



# RED Update

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Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC

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## **Baseline Survey Completed Safe Motherhood Promotion Project**

A baseline survey of the safe motherhood promotion project in Narsingdi district has been completed. Data were collected from 545 currently pregnant women and 554 mothers of under-one children from three randomly selected *upazilas* of Narsingdi district using both quantitative and qualitative methods. To reduce maternal mortality and improve the health and well-being of mothers and neonates, the policy makers need to recognize that the objectives of safe motherhood initiative cannot be realized by existing state of services. Provision of EOC services, up-grading existing health facilities, building functional network, deployment and retention of adequate number of trained health professionals, reducing know-do gap among the community, and strengthening collaboration between government, NGO and private sector health facilities will be essential to accomplish these. The study was done with financial support from JICA.

## **CFPR/TUP Update**

### **Repeat survey on food consumption begins**

A repeat survey on food consumption of the ultra poor households started in three northern districts. At baseline in 2002, food and calorie intake were remarkably less in selected ultra poor households which increased dramatically in 2004. Due to removal of BRAC subsidies, close monitoring and support; maintenance of the proper diet might become a financial challenge for many poor households. The study attempted to identify food, energy and nutrient consumption, and diet related changes that might be sustainable. The study is in progress.

## **Economic burden of illness measured**

The study titled 'Morbidity and poverty: measuring economic burden of illness requiring in-patient services' is completed and the report is being reviewed.

The major findings suggest:

- SUP households incurred lower healthcare related (out-of-pocket) expenses than NSUP households, which indicate a positive impact of programme intervention.
- SUP households were found to be better-off than NSUP households in terms of asset holding, as both the previous and after-sale asset stock was higher for the former group. A larger percentage of NSUP households faced high asset depletion due to health expenses (more than 40%).
- A higher percentage of SUP households incurred catastrophic (covering more than 10% of annual household income) healthcare expenses due to severe illness. This implies that BRAC should continue providing support to discourage asset depletion and protect the ultra poor from further impoverishment due to illness costs.

## **International conference on extreme poverty**

BRAC in partnership with Chronic Poverty Research Centre and the Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester is convening an international conference titled 'What works for the poorest? Knowledge, policies and practices' during 2-5 December 2006. Over 100 researchers, academics and practitioners working on extreme poverty from all over the world are expected to attend. The conference is

funded by CIDA as a part of the BRAC-AKFC Learning Partnership Project for CFPR/TUP.

## **New book**

A book on CFPR/TUP is being prepared which will bring together the knowledge on extreme poverty accumulated through BRAC research and programme learning. This is expected to be launched in the December conference on extreme poverty.

## **Baseline Survey Initiated BRAC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programme**

RED has initiated a baseline survey for 'BRAC Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Programme' in 50 *upazilas* in the first phase. The study will also identify the proportion of hardcore poor at those *upazilas*. The findings will be used to design WASH programme implementation, conduct impact assessment, and identify research agenda. A feasibility study for piped water installation will also be done in this phase.

## **Ethnography of Bus and Truck Drivers**

Although there are many other important factors of providing safety on road, the drivers are presumably the main actors of keeping road safe for people. This study observes the socioeconomic and health status, and lifestyle of bus and truck drivers including their professional career. It attempts to elucidate the contributing factors to make the road safer through analyzing the different aspects of drivers. Data were collected from 12 districts of six divisions. In-depth interview, survey, observation, and focus group discussions were used to gather data which are being analyzed.

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## Evaluation of LeAD Programme Begins

RED has recently initiated an evaluation of newly started leadership development programme of BRAC. The selection process of the programme participants, course delivery in the classroom, and the effectiveness of this programme will be evaluated. A systematic classroom observation and interviewing the participants and their facilitators during the training was undertaken. A draft report is expected in early next year.

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## Study on Gonokendra Pathagar Initiated

RED has recently initiated a study on *Gonokendra Pathagar* of BRAC Education Programme. This study aims to evaluate the nature of use of *pathagar* resources/facilities and to assess the impact of *pathagar* resources on its users and non-users. The process of community formation based on *pathagar* will also be assessed. Data will be collected from 10 *pathagars* from 10 districts. A draft report is expected in early next year.

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## Study on the Performance of Female Union Parishad Members Begins

This exploratory study intends to investigate the impact of BRAC, as an organization, on winning in the last *Union Parishad* election by the BRAC affiliated members. The study will also assess their performance against those who are not affiliated with any NGO. Data are being collected from four BRAC backed members and four non-BRAC members in Damar, Jaldhaka and Dimla of Nilphamari district.

