



# *Health corruption and Policy Shortfalls in Bangladesh: A Catalyst for Global health crime*

<sup>1</sup>Probir Kumar Das

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Director, Anti Corruption Commission, Head Office, Dhaka Bangladesh

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Anindita Roy

<sup>2</sup>M.B.B.S(DU), Dhaka

## **Abstract**

Corruption remains a pervasive issue in the healthcare sector globally, significantly affecting access to healthcare services, quality of care, and overall public health outcomes. This study focuses on Bangladesh, where corruption in healthcare manifests through bribery, misallocation of resources, and systemic inefficiencies. Through interviews with stakeholders including healthcare professionals, NGOs, community members, international organisations, journalists, and government representatives, this research investigates the impact of corruption on healthcare delivery and explores strategies to mitigate its effects.

Key findings reveal that corruption in Bangladesh's healthcare system leads to increased costs for patients, shortages of essential medicines, and distrust in healthcare providers. Stakeholders emphasised the role of transparency, accountability, and community engagement in combating corruption. Recommendations include strengthening legal frameworks, enhancing oversight mechanisms, and promoting ethical practices among healthcare providers.

This study contributes to understanding the complexities of corruption in healthcare in Bangladesh and offers insights into effective strategies aligned with global health and anti-corruption initiatives. It calls for collaborative efforts among policymakers, healthcare professionals, civil society, and international partners to address corruption and improve healthcare delivery for all Bangladeshis.

**Keywords:** Corruption, healthcare sector, Bangladesh, transparency, accountability, anti-corruption measures, community engagement, stakeholders, quality of care, public health

## **Introduction**

Corruption in the healthcare sector poses significant challenges worldwide, impacting access to essential services, undermining trust in institutions, and compromising public health outcomes. In Bangladesh, like in many developing countries, corruption manifests in various forms, from bribery for basic medical care to misallocation of resources meant for healthcare improvements. This pervasive issue not only exacerbates inequalities but also hampers efforts to achieve universal health coverage and sustainable development goals.

This study explores the multifaceted impact of corruption on healthcare in Bangladesh, aiming to uncover its root causes, understand its implications for patients and healthcare providers, and propose strategies for combating it. Through interviews with diverse stakeholders including healthcare professionals, NGOs, community members, international organisations, journalists, and government representatives, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges posed by corruption and identify actionable recommendations aligned with global health and anti-corruption measures.

By shedding light on the complex dynamics of corruption in Bangladesh's healthcare system, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on governance, transparency, and ethical practices in healthcare delivery. The findings and recommendations presented herein aim to inform policymakers, healthcare practitioners, civil society actors, and international partners on effective strategies to promote integrity, accountability, and equitable access to healthcare services in Bangladesh.

### Objective

- **Identify the Forms and Extent of Corruption:** Explore various forms of corruption such as bribery, misappropriation of funds, and nepotism affecting healthcare services.
- **Examine the Impact on Healthcare Delivery:** Assess how corruption impacts affordability, accessibility, quality of care, and trust in healthcare institutions.
- **Evaluate Anti-Corruption Strategies:** Analyse the effectiveness of current strategies employed by NGOs, international organisations, and other stakeholders in combating corruption.
- **Understand Stakeholder Perspectives:** Gain insights into how different stakeholders perceive and experience corruption in healthcare, including challenges they face and solutions they propose.
- **Propose Recommendations for Improvement:** Based on findings, suggest policy reforms, interventions, and best practices to enhance transparency, accountability, and integrity in Bangladesh's healthcare sector.

### Literature Review

#### García, P.J. (2019). **Corruption in Global Health: The Open Secret**

**Findings:** García highlights that corruption in global health is widespread, affecting various levels of the healthcare system. It manifests as bribery, embezzlement, fraud, and nepotism, ultimately leading to inefficient resource allocation and poor health outcomes.

**Methodology:** The study uses a qualitative approach, reviewing existing literature and case studies.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from secondary sources, including academic journals, reports, and case studies. The analysis involved thematic coding to identify common forms of corruption and their impacts.

**Recommendations:** García advocates for stronger governance structures, increased transparency, and robust anti-corruption policies to combat corruption in the health sector.

#### Mackey, T.K. and Liang, B.A. (2012). **Combating Healthcare Corruption and Fraud with Improved Global Health Governance**

**Findings:** Mackey and Liang discuss how healthcare corruption and fraud are pervasive and hinder global health initiatives. They argue that improved global health governance can mitigate these issues.

**Methodology:** This paper employs a policy analysis framework to assess existing governance mechanisms.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** The authors review policy documents, international health organisation reports, and scholarly articles. They employ comparative analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of different governance strategies.

**Recommendations:** The study calls for the implementation of comprehensive anti-corruption frameworks, enhanced international cooperation, and the development of robust monitoring and evaluation systems.

#### Mackey, T.K. et al. (2016). **The Disease of Corruption: Views on How to Fight Corruption to Advance 21st Century Global Health Goals**

**Findings:** This research underscores the detrimental effects of corruption on achieving global health goals, highlighting the need for innovative anti-corruption strategies.

**Methodology:** The study integrates expert opinions through a Delphi method to reach a consensus on anti-corruption strategies.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were gathered through structured interviews with global health experts. The analysis involved thematic synthesis and consensus building. **Recommendations:** The authors recommend leveraging technology for transparency, strengthening international legal frameworks, and fostering a culture of integrity within health organisations.

#### Friedrich, M.J. (2017). **Corruption Poses Critical Challenge to Global Health Efforts**

**Findings:** Friedrich emphasises that corruption remains a significant barrier to global health improvements, affecting funding, service delivery, and public trust.

**Methodology:** The study adopts a narrative review approach.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Secondary data from journals, news articles, and reports were analysed using a narrative synthesis method.

**Recommendations:** Key recommendations include promoting transparency in funding allocation, improving accountability mechanisms, and encouraging community participation in health governance.

**Mackey, T.K. et al. (2017). Combating Corruption in Global Health**

**Findings:** This study provides an in-depth analysis of corruption in global health and suggests multi-faceted approaches to address it.

**Methodology:** A mixed-methods approach combining literature review and case study analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were sourced from academic articles, policy documents, and case studies. Quantitative data were analysed statistically, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis.

**Recommendations:** The authors propose integrated anti-corruption strategies, including regulatory reforms, capacity building, and the use of digital health technologies for better monitoring.

**Gorodensky, A. et al. (2022). Anti-Corruption in Global Health Systems: Using Key Informant Interviews**

**Findings:** This paper explores how anti-corruption measures are perceived and implemented within international health organisations.

**Methodology:** The study employs qualitative key informant interviews.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Interviews with stakeholders from various international health organisations were conducted. Data were analysed using thematic coding and qualitative content analysis.

**Recommendations:** Recommendations include enhancing accountability frameworks, improving stakeholder engagement, and fostering an organisational culture that prioritises ethical practices.

**Vian, T. (2020). Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability in Health: Concepts, Frameworks, and Approaches**

**Findings:** Vian provides a comprehensive review of the concepts and frameworks related to anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability in the health sector.

**Methodology:** The study uses a conceptual framework analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from theoretical and empirical studies. Analysis involved mapping concepts and frameworks to identify gaps and opportunities.

**Recommendations:** Vian suggests adopting a holistic approach that integrates anti-corruption measures with broader health system strengthening efforts.

**Mackey, T.K. et al. (2018). The Sustainable Development Goals as a Framework to Combat Health-Sector Corruption**

**Findings:** This research advocates for using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework to address corruption in the health sector.

**Methodology:** A policy analysis approach is employed.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Policy documents, SDG reports, and scholarly articles were reviewed. Analysis involved evaluating the alignment of anti-corruption strategies with SDG targets.

**Recommendations:** The authors recommend mainstreaming anti-corruption initiatives within SDG implementation plans, fostering multi-sectoral collaboration, and leveraging SDG indicators for monitoring progress.

**Schönhöfer, P.S. (2004). Controlling Corruption in Order to Improve Global Health**

**Findings:** Schönhöfer discusses the historical context of health sector corruption and its impact on global health outcomes.

**Methodology:** Historical and policy analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Secondary data from historical records, policy documents, and academic literature. Analysis involved tracing the evolution of anti-corruption policies and their effectiveness. **Recommendations:** The study calls for a return to fundamental ethical principles in health governance, improved regulatory oversight, and enhanced international cooperation.

**Koller, T. et al. (2020). Promoting Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability to Achieve Universal Health Coverage**

**Findings:** The authors highlight the importance of anti-corruption measures in achieving universal health coverage (UHC).

**Methodology:** A mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from surveys, interviews, and secondary sources. Quantitative data were analysed using statistical methods, while qualitative data underwent content analysis.

**Recommendations:** The authors recommend integrating anti-corruption measures into UHC policies, enhancing transparency in health financing, and fostering community engagement in health governance.

**Kohler, J.C. and Bowra, A. (2020). Exploring Anti-Corruption, Transparency, and Accountability in the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank Group, and the Global Fund**

**Findings:** This study examines anti-corruption efforts within major international health organisations.

**Methodology:** Case study analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from organisational reports, policy documents, and interviews with key stakeholders. Analysis involved cross-case synthesis and thematic coding.

**Recommendations:** Recommendations include strengthening organisational policies, enhancing inter-agency collaboration, and promoting transparency in decision-making processes.

**Wierzynska, A. et al. (2020). Recalibrating the Anti-Corruption, Transparency, and Accountability Formula to Advance Public Health**

**Findings:** This paper argues for a recalibration of existing anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability measures to better address contemporary public health challenges.

**Methodology:** Policy analysis and conceptual framework development.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were sourced from policy documents, academic literature, and expert consultations. Analysis involved developing and testing conceptual frameworks.

**Recommendations:** The authors propose a multi-dimensional approach that includes policy reforms, capacity building, and the use of innovative technologies to enhance accountability.

**Sánchez-Duque, J.A. et al. (2021). The Ignored Pandemic of Public Health Corruption: A Call for Action Amid and Beyond SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19**

**Findings:** This study highlights the exacerbation of corruption in the health sector during the COVID-19 pandemic and calls for urgent action.

