



RED Update

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Pilot Project on Capacity Development of Health Care Providers in CFPR/TUP Areas

RED has launched a pilot project to improve the capacity of unqualified/semi-qualified healthcare providers in CFPR/TUP areas. Three *upazilas* from old CFPR/TUP districts are selected for this study. Gangachara under Rangpur and Domar under Nilphamari districts are selected for intervention and Rajarhat under Kurigram district is selected as control area. Inventory of healthcare providers is done. A baseline survey is being conducted to record benchmark information on their knowledge, attitude and practice regarding common illnesses prevailing in the areas. Following this, workshops will be conducted to assess the need of different cadres of healthcare providers. A training programme will be designed based on findings from baseline survey and need assessment workshops. IEC materials like training manual, leaflets, flipcharts, brochures, etc. will be developed for training. The intervention is expected to begin from November 2005.

BRAC's Health Microinsurance Pilot: A Demand Side Perspective

This study is based on a census of two villages within the operating area of BRAC's health microinsurance (MHI) pilot. We found that about 59% of the households in these villages had heard about MHI. The main determinants of this knowledge were, distance from the Area Office (closer to Area Office villagers knew more), NGO membership (NGO members knew more), and household's overall economic status (better-off household knew more). We found that

actual enrolment into MHI was only 16%. About 42% of the households knew about MHI but did not enroll, 21% of the households did not know about MHI but were interested in the MHI product, while the remaining 21% of the households did not know about MHI and were not interested either. Analysis of differences between those who enrolled and those who were interested suggests that better-off households were much more likely to be currently enrolled. The market opportunity thus lies in marketing and making the MHI product more attractive to the non-surplus category households.

Mapping of Development Programmes for the Excluded in Progress

The first exercise of the joint research project between RED and the Economic Research Group (ERG) was to collect organization specific data on programmes being undertaken for various types of excluded groups, including the ultra poor. The data collection is now completed. Based on this database, an analytical directory will be produced. The next phase will be a comparative study of some major approaches used in programmes for the poorest. A conceptual piece on exclusion has also been drafted.

Participatory Wealth Change Ranking Pilot Completed

A study on using participatory methods to assess over time change in the status of the poorest households has been piloted. The method developed will be used in an extensive way to complement the repeat CFPR/TUP survey planned to begin from September 2005.

Microfinance Experiences of Graduated TUP Members

Preliminary analysis of the data of this study show that TUP households who have chosen to take credit (credit taken or CT) are significantly different from those who have chosen not to do so (no CT or NCT). For example, CT households have a significantly favourable demographic and earning structure than the NCT households; the CT households have been significantly more successful in building a diversified asset base than the NCT households. Over 80% of the surveyed households reported that their creditworthiness in the informal credit market has increased, though this was significantly higher for the CT households.

Update on Environment-related Research

Climate change and its impact

BRAC RED and KATALYST – Bangladesh (on behalf of Swisscontact) agreed to conduct a study on 'Global climate change and its impacts on business sector in Bangladesh.' The study aims to: analyze Bangladesh policy and direction in relation to climate change and the global context; estimate the contribution of selected business sectors on climate change; and assess impact of global climate change on selected business sector.

Medical waste management at Rajshahi City Corporation

'Partnership and cooperation agreement' has been signed between BRAC RED and Institute of Policy Support Unit (IPSU), Ministry of Environment and Forest, government of Bangladesh on 20

June 2005. This agreement was signed to pilot an action research on 'Medical waste management at Rajshahi City Corporation: GO-NGO/public-private partnership development – a collaborative effort on medical waste management in Bangladesh.' This pilot research aims to: introduce an appropriate waste management system in hospitals, clinics and diagnostic centers at Rajshahi City Corporation using a standard manual; introduce appropriate in-house medical waste management at all BRAC Health Centres; and develop a core trainer group at BRAC on medical waste management.

