

UMME ABIHA SAIMA

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RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

BRAC James P. Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), BRAC University

Senior Research Assistant

September 2024 - Present

Currently involved in the following:

- ERASMUS+ ACCESS4ALL – a global consortium to develop curriculum and blended practice short courses on climate change and green skills (January 2024 - October 2025)
- Currently authoring a manuscript on how minority women in the Sundarbans show resilience against layered marginalisation through grassroots activism and everyday ecofeminist activities, employing intersectional theoretical frameworks to analyse their strategies for claiming space and advancing gender justice.
- Collaborating with the team to conduct field assessments that identify community knowledge gaps on the climate-health nexus, and co-developing fact sheets which are iteratively validated with community feedback to ensure accuracy and usability.

Research Assistant

May 2023- September 2024

- Contributed to the Hempel Foundation-funded “Accelerated Model School” intervention under the BRAC Education Programme, targeting COVID-induced learning loss among out-of-school students.
- Solely managed the Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, and Rangpur study sites, overseeing all qualitative research activities.
- Conducted in-depth interviews with students and parents, and key informant interviews with government and non-government stakeholders.
- Expanded the intervention to Jamalpur and Netrokona, conducting qualitative field research and leading a 13-member survey operations team.
- Facilitated focus group discussions (FGD) to capture diverse perspectives on programme impact.

For ACCESS4ALL,

- Conducted a comprehensive literature review on the gap between provision and demand for Climate Change Education (CCE) and green skills across industry, agriculture, and services, in collaboration with project team members.
- Maintained ongoing liaison with stakeholders: conducted key informant interviews and secured their participation in multiple project events. Identified national and regional individuals and organisations for case studies, and wrote detailed case study reports for the project.
- Designed and implemented qualitative fieldwork tools. Conducted (FGDs), (IDIs), and facilitated interactive sessions with community-based organisations to investigate locally-led solutions and climate-change knowledge.
- Authored & edited website content for ACCESS4ALL, including team bios, partner profiles (IUB, ULAB), logo shortlisting and finalisation, and overall content layout.

EDUCATION

BRAC University, Bangladesh

BSS in Anthropology (Minor in Sociology)

January 2018 - October 2022,

– CGPA 3.3 (out of 4)

Thesis: [Road Safety Movement: Young adults and Collective engagement in Social Movements.](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Report

BEP- BRAC Education Programme

Baseline-Endline Evidence on the Impact of Accelerated Model- to Address Primary School Drop-out Issue in Kurigram District of Bangladesh. (To Be Published)

Manuscript in Preparation

Saima, U. A., Chowdhury, D., Jahan, I., Rashid, S. F., & Ashrafee, R. Claiming Space, Asserting Rights: Minority Women's Environmental Grassroots Activism and the Struggle for Gender Justice in the Sundarbans (working title). BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health.

Saima, U. A., Chakma, S., & Hasan, T. Barriers to Continuity: Understanding the Persistence of Primary School Dropout in Bangladesh's Fragile Education Landscape (working title). BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health.

Curious Dhaka

Research Assistant

November 2022- February 2023

- Assisted with publishing “The New Sylhet/ Notun Sylhet,” books on urban development and the evolution of Sylhet city administration.
- Led interviews with stakeholders and carried out archival research and copy editing.
- Tasks included human geography analysis, emphasising spatial analysis and the dynamics of dispossession of common spaces.

SKILLS & CONTRIBUTIONS

- Qualitative Research Methods – Ethnography, Focus Group Discussion, Participant Observation.
- Thematic Analysis & Data Interpretation – Skilled in coding, categorising, data visualisation & presentation, and interpreting qualitative data.
- Academic & Policy Research – With emphasis on research ethics, compliance, and applied social inquiry.
- Survey Design & Tool Development
- Report, Grant & Proposal Writing
- Stakeholder Mapping & Engagement
- Monitoring, Evaluation & Project Management (M&E)

Project Consultant at PEAK (January 2025 to February 2026) for their project “Kotha”, funded by Save the Children, to create a platform for women experiencing menopause in the peri-urban areas of Dhaka.

Contributed to *The Commons: An Exhibition on the Vanishing Commons and the Claim*, organised by *Littera Magazine* and the *German Cultural Institute*. The theme of the exhibition was the erosion of shared spaces, resources, and traditions under systems of ownership and control. My conceptual art installation utilised archival maps to analyse spatial and historical changes in land use and ownership, which reflects on the layered history of urban spaces and the social dynamics of displacement and accumulation.

REFERENCE

Md Tanvir Hasan
Associate Professor
Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH),
BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health

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CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Organiser, Member, Anthropology Forum, BRAC University | 2019-2022

- Organised multiple in-house academic talk sessions to facilitate peer learning and interdisciplinary dialogue.
- Revived and co-led the event series “Alaap” (Conversation), focusing on contemporary social issues; served as a panellist in two sessions.
- Developed strong time management and leadership skills by balancing forum responsibilities with academic commitments.

Children’s Film Society Bangladesh

Member, Managing Editor (Brochures, 10th & 11th Festivals) | 2016-2021

Oversaw the editorial process for the 10th and 11th official festival brochures, including content planning, copyediting, and final review. Coordinated with filmmakers, designers, and the communications team to ensure timely and high-quality publication, including volunteer coordination, session organisation, and delegate support

Shehzad M Arifeen
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