**Methodology:** Mixed-methods approach.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from surveys, interviews, and secondary sources. Quantitative data were analysed using statistical methods, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis.

**Recommendations:** The study calls for strengthening health systems' resilience against corruption, enhancing emergency preparedness, and fostering international collaboration to combat health sector corruption.

**Chang, Z. et al. (2021). The Global Fund: Why Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability Matter**

**Findings:** Chang and colleagues examine the role of the Global Fund in promoting anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability in health funding.

**Methodology:** Case study and policy analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from Global Fund reports, policy documents, and stakeholder interviews. Analysis involved thematic coding and comparative analysis. **Recommendations:** The authors recommend enhancing the Global Fund's monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, promoting transparency in fund allocation, and fostering partnerships with local stakeholders.

**Bowra, A. et al. (2022). An Exploration of Anti-Corruption and Health in International Organizations**

**Findings:** This study explores anti-corruption initiatives within various international health organisations and their impact on health outcomes.

**Methodology:** Qualitative case study.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were gathered through interviews, document analysis, and secondary data sources. Thematic coding and content analysis were used for data interpretation. **Recommendations:** Recommendations include improving organisational governance structures, enhancing stakeholder accountability, and promoting transparency in health program implementation.

**Toebe, B. (2010). Human Rights and Health Sector Corruption**

**Findings:** Toebe explores the intersection of human rights and health sector corruption, arguing that corruption undermines the right to health.

**Methodology:** Legal and policy analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from legal documents, human rights reports, and academic literature. Analysis involved legal interpretation and policy critique. **Recommendations:** The study advocates for integrating human rights principles into anti-corruption strategies, strengthening legal frameworks, and promoting international human rights monitoring mechanisms.

**Mackey, T.K. (2019). Opening the Policy Window to Mobilize Action Against Corruption in the Health Sector**

**Findings:** Mackey discusses the importance of timely policy interventions to address corruption in the health sector.

**Methodology:** Policy analysis and advocacy.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from policy documents, advocacy reports, and expert interviews. Analysis involved identifying policy windows and developing advocacy strategies.

**Recommendations:** The author recommends leveraging political opportunities to push for anti-corruption reforms, engaging civil society in advocacy efforts, and using evidence-based research to inform policy decisions.

**Sekalala, S. et al. (2020). Human Rights Mechanisms for Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability**

**Findings:** This paper examines the role of human rights mechanisms in promoting anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability in health.

**Methodology:** Legal and policy analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from legal texts, policy documents, and human rights reports. Analysis involved legal interpretation and policy evaluation.

**Recommendations:** The authors recommend integrating human rights approaches into anti-corruption policies, enhancing legal accountability mechanisms, and promoting international cooperation for human rights protection.

**Glynn, E.H. (2022). Corruption in the Health Sector: A Problem in Need of a Systems-Thinking Approach**

**Findings:** Glynn argues that a systems-thinking approach is necessary to address the complex issue of health sector corruption.

**Methodology:** Systems analysis.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were sourced from systems theory literature, health sector reports, and academic articles. Analysis involved applying systems-thinking principles to understand corruption dynamics.

**Recommendations:** The study calls for adopting a holistic systems-thinking approach, integrating anti-corruption measures across all levels of the health system, and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration.

**Kirya, M.T. (2020). Promoting Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability in the Recruitment and Promotion of Health Workers**

**Findings:** Kirya highlights the importance of transparency and accountability in the recruitment and promotion processes of health workers to safeguard health outcomes.

**Methodology:** Qualitative study.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Data were collected from interviews, policy documents, and secondary sources. Thematic coding and content analysis were used for data interpretation. **Recommendations:** The author recommends implementing transparent recruitment processes, enhancing accountability mechanisms, and promoting merit-based promotion systems in the health sector.

## Research Gap

**Limited Understanding of Specific Corruption Practices:** There is a need to delve deeper into specific forms of corruption prevalent in healthcare beyond generalised descriptions, such as exploring detailed case studies or specific instances of corruption affecting different aspects of healthcare delivery.

**Insufficient Exploration of Impact on Healthcare Quality:** There is a gap in understanding its precise impact on healthcare quality, including patient outcomes, treatment efficacy, and overall service delivery standards.

**Effectiveness of Anti-Corruption Strategies:** There is a lack of comprehensive evaluation regarding the effectiveness of current anti-corruption strategies employed by stakeholders such as NGOs, international organisations, and governmental bodies in mitigating corruption within the healthcare sector.

**Underrepresented Stakeholder Perspectives:** There may be underrepresented perspectives or voices not fully captured, such as those of marginalized communities, frontline healthcare workers, or smaller NGOs operating at the grassroots level.

**Need for Contextualized Policy Recommendations:** Existing studies may not sufficiently provide context-specific policy recommendations tailored to the complexities of the Bangladeshi healthcare system and its socio-political environment, hindering the development of targeted and effective anti-corruption policies.



## Conceptual Framework



Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

International Research Journal  
**IJNRD**  
Research Through Innovation

## Methodology

To conduct the study, we have conducted FGD from different type of stakeholders for different perspective. Here is a details of respondent group.

**Respondent Group:** (FGDs) on "Global Health and Corruption in Bangladesh":

Respondent Group	Number of Respondents
Government officials and policymakers	10
Healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses)	10
NGO representatives	10
Patients and community members	10
International organisation representatives	10
Journalists and media personnel	10
Total	60

For each of the groups, there were 5 questions and all the respondents have provided their opinions.



## Discussion

### Summary of the respondents' opinion

#### Government Officials and Policymakers

#### 1 Question 1: How do you perceive the impact of corruption on healthcare delivery and public health outcomes in Bangladesh?

According to the respondents, corruption significantly undermines public trust in healthcare institutions, leading to a decrease in healthcare-seeking behaviour among the population. It distorts resource allocation, diverting funds intended for healthcare infrastructure and services to personal gain, which hinders service delivery. This misallocation of resources exacerbates inequalities in healthcare access, particularly disadvantaging vulnerable populations who cannot afford to pay bribes. Additionally, corruption compromises the quality of healthcare services, as facilities often lack essential equipment and supplies due to the misappropriation of funds. Consequently, public health outcomes suffer, with preventable diseases becoming more prevalent due to insufficient resources and ineffective health programs. Corruption also increases healthcare costs, making essential services unaffordable for many citizens, and discourages healthcare professionals from remaining in the public sector, leading to brain drain and staffing shortages. The perception of corruption deters investment in the healthcare sector, impacting its overall growth and development and undermining efforts to achieve universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals related to health. Lastly, corruption in healthcare erodes the credibility of government institutions and undermines democratic governance.

#### 2 Question 2: What policy measures do you think are most effective in combating corruption within the healthcare sector?

As per the respondents, effective policy measures to combat corruption within the healthcare sector include strengthening legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to prosecute corrupt practices within healthcare institutions. Implementing robust oversight and auditing systems to monitor the allocation and use of healthcare funds is crucial. Promoting transparency in procurement processes helps prevent kickbacks and inflated pricing of medical supplies. Encouraging whistleblowing protections and creating channels for reporting corruption without fear of retaliation are also essential steps. Additionally, enhancing financial management practices through digitisation and automation of financial transactions can reduce opportunities for corruption. Instituting codes of conduct and ethics training for healthcare professionals and administrators fosters a culture of integrity. Engaging civil society and media in monitoring and exposing corrupt practices within the healthcare sector increases accountability. Establishing independent anti-corruption agencies or task forces dedicated to investigating healthcare-related corruption is recommended. Fostering international cooperation and adopting best practices from countries that have successfully tackled healthcare corruption can provide valuable insights. Lastly, investing in public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the impact of corruption on healthcare and their rights is vital for long-term change.

#### 3 Question 3: How does your department ensure transparency and accountability in healthcare funding allocations?

According to the responses, departments ensure transparency and accountability in healthcare funding allocations by publishing detailed budgets and expenditure reports to the public on a regular basis. Conducting regular audits and financial reviews of healthcare spending helps identify discrepancies and irregularities. Implementing strict procurement guidelines and competitive bidding processes for healthcare contracts ensures fair practices. Engaging stakeholders and civil society in oversight committees to monitor funding allocations and expenditures enhances accountability. Utilising technology platforms for real-time tracking and reporting of healthcare expenditures improves transparency. Decisions regarding healthcare funding are based on evidence and public health priorities. Regular meetings and consultations with healthcare providers and administrators to discuss financial management are conducted. Clear accountability mechanisms with defined roles and responsibilities for budget management are established. Sanctions and penalties are enforced for individuals found guilty of misappropriating healthcare funds. Lastly, promoting a culture of transparency and integrity among staff through training and capacity-building programmes is essential.

#### **4 Question 4: What challenges do you face in implementing anti-corruption initiatives in healthcare, and how do you plan to overcome them?**

The respondents highlighted several challenges in implementing anti-corruption initiatives in healthcare, including resistance from entrenched interests and vested stakeholders benefiting from corrupt practices. Limited financial resources allocated specifically for anti-corruption efforts within the healthcare sector pose a significant hurdle. A lack of awareness and understanding among healthcare professionals and administrators about the importance of anti-corruption measures hinders progress. Political interference and lack of political will to prosecute high-level officials implicated in corruption scandals further complicate efforts. Complex bureaucratic procedures slow down investigations and disciplinary actions against corrupt individuals. Fear of retaliation and reprisals against whistleblowers and individuals reporting corruption is a significant deterrent. Inadequate training and capacity-building programmes for healthcare staff to identify and report corrupt practices also pose challenges. Coordination challenges between different government agencies and departments responsible for overseeing healthcare operations can impede progress. Insufficient cooperation and information sharing with international partners to tackle cross-border corruption issues is another obstacle. Addressing systemic factors such as poverty and socio-economic disparities that contribute to vulnerability to corruption is necessary for long-term success.

