



RED Update

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Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC

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New Research Collaboration Signed With Save the Children UK, Bangladesh Programme

BRAC and the Save the Children UK (SCUK), Bangladesh Programme have signed a memorandum of understanding to initiate a research collaboration to:

- a. examine different aspects of the relationship between poverty and child labour to inform the programmes of BRAC, SCUK, and other development organizations; and
- b. analyse changes in the child labour situation as a result of the ongoing BRAC programme, CFPR/TUP, which has "households where school-going aged children have to labour" as an inclusion indicator for targeting.

New Studies on the Ultra Poor Initiated

Exploring the Health Issues of the Ultra Poor

RED has recently initiated a study to explore various aspects of health among the ultra poor members of the CFPR-TUP programme of BRAC. The issues include, identification of the most prevalent illnesses and most popular health practitioners, understanding the perceptions concerning categorization and rating severity of various illnesses, and knowing the pathways of choosing health practitioners in seeking treatments. Case studies of illness episodes were done to understand the health seeking behaviour and explanatory model of different illnesses. Data were collected from three villages of Domar

upazila of Nilphamari district. Data analysis is underway. The study is expected to be completed by early February 2004.

Elite Perception of the Ultra Poor

The *Gram Shahayak* Committee of the CFPR-TUP programme has created a space where local elites can play supportive role in favour of the ultra poor people in their community. RED and the Advocacy Unit of BRAC jointly initiated a study to understand the perception of the elites about the ultra poor, to improve their interaction to facilitate pro-poor action, and to explore their potential in assisting the ultra poor. The study is being conducted in Nilphamari, Kurigram and Rangpur districts. A draft report is expected in February 2004.

Study on Successful School Management Initiated

RED is conducting a study on 'Successful School Management' as part of its connection with the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Education Planning (ANTRIEP). This study aims to explore how 'successful primary schools' are becoming successful as a unit of quality assurance body in the field of education in Bangladesh. Similar study is undertaken in some other Asian countries. State-owned and BRAC-run schools are considered for the Bangladesh part of the study.

Mr Samir R Nath, Senior Research Fellow and Mr Mirja M Shahjamal, Junior Research Associate attended a workshop on 'Successful School Management: Policies and Strategies' held on 15-18 December in Katmandu, Nepal. They presented two papers – one on the research process and the other on

the preliminary findings of the study. Various issues on case study preparation were discussed in the workshop and it came out with a framework for report writing. A four-member team from the National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) also participated in the workshop. RED is looking at the issue at primary level and NAEM at secondary level.

Research on Primary Schools Undertaken for Bangladesh Government

RED has undertaken a research for the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) of the Government of Bangladesh under its ESTEEM project. This study aims to see how do some primary schools in Bangladesh succeed despite the constraints. Fieldwork is underway in six government and non-government registered primary schools located in six different areas in the country. The study is expected to be completed by mid April 2004.

Pilot Study Conducted *Education Watch* 2003

Education Watch 2003 aims to explore the reasons behind poor achievement regarding Education For All, especially in the case of access and quality of education. A pilot study was conducted in Pabna Sadar *upazila* in November 2003. This included school-centred household surveys, interviews and focus group discussions with the non-enrolled children, students, parents, teachers, education officials, *Union Parisad* members and the *upazila* level officials. Data are being analyzed and a report is expected soon. Experience of the pilot study would help plan and design the main study.

Education Watch 2002 Findings Disseminated at District Level

The findings of *Education Watch 2002* were disseminated at six district headquarters – Noakhali, Kurigram, Sunamganj, Pirojpur, Kustia and Munshiganj. The seminars were organized by CAMPE and hosted by local NGOs. Mr. Samir R Nath, one of the co-authors of the report presented the findings and their policy implications in each of the seminars, while Dr Manzoor Ahmed and Ms. Rasheda K Choudhury were present and spoke respectively in Sunamganj and Munshiganj. Local educationists, professionals and practitioners took part in the discussions. The respective Deputy Commissioners or their representatives were present in the seminars as chief guests.

