



# RED Update

The quarterly newsletter of the  
Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC

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## RED Communicates Research Findings

### Research conference at Srimangal

The Research and Evaluation Division (RED) organized a daylong conference at the Training and Resource Centre of BRAC at Srimangal on 10 July 2003 to disseminate the findings of some recent BRAC research among the field managers/coordinators and trainers of BRAC. The conference also aimed at strengthening the interaction between the programme implementers and researchers, and to get their feedback.

The findings of some selected studies on BRAC's ultra poor programme, BRAC federation, education programme, prevention of neonatal death, effect of micronutrients on adolescent girls, arsenic-free alternative safe water options, impact of GQAL programme, and post-election violence were presented. Seventy field managers/coordinators and trainers attended the conference. Mr M Mokhlesur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar attended the conference as special guest. He acclaimed BRAC's pro-poor activities throughout the country. He opined that the public sector might replicate BRAC's learning. Mr Abdul-Muyeed Chowdhury, Executive Director, BRAC inaugurated the conference.

### Presentation of health research findings at Savar

RED researchers presented the findings of five recent health studies to the field managers of BRAC Health Programme (BHP) on 19 July 2003 at Savar TARC. Based on the programme needs, the topics selected for presentation include morbidity, tuberculosis, reproductive health, and health-seeking behaviour. Around 80 regional sector specialists

from BHP field stations attended the session. Director, programme coordinators, programme managers, and other sector specialists from the BHP head office also attended.

### Research dialogue at Rangpur, Nilphamari and Kurigram

RED initiated a series of research dialogue with the field staff of BRAC's CFPR-TUP programme on 28-29 July 2003 at Rangpur, Nilphamari and Kurigram. The objective of this initiative was to present the findings of some recent research to the programme implementers and to initiate a dialogue with them to learn from their experiences. In every session there were four presentations on various aspects of CFPR-TUP research such as, targeting the ultra poor, social and economic issues, health and nutrition, and process documentation. Around 20 regional and area office staff participated each of the sessions in three districts.

## Report on Education Watch 2002 Launched

The report on *Education Watch 2002* titled "Literacy in Bangladesh: need for a new vision" was launched on 23 August 2003 in Dhaka. Mr Samir R Nath of RED presented the findings and Dr Manzoor Ahmed, Convenor, Education Watch and Director, BRAC University Institute of Education Project presented the policy implications. Prof. Jahan Ara Begum, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Government of Bangladesh attended as chief guest while Mr Fazle Hasan Abed, Founder Chairperson of BRAC and Chairperson, CAMPE presided over the function. Mr Cornelius Hacking, Chairperson, Education Local Consultative Sub Group, Bangladesh and Ms Rasheda K Choudhury, Director, CAMPE also spoke at the occasion.

## New Acting Director Takes Over RED Leadership

Dr Imran Matin takes over the charges of RED as Acting Director from 10 August 2003. He replaces the former Director Professor AM Muazzam Husain who joined BRAC University as the Chairperson of the Department of Economics and Social Sciences. Dr Matin has been working in RED as a Research Coordinator of CFPR-TUP programme before taking over the new assignment. He studied development economics at the University of Sussex, UK and got his PhD from there.

## RED Launched New Research Projects

### Micronutrient sprinkles: a new collaboration initiated

BRAC has initiated a new collaboration with the Hospital for Sick Children, Canada on micronutrient sprinkles. This collaboration is aimed at developing a sustainable programme to control iron and other micronutrient deficiencies among infants and young children in Bangladesh. RED has initiated an efficacy trial of sprinkles in Kaliganj *upazila* of Dhaka district.

### Assessment of the Public-Private Partnership for health programme is underway

Given the considerable deterioration of governance and the failure of the public sector to meet the health care needs for poor and women, BRAC initiated a pilot project named *Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for Health Services of the Poor* in two unions in Brahmanpara *upazila* (sub-district) of Comilla district.

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With the financial assistance of NICARE/DFID, the PPP initiative is designed to deliver the essential health services through community-managed health schemes. The first phase of the project will be completed in October this year. RED has been conducting an assessment of the PPP initiative. The lessons learned from the project are expected to help BRAC and others to modify the project components in the next phase if necessary.

### **Baseline of a new BRAC programme has begun**

*BRAC Initiatives to Improve Neonatal Health in Bangladesh* has begun with three different service delivery strategies within the existing framework of the nutrition facilitation project. RED is expected to conduct a series of action research to assist this new initiative. These studies are expected to provide an opportunity to examine the best practices and successful experiences in assessing the effectiveness of the programme components, and reducing low birth weight and neonatal mortality. The lessons of the action research will update the policymakers to identify the gaps and take appropriate measures to modify the programme. The baseline survey has begun in September this year.