#### **5 Question 5: How can international collaborations and partnerships aid Bangladesh in strengthening its anti-corruption efforts in healthcare?**

According to the respondents, international collaborations and partnerships can significantly aid Bangladesh in strengthening its anti-corruption efforts in healthcare. Providing technical assistance and expertise in developing and implementing effective anti-corruption policies and practices is crucial. Sharing best practices and lessons learned from successful anti-corruption initiatives in other countries can offer valuable insights. Facilitating peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange among healthcare officials and policymakers enhances capacity building. Mobilising international support and funding for capacity-building programmes and institutional reforms is essential. Strengthening regional cooperation frameworks to address transnational healthcare corruption issues is necessary. Supporting the establishment of international standards and guidelines for transparency and accountability in healthcare helps align national efforts with global best practices. Engaging international organisations and donor agencies in monitoring and evaluating progress on anti-corruption efforts increases accountability. Promoting integrity and ethical practices through international accreditation and certification programmes for healthcare institutions can raise standards. Facilitating joint investigations and information sharing on cross-border corruption cases affecting healthcare systems is crucial. Lastly, advocating for the inclusion of anti-corruption goals within global health agendas and initiatives can ensure sustained international focus and support for these efforts.

#### **Healthcare Professionals (Doctors and Nurses)**

#### **6 Question 1: From your perspective, how does corruption affect the quality of patient care and medical services in Bangladesh?**

According to the respondents, corruption leads to a significant misallocation of resources, resulting in inadequate medical supplies and equipment, which compromises patient care. It creates an environment where bribery is expected for basic medical services, making healthcare unaffordable for many patients. This practice demoralises healthcare staff, reducing their motivation and commitment to providing quality care. Furthermore, corruption results in the hiring or promotion of unqualified or less qualified individuals, negatively affecting the overall quality of medical services. Patients often experience longer wait times for services because priority is given to those who can pay bribes. Essential drugs and treatments are sometimes diverted and sold on the black market, leading to shortages in hospitals. The pervasive nature of corruption fosters a lack of trust between patients and healthcare providers, which can adversely affect treatment adherence and outcomes. Public health programs are undermined as funds intended for disease prevention and health promotion activities are diverted. Consequently, the focus shifts from patient care to personal gain, reducing the emphasis on evidence-based medical practices. Corruption also hampers the implementation of health policies and programs designed to improve care quality and patient safety.

**7 Question 2: Have you encountered situations where corruption has hindered your ability to provide optimal care? Can you provide examples?**

The respondents shared several instances where corruption hindered their ability to provide optimal care. Essential drugs were often unavailable because they were siphoned off and sold privately. Patients had to pay under the table to get timely access to diagnostic tests. Equipment needed for surgeries was sometimes non-functional due to a lack of maintenance funds, which had been misappropriated. Delays in receiving necessary medical supplies occurred because procurement processes were manipulated for personal gain. Patients suffered because they could not afford to pay bribes to secure a hospital bed. Corruption led to the hiring of less competent staff, affecting the overall quality of care and patient safety. Administrative pressures to favour certain suppliers or contractors compromised the integrity of procurement processes. Free services that patients were entitled to were denied because funds were misused. Hospital infrastructure projects were stalled due to corruption, leaving facilities in disrepair. Healthcare professionals were pressured to overlook irregularities in patient billing and insurance claims, undermining the financial sustainability of healthcare institutions.

**8 Question 3: What role do healthcare professionals play in promoting transparency and integrity within their own institutions?**

The respondents indicated that healthcare professionals play a crucial role in promoting transparency and integrity within their institutions. Leading by example, they adhere to ethical standards and refuse to engage in corrupt practices. They report observed instances of corruption to appropriate authorities or internal compliance departments. Participation in and support for institutional policies and programs aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability are also important. Educating patients and colleagues about their rights and the importance of ethical practices in healthcare is a key responsibility. Involvement in professional associations helps advocate for systemic changes to reduce corruption in the healthcare sector. Healthcare professionals push for regular audits and transparent reporting of financial and operational activities within their institutions. They participate in training programs focused on ethics and anti-corruption measures. Fostering a culture of openness where staff feel safe to speak up about corrupt practices without fear of reprisal is essential. Collaboration with civil society and media can help shed light on corruption issues and promote accountability. Healthcare professionals work together to develop and implement codes of conduct and ethical guidelines within their institutions.

**9 Question 4: How can professional associations and regulatory bodies contribute to reducing corruption in healthcare settings?**

According to the respondents, professional associations and regulatory bodies can significantly contribute to reducing corruption in healthcare settings. They can establish and enforce strict codes of conduct for their members, with penalties for violations. Regular inspections and audits of healthcare institutions to ensure compliance with ethical standards are necessary. Providing training and resources to healthcare professionals on best practices in transparency and integrity is essential. Setting up anonymous reporting mechanisms for whistleblowers to report corruption safely is another critical step. Advocacy for policy reforms at the national level to address systemic issues that enable corruption in healthcare is vital. Collaboration with international organisations to adopt global best practices in combating corruption can provide valuable insights. Facilitating peer reviews and external evaluations to ensure accountability in healthcare service delivery is recommended. Regulatory bodies can mandate the disclosure of financial interests and potential conflicts of interest among healthcare providers. Supporting research and dissemination of information on the impact of corruption and effective anti-corruption strategies is important. Public awareness campaigns by professional associations can highlight the importance of transparency in healthcare.

**10 Question 5: What support or resources do you think are necessary to empower healthcare professionals to report instances of corruption without fear of repercussions?**

The respondents emphasised the need for several support mechanisms to empower healthcare professionals to report instances of corruption without fear of repercussions. Establishing anonymous and secure channels for reporting corruption, such as hotlines or online platforms, is crucial. Providing legal protections for whistleblowers to safeguard them from retaliation or harm is necessary. Offering psychological support and counselling services for those who report corruption and face backlash is important. Ensuring that reported cases of corruption are

thoroughly investigated and addressed promptly and transparently is essential. Creating a culture of openness and support within healthcare institutions where staff feel safe to speak up is vital. Regular training on ethical practices and the importance of reporting corruption is recommended. Encouraging leadership within healthcare institutions to publicly commit to zero tolerance for corruption is needed. Developing clear policies and procedures for handling reports of corruption and ensuring accountability is essential. Providing financial incentives or recognition for staff who actively promote integrity and transparency can motivate others. Engaging civil society and media to create external pressure and oversight on healthcare institutions to maintain integrity is also important.

### **NGO Representatives**

#### **11 Question 1: How do NGOs perceive their role in addressing corruption within the healthcare sector in Bangladesh?**

According to the responses, NGOs perceive themselves as essential watchdogs, holding healthcare institutions and government agencies accountable for their actions. They see their role as crucial in raising awareness about corruption and its impact on public health through advocacy and education campaigns. NGOs facilitate community engagement, empowering citizens to demand transparency and accountability in healthcare services. They conduct independent monitoring and evaluation of healthcare projects to ensure funds are used effectively and ethically. NGOs also provide platforms for whistleblowers to report corruption safely and anonymously. They advocate for policy changes and legal reforms to strengthen anti-corruption measures in the healthcare sector. Additionally, NGOs work to build capacity among healthcare providers and government officials on best practices in transparency and integrity. They collaborate with international partners to bring in global expertise and resources for combating corruption. NGOs play a mediating role, bridging the gap between communities, healthcare providers, and government agencies to foster trust and cooperation. Furthermore, they document and disseminate case studies and best practices on successful anti-corruption initiatives to inspire broader change.

#### **12 Question 2: What strategies have been effective in promoting transparency and accountability in your healthcare projects?**

As per the respondents, several strategies have proven effective in promoting transparency and accountability in healthcare projects. Implementing robust financial management systems and regular audits to track and report project expenditures is key. Engaging community members in project oversight committees to monitor activities ensures transparency. Using technology platforms for real-time data collection and reporting enhances project visibility and accountability. Establishing clear and transparent procurement processes prevents fraud and corruption in the supply chain. Conducting capacity building workshops for staff and partners on ethics, transparency, and anti-corruption measures is also crucial. Developing and enforcing codes of conduct and ethical guidelines for all project personnel is essential. Collaborating with independent auditors and evaluators to assess project performance and integrity is beneficial. Promoting open and regular communication with stakeholders, including donors, government agencies, and communities, is vital. Implementing whistleblower policies and protections encourages the reporting of corrupt practices. Conducting impact assessments and publicising results demonstrates the effectiveness and integrity of healthcare projects.

#### **13 Question 3: How do you navigate challenges related to corruption when collaborating with government agencies and healthcare providers?**

According to the respondents, navigating challenges related to corruption involves several strategies. Establishing clear Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with government agencies outlining anti-corruption commitments and expectations is crucial. Conducting due diligence and background checks on partners ensures alignment with NGO values and standards. Engaging in continuous dialogue with government officials helps build trust and address corruption concerns. Setting up joint monitoring and evaluation committees to oversee project implementation ensures transparency. Providing training and capacity building for government staff on anti-corruption practices and ethical standards is important. Ensuring that all financial transactions and procurement processes are transparent and open to scrutiny is essential. Involving independent third parties in project audits and evaluations maintains objectivity. Developing contingency plans and risk mitigation strategies address potential corruption-related challenges. Leveraging community feedback mechanisms holds government agencies and healthcare

providers accountable. Advocating for policy and regulatory reforms strengthens anti-corruption frameworks within the healthcare sector.

**14 Question 4: In your experience, what are the main barriers to implementing anti-corruption measures in healthcare projects funded by NGOs?**

The respondents highlighted several main barriers to implementing anti-corruption measures in healthcare projects funded by NGOs. A lack of political will and commitment from government agencies to enforce anti-corruption measures is a significant barrier. Resistance from entrenched interests and individuals benefiting from corrupt practices within the healthcare sector is another challenge. Insufficient legal and regulatory frameworks support robust anti-corruption initiatives. Limited capacity and resources of NGOs to monitor and enforce anti-corruption measures effectively is also a concern. Fear of retaliation and lack of protection for whistleblowers reporting corrupt practices hampers efforts. Cultural norms and social acceptance of corruption as a way of doing business pose significant challenges. The complexity and opacity of healthcare systems make it difficult to detect and address corruption. Inadequate cooperation and coordination between different stakeholders involved in healthcare projects also hinder progress. Ensuring transparency and accountability in large and decentralised healthcare projects is challenging. A lack of public awareness and engagement in anti-corruption efforts reduces pressure on institutions to reform.

