

Education Watch Report 2008 Launched

The *Education Watch* Report 2008 titled 'State of primary education in Bangladesh: progress made, challenges remained' was launched on 02 December 2009 in Dhaka. This ninth *Education Watch* reinvestigated the quality of primary education in Bangladesh through a framework called Input-Process-Output. Progress made in primary education during the past decade and challenges faced to ensure quality primary education to all children are discussed in this report. RED has been engaged with *Education Watch* since its inception in 1998. *Education Watch* is a civil society initiative to monitor educational progress in the country. This project is hosted by the Campaign for Popular Education on behalf of the broader civil society groups.



Education Research Update

Study on Praise in BRAC School Initiated

How praise is actually done in verbal and non-verbal expressions, what guidelines teachers follow, how they interpret the guidelines, how effectively they translate it in the classroom and how praise as reinforcement mechanism impact on learning achievement are the questions that are supposed to give answers through this research. Data are being collected from 50 BRAC primary schools. The draft report is expected by June 2010.



Photo Caption: (L-R) Anna Minj, Director Social Development Programme, Sheepa Hafiza, Director Gender, Justice & Diversity and Advocacy, Salma Khan, President, Women for Women and Chairperson, NGO Coalition on CEDAW and Beijing Process, Bangladesh, Mahabub Hossain, Executive Director, BRAC, Ayesha Khanam, President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, and Faustina Pereira, Director HRLS Programme, BRAC.

Symposium on Celebrating Development - Celebrating Women Held

A symposium titled 'Celebrating Development – Celebrating Women' was held on 17 February 2010 in Dhaka to commemorate 100 years of International Women's Day and 25 years of ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Towards this end the activities of three BRAC programmes – Social Development Programme, Gender, Justice and Diversity, and Human Rights and Legal Aid Services (HRLS) Programme – were presented. The Research and Evaluation Division (RED) of BRAC presented relevant research findings that corroborated the programme achievements. The symposium was jointly organized by RED and the three programmes of BRAC. Salma Khan, President, Women for Women and Chairperson, NGO Coalition on CEDAW and Beijing Process, Bangladesh and Ayesha Khanam, President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad were present as special guests. Dr. Mahabub Hossain, Executive Director, BRAC chaired the symposium.

10th Education Watch Study

The issue for the 10th *Education Watch* is school education in Sylhet division. The study aims to explore the reasons behind low performance in this particular area. Data are being collected from 7,500 households and 254 primary and secondary schools. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques are being used in exploration including a historical perspective of education in the region. The draft report is expected in August 2010.

Health Research Update

Cell Phone Study

A post-intervention survey of the cell phone pilot project was done to evaluate the effect of disseminating health information through cell phone. Preliminary findings show that those who answered the cell phone calls and took the course significantly improved their knowledge on key messages related to transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS and hand-washing practices. The draft report is currently underway.

Revisiting EHC and Evaluating ARI

Data for two studies – 'Revisiting the essential health care (EHC)' and 'Evaluation of the

acute respiratory infection (ARI) programme' – have been collected. The quantitative data are being analyzed and the draft report is expected in April 2010. The qualitative data of EHC study were compiled and analysis will begin soon.

Oral Health Pilot Survey

Field work of a pilot survey on oral and dental health is completed. The survey was done in an *upazila* to explore oral health awareness, oral health problems, oral health-seeking behaviour, etc. of the community. The data are being analyzed and the draft report is expected in April 2010.

Bangladesh Health Watch Report Launched

The third *Bangladesh Health Watch* Report titled 'How healthy is health sector governance' was launched on 13 February 2010 in Dhaka. One of the studies of health watch report titled 'Rational use of essential drugs' was conducted by RED. Nobel laureates Amartya Sen and



Muhammad Yunus were present in the launching ceremony.

MNCH Research Update

Household Costs of Obtaining Maternal and Newborn Care in Rural Bangladesh: Baseline Survey Done

This study examines the costs incurred by a household for maternal and newborn care in four MNCH (Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health) intervention and two control districts of Bangladesh. Findings show that there was higher use of antenatal services with no cost to households in the pilot intervention district (Nilphamari). Use of home delivery by unskilled providers was more prevalent among the poor people, while use of public and private facilities were more among the rich. Costs of delivery care varied by mode and place of delivery. Out of pocket spending was a major source for delivery care whilst spending out of savings was higher in Nilphamari. Cost was reported as a barrier to seeking skilled delivery care by more mothers in control areas. Mothers who did not use skilled attendance at delivery reported preferring public facilities but anticipated higher cost than those who have actually used those facilities.