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## Conference/Workshop Presentation

Hasan Shareef Ahmed delivered four lectures on the following topics:

- 'Authorship of scientific articles, publication ethics, and scientific misconduct' on 25 May in an Advance Course on Research Bioethics;
- 'Who should be an author' on 10 June and 'Ethics of publication' on 11 June in a Workshop on Scientific Writing; and

-- 'Writing research report' on 19 June in a Workshop on Research Methodology.

The training course and workshops were organized by the Bangladesh Medical Research Council, Government of Bangladesh in Dhaka.

Syed Masud Ahmed presented a paper titled '*Reaching the poorest of the poor with health services: the case of BRAC's CFPR/TUP programme in Bangladesh*' in the Conference on Private Sector in Health Care Delivery – Potentials and Challenges held in Jinan, China, during 26-28 September 2006.

Nuzhat Choudhury presented a paper titled '*Feeding practice in Bangladeshi children*' and

Farhana Haseen presented two papers titled '*Colostrum and milk concentration of immunoglobulins in Bangladeshi mothers*' and '*Breastfeeding and weaning practice in rural ultra poor households in Bangladesh*' in the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference on Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding held in Dhaka on 19-20 August 2006.

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## 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), doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2006.07.024. (Advance e-publication)

Chowdhury AMR, Alam MA, Ahmed J. Development knowledge and experience – from Bangladesh to Afghanistan and beyond. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 2006;84(8):677-81.

Karim F, Tripura A, Gani MS, Chowdhury AMR. Poverty status and health equity: evidence from rural Bangladesh. *Public Health* 2006;120(3):193-205.

Mannell J. Using communication for social change to build social capital for Bangladeshis who are ultrapoor. *MAZI: Communication for Social Change Report* 2005;3.

Nath SR. Internal efficiency of secondary educational institutions: results from a reconstructed cohort analysis. *Bangladesh Edu J* 2006;5(1):27-38.

Nilsson J, Rana AKMM, Kabir ZN. Social capital and quality of life in old age: results from a cross-sectional study in rural Bangladesh. *J Aging Health* 2006;18(3):419-34.

### Books and book chapters

Jakariya M, Rahman M, Chowdhury AMR, Rahman M, Yunus M, Bhuiya A, *et al.* Sustainable safe water options in Bangladesh: experiences from the arsenic project at Matlab (AsMat). In: Bundschuh, Bhattacharya, Chandrasekharam (Editors). *Natural arsenic in ground water: occurrence, remediation and management*. London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2005: 319-30.

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

Rafi M. Small ethnic groups of Bangladesh: a mapping exercise. Dhaka: Panjeree Publications Ltd., 2006. xiii, 56p (includes a database on compact disk).

### Research monograph series

Geirbo HC and Imam N. The motivations behind giving and taking dowry. Dhaka: BRAC, 2006. vi, 36p. (Research monograph series no. 28)

Nath SR. Quality of BRAC education programme: a review of existing studies. Dhaka: BRAC, 2006. vi, 50p. (Research monograph series no. 29)

Rashid M. Slum eviction and experiences of the slum dwellers: a close observation (In Bangla). Dhaka: BRAC, 2006. vii, 79p. (Research monograph series no. 30)

### CFPR/TUP working paper series

Barua P and Sulaiman M. Targeting the poorest in microfinance: poverty outreach of BDP ultra poor programme. Dhaka and Ottawa: BRAC and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, 2006. vi, 21p. (CFPR/TUP working paper series no. 13).

Rabbani M, Prakash VA, Sulaiman M. Impact assessment of CFPR/TUP: a descriptive analysis based on 2002-2005 panel data. Dhaka and Ottawa: BRAC and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, 2006. vi, 31p. (CFPR/TUP working paper series no. 12).

### Newspaper and newsletter articles

Ahmed SM. Towards a pro-poor health system in Bangladesh. *The Daily Star*, 3 Jul 2006.

Alim MA. Who is to blame for road accidents? *The Daily Star*, 25 Aug 2006.

Kabir MM. Education for small ethnic communities. *The Financial Express*, 12 Aug 2006.

Rashid M. *Param mamtai asthar pratik* (In Bangla). *Dainik Samakal*, 29 Aug 2006.

Rashid M. *Sarkari hospital o kichu prashna* (In Bangla). *Jai Jai Din*, 12 Sep 2006.

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