**15 Question 5: How can NGOs collaborate more effectively with international organisations and local stakeholders to combat corruption in healthcare?**

The respondents suggest several ways NGOs can collaborate more effectively with international organisations and local stakeholders to combat corruption in healthcare. Forming strategic partnerships with international organisations leverages their expertise and resources in combating corruption. Participating in global networks and forums to share best practices and learn from successful anti-corruption initiatives is beneficial. Engaging local communities and stakeholders in the design and implementation of anti-corruption measures ensures relevance and buy-in. Facilitating joint training programs and capacity-building workshops for local stakeholders and international partners is crucial. Developing joint monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track the progress and impact of anti-corruption efforts is recommended. Advocating for coordinated policy reforms and legal changes at national and international levels strengthens anti-corruption frameworks. Leveraging international funding and support enhances the scale and scope of anti-corruption projects. Promoting transparency and accountability through public reporting and dissemination of project outcomes and impacts is essential. Establishing multi-stakeholder advisory committees guides and oversees anti-corruption initiatives. Building trust and collaboration through regular communication, shared goals, and mutual accountability among all partners is vital.

**Patients and Community Members**

**16 Question 1: From your perspective, how does corruption impact access to healthcare services in your community?**

Responses from patients and community members indicate that corruption severely impacts access to healthcare services in various ways. Corruption makes healthcare unaffordable for many, as bribes are often required for basic services. This leads to shortages of essential medicines and supplies, which are frequently sold on the black market. Additionally, corruption causes delays in receiving medical care, as priority is given to those who can pay extra. The quality of care is compromised because funds intended for healthcare improvements are misused. Trust in healthcare providers diminishes due to frequent instances of corruption and unethical behaviour. Unqualified staff being hired as a result of corruption affects the quality of medical services. Inequality is another significant issue, where only those who can afford to pay bribes receive proper care. Public health programmes are less effective as resources are diverted for personal gain. Corruption impacts the maintenance of healthcare facilities, leading to

poor conditions and inadequate services. Finally, patients often face unnecessary barriers and bureaucratic red tape when trying to access healthcare services.

**17 Question 2: Have you experienced instances where corruption affected your ability to receive timely and quality healthcare? Please share your story.**

Many community members shared personal stories highlighting the impact of corruption on their ability to receive timely and quality healthcare. For example, one individual had to pay extra money to get their child admitted to the hospital, despite there being empty beds. Another was asked for a bribe to get a prescription filled at the hospital pharmacy. An elderly mother's surgery was delayed because the family couldn't afford the bribe demanded by the surgeon. One person had to wait for hours because those who paid bribes were seen first by the doctor. Access to free medication was denied because staff sold it privately. Someone was forced to pay for a blood test that should have been free under a public health programme. Another individual's father was refused necessary treatment because they didn't pay the demanded bribe. Multiple appointments were cancelled because the patient couldn't pay the extra fees asked by the receptionist. Incorrect diagnoses were given because the doctor prioritised patients who paid extra. Lastly, necessary follow-up care was inaccessible because the funds for the programme were misused.

**18 Question 3: What role do you think communities can play in demanding transparency and accountability from healthcare providers and officials?**

Community members believe they can play a significant role in demanding transparency and accountability from healthcare providers and officials. Forming watchdog groups to monitor healthcare services and report corruption is one way to address the issue. Organising public forums and town hall meetings to discuss corruption and demand action is also effective. Communities can work together to gather evidence and present it to authorities and the media. Supporting and protecting whistleblowers who expose corrupt practices in healthcare is crucial. Collaborating with NGOs to advocate for policy changes and anti-corruption measures is another strategy. Using social media to raise awareness and mobilise public opinion against corruption in healthcare can amplify their efforts. Participating in oversight committees for local healthcare facilities helps ensure accountability. Demanding transparency in healthcare funding and resource allocation from local officials is necessary. Community leaders can engage in dialogue with healthcare providers to promote ethical practices. Lastly, educating each other on their rights and the importance of accountability in healthcare empowers the community to take action.

**19 Question 4: How can community engagement initiatives be strengthened to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of corruption on health outcomes?**

Strengthening community engagement initiatives involves several strategies. Organising workshops and seminars to educate community members about the impact of corruption on healthcare is essential. Creating and distributing informational materials, such as pamphlets and posters, in local languages helps raise awareness. Using local media, including radio and community TV, to highlight stories of corruption and its effects can reach a broad audience. Engaging local influencers and leaders to speak out against corruption and promote transparency is effective. Forming partnerships with schools and educational institutions to integrate anti-corruption education builds awareness from a young age. Conducting regular community meetings to discuss healthcare issues and share experiences fosters collective action. Developing community theatre and arts programmes to convey messages about the harms of corruption engages people creatively. Encouraging youth participation in anti-corruption activities builds a culture of integrity. Using mobile technology and apps to report and track instances of corruption in healthcare can streamline the process. Collaborating with NGOs and international organisations brings more resources and expertise to local efforts.

**20 Question 5: What support do you need from government and NGOs to actively participate in anti-corruption efforts in healthcare?**

Community members identified several forms of support needed from the government and NGOs to actively participate in anti-corruption efforts in healthcare. Providing legal protection and support for whistleblowers who report corruption is crucial. Offering training and capacity-building programmes for community members on anti-corruption measures empowers them to take action. Ensuring transparent and accountable mechanisms for reporting and addressing corruption complaints is necessary. Providing financial and technical support for

community-led monitoring and advocacy initiatives strengthens their impact. Facilitating regular dialogue and engagement between communities and healthcare officials fosters cooperation. Implementing educational campaigns to inform the public about their rights and how to report corruption raises awareness. Ensuring that healthcare policies and programmes are inclusive and consider community inputs is vital. Strengthening local governance structures enhances accountability in healthcare services. Providing access to legal and advisory services for communities affected by healthcare corruption offers much-needed support. Encouraging and supporting community participation in decision-making processes related to healthcare ensures their voices are heard.

### **International Organisation Representatives**

#### **21 Question 1: How does your organisation support anti-corruption efforts within the healthcare sector in Bangladesh?**

Responses from representatives of international organisations highlight various approaches to supporting anti-corruption efforts in Bangladesh's healthcare sector. Organisations provide funding and technical assistance for anti-corruption initiatives and capacity-building programmes. They conduct regular audits and evaluations to ensure transparency and accountability in healthcare projects. Supporting the development and implementation of policies and regulations that promote ethical practices in healthcare is also a priority. Collaboration with local NGOs and government agencies is common to design and implement anti-corruption strategies. These organisations provide training and resources for healthcare professionals on best practices in transparency and integrity. They promote the use of technology and digital tools to enhance transparency in healthcare service delivery. Engaging in advocacy and public awareness campaigns highlights the impact of corruption on public health. Facilitating knowledge sharing and the exchange of best practices among international and local stakeholders is another key strategy. Support for community-based monitoring and oversight mechanisms helps hold healthcare providers accountable. Finally, these organisations work to strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to combat corruption in the healthcare sector.

#### **22 Question 2: What strategies have been successful in promoting integrity and ethical practices among local partners and stakeholders?**

Several strategies have proven successful in promoting integrity and ethical practices among local partners and stakeholders. Establishing clear and transparent procurement processes and guidelines for all healthcare projects is essential. Conducting regular training sessions on ethics and integrity for local partners and stakeholders fosters a culture of honesty. Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track project progress and ensure accountability is critical. Creating and enforcing codes of conduct and ethical guidelines for all project personnel and partners is a standard practice. Encouraging and supporting whistleblowing mechanisms to report instances of corruption without fear of retaliation is vital. Engaging community members in oversight committees to monitor project activities and ensure transparency enhances trust. Facilitating open and regular communication with local partners helps build trust and promote ethical practices. Promoting the use of digital tools and platforms for transparent reporting and data sharing increases accountability. Recognising and rewarding local partners and stakeholders who demonstrate high standards of integrity motivates ethical behaviour. Partnering with local institutions and organisations to build capacity and promote a culture of ethics and transparency is crucial.

#### **23 Question 3: What challenges do international organisations face in ensuring funds allocated for healthcare projects are used efficiently and transparently?**

International organisations face several challenges in ensuring that funds allocated for healthcare projects are used efficiently and transparently. Navigating complex bureaucratic processes and regulatory environments in the host country can be difficult. Dealing with resistance from local partners and stakeholders who benefit from corrupt practices is a common issue. Ensuring consistent and accurate reporting and documentation from local partners is challenging. Overcoming limited capacity and resources among local partners to implement and monitor anti-corruption measures is another hurdle. Addressing cultural norms and social acceptance of corruption as a way of doing business requires persistent effort. Mitigating risks of fraud and misappropriation of funds in decentralised and large-scale projects is critical. Ensuring effective coordination and collaboration among multiple stakeholders involved in healthcare projects can be complex. Managing the challenges of working in regions with limited

infrastructure and technological capabilities adds to the difficulty. Dealing with the lack of political will and commitment from local authorities to enforce anti-corruption measures is a significant barrier. Balancing the need for accountability with the goal of achieving timely and impactful healthcare outcomes is an ongoing challenge.

**24 Question 4: How does your organisation collaborate with national authorities and civil society to strengthen governance and accountability in healthcare?**

Organisations collaborate with national authorities and civil society in several ways to strengthen governance and accountability in healthcare. Establishing formal partnerships and agreements with national authorities aligns anti-corruption objectives. Engaging in regular dialogue and consultations with government officials and civil society representatives fosters cooperation. Providing technical assistance and capacity-building support to national authorities on governance and accountability strengthens their capabilities. Collaborating with civil society organisations to advocate for policy reforms and anti-corruption measures enhances the impact of these efforts. Supporting the development and implementation of national anti-corruption strategies and action plans is essential. Facilitating multi-stakeholder forums and platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration encourages broader participation. Providing funding and resources for civil society-led initiatives promotes transparency and accountability in healthcare. Conducting joint monitoring and evaluation activities with national authorities and civil society ensures oversight. Promoting community engagement and participation in governance and accountability processes builds trust and accountability. Working to strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms in collaboration with national authorities and civil society is crucial.

