

Study on 'Birthing Centres' of MNCH Programme Done

The study entitled "Preliminary exploration of birthing hut facilities of MANOSHI programme" was done in January 2007. The study included four initial settings of birthing centres in Shabujbagh, Tongi, Mohakhali and Shaympur. The study aimed to explore the facilities available and services offered for delivery and acceptability by the local people, and service providers' knowledge and perceptions of these birthing centres. The findings reveal that doctor's service at the birthing centre was highly needed. One-stop services are required during ANC, delivery and PNC. Service providers were not always satisfied with their remuneration. All the providers were not aware about all the services of the centres, specially the services at referral points. Sometimes the selected area for birthing centre was saturated with other health facilities. Financial linkages to referral facilities were not established. Community was not adequately aware of the birthing centre facilities or services when registered with it.

Study on BRAC Shasthya Shebikas Initiated

This study aims to explore the determinants of income of the *Shasthya shebikas* (SS) working in Nilphamari district and examine the changes in their income, if any, due to the recruitment of new SSs under the MNCH programme. Data will be collected from 780 randomly selected SSs working in Nilphamari district. The field survey started in March and is near completion. The final report is expected in July 2007.

Estimation of Supply Side Costs for the 'MANOSHI' Project

This study aims to estimate the supply side costs faced by BRAC for delivering health care and other services under the 'MANOSHI' project to urban poor living in slums. It also aims to estimate the expenditure per patient for BRAC and investigate factors that affect the cost of service delivery. Designing of costing tools is currently in progress.

Education Watch 2007 is in Progress

The fieldwork for the *Education Watch 2007* has started in mid March. Three issues are being investigated – curriculum of secondary education, learning achievement of the students of grade X, and work opportunities of the secondary graduates. Comparison between general and madrasa streams will be done on all the three issues. The sample includes 150 schools/madrasas, 3,000 students of grade X, and 3,000 graduates. The fieldwork would be completed by the first week of May and the report is expected in October 2007.

Tracer Study on BRAC NFPE Graduates Begins

This study aims to trace the graduates of BRAC's Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) system and look at their current activities. Three major cohorts will be selected – graduates of 1995, 1999 and 2003. Particular emphasis will be placed on capturing their self-employment activities and participation in unpaid work in family enterprises, especially for the younger cohorts who are less likely to be involved in the formal job market.

The pre-test will be conducted soon in Manikganj, while the actual study will cover the graduates of 32 schools of Sherpur and Faridpur districts.

Baseline for Evaluation of 2nd Phase of CFPR Begins

The baseline of the 2nd phase of CFPR has started. The evaluation of STUP-I component of the programme will be a randomized one. Twenty branch offices have been selected randomly each for control and treatment group. The five-year long evaluation is being conducted in partnership with the London School of Economics, UK. Baseline survey starts from mid-April with an aim of a panel data. The survey design intends to capture not only the direct programme impact but also the spillover effects. Evaluation design is progressing for the other three components of CFPR which are STUP II, OTUP I and OTUP II.

North West Microfinance Repeat Survey Done

A baseline survey on 1,100 beneficiaries from 8 BRAC Area Offices in the northwestern region of Bangladesh was done in 2003. A repeat survey was conducted for impact evaluation of the programme in March 2007. Panel data analysis is going on. A draft report is expected at the end of April 2007.

Study on BRAC Bank's Small Business Clients Initiated

RED in collaboration with ShoreCap Exchange will conduct a survey and case studies on BRAC Bank's small business clients to understand their poverty outreach. The sample will include firms

engaged in manufacturing, trading, agriculture, and service sectors. The case studies aims to obtain in-depth knowledge of the changes in their employment patterns over time, skill and gender profile of employees, and wages/salary received by employees of these small business borrowers to infer their poverty outreach over time. The survey will explore poverty status of their employees. Pre-testing has been done. Survey instrument is being prepared. The survey and the case studies will be done in August 2007.

World Development Report 2007 Disseminated

RED has arranged two workshops in Chittagong and Rajshahi to disseminate the World Development Report 2007. The theme of this report is Development and the Next Generation. Dr Subrata S Dhar of the World Bank Dhaka Office presented the World Bank report while Dr. Syed Masud Ahmed of RED presented some findings from RED's recent studies on adolescents. Over 140 people from various organizations participated in the Chittagong workshop and nearly 200 in Rajshahi workshop.

