

Research Update on Social Development and Human Rights

Ongoing studies

Communication for development: promoting sustainable behaviour and social development changes in Cox's Bazar district

This study aims to understand the knowledge and practices of safe delivery, acute respiratory infection, corporal punishment and injury of children, maintaining hygiene on hand washing, HIV/AIDS, gender discrimination in labour as well as food and nutrition intake and violence against women in the programme area. The baseline survey has been completed. Data processing is ongoing.

Assessment of BRAC's Enhancing Social Capital Project-2011

To upgrade the integrity and norms of BRAC village organizations (VO), the Social Development Programme of BRAC introduced the Enhancing Social Capital project in 2010. This study aims to assess the VO members' group behaviour and their progress along with the programme achievement. The study compares the status of intervention VOs with non-intervention VOs. The study is in progress.

Exploring the legal aid services in Cox's Bazar BRAC HRLS programme-2011

This qualitative study will explore the contribution of BRAC's legal aid services in Cox's Bazar district. The study is in progress.



Matia Chowdhury, minister for agriculture, government of Bangladesh is seen addressing the workshop as chief guest. Others on the podium are (L-R) Dr. Md. Abdul Mannan, director general, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute, Dr. Wais Kabir, executive chairman, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council, Dr. Mahabub Hossain, executive director, BRAC, and Dr. Harrie Hendrickx, head, product delivery, HarvestPlus.

National Workshop on Micronutrient Malnutrition Held

The workshop on 'Addressing micronutrient malnutrition in Bangladesh: a case of zinc biofortified rice' was held on 11-12 May 2011 in Dhaka. Matia Chowdhury, minister for agriculture, government of Bangladesh inaugurated the workshop as chief guest. The workshop was organized jointly by HarvestPlus, BRAC and BRRI. HarvestPlus, a programme of CGIAR, is engaged in developing and promoting new varieties of staple crops rich in micronutrients through a process of selective breeding called biofortification. At present HarvestPlus research is going on in nine countries on seven crops and three micronutrients. In Bangladesh, HarvestPlus works in partnership with Bangladesh government, BRAC and ICDDR,B. The researchers in BRRI are on the verge of finding out a new rice variety rich in zinc and at least equally rich in other traits compared to the most popular varieties in the country. Over 30 scientists, policy makers and professionals belonging to agriculture reviewed the HarvestPlus research in the workshop and brainstormed to find appropriate strategies for rapid extension of zinc rice in the country.

Environmental Research Update

Study completed

Promotion of improved cook stoves in rural Bangladesh

The findings of this study reveal that the study households were usually aware of indoor air pollution but not so much so of the existence of improved cook stoves. The adoption decision was also found to be highly responsive to price.

Ongoing studies

Impact of BRAC water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme on hygiene knowledge and practices in rural areas

Initial results show that knowledge on hygienic management of water (in collection, storage, etc.) and waterborne diseases significantly increased after five years of intervention. Besides, hand washing practice with soap at critical time also significantly increased.

Impact of BRAC WASH programme on educational institutions of Bangladesh

Preliminary analysis found that tubewell was the source of drinking water in all the institutions under study. Overall, availability of sanitary latrines in educational institutions increased to 98% in endline (2011) from 91% in baseline (2006).

Impact of BRAC WASH programme on the prevalence of water-related diseases in Bangladesh

The initial results show that the prevalence of water-related diseases significantly reduced from 9.4% in 2006 to 7.1% in 2009 and to 2.3% in 2011.

Impact of BRAC WASH programme on safe water use in rural areas

The preliminary results show that almost all the households (98-99%) used tubewell water for drinking while 62-76% for cooking, 55-66% for washing utensils, 63-71% for cleaning after defecation and 21-40% for bathing in baseline both in the dry and rainy seasons. The numbers were significantly larger in both midline (2009) and endline (2011) than in baseline (2006).

Management of water: role of women at household level

The initial results show that most of the women (97%) were responsible for collecting water in baseline (2006) which decreased significantly to 91% in midline to 86% in endline (2011). Besides, putting cover (lid) on the opening of water vessels during fetching water increased significantly in endline from baseline.

