

Study on Bangladesh Health Workforce Begins

RED has initiated a study on Bangladesh health workforce under the *Bangladesh Health Watch 2007*. The study aims to delineate the density (provider to population ratio) of different categories of healthcare providers in the formal and informal sectors, and also information on their training, practices and performances. The study will be conducted in two stages: i) an inventory of the healthcare providers will be done using free-listing, key informant interview and informal group discussion. ii) Once the final list is produced after triangulation and cross-checking to avoid duplication and identifying only the currently practicing providers, a sub-sample from each category will be interviewed to elicit relevant information. The study will use a representative sample of 46 unions (rural) and 14 wards (urban) drawn randomly from the PSUs of BBS. The training of the interviewers for the first phase has been completed. The field work is about to begin. The two phases of the survey will take about two and half months to complete.

Evaluation of North West Microfinance Done

With financial assistance from AusAID, BRAC is implementing the North-West Microfinance Expansion Project. A baseline study was done in 2003. After a follow-up survey, the evaluation has been completed. The study shows the impact of microfinance participation on the asset holdings. The study also looked at client satisfaction with the microfinance service of BRAC and shows that they require more flexibility in repayment. Interest rates were found to be less important among the clients.

Pilot Study on Poverty Scorecard Initiated

A pilot study has been initiated to investigate the efficiency of poverty scorecard to monitor poverty profile among BRAC's microfinance clients. A survey has been conducted. Based on the findings from this pilot project, the loan application forms of the microfinance (*dabi*) could be modified and embed the monitoring system in the MIS.

Study on Sustainability of Food Consumption of TUP Participants Completed

A study on sustainability of the gain in food and nutrition intake of CFPR/TUP beneficiaries has been completed. It has been observed that the TUP members were sustaining their improvement in food expenditure after two years from the end of their graduation.

Impact Study on Adolescent Development Programme

A preliminary report on the impact assessment study of BRAC's Adolescent Development Programme (ADP) was released. It considered a small portion of the database and compared adolescents participating in BRAC programme with the national situation of the adolescents. This preliminary report shows how ADP targeted adolescents' outlook, self-perception, desire for further education, health-seeking behaviour, involvement in earning activities, confidence in influencing opinions of others, decision making and awareness on social, legal and reproductive health issues vary from general national adolescents. The final report will be released by July 2007.

Current Research on WASH Programme

Measuring willingness to pay for improved sanitation services in rural Bangladesh

This study aims to measure willingness to pay for improved sanitation services in rural Bangladesh along with their ability to pay. The study used contingent valuation method to capture household's willingness and ability to pay and preferred payment mechanism. The preliminary analysis shows that the households are willing to pay as much as 2% of their household income on improving their sanitation condition.

Cultural construction of hygiene practice and behaviour in rural Bangladesh

This study aims to explore the perception, knowledge, believe and practice of rural people regarding hygiene practice and behaviours; investigate environmental factors that affect hygiene practice and behaviours; and explore hygiene promotion compatible with culture of a particular community. Participatory methods are being used for data collection.

Process documentation of PRA social mapping-wealth ranking and formation of village WASH committee

This study aims to document PRA social and wealth ranking and formation of village WASH committee. Whole cycle of PRA and formation of village WASH committees were observed and documented. The 11-member village WASH committee (plus two advisors) was formed after completion of PRA in each village. Based on process documentation findings suggestions were given to the

programme to improve the facilitation process.

BRAC WASH hygiene baseline study

This study aims to obtain a baseline status of prevalence of selected hygiene practices and use of latrines. A triangulated analysis employing pocket voting, spot demonstration, and survey of the selected hygiene practices is being done.

Relationship between government and NGOs in WASH area with special emphasis on BRAC

This study aims to understand the existing relationship between the government (LGI, LGED, LGRD, etc.) and BRAC and factors influencing the relationship. GoB and BRAC has a long-term partnership in different programmes. It is expected that the learning from this study will help strengthen the collaboration by identifying and removing the weaknesses in the process.

Reasons for not using existing sanitation facilities in WASH area

This study aims to know why people are not using existing sanitation facilities. This is a cross-sectional and qualitative study. Some quantitative data are also being collected. The study areas have been selected to represent six extreme variations in (i) sanitation coverage, (ii) geographical features, (iii) climate conditions, and iv) culture. It is expected that the findings will help identify the key reasons that impede 100% use of sanitary latrines. Further, the findings may also help to define the role and involvement of stakeholders.