### **Research Findings Shared Assessment of Male Attitude Towards Violence Against Women**

Mohammad Rafi of RED shared the findings and the recommendations of a UNFPA-funded study titled "An assessment of male attitude towards violence against women" on 13 August 2003 in a workshop organized by UNFPA in Dhaka. UN and government officials, development practitioners, social workers, researchers and donors' representatives attended the workshop.

### **Primary Healthcare in Later Life Findings of the Baseline Survey Shared at Chandpur**

The findings of a baseline survey on the "Primary healthcare in later life: improving services in Bangladesh and Vietnam (PHILL)" were presented in a seminar held at Chandpur on 07 Septem-

ber 2003. This action research project aims to assess the effectiveness of low-cost, preventive and health promotion interventions in improving PHC for the elderly (60+ years) using the existing infrastructure and involving the family and the community. Dr Syed Masud Ahmed, Dr Shahaduzzaman, and Mr Masud Rana of RED presented the findings. The Deputy Commissioner of Chandpur, Mr Abdur Rab Hawlader attended the seminar as chief guest while the Civil Surgeon of Chandpur, Dr Syed Monowar Ali attended as special guest. Two elderly people of the project area Mr Abul Hussain and Mrs Tara Banu also spoke at the occasion among others. The speakers underscored the importance of care, welfare and respect for the elderly people in our society. The government officers assured their whole-hearted cooperation in this endeavour of BRAC.

### **Management of Medical Waste Needs to be Improved**

Mayor of Dhaka Mr Sadeq Hossain Khoka, MP called upon all to help make Dhaka a clean city by managing its hazardous medical waste and to minimize the health risks of the city dwellers. He was addressing a seminar on "Appropriate management options of medical waste for developing countries" organized by RED on 08 July 2003 in Dhaka. He assured of introducing special measures for handling harmful medical waste.

Dr Nasima Akter of RED presented the findings of her recently completed PhD dissertation in the seminar. Concerned government and UN officials, activists, researchers, and journalists also spoke at the occasion. Mr Abdul-Muyeed Chowdhury, Executive Director of BRAC presided over the seminar.

### **Recent Publications**

(Arranged alphabetically)

#### **Journal articles, books and book chapters**

Ahmed HS. Does peer review process exist in developing-country journals?: the Bangladesh experience. *J Scholarly Publ* 2003;34(4).

Ahmed M, Nath SR, Ahmed KS. Bangladeshe shakkharata: proyojon natun bhabonar [In Bangla]. Dhaka: Campaign for Popular Education, 2003. 134p.

Ahmed M, Nath SR, Ahmed KS. Bangladeshe shakkharata: proyojon natun bhabonar. Mul protibedaner sharshangkhep [In Bangla]. Dhaka: Campaign for Popular Education, 2003. 18p.

Ahmed M, Nath SR, Ahmed KS. Literacy in Bangladesh: need for a new vision. Dhaka: Campaign for Popular Education, 2003. 142p.

Ahmed M, Nath SR, Ahmed KS. Literacy in Bangladesh: need for a new vision. Overview of the main report. Dhaka: Campaign for Popular Education, 2003. 18p.

Ahmed SM, Adams A, Chowdhury M, Bhuiya A. Changing health-seeking behaviour in Matlab, Bangladesh: do development interventions matter? *Health Policy Plann* 2003;18(3):306-15.

Akter N, Tränkler J. An analysis of possible scenarios of medical waste management in Bangladesh. *Management Env Quality: Int J* 2003;14(2):242-55.

Hossain Z, Quaiyum M, Jakariya M. Using IEC materials for mass communication: experiences of an arsenic mitigation project in Bangladesh. *Bangladesh J Commun Publ* 2003;2(1):11-8.

Jakariya M, Hossain MZ. Arsenic poisoning of groundwater and its consequences on human health: experiences from an upazila. *Bangladesh J Environ Sci* 2003;1:103-5.

Jakariya M, Chowdhury AMR, Hossain Z, Rahman M, Sarker Q, Khan RI, Rahman M. Sustainable community-based safe water options to mitigate the Bangladesh arsenic catastrophe – an experience from two upazilas. *Current Sci* 2003;85(2):141-6.

#### **Newspaper and newsletter articles**

Abed FH. Overcoming a national failure: a collective effort needed. *The Daily Star* 25 Aug 2003.

Abed FH. Jatiya bayrthata: proyojon shammilita karmouddyog [In Bangla]. *Prothom Alo* 04 Sep 2003.

Ahmed M. Literacy for a learning society. *The Daily Star* 25 Aug 2003.

Nath SR. Bangladeshe shakkharata paristhiti [In Bangla]. *Prothom Alo* 24 Aug 2003.

Nath SR. Literacy situation in Bangladesh. *The Daily Star* 25 Aug 2003.

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