Exposure to arsenic-contaminated drinking water among ultra poor, poor and non-poor: a population-based study

The preliminary results show that arsenic contaminated tubewell significantly decreased from 42% in 2006 to 39.4% in 2009 and to 35.3% in 2011. Ultra poor households were greater exposed to arsenic-contaminated water than poor and non-poor households. The decrease in exposure to arsenic-contaminated water was found highest in the case of poor than non-poor and ultra poor households.

Process assessment of a training course on organizational preparation and community-based disaster risk reduction

This qualitative study documented the process of training and classroom performance of trainers and participants through observation technique. The purpose of the training was to strengthen institutional capacity for disaster risk

reduction. The content of the training module was divided into 4 days. Each session was executed with a number of techniques such as lecture and large group discussion, small group exercise, games, role play, experience and sharing of personal feelings.

Sanitation status at household level: changes from baseline to endline survey

Through this study, the changes in sanitation indicators were examined to understand the extent of variation over the five-year period. Findings show that households' latrine ownership increased while proportion of shared latrine users decreased over the years.

Pilot interventions of improved cook stoves in rural areas: assessment of effects on fuel use, smoke emission and health

The evidence shows lower fuel expenditure, time spent in cooking food or time spent in collecting fuel for improved cook stoves (ICS) compared to traditional stove. Besides, smoke emission reduced and soot production dropped due to ICS use. Further, the study shows that most respondents (62.5%) did not go anywhere for treatment on health problems within 30 days since interview occurred.

Adaptation strategy for climate change: a comparative analysis on local microclimatic variables

The initial results show that there was no significant difference in the case of monthly average maximum temperature. However, a significant difference was found in the case of monthly average minimum temperature. Moreover, significant difference was found in yearly rainfall in two locations of Gazipur district - rainfall in Joydebpur was more than 4 times higher than in Sreepur. The study is in progress.

Health Research Update

Studies completed

Baseline survey of BRAC tea estate workers

This baseline survey was undertaken in five tea gardens of BRAC in Chittagong district. Data were collected from all the 1,722 households in these gardens both at household and individual levels. Findings reveal poor awareness of tea garden workers on maintaining good health, drinking safe water and using sanitary latrine. One-fifth of the household members currently suffered from bodyache/joint pain, diabetes, gastric pain and cardiac disease. Underweight,

wasting and stunting were more prevalent among the under-five children. Use of health services was low. About 5% of mothers had history of abortion and 8% intra uterine death.

Use of insecticide-treated net in programme areas

The fourth round survey on the use of bed net and knowledge and practices to prevent malaria in Bangladesh is completed. A total of 7,895 respondents were interviewed in 13 malaria endemic districts. Findings show that 75.2% households have at least one and 36.7% have at least two insecticide-treated bed nets (LLINs/ITNs). As reported, 74% of the household members, 89.3% of the under-5 children, and 87.2% of the pregnant women slept under LLINs/ITNs on the previous night of the interview.

Ongoing studies

DOTS in hard-to-reach areas: how well are we doing?

The survey was undertaken to build knowledge base on DOTS (Directly observed treatment short course) in 'hard-to-reach' areas, on knowledge, attitude and practices and health-seeking behaviour of community people regarding TB and future directions for strengthening the programme. Among others, the constraints to service utilization, challenges faced by the *Shasthya Shebikas* in implementing the programme, etc. will be examined. Data analysis is in progress.

Performance incentives to the *Shasthya Shebikas* (SS) and *Pusti Karmis* (PK) for facilitating IYCF practices among rural women: baseline survey in two upazilas under Alive and Thrive programme

The study aims to know the status of specific performance indicators for all SSs and PKs in two purposively selected upazilas. This will be used later to evaluate the effectiveness of the incentive package on performances of the SSs and PKs. Data analysis is underway.

Studies initiated

Treatment compliance of *Plasmodium vivax* in malaria control programme areas

A study to explore treatment compliances among the malaria patients under the malaria control programme areas of BRAC is initiated. It will also investigate the process of diagnosis and treatment in the field and identify constraints and reasons for delays, if any, regarding diagnosis and treatment.

Educational Research Update

Studies initiated

Tracing the BRAC graduates study- 3rd round survey

A longitudinal study on BRAC primary graduates has been initiated to track their further education and life changes. The survey is in progress for collecting information on 12,000 children (who were surveyed in 2009, where half were BRAC primary graduates).