Study on Factors Influencing Utilization of *Manoshi* Delivery Centres in Urban Slums of Dhaka Completed

A qualitative study was conducted during November 2007 to January 2008 to identify factors affecting the use of delivery centres. Findings suggest that slum residents preferred delivery centre because of free service, delivery attended by trained birth attendants, and management of complications through referral linkages. Preference for home delivery, family birth attendants, absence of medical doctors, and fear of surgery were identified as factors that hindered the use of delivery centre.

Study on Causal Association of Stillbirth at Delivery Centre Done

The findings show that no maternal education, high maternal age, pre-term delivery (before 37 weeks), complications during pregnancy and delivery, and poor socioeconomic status emerged as the major independent risk factors for stillbirth. Findings also reveal that *Manoshi* programme has an impact on changing the grave outcome (stillbirths).

Assessment of Referral System of *Manoshi* in Addressing Delays of Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) Done

The findings reveal that delay in taking decision to seek care was significantly longer among women who were referred from home than those who were referred from delivery

center. Time to reach the facility and receive treatment was almost equal in both cases. Time to decide to seek care was shortest in life threatening condition. About half of the husbands played the prime role in making such decisions. Reasons for first delay include fear of medical intervention, lack of money, failed to recognize danger signs, traditional beliefs, etc. Financial assistance from *Manoshi* in accessing EmOC services significantly reduced the first delay.

Assessment of the MNCH Referral System in Addressing Delays in Seeking EmOC in Rural Bangladesh

This cross-sectional comparative study aims to assess the role of MNCH programme in reducing delays in seeking EmOC in rural Bangladesh. This study is being conducted in four MNCH intervention areas in Mymensingh, Gaibandha, Rangpur and Nilphamari and two comparison areas in Netrakona and Naogaon. Data will be collected from 1,200 women (200 per district) who have had a history of obstetric complication during pregnancy and child birth two months before data collection.

Effectiveness of Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) in MNCH Care and Services

Since inception in 2006, BRAC MNCH programme include BCC in improving the knowledge and practices regarding MNCH. This qualitative study attempts to assess the comprehensibility and acceptability of different BCC tools in influencing behaviour on maternal, neonatal and child health care, the mechanisms whereby that influence is achieved, and the implications for interventions directed towards achieving such behaviour change. Data collection is in progress.

Knowledge, Practice and Acceptability of Misoprostol in Preventing Postpartum Haemorrhage in Northern Districts of Rural Bangladesh

To prevent postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) in rural areas *Shasthya Shebikas* or newborn health workers of BRAC MNCH programme provide two doses of oral Misoprostol tablets (400 µg) to all women who give birth at home in addition to counseling during antenatal visits. The study aims to find out programme effectiveness in increasing the knowledge, practice and acceptability of community-based education and distribution of Misoprostol for prevention of PPH. Data collection is in progress.

Voice and Accountability of MNCH Committee

This study aims to explore how MNCH committee members encourage community participation, how their communication activities influence community people to use health services, and how their contribution

tends to bring positive health outcome among poor mothers and their children. The study findings will provide necessary information to create an enabling environment for raising voice of MNCH committee members, community people, and service providers to work actively in planning, monitoring and supervision. The study is in progress.

Cost of Providing MNCH Services

This study aims to estimate the full economic costs of MNCH services at various levels of public facilities of the MNCH programme intervention and control area. The study is in progress.

Performance of *Manoshi* Delivery Centre

A qualitative study was conducted to explore the factors behind good and bad performing Delivery Centres. Data analysis is in progress. Preliminary findings will be shared in April 2010.

MNCH: A Review on Existing Knowledge, Care, Practices, Health-seeking Behaviour of the Community in Rural Bangladesh and Assessment of Community Needs

This study aims to identify the knowledge and practice of mothers and community people regarding maternal and newborn care, find out strategies for programme to make effective community intervention and identify future research priorities. The study is in progress.

