



RED Update

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Study on TB in Progress

The multicomponent study titled 'DOTS (Directly observed treatment short course) strategy for tuberculosis (TB) control: socioeconomic and gender divide in accessing DOTS services in rural Bangladesh' is in progress. It aims to measure the prevalence of TB, understand the patterns of and barriers to help-seeking behaviour for respiratory illnesses, assess socioeconomic and gender divides in the use of DOTS services including treatment, and explores the role of private health providers in DOTS strategy at community level. Data were collected from rural communities, TB patients and health providers in six districts. Data are being analyzed.

Baseline Survey in Progress MNCH Pilot Project

Field activities of a baseline survey of the MNCH (Maternal, neonatal, and child health) pilot project in Nilphamari district was completed in May 2006. The survey covered 2,050 pregnant women and mothers of under-five children from two *upazilas* each of Nilphamari (intervention) and Dinajpur (control) districts, and local healthcare providers. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data on knowledge and practice of mothers and healthcare providers on issues related to MNCH. Data are being analyzed. Draft report is expected in August 2006.

Study on Food Supplementation Done

A study was done to explore the management process of food supplementation procedure of the National Nutrition Project (NNP) in BRAC-operated *upazilas*. Enrolled and non-enrolled mothers and children, and the commu-

nity nutrition promoters of 20 community nutrition centres from Narsingdi and Laxmipur sadar *upazilas* were included. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The findings show that there were discrepancies in the selection process of the food supplementation programme in BRAC NNP, which is related with weight and height records as well as BMI calculation. Foods were not prepared in hygienic condition. Some errors were also found in weight and quality of the ingredients of the food supplementation packets.

Study on Sanitation Programme Done

A cross sectional study was carried out in Shibpur *upazila* to explore the present status of sanitation programme on the use of sanitary latrine. Housewives and stakeholders were the respondents. The findings show that there was a huge gap between knowledge and practice. About 2% households did not have any latrine access whereas about 85% had latrine and 13% did not own but they had access to latrine of any type. However, fixed place defecation was 96% and 54% for adult and under-5 children respectively. There was no influence of seasonal variation on the use of latrine. Habit, lack of awareness, and financial problems were the main barriers to transform knowledge into practice for sanitation. Community awareness is believed to be the main factor that could contribute to sanitation success in this study area.

Environmental Assessment of BRAC Bank SME Completed

A study on environmental assessment of small and medium enterprises (SME) of BRAC Bank has recently been com-

pleted. This was done to formulate environmental guideline for SMEs of BRAC Bank. This kind of initiative is new in the field of SME financing in Bangladesh.

CFPR/TUP Updates

Situation analysis of panel doctors of the CFPR/TUP programme done

The field activities of a situation analysis survey of the panel doctors of CFPR/TUP programme has recently been completed. Two *upazilas* from each of the 12 CFPR/TUP regions where the scheme is running for more than one year were included. Survey of functional status of the scheme with inventory of physical facilities, participant observation of the activities and exit interviews of the patients coming for treatment were done in all these sites. In addition, in-depth interviews with doctors were done. FGDs were done with consumers, programme organizers, and *Shasthya shebikas/karmis* (Health volunteers/workers). The data are being analyzed.

A resource CD on CFPR/TUP programme developed

RED has developed a resource CD that includes the half yearly progress reports, research outputs, and a video on CFPR/TUP programme. The design of the CD allows updating which RED will be doing in the subsequent versions of the CD. The CDs were distributed during the BRAC-DFID organized workshop on 'Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh' attended by over 80 participants.

Study on relative poverty of BDP ultra poor completed

The BDP ultra poor are relatively poorer than BRAC's village organization (VO) members and non-VO members, with

46% of them in the poorest quartile compared to 26% of other VO members. This study also identified that the BDP ultra poor can be further differentiated on the basis of previous microfinance participation – the poorest of them never participated while those currently participating are much better-off. This raises the research question of whether the current BDP ultra poor package is appropriate for this group.

Education Research Update

Education Watch 2006 progressing

The 7th *Education Watch* aims to assess curriculum, learning achievement and employment opportunities in secondary education with special focus on comparison between general and madrasa streams. A pilot study is underway. The national survey will be held in August which would include achievement test of 3,000 pupils of class X and tracing 3,000 secondary graduates of 1996 from government schools, non-government schools, combined school and colleges, and dakhil and alim madrasas.

