



RED Update

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Update on CFPR-TUP Research

Case studies of struggling TUP members completed

Based on participatory change ranking of a sample of TUP members who joined the programme in 2002, we carried out a detailed case study on those who were ranked lowest. In the change ranking exercise, 18% of the members were categorized as witnessing 'very positive' changes, while 28% as 'struggling'. Detailed case studies on 12 such TUP members suggest that initial household demographics including age and physical ability of the TUP members should be better assessed to ensure an appropriate enterprise selection. The quality of TUP member's relationship with her husband also emerged as an important factor.

Social capital baseline survey completed

A survey was carried out to get a clearer baseline understanding of the social capital of the ultra poor. The survey covered a sample of the year 2002 and 2004 ultra poor members of the TUP programme. For comparison, sample of 'not selected ultra poor' and women from other wealth groups were also surveyed.

Sector scan of TUP enterprise completed

The study aims to compare the performance of the different enterprises provided to the ultra poor members to identify key determinants of enterprise sustainability — the likelihood of SUP sustaining their initial enterprise as an ongoing source of income after the withdrawal of BRAC programme support.

Technical assistance to baseline survey of Char Livelihood Programme

The Management Agency of DFID and GoB's Char Livelihood Programme (CLP) requested RED to provide technical assistance in designing its baseline survey. CLP is a seven year programme that aims to halve extreme poverty in the riverine chars of Bangladesh by 2015.

Study on Non-communicable Diseases Begins

A research project titled 'Identifying non-communicable disease risk factors in Bangladesh' has begun in December 2004. Using the WHO standardized STEPS approach, the study will assess the level of risk factors of non-communicable diseases, identify the socio-economic and regional disparities, and develop a surveillance module of such diseases. Funded by the INDEPTH Network, this project is expected to be completed by November 2005.

Evaluation of Child-to- Child Component of the ECD Programme Begins

Early Childhood Development (ECD) project is being implemented by BRAC in 50 *upazilas* of 10 districts since 2001. BRAC's frontline workers (FLW) disseminate messages on how to facilitate psychosocial and emotional development of under-5 children to mothers, newly wed couples, and other family members including adolescents through various forums. In the villages through Community Learning Centers and Union

Libraries in Sherpur *upazila* of Bogra district, the ECD project, in addition to regular activities through FLWs, trained adolescents since 2003 to develop their skills for creative and effective interaction with children, and solving their problem. Sherpur is one of the six *upazilas* where child-to-child component is implemented. The adolescents also take part as volunteers in the *Shisu Bikash Kendro* programme of ECD. It is a home-based child development centre aims to enhance child care knowledge and practices of the parents and the caregivers through practical demonstration. A baseline survey was done in 2003 to gather information on ECD knowledge and practice of the adolescents before the intervention began. The current phase ends on 31 December 2004. A mid-term evaluation of the child-to-child component will begin in January 2005.

Pilot Research on Rural Energy Initiated

BRAC and Emergence Energy, Inc. of the USA recently signed an agreement to conduct a pilot research on energy and environment called 'Project Emergence.' This project is a micro-enterprise effort involving five components: a) local production of environmentally sound energy; b) local consumption of electricity and other energy production by-products; c) empowerment of the poor, particularly women; d) creation of sustainable jobs; and e) community development. The project plans to establish mini power plants (MPP) in rural Bangladesh, each of which will be owned and operated by two borrowers in a micro-credit programme. Using cow dung and Stirling engine the MPP will produce electricity, fertilizer, and heat for drying. In addition to using biogas, the Stirling engine may also use alternative fuels even kerosene.

Baseline Report Completed Extension Phase of ADB's RETA 6008 – Gender and Good Governance Issues in Local Government

BRAC Development Programme initiated a pilot programme in 2003 to empower the women ward members by building their capacity and networking abilities so that they can participate more effectively in local governance. On successful completion, ADB provided support for an extension of the pilot in 2004. RED carried out a baseline survey on the socioeconomic profile of the women ward members and their knowledge and participation in local public affairs.