Economic Research Update

Baseline Survey for SoFEA Evaluation

As part of the evaluation of Social and Financial Empowerment of the Adolescents (SoFEA) programme, a baseline survey was conducted in 16 branch offices of BRAC covering 6,500 households. The draft report is expected in June 2010.

Impact Assessment of Border ADP

The repeat survey of Border Adolescent Development Programme (ADP) has been done during January-February 2010 to see the impact of the programme. The study is expected to be completed by May 2010.

CFPR Sustainability Analysis Done

The study titled 'Addressing extreme poverty in a sustainable manner: evidence from CFPR programme' has been completed. Using panel data from three round surveys (2002, 2005 and 2008), this study explores sustainability of livelihood impacts of CFPR phase I. The findings show that impact of the programme on income, employment, food security and asset holding was mostly sustainable in the long run. Magnitude of impact on per capita income was found to be increased over time.

Evaluation of BRAC Kallyan Project Done

The study titled 'Social protection package for the retrenched state-owned enterprise workers: a quick review' has been completed. The study maps the cumulative achievement of the project and assesses its impact on livelihoods of the participant households. The review shows that although the project faced trouble in locating retrenched workers due to their dispersed physical locations it was successful in achieving the pre-set targets. In some of the components such as employment generation, project achievements far exceeded pre-set targets. The participant households experienced significant positive impacts on asset holding, per capita income, employment, food security, and education.

Study on Gram Daridra Bimochon Committee

A study on *Gram Daridra Bimochon Committee* (GDBC) of CFPR titled 'Elite capture or capturing elites' has been initiated. The study aims to determine the factors and characteristics of GDBC members that enable it to perform better compared to other committees and make the committee sustainable. Five branches from Sirajganj and Naogaon districts were selected as survey sites. The study is expected to be completed in April 2010.

Study on Profiles of Sharecroppers

A study titled 'The profiles of the sharecroppers of Bangladesh' has been initiated. This study uses the information collected by the Social Development (SD) Programme of BRAC. As a part of selection of sharecroppers for BRAC's newly initiated credit programme, BRAC's SD Programme traced about one million sharecroppers across the country and collected their socioeconomic information. The study is in progress.

Nutrition Research Update

Alive and Thrive (A&T) Preparatory Phase Activities: Early Exploration

RED has initiated an operation research in collaboration with IFPRI in the preparatory phase of A&T project. The study aims to assess i) *Shasthya Shebikas* (SS) and IYCFP's (Infant and Young Child Feeding Promoters) awareness of IYCF practices, ii) current incentive structures for SS/*Shasthya Karmis* in the context of A&T project, and iii) trainers' perceptions of overall IYCF training, training methods, and their impact on SS. The study is in progress.

Assessment of IYCF Training of BRAC's Frontline Health Workers Done

This study provides assessment of the quality of training materials, the level of understanding of the trainees and the quality of performance of the master trainers. The study explored the information on the quality of

IYCF training of SS and *Shasthya Karmi* who are the frontline workers to reach the mothers of under-2 children to educate and support them for appropriate IYCF practices.

Perception of Formal and Informal Health Care Providers on IYCF Practices in Rural Bangladesh Done

This study aimed to understand the perception of health care providers on IYCF practices and the potential barriers and their motivational factors. The findings show that majority of the frontline workers were not uniform and they deviated from the ideal recommended practices of IYCF. Majority did not have any perception of correct positioning and attachment of the baby for breastfeeding. Comprehensive training, job aids, monetary benefits and development of interpersonal skills were felt need of BRAC workers.

Food Frequency and Dietary Consumption

The major aim of this study is to validate the food security measurement tool that is being used by Food Security and Nutrition Surveillance Project. The study will also measure the association between food consumption and early childhood development. BRAC and University of Toronto, Canada are jointly conducting the study.

Perceptions on IYCF among Adolescent Girls

This study aims to explore the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions on IYCF among rural adolescent girls and mothers aged between 15-21 years. This study will help develop new infant nutrition training modules for the adolescent girl's clubs run by BRAC SoFEA programme. This is a collaborative study with the University of Toronto, Canada.