BRAC-FIVDB drive for universal primary education in Sylhet

BRAC, jointly with FIVDB, has undertaken a pilot campaign project in selected five unions in Sunamganj and Hobiganj districts to ensure Universal Primary Education in Sylhet Division by 2015. This study is exploring the efficacy of current strategy and interventions in the project areas and providing roadmap for further expansion.

Economic Research Update

Repeat survey of Other Targeted Ultra Poor package evaluation completed

Second round survey to assess the impact of the microfinance intensive support package of the CFPR (Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction) programme, the Other Targeted Ultra Poor (OTUP), has been completed and data entry is underway. Data were collected on 1,241 households from Chandpur and Manikganj districts of Bangladesh. The impact assessment of various outcome indicators of OTUP is expected to be completed by July 2011.

Third round survey of STUP package evaluation initiated

The third round survey of the Specially Targeted Ultra Poor (STUP) package evaluation is underway. The study aims to assess long-term impact of the programme using randomized control trial design. The study is in progress.

HarvestPlus Director Visits BRAC

Dr. Howarth E Bouis, director, HarvestPlus visited Bangladesh during 18-22 June 2011. During this time he visited BRAC agricultural research and development farm, BIRRI rice breeding research farm, ICDDR,B nutrition research lab and Bangladesh Agricultural University apart from meeting government officials in agriculture sector. BRAC, BIRRI and ICDDR,B have been working in partnership with HarvestPlus for breeding, testing and promoting a high zinc rice variety in a bid to redress the zinc malnutrition problem in the country. "We



The launching ceremony of education watch 2009/10. (L-R) Samir Ranjan Nath, researcher and member, working group education watch, Mr. Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Mayor Sylhet City Corporation, Hafiz Ahmed Majumder, MP, Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director CAMPE and former advisor, caretaker government, Nurul Islam Nahid, minister of education, government of Bangladesh, Imran Ahmed, MP, and Zahin Ahmed, executive director, FIVDB.

Education Watch Report 2009-10 Launched

The 10th Education Watch Report titled 'Exploring low performance in education: the case of Sylhet division' has been launched on 17 April 2011 in Sylhet. Samir Ranjan Nath of BRAC RED presented the study findings. Geographical conditions, late entry and early dropout of children, poverty and child labour, teachers' absenteeism and lack of punctuality, management weakness, lack of awareness of the parents, and unavailability of enough secondary schools were identified as the reasons of low performance in education in Sylhet division. Some of the recommendations are decentralized educational planning and management, more authority for local government, and need-based affirmative action. Education minister Nurul Islam Nahid was present as the chief guest. Suranjit Sen Gupta, MP, Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Mayor of Sylhet City Corporation and other members of the Parliament were also present.

are on track to release the new variety in 2013 for widespread cultivation and consumption" said Dr. Bouis stressing that "the variety holds a significant promise to meet the hidden hunger of zinc malnutrition in Bangladesh."

Capacity Development

Jesmin Akter, Shuburna Chodhuary, M Saiful Islam Majumder and Umme Salma Mukta attended a month-long course on SPSS and Applied statistics held in Dhaka University during 25 May-25 June 2011.

M Abdul Alim attended a training workshop on 'Most significant change (MSC)' in Dhaka on 13-14 June 2011. The objective of the workshop was to orient MSC technique to improve capacity on story writing skills.

Conferences Attended

Syed Masud Ahmed presented a paper titled 'Experiences from targeting the poorest: the case of CFPR programme of BRAC' in the international roundtable conference on 'Marginality and extreme poverty: towards inclusive development for and with the poorest' held in Bonn, Germany, on 20-22 June 2011. He also participated as a discussant in a panel

'Success stories - Impacts, conditions of success and transferability'.

Fazlul Karim presented a paper titled 'The role of NGOs in improving sanitation status in the rural areas of Bangladesh: challenges and expectations' in the '35th WEDC international conference on the future of water, sanitation and hygiene: innovation, adaption and engagement in a changing world' held in loughborough, UK on 6-8 July 2011.

New Director for RED

Professor WMH Jaim has joined as Director, Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC on 03 July 2011. Before joining BRAC he was serving as a professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh. He did his PhD (1983) in agricultural economics from University of London, UK and post-doctorate (1992) from Winrock International, USA. He authored three books and two edited volumes and has a long list of journal publications in his credit. Congratulations to Prof. Jaim.