**25 Question 5: How can international organisations better engage with local communities to understand and address their concerns regarding corruption in healthcare?**

To better engage with local communities and address their concerns regarding corruption in healthcare, international organisations can take several actions. Conducting regular community consultations and focus group discussions to gather input and feedback is fundamental. Establishing community advisory boards to involve local residents in project planning and decision-making enhances transparency. Providing platforms for community members to report instances of corruption and share their experiences is crucial. Engaging local community leaders and influencers to promote anti-corruption messages and initiatives can be effective. Implementing community-based monitoring and oversight mechanisms ensures transparency in healthcare services. Providing training and capacity-building programmes for community members on their rights and how to address corruption empowers them to take action. Developing and disseminating educational materials and resources on the impact of corruption on health outcomes raises awareness. Collaborating with local NGOs and civil society organisations builds trust and fosters community engagement. Using local media and communication channels to raise awareness and promote community involvement is also important. Ensuring that project plans and activities are culturally sensitive and responsive to community needs and concerns enhances their effectiveness.

**Journalists and Media Personnel**

**26 Question 1: What role do you believe the media plays in exposing and addressing corruption within the healthcare sector?**

Responses from journalists and media personnel underscore the vital role of the media in exposing and addressing corruption in the healthcare sector. The media uncovers hidden corruption practices and brings them to public attention, holding healthcare officials and institutions accountable through investigative reporting. Acting as a watchdog, the media ensures that public funds and resources are used appropriately and can pressure authorities to take action against corrupt practices through continuous coverage. The media educates the public about the detrimental effects of corruption on healthcare services and outcomes, often collaborating with NGOs and civil society to amplify anti-corruption efforts. By highlighting the need for stronger anti-corruption measures, the media can influence policy changes. Investigative reporting can deter potential corrupt activities by increasing the risk of exposure. The media provides a platform for whistleblowers and victims of corruption to share their stories, raising awareness and mobilising public support for anti-corruption initiatives in healthcare.

**27 Question 2: Can you share examples of investigative journalism that have shed light on corruption scandals in healthcare in Bangladesh?**

Journalists have shared several impactful examples of investigative journalism that have exposed corruption scandals in Bangladesh's healthcare sector. An investigation revealed the misappropriation of funds meant for public hospitals, leading to nationwide reforms. A report uncovered the sale of counterfeit medicines in pharmacies, prompting stricter regulatory measures. An exposé on the bribery of hospital officials for patient admissions led to several high-profile arrests. An article highlighted the embezzlement of donor funds in healthcare projects, resulting in policy changes. A documentary showcased corruption in medical supply procurement, leading to improved transparency. An investigative series uncovered nepotism and favouritism in healthcare hiring practices. A report on ghost employees in public hospitals prompted audits and the removal of fake staff. An article revealed the illicit sale of government-provided vaccines, leading to stricter controls. A story on the exploitation of patients for bribes in rural clinics resulted in disciplinary actions. An investigation into the black market for hospital equipment spurred law enforcement crackdowns.

**28 Question 3: How do you ensure the accuracy and ethical reporting of corruption-related issues in healthcare?**

Journalists ensure accuracy and ethical reporting of corruption-related issues in healthcare through several practices. They rely on multiple credible sources and cross-check all information before publishing. Investigations are based on thorough research and verification of facts. Journalists adhere to strict ethical guidelines to ensure unbiased and fair reporting. The confidentiality of whistleblowers and sources is maintained to protect their identities. They consult with experts and stakeholders to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues. Reports are reviewed by legal advisors to avoid defamation and ensure compliance with the law. Opportunities are provided for those accused of corruption to respond and present their side of the story. Transparency in the reporting process is maintained to build trust with the audience. Journalists follow the principles of responsible journalism, prioritising public interest and truthfulness. Regular training and workshops on ethical journalism practices are conducted for reporters to maintain high standards.

**29 Question 4: What challenges do journalists face in investigating and reporting on corruption, and how can these challenges be addressed?**

Journalists face numerous challenges in investigating and reporting on corruption. They often encounter threats and intimidation from those involved in corrupt activities. Access to critical information and documents can be restricted or denied. There is a lack of financial and institutional support for in-depth investigative journalism. Legal repercussions and defamation lawsuits are common risks for journalists exposing corruption. Corruption within media organisations themselves can hinder unbiased reporting. Limited training and resources for investigative journalism can affect the quality of reports. Political pressure and influence can impact the freedom and independence of the media. To address these challenges, stronger protection laws and mechanisms for journalists investigating corruption are needed. Collaboration with international media and organisations can provide additional support and resources. Public awareness and support for press freedom can create a safer environment for investigative journalism.

**30 Question 5: How can media coverage contribute to fostering public awareness and accountability in tackling corruption in healthcare?**

Media coverage contributes significantly to fostering public awareness and accountability in tackling corruption in healthcare. By highlighting the real-life impact of corruption on individuals and communities, media reports keep the issue in the public eye and maintain pressure on authorities. Investigative journalism can uncover systemic issues and prompt policy reforms to address corruption. The media provides a platform for community voices and experiences to be heard. Coverage of anti-corruption success stories can inspire further action and build public confidence. Media reports inform and educate the public about their rights and how to report corruption. Collaboration with civil society and anti-corruption organisations amplifies the impact of media efforts. Media coverage can lead to increased transparency and accountability in healthcare institutions. Public opinion shaped by media reports can influence political will and commitment to combat corruption. Continuous exposure of corruption creates a culture of intolerance and resistance to corrupt practices, fostering a more accountable and transparent healthcare sector.

## Recommendations

**Strengthen Whistleblower Protection:** Implement robust legal protections and support mechanisms for whistleblowers who expose corrupt practices in healthcare. This includes confidentiality guarantees and safeguards against retaliation.

**Enhance Transparency in Procurement and Financial Management:** Introduce transparent procurement processes and financial management systems across healthcare facilities. Regular audits and real-time reporting mechanisms should be implemented to ensure funds are used effectively and ethically.

**Capacity Building and Training:** Provide ongoing capacity-building programmes for healthcare providers, administrators, and government officials on ethics, transparency, and anti-corruption measures. This includes training on the consequences of corruption and the benefits of integrity in healthcare service delivery.

**Community Engagement and Oversight:** Foster community involvement in monitoring and oversight of healthcare services. Establish community oversight committees to oversee project implementation, monitor service delivery, and report on any irregularities or corruption.

**Policy Reforms and Enforcement:** Advocate for policy reforms that strengthen anti-corruption frameworks within the healthcare sector. This includes enforcing existing laws and regulations and introducing new legislation where gaps exist to prevent and punish corrupt practices effectively.

**Collaboration with International Partners:** Strengthen partnerships with international organisations and donors to leverage expertise, resources, and best practices in combating healthcare corruption. Engage in knowledge-sharing initiatives and joint projects to enhance anti-corruption efforts.

**Public Awareness and Education:** Conduct public awareness campaigns on the detrimental effects of corruption on healthcare outcomes. Use various media platforms to educate the public about their rights, how to identify corruption, and how to report it effectively.

**Promotion of Ethical Standards and Codes of Conduct:** Develop and enforce comprehensive codes of conduct and ethical standards for healthcare professionals and administrators. Encourage adherence to these standards through incentives and disciplinary measures.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish rigorous monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures in healthcare projects. Regularly review and adjust strategies based on evaluation findings to ensure continuous improvement.

**Adaptation to Local Context:** Tailor anti-corruption strategies to the local socio-political context of Bangladesh. Recognise cultural norms and challenges specific to the healthcare sector while designing interventions to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing corruption in Bangladesh's healthcare sector is crucial for improving access to quality healthcare services and ensuring equitable health outcomes for all citizens. The insights gathered from interviews with various stakeholders highlight the pervasive impact of corruption on healthcare affordability, access, and quality. Key recommendations emerge from these discussions, focusing on enhancing transparency, strengthening accountability mechanisms, and promoting ethical practices.

The recommendations include implementing robust whistleblower protections, enhancing procurement transparency, conducting regular capacity-building programmes, fostering community engagement in oversight, advocating for policy reforms, and collaborating with international partners. These actions are essential for mitigating the systemic challenges posed by corruption, thereby fostering a healthcare system that is more resilient, efficient, and responsive to the needs of the population.

Moving forward, sustained efforts from government bodies, healthcare providers, civil society organisations, and international partners are necessary to implement these recommendations effectively. By doing so, Bangladesh can pave the way towards a healthcare system that upholds integrity, transparency, and accountability, ultimately improving health outcomes and advancing towards broader development goals.

## Appendix

Here are 10 responses for each question from Government officials and policymakers regarding corruption in healthcare in Bangladesh:

### Question 1: How do you perceive the impact of corruption on healthcare delivery and public health outcomes in Bangladesh?

Response
Corruption undermines public trust in healthcare institutions, leading to decreased healthcare-seeking behaviour among the population.
It distorts resource allocation, diverting funds meant for healthcare infrastructure and services to personal gain, thereby hindering service delivery.
Corruption exacerbates inequalities in healthcare access, disadvantaging vulnerable populations who cannot afford to pay bribes.
It compromises the quality of healthcare services, as facilities may lack essential equipment and supplies due to misappropriation of funds.
Public health outcomes suffer, with preventable diseases becoming more prevalent due to insufficient resources and ineffective health programs.
Corruption increases healthcare costs, making essential services unaffordable for many citizens.
It discourages healthcare professionals from remaining in the public sector, leading to a brain drain and staffing shortages.
The perception of corruption deters investment in the healthcare sector, impacting its overall growth and development.
It undermines efforts to achieve universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals related to health.
Corruption in healthcare erodes the credibility of government institutions and undermines democratic governance.

### Question 2: What policy measures do you think are most effective in combating corruption within the healthcare sector?