Preventing Growth Faltering among Low Birth Weight (LBW) Babies

In collaboration with Hospital for Sick Children, Canada, RED is conducting a community-based cluster randomized controlled trial to reduce linear growth faltering among LBW babies in rural areas of Gazipur district. The study aims to facilitate improved feeding practices through early reduction of infection i.e., using a combination of innovative tools, water-based hand sanitizer, improved micronutrient powders (MNP) along with nutrition and hygiene education.

Study on Calcium Deficiency Among Anaemic Children

A two-month long clinical trial is being carried out by RED and Hospital for Sick Children, Canada on controlling iron deficiency anaemia and preventing calcium deficiency in children. The study aimed to compare the haemoglobin status of infants aged 6-11 months with iron deficiency

anaemia, who are receiving MNPs containing iron with or without calcium. The study is in progress.

Environment Research Update

Study on Jamuna Bridge Resettlement Project Completed

A study on Jamuna Bridge Resettlement Project titled 'Revisiting Jamuna bridge resettlement areas: exploring livelihood status of the affected people' has been completed. RED has conducted this study as a consultant of the World Bank.

Study on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Programme Done

Using data from WASH baseline survey 2006-7 and midline survey 2009, a study titled 'Measuring changes in hand washing practices with soap among women: a community-based empirical study in rural Bangladesh' has been done. The final report is expected by April 2010.

Indoor Air Pollution and its Health Impact in Developing Countries: An Intervention Study in Bangladesh

The second round of data collection has been completed and intervention of improved cooking stoves (ICS) is in progress. The study aims to understand the factors affecting ICS adoption, their impact on human health, and social networking on ICS. This study is being done in collaboration with Yale University and Stanford University of USA.

Environmental Consideration in BRAC Microfinance-Supported Enterprises

As a routine evaluation process a study on environmental consideration in BRAC microfinance-supported enterprises has been initiated to assess their environmental performance. Data will be collected from all the regions except the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The final report will be available by June 2010.

Social Development Research Update

Baseline Survey on Active Citizens and Accountable Local Government Begins

The Social Development Programme of BRAC has undertaken an initiative to create a condition for more active civic engagement of the rural poor in tabbing resources for their development and to strengthen the capacities of local government in providing more accountable and effective governance. RED has lunched a study in Bogra and Jessore to assess the extent the *Union Parishad* become pro-poor, gender sensitized, and the extent the *Palli Shamaj* actively engages itself with the local government. Besides, the study will also assess the *Union Parishad* in terms of services they provide to the poor.

Capacity Building

Qazi Shafayetul Islam attended a training course on 'Operational research for TB control programme' at the Gadj Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia during 16-20 March 2010.

Shamim Hossain participated in a training course on 'Evaluation of development programme' during 1-8 March 2010 at BRAC University, Dhaka.

Morsheda Banu, Shumona Sharmin Salam and Md. Nasiruddin Khan attended a course on 'Monitoring and evaluation of maternal and neonatal health programme' from 6 -17 December 2009 at BRAC University, Dhaka.

Seminars/Lectures Given

Professor Edward Frongillo, Chair, Department of Health Promotion Education and Behaviour, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina, USA gave a seminar at RED on 'Evaluation and monitoring of social programmes at multiple levels' on 23 March 2010.

Professor Stanley Zlotkin, Head of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada gave a seminar at RED on 02 February 2010 on how Sprinkles (micronutrient powder) has evolved over time and has reached millions of children worldwide to reduce anaemia and support growth and development of children.

Hasan Shareef Ahmed gave lectures on 'Ethics of publication and scientific misconduct' and 'How to write a case report' in two Workshops on Medical Writing organized by Bangladesh Medical Research Council, Dhaka on 08 and 09 December 2009.

Conferences/Workshops Attended

Syed Masud Ahmed presented a paper on 'Problems and prospects of running a DSS for chronic disease research in LICs: insights from *Watch, Bangladesh*' in an international symposium on 'Prioritizing chronicity' in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 11-12 March 2010. The symposium was organized by Monash University Sunway Campus, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Narayan Chandra Das presented a paper titled 'Addressing extreme poverty in a sustainable manner: evidence from CFPR' in a workshop on 'Improving institutions for pro-poor growth in Africa and South Asia' organized by the Centre for Study of African Economies, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK on 20 March 2010.

