamin A capsule and other free medical camps. In emergency cases, the volunteers advocate families of students to government medical facilities to obtain affordably and sometimes free of cost healthcare.

Hashimukh Somaj Kallyan Songstha has an aspiration to make healthcare advice and support more accessible and reasonable for the underprivileged section of the society. It endeavors to ensure better health for children and adolescents through its activities.