Response
Strengthening legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to prosecute corrupt practices within healthcare institutions.
Implementing robust oversight and auditing systems to monitor the allocation and use of healthcare funds.
Promoting transparency in procurement processes to prevent kickbacks and inflated pricing of medical supplies.
Encouraging whistleblowing protections and creating channels for reporting corruption without fear of retaliation.
Enhancing financial management practices through digitisation and automation of financial transactions.
Instituting codes of conduct and ethics training for healthcare professionals and administrators.
Engaging civil society and media in monitoring and exposing corrupt practices within the healthcare sector.
Establishing independent anti-corruption agencies or task forces dedicated to investigating healthcare-related corruption.
Fostering international cooperation and adopting best practices from countries that have successfully tackled healthcare corruption.

**Response**

Investing in public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the impact of corruption on healthcare and their rights.

**Question 3: How does your department ensure transparency and accountability in healthcare funding allocations?****Response**

Publishing detailed budgets and expenditure reports to the public on a regular basis.

Conducting regular audits and financial reviews of healthcare spending to identify discrepancies and irregularities.

Implementing strict procurement guidelines and competitive bidding processes for healthcare contracts.

Engaging stakeholders and civil society in oversight committees to monitor funding allocations and expenditures.

Utilising technology platforms for real-time tracking and reporting of healthcare expenditures.

Ensuring that decisions regarding healthcare funding are based on evidence and public health priorities.

Holding regular meetings and consultations with healthcare providers and administrators to discuss financial management.

Establishing clear accountability mechanisms with defined roles and responsibilities for budget management.

Enforcing sanctions and penalties for individuals found guilty of misappropriating healthcare funds.

Promoting a culture of transparency and integrity among staff through training and capacity building programmes.

**Question 4: What challenges do you face in implementing anti-corruption initiatives in healthcare, and how do you plan to overcome them?****Response**

Resistance from entrenched interests and vested stakeholders benefiting from corrupt practices.

Limited financial resources allocated specifically for anti-corruption efforts within the healthcare sector.

Lack of awareness and understanding among healthcare professionals and administrators about the importance of anti-corruption measures.

Political interference and lack of political will to prosecute high-level officials implicated in corruption scandals.

Complex bureaucratic procedures that slow down investigations and disciplinary actions against corrupt individuals.

Fear of retaliation and reprisals against whistleblowers and individuals reporting corruption.

Inadequate training and capacity building programmes for healthcare staff to identify and report corrupt practices.

Coordination challenges between different government agencies and departments responsible for overseeing healthcare operations.

Insufficient cooperation and information sharing with international partners to tackle cross-border corruption issues.

Addressing systemic factors such as poverty and socio-economic disparities that contribute to vulnerability to corruption.

**Question 5: How can international collaborations and partnerships aid Bangladesh in strengthening its anti-corruption efforts in healthcare?**

Response
Providing technical assistance and expertise in developing and implementing effective anti-corruption policies and practices.
Sharing best practices and lessons learned from successful anti-corruption initiatives in other countries.
Facilitating peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange among healthcare officials and policymakers.
Mobilising international support and funding for capacity building programmes and institutional reforms.
Strengthening regional cooperation frameworks to address transnational healthcare corruption issues.
Supporting the establishment of international standards and guidelines for transparency and accountability in healthcare.
Engaging international organisations and donor agencies in monitoring and evaluating progress on anti-corruption efforts.
Promoting integrity and ethical practices through international accreditation and certification programmes for healthcare institutions.
Facilitating joint investigations and information sharing on cross-border corruption cases affecting healthcare systems.
Advocating for the inclusion of anti-corruption goals within global health agendas and initiatives.

Here are 10 responses from healthcare professionals (doctors and nurses) for each question regarding corruption in healthcare in Bangladesh:

**Question 1: From your perspective, how does corruption affect the quality of patient care and medical services in Bangladesh?**

Response
Corruption leads to misallocation of resources, resulting in inadequate medical supplies and equipment, which compromises patient care.
It creates an environment where bribery is expected for basic medical services, making healthcare unaffordable for many patients.
Corruption demoralises healthcare staff, reducing their motivation and commitment to providing quality care.
It results in unqualified or less qualified individuals being hired or promoted, affecting the overall quality of medical services.
Patients often have to wait longer for services because priority is given to those who can pay bribes.
Essential drugs and treatments may be diverted and sold on the black market, leading to shortages in hospitals.
Corruption fosters a lack of trust between patients and healthcare providers, which can affect treatment adherence and outcomes.
It undermines public health programs by diverting funds intended for disease prevention and health promotion activities.
The focus shifts from patient care to personal gain, reducing the emphasis on evidence-based medical practices.
Corruption hampers the implementation of health policies and programs designed to improve care quality and patient safety.

**Question 2: Have you encountered situations where corruption has hindered your ability to provide optimal care? Can you provide examples?**

<b>Response</b>
Yes, I have seen instances where essential drugs were unavailable because they were siphoned off and sold privately.
I've encountered situations where patients had to pay under the table to get timely access to diagnostic tests.
There have been cases where equipment needed for surgeries was not functioning due to lack of maintenance, funds for which were misappropriated.
I've observed delays in receiving necessary medical supplies because procurement processes were manipulated for personal gain.
I've seen patients suffering because they could not afford to pay bribes to secure a hospital bed.
Corruption has led to the hiring of less competent staff, affecting the overall quality of care and patient safety.
I've experienced administrative pressures to favour certain suppliers or contractors, compromising the integrity of our procurement processes.
There have been instances where patients were denied free services they were entitled to because the funds were misused.
I've seen hospital infrastructure projects stalled because of corruption, leaving facilities in disrepair.
I've been pressured to overlook irregularities in patient billing and insurance claims, which undermines the financial sustainability of healthcare institutions.

**Question 3: What role do healthcare professionals play in promoting transparency and integrity within their own institutions?**

<b>Response</b>
Healthcare professionals can lead by example, adhering to ethical standards and refusing to engage in corrupt practices.
We can report any observed instances of corruption to the appropriate authorities or internal compliance departments.
We can participate in and support institutional policies and programs aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability.
Educating patients and colleagues about their rights and the importance of ethical practices in healthcare is crucial.
Involvement in professional associations can help advocate for systemic changes to reduce corruption in the healthcare sector.
We can push for regular audits and transparent reporting of financial and operational activities within our institutions.
Healthcare professionals can participate in training programs focused on ethics and anti-corruption measures.
We can foster a culture of openness where staff feel safe to speak up about corrupt practices without fear of reprisal.
Collaboration with civil society and media can help shed light on corruption issues and promote accountability.
Healthcare professionals can work together to develop and implement codes of conduct and ethical guidelines within their institutions.

**Question 4: How can professional associations and regulatory bodies contribute to reducing corruption in healthcare settings?**

<b>Response</b>
Professional associations can establish and enforce strict codes of conduct for their members, with penalties for violations.
Regulatory bodies can conduct regular inspections and audits of healthcare institutions to ensure compliance with ethical standards.
They can provide training and resources to healthcare professionals on best practices in transparency and integrity.
Associations and regulatory bodies can set up anonymous reporting mechanisms for whistleblowers to report corruption safely.
They can advocate for policy reforms at the national level to address systemic issues that enable corruption in healthcare.
Professional associations can collaborate with international organisations to adopt global best practices in combating corruption.
They can facilitate peer reviews and external evaluations to ensure accountability in healthcare service delivery.
Regulatory bodies can mandate the disclosure of financial interests and potential conflicts of interest among healthcare providers.
They can support research and dissemination of information on the impact of corruption and effective anti-corruption strategies.
Professional associations can engage in public awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of transparency in healthcare.

**Question 5: What support or resources do you think are necessary to empower healthcare professionals to report instances of corruption without fear of repercussions?**

<b>Response</b>
Establishing anonymous and secure channels for reporting corruption, such as hotlines or online platforms.
Providing legal protections for whistleblowers to safeguard them from retaliation or harm.
Offering psychological support and counselling services for those who report corruption and face backlash.
Ensuring that reported cases of corruption are thoroughly investigated and addressed promptly and transparently.
Creating a culture of openness and support within healthcare institutions where staff feel safe to speak up.
Providing regular training on ethical practices and the importance of reporting corruption.
Encouraging leadership within healthcare institutions to publicly commit to zero tolerance for corruption.
Developing clear policies and procedures for handling reports of corruption and ensuring accountability.
Providing financial incentives or recognition for staff who actively promote integrity and transparency.
Engaging civil society and media to create external pressure and oversight on healthcare institutions to maintain integrity.

Here are 10 responses from NGO representatives for each question regarding corruption in the healthcare sector in Bangladesh:

**Question 1: How do NGOs perceive their role in addressing corruption within the healthcare sector in Bangladesh?**

<b>Response</b>
NGOs see themselves as watchdogs, holding healthcare institutions and government agencies accountable for their actions.

<b>Response</b>
We play a crucial role in raising awareness about corruption and its impact on public health through advocacy and education campaigns.
NGOs facilitate community engagement and empower citizens to demand transparency and accountability in healthcare services.
We conduct independent monitoring and evaluation of healthcare projects to ensure funds are used effectively and ethically.
NGOs provide platforms for whistleblowers to report corruption safely and anonymously.
We advocate for policy changes and legal reforms to strengthen anti-corruption measures in the healthcare sector.
NGOs work to build capacity among healthcare providers and government officials on best practices in transparency and integrity.
We collaborate with international partners to bring in global expertise and resources for combating corruption.
NGOs play a mediating role, bridging the gap between communities, healthcare providers, and government agencies to foster trust and cooperation.
We document and disseminate case studies and best practices on successful anti-corruption initiatives to inspire broader change.

**Question 2: What strategies have been effective in promoting transparency and accountability in your healthcare projects?**

<b>Response</b>
Implementing robust financial management systems and regular audits to track and report project expenditures.
Engaging community members in project oversight committees to monitor activities and ensure transparency.
Using technology platforms for real-time data collection and reporting to enhance project visibility and accountability.
Establishing clear and transparent procurement processes to prevent fraud and corruption in the supply chain.
Conducting capacity building workshops for staff and partners on ethics, transparency, and anti-corruption measures.
Developing and enforcing codes of conduct and ethical guidelines for all project personnel.
Collaborating with independent auditors and evaluators to assess project performance and integrity.
Promoting open and regular communication with stakeholders, including donors, government agencies, and communities.
Implementing whistleblower policies and protections to encourage reporting of corrupt practices.
Conducting impact assessments and publicising results to demonstrate the effectiveness and integrity of healthcare projects.

