



RED Update

The quarterly newsletter of the
Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC

Volume 4, No. 3

September 2005

Bangladesh Adolescents Survey 2005

RED, with technical assistance from Population Council of USA, has launched a national survey on adolescents aged 10-24 years in Bangladesh. The survey aims to collect information on school attendance and dropout, entry into work, time utilization, marriage, dowry, reproductive health, adolescents' social life and risk behaviours, etc. The survey is expected to suggest strategies for better targeted programmes for adolescents. Data collection started in April 2005 and ended in September 2005. The data will be analyzed with emphasis on gender contrasts, regional differences, and poverty level of the households.

The Education Watch 2005 in Progress

The fieldwork of *Education Watch* 2005 has been completed. This year's survey covered 23,971 households and 598 secondary schools from all the districts of the country. The data are being analyzed. The draft report is expected in November 2005.

Ethnographic Study on Primary School Culture Initiated

School culture is a strong determinant of quality of education. Plan Bangladesh, Dhaka Ahsania Mission and Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC jointly initiated an ethnographic study on primary school culture in Bangladesh. This study would explore the changes taking place in the government primary schools due to intervention of the above NGOs. Six Field Researchers have already been stationed in six study

schools located in three areas viz., Khanshama in Dinajpur, Keshabpur in Jessore, and Fulbari in Kurigram. The researchers will stay there for eight months. It would take about a year to complete the study.

Deputy Executive Director Explores Collaborations

Dr AMR Chowdhury, Deputy Executive Director of BRAC and Dean, BRAC University JP Grant School of Public Health visited USA and Switzerland during 10-21 September 2005. He attended the launch of the Partnership on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health at the UNICEF Head Quarter, visited universities, donor institutions, and the World Bank, and met senior officials there. He discussed bilateral matters to explore possible collaboration in BRAC programmes and research, and with the BRAC University School of Public Health.

Director Research Assigned Enhanced Role

Dr Imran Matin, Director, Research and Evaluation Division, BRAC is appointed as the Head of the Master of Development Studies (MDS) Programme at BRAC University since 08 September 2005. This position is a complement to his present position. Congratulations to Dr. Imran Matin.

Study on Out of School Children: Preliminary Report Released

A preliminary report on the study on out of school children in the tea gardens and the ethnic minorities in Bangladesh was

released in August 2005. The study, commissioned by CAMPE, found that two in every five children in the tea gardens and one in every five among the ethnic minorities were out of school. Although gender parity exists among the primary school-age children but the secondary school-age girls are less likely to enrol in school than the boys of the same age group. The final report is expected soon.

Study on Micronutrient Sprinkles in Pregnant Women Initiated

RED, in collaboration with Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto, Canada, initiated a study to see if the micronutrient Sprinkles are at least as efficacious as the iron folic acid (IFA) tablets in maintaining haemoglobin concentrations in pregnant women. The study will be conducted at 42 community-based Antenatal Care Centers in Gazipur district. Nearly 500 pregnant women will be given either Sprinkles or IFA tablets. The study will be completed within a year.

CFPR-TUP Research Update

**Is targeting effectiveness in
CFPR/TUP scalable?**

The CFPR/TUP programme is rapidly scaling up, with the number of targeted ultra poor in a year increasing from 5,000 in 2002 to 25,000 in 2005. To ensure sustainability of the programme and planning future scale up, it is critically important to examine if the targeting process is replicable for the programme as it grows. Earlier studies on the effectiveness of targeting show that the targeting of CFPR/TUP partici-

pants had been effective at the beginning of the programme in 2002. This study, based on a 2005 survey, investigates whether the effectiveness of targeting in the scaled up setting of the programme has been sustained.

The study used relative poverty scores to find that about three-quarters of the SUP households belonged to the bottom 25% group in terms of poverty scores. This suggests that the programme has been extremely successful in targeting the poorest. A comparison of basic profiles of the ultra poor selected in 2002 and 2005 confirm this finding. Despite scaling-up, the programme has been able to maintain its focus on targeting the poorest. The study also explores the issue of poverty dynamics by asking whether chronic or transient poverty play a role in the selection process, and finds that poverty dynamics do not influence selection.