Water, sanitation and hygiene atlas

An atlas titled 'Water, sanitation and hygiene atlas of Bangladesh' is being prepared using primary data of the WASH programme and some secondary data. The purposes of the atlas are to: i) aware the programme people about the progress of the project and to help locate geographical areas that deserves special attention for certain types of interventions; ii) provide information to others working outside BRAC since this kind of atlas is not available in the country at this moment; and iii) use as a tool for project monitoring and reporting to the donors and other concerned agencies.

Screening of An Inconvenient Truth

The movie titled *An Inconvenient Truth* is based on some of the recent scientific findings on global warming and digs in deep to convince its audience that it is not anymore a political issue; rather, it is the biggest moral challenge facing our global civilization. BRAC RED screened this movie at BRAC on 29 May 2007 to initiate an open dialogue through which participants would have an appreciation and basic recognition of the challenge that the world faces from climate change. Professor Ainun Nishat, Country Representative, IUCN, Bangladesh and a member of the BRAC Governing Body facilitated the discussion as resource person.

RED Participates in the World Environment Day Fair 2007

BRAC participated in the World Environment Day Fair 2007 held at the Osmani Memorial Hall in Dhaka on 5-7 June 2007. Environment and Forest Adviser Dr. CS Karim inaugurated the fair. The World Environment Day slogan selected for 2007 was Melting Ice – a Hot Topic? in Bangla 'Uttopto hochhe prithibi - golche borof - amader prostuti ki jothestho?' Among the other organizations Environmental Research Unit of BRAC organized a stall in the fair. BRAC exhibited its environmental activities and publications on environmental education and research. Activities on WASH, solar (renewable energy), recycled paper, tissue culture (including stevia), nursery (medicinal plants), RED publications, screening of New Horizon, 2D video animation on medical waste management, etc. were exhibited during the three-day fair.

Presentations at Conference/Workshop

Munshi Sulaiman and Farhana Haseen presented the research methodologies of CFPR II in a workshop on Pro-poor Strategies for Growth in Oxford, UK on 28 June 2007 organized by the University of Oxford.

Mehnaz Rabbani presented a paper on 'When the men migrate: challenges and strategies of women in extreme poor migrant households' at a conference on

Feminist Economics in Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok, Thailand, organized by International Association for Feminist Economics during 28 June and 01 July 2007.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Annual Report

BRAC Research 2006. Dhaka: BRAC, 2007. x, 64p.

Journal article

Ahmed HS. Editor-author conflict from the editor's perspective. *European Sci Editing* 2007;33(2):47-8.

Ahmed SM and Hossain MA. Knowledge and practice of unqualified and semi-qualified allopathic providers in rural Bangladesh: implications for the HRH problem. *Health Policy* 2007. doi:10.1016/j.healthpol.2007.05.011

Bhuiya A, Mahmood SS, Rana AKMM, Wahed T, Ahmed SM, Chowdhury AMR. A multidimensional approach to measure poverty in rural Bangladesh. *J Health Popul Nutr* 2007;25(2):

Eyben R, León R, Hossain N. Participatory action research into donor-recipient relations: a case study. *Dev Practice* 2007;17(2):167-78.

Haseen F. Change in food and energy consumption among the ultra poor: is the poverty reduction programme making a difference? *Asia Pac J Clin Nutr* 2007;16(Suppl 1):58-64.

Hyder SMZ, Haseen F, Rahman M, Tondeur MC, Zlotkin SH. Effect of daily versus once-weekly home fortification with micronutrient Sprinkles on hemoglobin and iron status among young children in rural Bangladesh. *Food Nutr Bull* 2007;28(2):156-64.

Nath SR. Self-reporting and test discrepancy: evidence from a national literacy survey in Bangladesh. *Int Rev Edu* 2007;53(2):119-33.

Rana AKMM, Lundborg CS, Wahlin A, Ahmed SM, Kabir ZN. The impact of health education in managing self-reported arthritis-related illness among elderly persons in rural Bangladesh. *Health Edu Res* 2007. doi:10.1093/her/cym002

Newspaper articles

Tariquzzaman S and Rashid M. Livelihood of people of enclaves (In Bangla). *Samakal*, 28 Jun 2007.

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