

Impact Evaluation of the Rural MNCH Programme Completed

A baseline survey has been completed for impact evaluation of the rural Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) programme of BRAC. This study aimed to analyze the situation of MNCH in four intervention and two control districts and covers 7,200 households. Data are being analyzed and the final report is expected to be launched in June 2009.

Data Collection Completed for Bangladesh Health Watch Study 2008

Bangladesh Health Watch, a civil society voice, provides a platform for citizen's group to take an active interest in understanding and sharing the challenges and choices, policy and programme options of the country's health sector. It publishes an annual report on the state of health in Bangladesh focusing on different concepts each year. The theme for the 2008 report is health sector governance. Under this broad context several sub-studies were done – one of which is essential drugs. BRAC RED carried out the study. The main objective of the research is to study the availability, affordability, quality of essential drugs, and rational use of drugs in terms of national drug policy. Field data collection was completed and the data entry is going on.

Baseline Survey on Dissemination of Essential Information over Mobile Phones Done

A baseline survey on 'Disseminating essential information (on HIV/AIDS and hand washing) over mobile phones' has been completed recently. Over 2,000

mobile phone users in rural areas from 30 *upazilas* of Bangladesh were interviewed. Data were collected during 15 February-6 March 2009. A draft report is underway.

Malaria NGO Partners' Performance Study Begins

The study on 'Malaria NGO Partners' Performance' has been initiated recently. Data were collected from 69 villages of 23 malaria endemic *upazilas* of Bangladesh. All the *upazilas* were selected randomly from partner NGOs' working areas (one *upazila* for each partner NGO) and BRAC working areas (three high endemic *upazilas* from BRAC programme area). More than 8,000 households were interviewed. Data entry is currently going on and a draft report is expected by the end of May 2009.

WASH Repeat Survey Starts

The midline survey for the evaluation of the BRAC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programme will start in April 2009. This is the second of the three round surveys. All the households and institutes from the baseline survey carried out in 2006 will be re-interviewed to create a panel dataset that will help evaluate the effectiveness of the WASH programme. The survey will be completed in two months and a report is expected by the end of next September.

Factors Affecting Improved Cook Stove Adoption

A study on indoor air pollution focusing factors affecting improved cook stove adoption in Bangladesh is being conducted in cooperation with Stanford University, USA. Testing of cook stove is one major component of this study. The purpose of testing is to measure invisible

particulate matter (PM2.5) in the smoke and fuel combustion efficiency during cooking with both traditional and improved cook stoves. Jamalpur Sadar and Hatia *upazilas* are included in the study. Testing of cook stove at Jamalpur *upazila* is completed. The study is expected to help design improved cook stove programme addressing indoor air pollution especially in rural areas of Bangladesh.

Study on 100-Day Employment Generation Programme

This mixed method collaborative study conducted by BRAC, NFPCSP, and BDI provides a baseline profile of the participant households, implementation process, targeting effectiveness, and self-assessed impact of the programme. The outcome of the programme was found to be encouraging. Majority of the beneficiaries, particularly the women, reported positive impacts on food consumption and investment in productive assets. The report is available at BRAC website (www.brac.net/research).

New Study Initiated on Supplementary Tutoring by GDB Committees

A study has been initiated on 'Supplementary tutoring under *Gram Daridro Bimochon* (GDB) Committees' to understand the impact of *extra-tutorial support* (coaching) conducted by GDBC members on education of the children of ultra poor families. This study aims to examine the socioeconomic profile of the GDBC members, role of GDBC members on enhancement of education of the ultra poor children, structure of *extra-tutorial support*, socioeconomic profile of tutors and students. Understanding of current status of *extra-tutorial support* from GDBC members would be helpful to recommend further policies. Data have already been

collected using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The draft report is expected in June 2009.

Time Use Repeat Survey Completed

The two-month long repeat survey on time use was conducted during February-March 2009. The study included a sub-sample of the households interviewed in the STUP (specially targeted ultra poor) baseline survey of CFPR II. All the members aged above 10 years in the sample households were included. Data entry has been completed and the draft report is expected by June 2009.