Update on Education Research

Study on quality primary education completed

A study on the quality primary education in Bangladesh commissioned by the ESTEEM project of the Directorate of Primary Education, GoB has recently been completed. The study looked at the process of various provisions in six good quality primary schools of the country – five government schools and one non-government registered school.

Study on competency achievement of BRAC school students

A study on the competency achievement of BRAC school students at the end of grade V has been initiated. This is the fifth study of this kind. The earlier studies concentrated only on the NFPE schools. However, for the first time, two other types of schools viz., Community School and BRAC Primary Schools are also added in the sample.

Draft report of *Education Watch* shared

The draft report of the *Education Watch* 2003/4 was shared with various stakeholders at Dhaka on 22 November 2004. The year's Education Watch aimed to do in-depth probe of quality primary education in Bangladesh. The title of the report is *Quality with equity: the primary education agenda*. Manzoor Ahmed and Samir R Nath of BRAC presented the draft report.

INDEPTH Network Meeting Held

Abdullahel Hadi of RED attended a meeting of the INDEPTH Network on 22-24 November 2004 in Bangkok. INDEPTH is an international association of demographic and health research projects in Asia and Africa where the *Watch Project* of RED is a member. The objective of this meeting was to develop a protocol to conduct a cross-country study in fertility change in south and south-east Asia. The outcome will be published in the form of a monograph.

Kangaroo Mother Care Study Launched

BRAC and the Population Council, USA initiated the main study of the Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) approach in four rural *upazilas* in November 2004. The study aims to see the potential impact of skin-to-skin care for the low birth weight babies. A pilot study, conducted in 2002, showed the feasibility of adaptation of KMC approach by rural Bangladeshi mothers. This four-year project aims to help reduce infant mortality in countries like Bangladesh where the incidence of LBW is high.

Workshop on Medical Waste Management Held

BRAC has undertaken a pilot project on improving in-house medical waste management in collaboration with three selected hospitals. A manual on in-house hospital waste management has been prepared. To finalize this manual, a workshop was held on 28 October 2004 in Dhaka. Major stakeholders on the issue of waste management, health, and environment attended the workshop.

Workshop/Conference/ Training Course

Imran Matin participated as a panel member of civil society representatives in an international consultation on Millennium Development Goals held on 1-3 October in Siem Reap, Cambodia organized by the UNDP.

Imran Matin presented a paper titled 'Delivering inclusive microfinance with a poverty focus: experiences of BRAC'

at the Advanced Reflective Training of Upscaling Microfinance organized by Tata-Dhan Foundation in Madurai, India, December 3, 2004.

Imran Matin gave a presentation on 'Extreme poverty and social safety nets' to the trainees of the Salma Sobhan Fellowship for Development Journalism at Savar TARC, December 19, 2004.

Mirja M Shahjamal presented a paper on gender difference in mathematics and Rosie Nilufar Yasmin along with Hosne Ara Begum of IER, Dhaka University presented another paper on assessment of pre-primary schools in the UNESCO-BAFED Researchers Forum held in Dhaka on 18 December 2004.

M Showkat Gani has contributed to a training course on monitoring and evaluation organized by BRAC Training Division for the senior officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment, Government of Afghanistan. They have successfully completed a five-month certificate programme on 'Managing rural development' at BRAC.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal article

Hadi A and Parveen R (2004). Arsenicosis in Bangladesh: prevalence and socioeconomic correlates. *Public Health* 118:559-64. (www.elsevier.com/journals/pubh)

Working papers

Matin I and Walker S. Exploring changes in the lives of the ultra poor: an exploratory study on CFPR/TUP members. Dhaka and Ottawa: BRAC and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, 2004. vi, 14p. (CFPR-TUP Working paper series no. 4)

Zaman S, Rahman H, Edgeworth R. Health domain of the ultra poor: an exploration. Dhaka and Ottawa: BRAC and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, 2004. vi, 45p. (CFPR-TUP Working paper series no. 5)

Newspaper article

Mannell J. BRAC puts the breaks on road accidents. *The Weekly Holiday* 29 Oct 2004.

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