Needs of Ethnic Minority Students for Learning Improvement in Secondary Schools

This study sought to investigate the needs of ethnic minority students for learning improvement in secondary schools through in-depth understanding of the factors affecting their poor performance. Findings reconfirmed the poor performance of ethnic minority students. Weak foundation in Bengali language, along with continuous economic crises, teachers' inefficient teaching and irregular attendance, parental disinterest, other responsibilities outside the school, and weak educational foundation in primary school stimulated and perpetuated a sub-standard performance in general. The needs of ethnic minority students for their learning improvement include developing a good foundation in Bengali, quality teaching, need-based curriculum, sensitizing teachers on issues specific to ethnic pupils, eradicating irregularities in testing system, increased interaction between ethnic minority and Bengali pupils, and developing a comprehensive support system for them.

Ongoing Education Research

The Education Watch 2005 in progress

The sixth *Education Watch* intends to explore the internal efficiency of secondary education in Bangladesh. A total of 24,000 households and 600 different types of secondary educational institutions (including madrasas) will be surveyed. The field work is in progress.

Study on the out of school children in tea gardens and ethnic minority areas

A situation analysis of the out of school children in tea gardens and ethnic minority areas is being conducted at RED as a commissioned study. The quantitative part of the study was carried out in 6,000 households in 30 tea gardens and 30 ethnic minority areas. The data are being processed. The qualitative part is yet to be conducted.

Study on the impact of ELA programme on the lives of the adolescents

Employment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) programme was initiated by BRAC in January 2003 to provide savings and credit facilities to adolescent girls aged between 14-25 years so that they can earn some money for themselves and their family. BRAC is going to open 1,500 ELA Centres within two years to create safe social space and provide indoor and outdoor games for them in addition to credit facilities. RED has been conducting a situation analysis and process documentation of these ELA Centres. An assessment of these Centres will be subsequently carried out.

Study of BRAC Bank Completed

Completed in April 2005, this study looks at the employment generation of enterprises financed by BRAC Bank's Small and Medium Enterprise loan scheme. The results show that employment generation is highest among enterprises that have relatively longer association with the Bank and those with lower initial capital-labour ratio. Although most borrowers are engaged in trade, enterprises in the manufacturing sector generate more employment with the same amount of loan.

CFPR/TUP Mid-term Survey on Health and Health-seeking Behaviour Completed

A mid-term survey of the CFPR/TUP programme (at the end of 1st cycle of 18 months intervention) on health and related issues was done during July-September 2004. The survey involved re-interviewing the same baseline survey households for studying the effects of intervention over time. Findings

revealed substantial improvement in self-rated food-security status and perceived self-health among programme participants which was matched by improved household capacity for health-expenditure and food consumption. Improvement was observed in children's nutritional status and use of contraceptives. Health-services use for illnesses increased while gender inequity in health-seeking from qualified providers persisted. Emergence of the 'para-professionals' as one of the major provider of healthcare to the poor was noted. The report is being published as a CFPR/TUP working paper.

Conferences/Seminars/Meetings Attended

Nasima Akter, Research Fellow presented a paper titled 'Hospital waste management in developed cities and our present situation' in a seminar on hospital waste management in the observance of World Environment Day 2005 (5-7 June 2005) in Dhaka on 06 June 2005.

Abdullahel Hadi, Research Coordinator attended the 5th Annual General and Scientific Meeting of the INDEPTH Network in Durban, South Africa during 23-27 May 2005.

Imran Matin, Director Research and Syed Masud Ahmed, Research Coordinator attended a conference on 'Reclaiming development? NGOs and the challenge of alternatives' organized by the Institute of Development and Policy Management, University of Manchester, UK from June 27-29. Dr Matin presented the experiences of BRAC in developing programmes for the poorest in a parallel session on Chronic Poverty and was a member of the panel of the concluding session of the conference.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal article

Hadi A. Women's productive role and marital violence in Bangladesh. *J Family Violence* 2005; 20(3):181-9.

Ahmed SM. Intimate partner violence against women: experiences from a women-focused development programme in Matlab, Bangladesh. *J Health Popul Nutr* 2005;23(1):95-101.

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