The effect of an inclusive development intervention on the self-reported health status of ultra poor women in a rural area of Bangladesh

The CFPR/TUP programme is an integrated development intervention that comprises of health and social components along with the economic support. This study looked at the impact of the health component of the programme by analyzing the changes in self-perceptions of health of women, using the TUP Baseline Survey 2002 and a follow-up survey of 2004. The study shows that the TUP programme strongly increases the probability of a better health outcome for the participants. Those in poor health in 2002 showed almost double those gains, with TUP membership increasing the probability of a good health score in 2004 by nearly 16%. These results hold consistently, controlling for marital status, literacy, age, previous health, disability, occupation, sanitary practices, knowledge of sanitation, whether the household had loans and location. The CFPR/TUP programme has a significant effect on women's self-perception of health, highlighting the importance of targeted development programmes with a holistic focus.

CFPR/TUP repeat survey 2005

RED conducted a baseline survey in 2002 of 5,626 households in the three districts where the CFPR/TUP pro-

gramme was first started. This sample included selected ultra poor, non-selected ultra poor and others from the remaining wealth ranks. To evaluate the impact of the programme in these communities, a repeat survey on the same households is being conducted. The survey is designed to collect detailed information on socioeconomic indicators of the households, which are comparable with the baseline survey data. The data will be ready for analysis in January 2006.

Mid-term Evaluation of HIV/AIDS Programme

RED recently initiated a mid-term evaluation of BRAC HIV/AIDS programme to see the programme achievements considering time and resource spent. A draft report will be available in early November 2005.

Conferences/Seminars/ Meetings Attended

Nuzhat Choudhury, Research Associate presented the ongoing activities of a BRAC-Population Council (USA) joint study on 'Community-based kangaroo mother care to prevent neonatal and infant mortality' in a seminar on 'Maternal and newborn health' held in Dhaka on 23 August 2005 on the occasion of World Health Day 2005. The seminar was organized by Bangladesh Neonatal Forum (BNF). All the members of BNF and other senior consultants and paediatricians of the country were present in the seminar.

Qazi Shafayetul Islam, Staff Researcher attended the 18th International Nutrition Congress held in Durban, South Africa during 19-23 September 2005.

Samir R Nath, Senior Research Fellow attended a workshop on Developing Learning Materials on Successful School Management held in Colombo during 23-26 August 2005. It is a follow up activity of a multi-country research on successful school management under the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP).

AKM Masud Rana, Staff Researcher and Munshi Sulaiman, Research Associate attended a course on Evaluating Social

Programmes jointly organized by Institute of Financial Management and Research (IFMR) and Poverty Action Lab held in Chennai from 8-13 August 2005. The content of the program included the importance of rigorous impact evaluation and use of randomization as the most efficient evaluation technique.

Nirjash Published

The 15th issue of *Nirjash* has recently been published. *Nirjash*, a research compendium of RED in Bangla, is primarily published for the field staff of BRAC since 1995. Summaries of selected BRAC research reports and important news and views relevant to BRAC programmes are published in lucid Bengali language. The full text report is available in RED website. Published copies are available with BRAC RED.

Recent Publications

(Arranged alphabetically)

Journal publications

Hadi A. Risk factors of violent death in rural Bangladesh, 1990-1999. *Death Stud* 2005; 29(6):559-72.

Karim F, Rafi M, Begum SA. Inequitable access to immunization and vitamin A capsule services: a case of ethnic minorities in three hill districts of Bangladesh. *Public Health* 2005;119:743-6.

CFPR/TUP working paper series

Ahmed SM and Rana AKMM. Customized development interventions for the ultra poor: preliminary change assessments of health and health-seeking behaviour (CFPR/TUP 2002 to 2004). Dhaka and Ottawa: BRAC and Aga Khan Foundation Canada, 2005. vi, 21p. (CFPR/TUP working paper series no. 7)

Newsletter and newspaper articles

Jakariya M. Arsenic in drinking water of Bangladesh and mitigation challenges: experience of BRAC. *Financial Express* 19 Jun 2005.

Pasha A. Website of the Research and Evaluation Division launched (In Bangla). *Shetu* 2005 Apr-May;21(1):1-4.

Editor: Hasan Shareef Ahmed

Published by:
Research and Evaluation Division, BRAC
75 Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh
Phone: 9881265, 8824180 (PABX)
(e-mail: research@brac.net)
Website: www.bracresearch.org