Research on Child Labour Begins

RED has initiated a qualitative research on child labour to explore what changes have occurred in child employment and in the perceptions of the employers regarding child employment due to a variety of external pressures. The study is in progress and the final report is expected by the end of the year.

RED Researchers Visit Abroad

Exchange visit in India

Syed Masud Ahmed, Hashima-e-Nasreen, and Nuzhat Chowdhury of RED visited (7-16 March 2007) three organizations in India to learn from their successful interventions on safe motherhood, child health, and women's and adolescents' reproductive health. The organizations visited were: a) Health Institute for Mother and Child in New Delhi; b) Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health in

Maharashtra, and c) Seva Mandir in Rajasthan.

Speaking tour in Canada

As part of the BRAC-AKFC learning partnership, a Speaking Tour was organized by Aga Khan Foundation Canada during 1-8 February 2007. The following three presentations were made at four Canadian Universities – Carleton University (Ottawa), University of British Columbia (Vancouver), University of Toronto (Toronto) and McGill University (Montreal):

- 'Concepts, experiences and reflections' by Imran Matin
- 'Knowledge and evidence from research and evaluation' by Mehnaz Rabbani
- 'Crisis and social inclusion: CFPR effects' by Vivek Prakash

The presentations were open to students, faculty, development practitioners and the public. Besides, the speakers also gave seminars to AKFC and CIDA.

Workshop in Egypt

Mahjabeen Rahman attended a workshop on methodologies for researching empowerment in Cairo, Egypt from 28 January to 4 February 2007 as a member of the Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Group of the Development Studies Programme of BRAC University. This workshop was hosted by the Social Research Center at the American University Cairo.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal articles

Ahmed SM, Petzold M, Kabir ZN, Tomson G. Targeted intervention for the ultra poor in rural Bangladesh: does it make any difference in their health-seeking behaviour? *Soc Sci Med* 2006;63:2899-911.

Ali TO, Rabbani M, Sulaiman M. Piloting a methodology to investigate poverty dynamics. *Participatory Learning and Action* 2006;55:101-6.

Haseen F. Change in food and energy consumption among the ultra poor: is the poverty reduction programme making a difference? *Asia Pac J Clin Nutr* 2007;16(Suppl 1):58-64

Kabir MM and Nath SR. Needs of ethnic minority students for learning improvement in secondary schools. *Bangladesh Edu J* 2006;5(2):35-48.

Nath SR. An exploration of the students' assessment at the beginning of secondary education. *Bangladesh Edu J* 2006;5(2):9-25.

Books

Ahmed M, Nath SR, Hossain A, Kalam MA. The state of secondary education: progress and challenges. Dhaka: Campaign for Popular Education, 2006.

Nasreen H, Imam N, Akter R, Ahmed SM. Safe motherhood promotion project in Narsingdi district: baseline survey 2006. Dhaka: BRAC, 2006. xiv, 98p.

Book chapters

Ahmed SM. Morbidity, health-seeking behaviour and life-style characteristics of the adolescents. *In: Adolescents and Youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC Research and Evaluation Division, 2006:97-112.

Akter N. Role of NGO & private sectors in bird flue prevention and management: BRAC's experience. *In: Rashid H (Editor). Bird flue songkramon: jhunky o protikar.* Dhaka: Bandhon Publications. 2006:59-65.

Gani MS and Ahmed SM. Growing up and reproducing: knowledge and practices of young people in Bangladesh. *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:73-96.

Geirbo HC and Imam N. Dowry and the transition to marriage. *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:113-27.

Nath SR. Education status of the youths in Bangladesh. *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:1-19.

Nath SR. Youths access to mass media in Bangladesh. *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:147-62.

Rabbani M. A day in the life of a Bangladeshi adolescent: using time use data to identify differences in adolescent lifestyles. *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:21-46.

Rahman M and Sulaiman M. Transition to the labour market: what opportunities does it hold for adolescents in Bangladesh? *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:47-72.

Selim N. Early marriage in Bangladesh: an examination of the social institutions and processes. *In: Adolescents and youths in Bangladesh: some selected issues.* Dhaka: BRAC, 2006:129-45.

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