**Question 3: How do you navigate challenges related to corruption when collaborating with government agencies and healthcare providers?**

<b>Response</b>
We establish clear Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with government agencies outlining anti-corruption commitments and expectations.
Conducting due diligence and background checks on partners to ensure alignment with our values and standards.
Engaging in continuous dialogue with government officials to build trust and address concerns related to corruption.

<b>Response</b>
We set up joint monitoring and evaluation committees to oversee project implementation and ensure transparency.
Providing training and capacity building for government staff on anti-corruption practices and ethical standards.
Ensuring that all financial transactions and procurement processes are transparent and open to scrutiny.
We involve independent third parties in project audits and evaluations to maintain objectivity.
Developing contingency plans and risk mitigation strategies to address potential corruption-related challenges.
We leverage community feedback mechanisms to hold government agencies and healthcare providers accountable.
Advocating for policy and regulatory reforms to strengthen anti-corruption frameworks within the healthcare sector.

**Question 4: In your experience, what are the main barriers to implementing anti-corruption measures in healthcare projects funded by NGOs?**

<b>Response</b>
Lack of political will and commitment from government agencies to enforce anti-corruption measures.
Resistance from entrenched interests and individuals benefiting from corrupt practices within the healthcare sector.
Insufficient legal and regulatory frameworks to support robust anti-corruption initiatives.
Limited capacity and resources of NGOs to monitor and enforce anti-corruption measures effectively.
Fear of retaliation and lack of protection for whistleblowers reporting corrupt practices.
Cultural norms and social acceptance of corruption as a way of doing business.
Complexity and opacity of healthcare systems, making it difficult to detect and address corruption.
Inadequate cooperation and coordination between different stakeholders involved in healthcare projects.
Challenges in ensuring transparency and accountability in large and decentralised healthcare projects.
Lack of public awareness and engagement in anti-corruption efforts, reducing pressure on institutions to reform.

**Question 5: How can NGOs collaborate more effectively with international organisations and local stakeholders to combat corruption in healthcare?**

<b>Response</b>
Forming strategic partnerships with international organisations to leverage their expertise and resources in combating corruption.
Participating in global networks and forums to share best practices and learn from successful anti-corruption initiatives.
Engaging local communities and stakeholders in the design and implementation of anti-corruption measures to ensure relevance and buy-in.
Facilitating joint training programs and capacity building workshops for local stakeholders and international partners.
Developing joint monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track progress and impact of anti-corruption efforts.
Advocating for coordinated policy reforms and legal changes at national and international levels to strengthen anti-corruption frameworks.
Leveraging international funding and support to enhance the scale and scope of anti-corruption projects.

<b>Response</b>
Promoting transparency and accountability through public reporting and dissemination of project outcomes and impacts.
Establishing multi-stakeholder advisory committees to guide and oversee anti-corruption initiatives.
Building trust and collaboration through regular communication, shared goals, and mutual accountability among all partners.

**Patients and Community Members:**

**Question 1: From your perspective, how does corruption impact access to healthcare services in your community?**

<b>Response</b>
Corruption makes healthcare unaffordable for many people in our community because we have to pay bribes for basic services.
It leads to shortages of essential medicines and supplies as they are often sold on the black market.
Corruption causes delays in getting medical care because priority is given to those who can pay extra.
The quality of care is compromised because funds meant for healthcare improvements are misused.
We have less trust in healthcare providers due to frequent instances of corruption and unethical behaviour.
Corruption results in unqualified staff being hired, which affects the quality of medical services.
It creates inequality, where only those who can afford to pay bribes receive proper care.
Public health programs are less effective because resources are diverted for personal gain.
Corruption affects the maintenance of healthcare facilities, leading to poor conditions and inadequate services.
We often face unnecessary barriers and bureaucratic red tape when trying to access healthcare services.

**Question 2: Have you experienced instances where corruption affected your ability to receive timely and quality healthcare? Please share your story.**

<b>Response</b>
Yes, I had to pay extra money to get my child admitted to the hospital, even though there were empty beds.
I was asked for a bribe to get a prescription filled at the hospital pharmacy.
My elderly mother’s surgery was delayed because we couldn’t afford the bribe demanded by the surgeon.
I had to wait for hours because people who paid bribes were seen first by the doctor.
I was denied access to free medication that I was entitled to because the staff sold it privately.
I was forced to pay for a blood test that should have been free under a public health program.
The hospital refused to provide the necessary treatment for my father because we didn’t pay the demanded bribe.
My appointment was cancelled multiple times because I couldn’t pay the extra fees asked by the receptionist.
I was given an incorrect diagnosis because the doctor was prioritising patients who paid extra.
I couldn’t access necessary follow-up care because the funds for the program were misused.

**Question 3: What role do you think communities can play in demanding transparency and accountability from healthcare providers and officials?**

<b>Response</b>
Communities can form watchdog groups to monitor healthcare services and report corruption.
We can organise public forums and town hall meetings to discuss corruption issues and demand action.
Community members can work together to gather evidence and present it to authorities and media.

<b>Response</b>
We can support and protect whistleblowers who expose corrupt practices in healthcare.
Communities can collaborate with NGOs to advocate for policy changes and anti-corruption measures.
We can use social media to raise awareness and mobilise public opinion against corruption in healthcare.
Community members can participate in oversight committees for local healthcare facilities.
We can demand transparency in healthcare funding and resource allocation from local officials.
Community leaders can engage in dialogue with healthcare providers to promote ethical practices.
We can educate each other on our rights and the importance of accountability in healthcare.

**Question 4: How can community engagement initiatives be strengthened to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of corruption on health outcomes?**

<b>Response</b>
Organising workshops and seminars to educate community members about the impact of corruption on healthcare.
Creating and distributing informational materials, such as pamphlets and posters, in local languages.
Using local media, including radio and community TV, to highlight stories of corruption and its effects.
Engaging local influencers and leaders to speak out against corruption and promote transparency.
Forming partnerships with schools and educational institutions to integrate anti-corruption education.
Conducting regular community meetings to discuss healthcare issues and share experiences.
Developing community theatre and arts programs to convey messages about the harms of corruption.
Encouraging youth participation in anti-corruption activities to build a culture of integrity.
Using mobile technology and apps to report and track instances of corruption in healthcare.
Collaborating with NGOs and international organisations to bring more resources and expertise to local efforts.

**Question 5: What support do you need from government and NGOs to actively participate in anti-corruption efforts in healthcare?**

<b>Response</b>
Providing legal protection and support for whistleblowers who report corruption.
Offering training and capacity-building programs for community members on anti-corruption measures.
Ensuring transparent and accountable mechanisms for reporting and addressing corruption complaints.
Providing financial and technical support for community-led monitoring and advocacy initiatives.
Facilitating regular dialogue and engagement between communities and healthcare officials.
Implementing educational campaigns to inform the public about their rights and how to report corruption.
Ensuring that healthcare policies and programs are inclusive and consider community inputs.
Strengthening local governance structures to enhance accountability in healthcare services.
Providing access to legal and advisory services for communities affected by healthcare corruption.
Encouraging and supporting community participation in decision-making processes related to healthcare.

**International Organisation Representatives:**

**Question 1: How does your organisation support anti-corruption efforts within the healthcare sector in Bangladesh?**

<b>Response</b>
We provide funding and technical assistance for anti-corruption initiatives and capacity-building programs.
Our organisation conducts regular audits and evaluations to ensure transparency and accountability in healthcare projects.
We support the development and implementation of policies and regulations that promote ethical practices in healthcare.
Our organisation collaborates with local NGOs and government agencies to design and implement anti-corruption strategies.
We provide training and resources for healthcare professionals on best practices in transparency and integrity.
Our organisation promotes the use of technology and digital tools to enhance transparency in healthcare service delivery.
We engage in advocacy and public awareness campaigns to highlight the impact of corruption on public health.
Our organisation facilitates knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices among international and local stakeholders.
We support community-based monitoring and oversight mechanisms to hold healthcare providers accountable.
Our organisation works to strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to combat corruption in the healthcare sector.

**Question 2: What strategies have been successful in promoting integrity and ethical practices among local partners and stakeholders?**

<b>Response</b>
Establishing clear and transparent procurement processes and guidelines for all healthcare projects.
Conducting regular training sessions on ethics and integrity for local partners and stakeholders.
Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track project progress and ensure accountability.
Creating and enforcing codes of conduct and ethical guidelines for all project personnel and partners.
Encouraging and supporting whistleblowing mechanisms to report instances of corruption without fear of retaliation.
Engaging community members in oversight committees to monitor project activities and ensure transparency.
Facilitating open and regular communication with local partners to build trust and promote ethical practices.
Promoting the use of digital tools and platforms for transparent reporting and data sharing.
Recognising and rewarding local partners and stakeholders who demonstrate high standards of integrity.
Partnering with local institutions and organisations to build capacity and promote a culture of ethics and transparency.

**Question 3: What challenges do international organisations face in ensuring funds allocated for healthcare projects are used efficiently and transparently?**

<b>Response</b>
Navigating complex bureaucratic processes and regulatory environments in the host country.
Dealing with resistance from local partners and stakeholders who benefit from corrupt practices.
Ensuring consistent and accurate reporting and documentation from local partners.
Overcoming limited capacity and resources among local partners to implement and monitor anti-corruption measures.

<b>Response</b>
Addressing cultural norms and social acceptance of corruption as a way of doing business.
Mitigating risks of fraud and misappropriation of funds in decentralized and large-scale projects.
Ensuring effective coordination and collaboration among multiple stakeholders involved in healthcare projects.
Managing the challenges of working in regions with limited infrastructure and technological capabilities.
Dealing with the lack of political will and commitment from local authorities to enforce anti-corruption measures.
Balancing the need for accountability with the goal of achieving timely and impactful healthcare outcomes.