Staff Separated/Newly Joined

The following staff separated/joined during January-June 2011.

Separated

Sabrina Ahmed, ARM Mehrab Ali, Mohammed Rabiul Awal, Anindita Bhattacharjee, Farzana Sayeed and Hasina Shikder.

Joined

M Shahe Alam, Mohammed Rabiul Awal, Shuburna Choudhury, Aniq Tasnim Hossain, M Akramul Islam, WMH Jaim, Saira Parveen Jolly, M Bashir Mia Khadem, Mohammad Abdul Malek, Sanjit Roy and Syeda Sitwat Shahed.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Internal publications

Research monograph series

Mallick D and Nabin MH. Where NGOs go and do not go? Dhaka: BRAC, 2011. iv, 26p. (Research Monograph Series No. 45)



RED working paper series

Arif T, et al. Promotion of improved cookstove in rural Bangladesh. Dhaka: BRAC, 2011. iv, 30p. (RED working paper no. 22)



Islam QS, Ahmed SM, Khan MAU. Revisiting the ARI programme of BRAC: how well are we doing? Dhaka: BRAC, 2011. viii, 35p. (RED working paper no. 23)



Rahman A, Leppard M, Nasreen HE, Rashid S. Acceptability, comprehensibility and reported influence of behaviour change communication tools: experience from MNCH programme in Nilphamari district of Bangladesh. Dhaka: BRAC, 2011. vi, 37p. (RED working paper no. 21)



External publications

Journal articles

Ara J and Hamid SA. Against the odds. *Dev Cooperation* 2011;52(2):66-8.

Edhborg M, Nasreen HE, Kabir ZN. Impact of postpartum depressive and anxiety symptoms on the mothers' emotional tie to their infants 2-3 months postpartum: a population-based study from rural Bangladesh. *Arch Womens Ment Health*. doi: 10.1007/s00737-011-0221-7

Hossain M and Karim R. Zinc-enriched rice variety in eliminating malnutrition: an innovative international project (In Bangla). *Bangladesh Unnyan Sameekhya* 2011;28:191-3.

Kashem MM, Guha RK, Malek MA. Micro enterprises in rural Bangladesh: entrepreneurial process, problems and prospects. *J Rural Dev* 2009;36(1):43-76.

Kundu DK, Sammadder M, Khan A. Understanding alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and gender justice in Bangladesh: myth and reality. *J Inst Bangladesh Stud* 2010;33:27-34.

Nasreen HE, Kabir ZN, Forsell Y, Edhborg M. Prevalence and associated factors of depressive and anxiety symptoms during pregnancy: a population based study in rural Bangladesh. *BMC Women's Health* 2011,11:22. www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6874/11/22

Rifat M, Rusen ID, Islam MA, Enarson DA, Ahmed F, Ahmed SM, Karim F. Why are tuberculosis patients not treated earlier? A study of informal health practitioners in Bangladesh. *Int J Tubercul Lung Dis* 2011;15(5):647-51.

Book

Nath SR, Kabir MM, Ahmed KS, Roy G, Hossain MA, Alam SMN, Chowdhury FK, Mahbub A. Exploring low performance in education: the case of Sylhet division. Dhaka: Campaign for Popular Education, 2011. 197p.



Newspaper and newsletter articles

Ahmed SM. Lives and livelihoods on the streets of Dhaka city (Part-I). *The Daily Sun* 29 May 2011.

Ahmed SM. Lives and livelihoods on the streets of Dhaka city (Final part). *The Daily Sun* 30 May 2011.

Nath SR and Choudhury RK. Regional disparity in education: Sylhet paradox (Part-I). *The Daily Sun* 14 May 2011.

Nath SR and Choudhury RK. Regional disparity in education: Sylhet paradox (Final part). *The Daily Sun* 15 May 2011.

Nath SR and Choudhury RK. Regional disparity and Sylhet division (In Bangla). *Prothom Alo* 21 April 2011.

Nath SR and Choudhury RK. Why does Sylhet lag behind in Education? *The New Age* 29 May 2011.

Raza W. Building the chars. *Forum* 2011;5(6):22-24. www.thedailystar.net/forum/2011/june/building.htm

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