Investigation on Appropriate Sanitation Technologies Begins

This study is a review work on appropriate sanitation technological options (hardware) for the environmentally critical areas of Bangladesh that include Chittagong Hill Tracts, Hakaluki *haor*, *char* land at Sariakandi and hard soil area of Majira in Bogra. These areas are considered in this study as the critical areas in terms of sanitation technological intervention. It focuses on low cost, sustainable and environment-friendly sanitation technological options.

Education Watch 2008 is Underway

Since its inception in 1998, *Education Watch* project is going to produce its ninth report. The aim of the present study is to reveal the quality of primary education. It is a revisit of the *Education Watch* activities conducted in 2000-01. Activities under the study include review of competencies, competency based test of students, and survey of educational institutions, and households. Data analysis and report writing are underway. The draft report is expected in May 2009.

Tracer Study on BRAC Primary School Graduates is in Progress

The field work for tracing the BRAC primary school graduates of 2005 has been started in March 2009. The first round data were collected in late 2007 and the second phase of data collection

is now underway. The study aims to explore the continuation, dropout, attendance and performance of BRAC school graduates in the further levels of education. From this year, steps have been taken to compare the BRAC school graduates with the graduates of primary schools. Therefore, 6,000 formal school graduates have been taken as sample along with the previously selected 6,000 graduates of BRAC schools.

Second Round Survey of a Sub-sample of STUP I Baseline Initiated

The second round survey of a sub-sample of the households interviewed in the STUP I baseline has been initiated in January 2009. Comprehensive baseline survey for STUP I evaluation was conducted in 2007, which will be repeated after two years (the repeat survey will be initiated in July 2009). However, a sub-sample of the STUP I baseline is surveyed every year to capture the impact of the programme with a short time period. The survey is expected to be completed by April 2009.

Training

As part of the maternal perinatal depression project, a consultant from Karolinska Institute, Sweden provided training to the RED researchers on how to analyze the face-to-face interaction between mothers and their two-to-four or five months old infants using Global Rating Scale and how this interaction is video-taped in a facility setting.

Sarawat Rashid, Mahmuda Akter and the field researchers received training from ICDDR,B on mile-stone development of children under 2, and how information will be collected from the community settings.

BRAC RED Participated in Gender and Development Book Fair

BRAC RED, BRAC Development Institute, BRAC University James P. Grant School of Public Health, Pathways of Women's Empowerment and Realizing Rights jointly participated in Gender and Development Book Fair organized by USAID on March 8-10 at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Paper Presentation

Morsheda Banu and Atiya Rahman presented two papers on rural MNCH operations research at 12th Annual Scientific Conference of ICDDR.B during 9-12 February at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Dhaka.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal articles

Alam GM and Shahjamal MM. The role of technological transformation in education at network age for human resource development. *J Edu Policy* Fall 2008 Issue. doi: <https://www4.nau.edu/cee/jep/journals.aspx?id=182>

Rana AKMM, Wahlin A, Lundborg CS, Kabir ZN. Impact of health education on health-related quality of life among elderly persons: results from a community-based intervention study in rural Bangladesh. *Health Promotion Int* 2009:1-10.

Books and book chapters

Alam GM, Shahjamal MM, Basher S. Return from the School System in Bangladesh. In: Basher S (Editor). Whither policy reforms in education: lessons and challenges. *Unnayan Onneshan* 2009:136-46.

Alam GM, Shahjamal MM, Basher S. Bangladeshi school babostha theke biniyog prapti. (In Bangla). In: Kon pothey shikkha khater niti shongshkar: oviggota o challenge. *Unnayan Onneshan* 2009:134-42.

Nirjash. Dhaka: BRAC, issue 18. Jan 2009. vi, 128p.

Pathways out of extreme poverty: findings from round I survey of CFPR phase II. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. 272p.

Research monograph series

Sulaiman M, Parvin M and Das NC. Impact of the food price hike on nutritional status of women and children. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. xiii, 50p. (Research monograph series no. 38)

RED working paper series

Rahman M and Tasneem S. Determinants of income of the *Shasthya shebikas*: evidence from a pilot MNCH initiative in Nilphamari district of Bangladesh. Dhaka: BRAC, 2008. 42p.

Shamim A. An assessment of the impacts of floods on sanitation in rural Bangladesh. Dhaka: BRAC, 2008. 22p.

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