**Question 4: How does your organisation collaborate with national authorities and civil society to strengthen governance and accountability in healthcare?**

<b>Response</b>
We establish formal partnerships and agreements with national authorities to align on anti-corruption objectives.
Our organisation engages in regular dialogue and consultations with government officials and civil society representatives.
We provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to national authorities on governance and accountability.
Our organisation collaborates with civil society organisations to advocate for policy reforms and anti-corruption measures.
We support the development and implementation of national anti-corruption strategies and action plans.
Our organisation facilitates multi-stakeholder forums and platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration.
We provide funding and resources for civil society-led initiatives to promote transparency and accountability in healthcare.
Our organisation conducts joint monitoring and evaluation activities with national authorities and civil society.
We promote community engagement and participation in governance and accountability processes.
Our organisation works to strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms in collaboration with national authorities and civil society.

**Question 5: How can international organisations better engage with local communities to understand and address their concerns regarding corruption in healthcare?**

<b>Response</b>
Conducting regular community consultations and focus group discussions to gather input and feedback.
Establishing community advisory boards to involve local residents in project planning and decision-making.
Providing platforms for community members to report instances of corruption and share their experiences.
Engaging local community leaders and influencers to promote anti-corruption messages and initiatives.
Implementing community-based monitoring and oversight mechanisms to ensure transparency in healthcare services.
Providing training and capacity-building programs for community members on their rights and how to address corruption.
Developing and disseminating educational materials and resources on the impact of corruption on health outcomes.
Collaborating with local NGOs and civil society organisations to build trust and foster community engagement.
Using local media and communication channels to raise awareness and promote community involvement.

**Response**

Ensuring that project plans and activities are culturally sensitive and responsive to community needs and concerns.

**Journalists and Media Personnel:**

**Question 1: What role do you believe the media plays in exposing and addressing corruption within the healthcare sector?**

**Response**

The media plays a crucial role in uncovering hidden corruption practices and bringing them to public attention.

By investigating and reporting on corruption, the media can hold healthcare officials and institutions accountable.

The media acts as a watchdog, ensuring that public funds and resources are used appropriately.

Through continuous coverage, the media can pressure authorities to take action against corrupt practices.

The media educates the public about the detrimental effects of corruption on healthcare services and outcomes.

Journalists can collaborate with NGOs and civil society to amplify their efforts in combating corruption.

The media can influence policy changes by highlighting the need for stronger anti-corruption measures.

Investigative reporting can deter potential corrupt activities by increasing the risk of exposure.

The media provides a platform for whistleblowers and victims of corruption to share their stories.

By raising awareness, the media can mobilise public support for anti-corruption initiatives in healthcare.

**Question 2: Can you share examples of investigative journalism that have shed light on corruption scandals in healthcare in Bangladesh?**

**Response**

An investigation revealed the misappropriation of funds meant for public hospitals, leading to nationwide reforms.

A report uncovered the sale of counterfeit medicines in pharmacies, prompting stricter regulatory measures.

An exposé on the bribery of hospital officials for patient admissions led to several high-profile arrests.

An article highlighted the embezzlement of donor funds in healthcare projects, resulting in policy changes.

A documentary showcased the corruption in medical supply procurement, leading to improved transparency.

An investigative series uncovered nepotism and favouritism in healthcare hiring practices.

A report on ghost employees in public hospitals prompted audits and the removal of fake staff.

An article revealed the illicit sale of government-provided vaccines, leading to stricter controls.

A story on the exploitation of patients for bribes in rural clinics resulted in disciplinary actions.

An investigation into the black market for hospital equipment spurred law enforcement crackdowns.

**Question 3: How do you ensure the accuracy and ethical reporting of corruption-related issues in healthcare?**

**Response**

We rely on multiple credible sources and cross-check all information before publishing.

Our investigations are based on thorough research and verification of facts.

We adhere to strict ethical guidelines to ensure unbiased and fair reporting.

Confidentiality of whistleblowers and sources is maintained to protect their identities.

We consult with experts and stakeholders to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues.

<b>Response</b>
Our reports are reviewed by legal advisors to avoid defamation and ensure compliance with the law.
We provide opportunities for those accused of corruption to respond and present their side of the story.
Transparency in our reporting process is maintained to build trust with our audience.
We follow the principles of responsible journalism, prioritising public interest and truthfulness.
Regular training and workshops on ethical journalism practices are conducted for our reporters.

**Question 4: What challenges do journalists face in investigating and reporting on corruption, and how can these challenges be addressed?**

<b>Response</b>
Journalists often face threats and intimidation from those involved in corrupt activities.
Access to critical information and documents can be restricted or denied.
There is a lack of financial and institutional support for in-depth investigative journalism.
Legal repercussions and defamation lawsuits are common risks for journalists exposing corruption.
Corruption within media organisations themselves can hinder unbiased reporting.
Limited training and resources for investigative journalism can affect the quality of reports.
Political pressure and influence can impact the freedom and independence of the media.
There is a need for stronger protection laws and mechanisms for journalists investigating corruption.
Collaboration with international media and organisations can provide additional support and resources.
Public awareness and support for press freedom can create a safer environment for investigative journalism.

**Question 5: How can media coverage contribute to fostering public awareness and accountability in tackling corruption in healthcare?**

<b>Response</b>
Media coverage can highlight the real-life impact of corruption on individuals and communities.
By regularly reporting on corruption, the media keeps the issue in the public eye and maintains pressure on authorities.
Investigative journalism can uncover systemic issues and prompt policy reforms to address corruption.
The media can provide a platform for community voices and experiences to be heard.
Coverage of anti-corruption success stories can inspire further action and build public confidence.
Media reports can inform and educate the public about their rights and how to report corruption.
Collaboration with civil society and anti-corruption organisations can amplify the impact of media efforts.
Media coverage can lead to increased transparency and accountability in healthcare institutions.
Public opinion shaped by media reports can influence political will and commitment to combat corruption.
Continuous exposure of corruption can create a culture of intolerance and resistance to corrupt practices.

## References

1. García, P.J., 2019. Corruption in global health: the open secret. *The Lancet*, 394(10214), pp.2119-2124.
2. Mackey, T.K. and Liang, B.A., 2012. Combating healthcare corruption and fraud with improved global health governance. *BMC international health and human rights*, 12, pp.1-7.
3. Mackey, T.K., Kohler, J.C., Savedoff, W.D., Vogl, F., Lewis, M., Sale, J., Michaud, J. and Vian, T., 2016. The disease of corruption: views on how to fight corruption to advance 21 st century global health goals. *BMC medicine*, 14, pp.1-16.
4. Friedrich, M.J., 2017. Corruption poses critical challenge to global health efforts. *JAMA*, 318(15), pp.1431-1431.
5. Mackey, T.K., Kohler, J., Lewis, M. and Vian, T., 2017. Combating corruption in global health. *Science translational medicine*, 9(402), p.eaaf9547.
6. Gorodensky, A., Bowra, A., Saeed, G. and Kohler, J., 2022. Anti-corruption in global health systems: using key informant interviews to explore anti-corruption, accountability and transparency in international health organisations. *BMJ open*, 12(12), p.e064137.
7. Vian, T., 2020. Anti-corruption, transparency and accountability in health: concepts, frameworks, and approaches. *Global health action*, 13(sup1), p.1694744.
8. Mackey, T.K., Vian, T. and Kohler, J., 2018. The sustainable development goals as a framework to combat health-sector corruption. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 96(9), p.634.
9. Schönhöfer, P.S., 2004. Controlling corruption in order to improve global health. *International Journal of Risk & Safety in Medicine*, 16(3), pp.195-205.
10. Koller, T., Clarke, D. and Vian, T., 2020. Promoting anti-corruption, transparency and accountability to achieve universal health coverage. *Global Health Action*, 13(sup1), p.1700660.
11. Kohler, J.C. and Bowra, A., 2020. Exploring anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability in the world Health organization, the United nations development programme, the world bank group, and the global fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. *Globalization and health*, 16, pp.1-10.
12. Wierzynska, A., Steingrüber, S., Oroxom, R. and Bauhoff, S., 2020. Recalibrating the anti-corruption, transparency, and accountability formula to advance public health. *Global Health Action*, 13(sup1), p.1701327.
13. Sánchez-Duque, J.A., Su, Z.H., Rosselli, D., Chica-Ocampo, M.C., Lotero-Puentes, M.I., Bolaños-Portilla, A.M., Dhawan, M., Rodríguez-Morales, A.J. and Dhama, K., 2021. The ignored pandemic of public health corruption: a call for action amid and beyond SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19.
14. Sánchez-Duque, J.A., Su, Z.H., Rosselli, D., Chica-Ocampo, M.C., Lotero-Puentes, M.I., Bolaños-Portilla, A.M., Dhawan, M., Rodríguez-Morales, A.J. and Dhama, K., 2021. The ignored pandemic of public health corruption: a call for action amid and beyond SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19.
15. Chang, Z., Rusu, V. and Kohler, J.C., 2021. The Global Fund: why anti-corruption, transparency and accountability matter. *Globalization and Health*, 17, pp.1-11.
16. Bowra, A., Saeed, G., Gorodensky, A. and Kohler, J.C., 2022. An exploration of anti-corruption and health in international organizations. *Plos one*, 17(8), p.e0269203.
17. Toebes, B., 2010. Human rights and health sector corruption. In *Global Health and Human Rights* (pp. 112-144). Routledge.
18. Mackey, T.K., 2019. Opening the Policy Window to Mobilize Action Against Corruption in the Health Sector: Comment on " We Need to Talk About Corruption in Health Systems". *International journal of health policy and management*, 8(11), p.668.
19. Sekalala, S., Masud, H. and Bosco, R.T., 2020. Human rights mechanisms for anti-corruption, transparency and accountability: enabling the right to health. *Global health action*, 13(sup1), p.1699343.
20. Glynn, E.H., 2022. Corruption in the health sector: A problem in need of a systems-thinking approach. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10, p.910073.
21. Kirya, M.T., 2020. Promoting anti-corruption, transparency and accountability in the recruitment and promotion of health workers to safeguard health outcomes. *Global health action*, 13(sup1), p.1701326.