Nepal C Dey presented two papers titled 'Environmental assessment of drought in the northwest region of Bangladesh' and 'Relationship between soil surface conditions and spectral reflectance' in an international conference on 'Bangladesh Environment' in Dhaka on 3-4 January 2010. The conference

was organized by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Bangladesh Environment Network.

Nepal C Dey attended the 'Workshop on Research in Support of Food Security Policies: Improving Availability and Access' in Dhaka on 21 March 2010. The workshop was jointly organized by Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Bangladesh and FAO with the financial support of the EC and USAID.

CSB Jalal attended a workshop on 'Reduction of Stunting through Improvement of Complementary Feeding and Maternal Nutrition' organized by UNICEF, WHO and WFP in Bangkok, Thailand on 25-27 March 2010.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal articles

Aboud FE, Shafique S, Akhter S. A responsive feeding intervention increases children's self-feeding and maternal responsiveness but not weight gain. *J Nutr* 2009;139(9):1738-43. doi: 10.3945/jn.109.104885

Mallick D and Rafi M. Are female-headed households more food insecure? Evidence from Bangladesh. *World Dev* 2010;38(4):593-605.

Books

Roy G. Group discussion (In Bangla). Dhaka: Banglaprakash, 2010. 144p.

Salam SS, Khan MA, Salahuddin S, Choudhury N, Nicholls P, Nasreen HE. Maternal, neonatal and child health in selected northern districts of Bangladesh: findings from baseline survey 2008. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. xv, 134p.

Research Monograph Series

Karim F (Editor). Socioeconomic divides in tuberculosis control: study of smear-positive TB prevalence, care seeking behaviour and role of informal healthcare providers. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. xv, 72p. (Research Monograph Series No. 41)

Khan MNU, Quayyum Z, Nasreen HE, Ensor T, Salahuddin S. Household costs of obtaining maternal and newborn care in rural Bangladesh: baseline survey. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. ix, 37p. (Research Monograph Series No. 43)

Mallick D. Microfinance and moneylender interest rate: evidence from Bangladesh. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. v, 23p. (Research Monograph Series No. 42)

Research Compendium

Nirjash (In Bangla). Vol. 19. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. 138p.

RED working paper

Ahmed SM and Islam QS. Improving the quality of life of the presbyopic patients: The reading glass project of BRAC. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. vi, 29p. (RED Working Paper No. 8)

Das NC, Raza WA, Misha FA. An early assessment of CFPR II support packages. Dhaka: BRAC, 2009. iv, 53p. (RED Working Paper No. 9)

MANOSHI Working Paper Series

Afsana K *et al.* MANOSHI: a programme for improving maternal, neonatal and child health in the urban slums of Bangladesh. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 49p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.1)

Alam K, Oliveras E and Tasneem S. Retention of female volunteer community health workers: a case-control study in the urban slums of Dhaka. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 19p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.8)

Banu M, Nahar S and Nasreen HE. Assessing the MANOSHI referral system: addressing delays in seeking emergency obstetric care in Dhaka's slums. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2010. 36p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.10)

Choudhury N *et al.* Maternal, newborn and child helathcare practices: an exploratory study of Korail slum in Dhaka. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 34p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.3)

Hossain MA *et al.* Mapping the healthcare-market for MNCH care: the case of providers and facilities of Korail slum in Dhaka. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 44p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.2)

Islam Z *et al.* Urban slum dwellers "willingness to pay": a study of the MANOSHI delivery centres in Dhaka. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 29p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.4)

Khan MA and Ahmed SM. The "birthing hut" facilities of MANOSHI: a two-part paper, exploring the inception and post-inception phases of urban delivery centres. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 34p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.7)

Moran A *et al.* Causes of maternal, neonatal and child deaths: an exploratory study of Dhaka's slum dwellers. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 29p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.5)

Moran AC and Wahed T. The use of oxytocin during labour in a home setting: exploring the demand side needs in urban slums of Dhaka. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 24p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.6)

Mridha MK *et al.* The perceptions of community groups to improve MNCH in urban slums: an exploratory case study of Korail slum in Dhaka. Dhaka: ICDDR,B and BRAC, 2009. 37p. (Manoshi Working Paper No.9)

Newspaper article

Nath SR. Main problem lies with education system (In Bangla). *Prothom Alo*, 03 March 2010.

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