Multi-country Study on Primary Health Care of Elderly in Progress

To improve the quality of life of elderly people in Bangladesh and Vietnam, a study was undertaken in October 2002 jointly by RED of BRAC, Karolinska Institute, Sweden, Health Strategy and Policy Institute, Vietnam, and University of East Anglia, UK. The programme interventions started in four villages of Chandpur Sadar *upazila* under Chandpur district. The interventions include providing social and health awareness to elderly caregivers and the community people. Health check-up and eye camp for the elderly people will be undertaken soon.

RED Staff Contributed in International Workshops and Conferences

Dr Shahaduz Zaman, Senior Research Fellow presented a paper titled 'Primary health care in later life: BRAC experience' in the workshop on 'Multi-site Research on Adult Health and Ageing' held on 30 October-01 November 2003 in Johannesburg, South Africa (organized by INDEPTH Network). He also presented another paper titled 'Experiences with process documentation research: a new approach to evaluate

BRAC's CFPR/TUP programme' in the conference on 'New Direction of Impact Assessment: Method and Practice' held on 24-25 November 2003 in Manchester, UK (organized by the Institute of Policy and Development Management, Manchester University, UK).

Mr M Showkat Gani, Research Associate has contributed as a resource person in INDEPTH Multilevel Analysis Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya during 27-31 October 2003. The workshop was organized to provide a practical introduction to multilevel modeling for demographic and health surveillance and cross-sectional survey data, and enable participants to analyze their own hierarchical data using relevant software. Thirty-seven researchers/teachers from 14 countries attended the workshop. He also conducted similar workshop at the Department of Population and Environment at the Independent University, Bangladesh during 4-7 December 2003.

Obituary

Kazi Billal Hossain, Materials Developer (PIN 3443), died of cerebral haemorrhage on 25 November 2003 at the age of 39 at a local hospital in Dhaka. He left behind his wife, two minor sons, and a lot of friends, relatives, and well-wishers. He joined BRAC on 15 October 1989 and was working at RED since 26 February 2001. At RED, he was closely associated with the publication of *Nirjash* – the research compendium in Bangla, and other publications of RED as well as their dissemination.

Training on Participatory Market Research for Microfinance Held

RED carried out a training programme for BRAC staff on 'Participatory Market Research for Microfinance' at Rangpur during 10-19 November 2003. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools are being increasingly used for developing more client responsive microfinance products and services. Information collected during the fieldwork will be used for compiling a report on financial service needs and preferences of the ultra poor.

RED Works to Improve Gender Relation Among the BRAC VO members

RED and the Training Division of BRAC have jointly initiated a pilot project to develop positive attitude to improve gender relation and enhance gender equity and equality among the members of BRAC village organizations. It is expected to contribute to women's empowerment at individual, social, and organization level. The lessons learned will be shared with the programme implementers of BRAC through workshops.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal articles, books and book chapters

Ahmad J, Golder BN, Misra S, Jakariya M. Fighting arsenic: listening to rural communities. Willingness to pay for arsenic-free, safe drinking water in Bangladesh. Dhaka: The World Bank and BRAC, 2003.

Chowdhury AMR, Nath SR, Choudhury RK. Equity gains in Bangladesh primary education. *Int Rev Edu* 2003;49(6):601-19.

Chowdhury AMR, Bhuiya A, Mahmud S, Salam AKMA, Karim F. Immunization divide: who do get vaccinated in Bangladesh? *J Health Pop Nutr* 2003;21(3):193-204.

Halder SR. Poverty outreach and BRAC's microfinance interventions: programme impact and sustainability. *IDS Bull* 2003;34(4):44-53.

Quasem I, Sloan NL, Chowdhury A, Ahmed S, Winikoff B, Chowdhury AMR. Adaptation of Kangaroo mother care for community-based application. *J Perinatology* 2003;23(8):646-51.

Abstracts

Jalal CSB, Hyder SMZ, Aziz M, Haseen F, Rahman MM. Supplementation of drink fortified with multiple micronutrients among rural adolescent girls: some preliminary findings [abstract]. Abstracts book of the 10th Asian Conference on Diarrhoeal Diseases and Nutrition. Dhaka: ICDDR,B, 2003:175.

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