Study on English teachers training done

The PACE programme of BRAC offers training course for the English language teachers of rural non-governmental high schools to enhance their capacity in implementing the newly revised curriculum. RED has recently conducted a study to see the effectiveness of this training and how the teachers apply their newly acquired knowledge in teaching English language in their schools.

Technical support offered to Education Watch initiators in India

Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) in Bhubaneswar, India initiated *Education Watch* in Orissa. Samir R Nath recently visited CYSD and offered technical support and gave a seminar on Bangladesh experience.

RED Participates in Environment Day Fair

RED participated in the World Environment Day Fair 2006 in Dhaka on 5-7 June 2006. The World Environment Day theme for 2006 was *Deserts and Desertification* and the slogan was *Don't*

Desert Drylands! The slogan emphasizes the importance of protecting drylands, which cover more than 40% of the planet's surface. This ecosystem is home to one-third of the world's people who are more vulnerable members of society. BRAC exhibited its environmental activities and publications on environmental education and research.

Social Sector Performance Qualitative Study (SSPQS)

Fieldwork for the SSPQS research, a qualitative study contributing to the DFID-funded public expenditure tracking surveys in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management, took place in April-June. This included in-depth studies of governance, management and service delivery in 27 schools and health facilities, as well as relevant officials up to district level. Final reports from the project will be available from August 2006.

Governance Research Team Formed

RED has formed a new team called the Governance Research Team, led by Dr. Naomi Hossain. The Team is working on the first State of Governance in Bangladesh Report for the Centre for Governance of BRAC University. This is likely to be a regular annual publication carried out by this team.

Seminar/Workshop Presentation

Nasima Akter presented a paper titled 'Risk of bird flu pre-valence in Bangladesh and the means of prevention: role of NGO and private sectors in bird flu prevention and management' at a seminar on bird flu held on 15 April 2006 in Dhaka.

Farhana Haseen presented a paper titled 'The 24-hour recall for ultra poor households: validation exercise' at the Sixth International Conference on Dietary Assessment Methods held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 27-29 April 2006.

Imran Matin presented BRAC's experiences with designing social protection interventions for the poorest in the following two workshops:

-- Ford Foundation programme on social protection in Asia, held in Bangkok, Thailand on 14-17 May 2006, and

-- Social protection in Asia workshop organized by the World Bank in Colombo on 17-19 May 2006.

He also presented a paper titled 'Extreme poverty: concepts and approaches' at the BRAC-DFID organized day-long workshop on Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh on 26 June 2006 in Dhaka.

He also conducted a 4-day training course on 'Microfinance experiences of Bangladesh: harnessing possibilities, thinking differently' for the Chinese microfinance practitioners in Beijing, China on 20-23 April 2006. The course was organized by the Rural Development Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Annual Report

BRAC research 2005. Dhaka: BRAC, 2006, ix, 70p.

Journal articles

Biswas P, Kabir ZN, Nilsson J, Zaman S. Dynamics of health care seeking behaviour of elderly people in rural Bangladesh. *Int J Ageing Later Life* 2006;1(1):69-89.

Rashid A. The politics of administrative decentralization in Bangladesh. *Canadian J Dev Stud* 2005;26(4):781-98.

Booklet

Aker N, Rahman M, Ghosh K. Shustho medical barja bebosthapon: nirapod jibon (In Bangla). Dhaka: Institution and Policy Support Unit, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of Bangladesh, 2006. 20p.

PRCPB working paper

Ali T and Hossain N. Popular expectations of government: findings from three areas in Bangladesh. (PRCPB working paper no. 13)

Research monograph series

Karim F, Choudhury N, Pasha A, Hasan K, Hyder SMZ, Zlotkin SH. Reaching sprinkles to millions: social marketing strategy for combating childhood iron deficiency anemia. Dhaka and Toronto: BRAC and Hospital for Sick Children, 2006. xix, 142p. (Research monograph series 27).

CFPR/TUP working paper series

Haseen F. Change in food and nutrient consumption among the ultra poor: is the CFPR/TUP programme making a difference? Dhaka and Ottawa: BRAC and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, 2006. vi, 31p. (CFPR/TUP working paper series no. 11).

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