



Bengali New Year (Pohela Boishakh) Celebration at BRAC JPGSPH

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The Centre for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN) Officially Launched at CIRDAP, Dhaka

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH), BRAC University organized the launching ceremony of the 'Centre for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN)' at the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) on April 3, 2019. The Centre was established in December 2017 at BRAC JPGSPH in collaboration with Non-communicable Disease Control Programme (NCDC), Director General of Health Service (DGHS); National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD); BRAC JPGSPH; Bangladesh Institute of Research and Rehabilitation for Diabetes, Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (BIRDEM); BRAC; and Bangladesh University of Health Science (BUHS). CNCDN is funded by National Institute of Health Research, UK and supported by Global Health Research Unit (GHRU) and Imperial College London, UK.

Professor Dr AHM Enayet Hussain, Additional Director General of Health Services (Planning and Development), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW); **Dr Nur Mohammad**, Line Director, Non-communicable Disease Control Programme, Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) **Professor Vincent Chang**, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University; **Professor Zafar Ahmed Latif**, Director General, BIRDEM and **Professor Faridul Alam**, Vice Chancellor, BUHS and **Professor Dr John C Chambers**, Professor of Cardiovascular Epidemiology, Faculty of Medicine, School of Public Health, Imperial College London were the Special Guests of the event. The event was also attended by **Professor Malabika Sarker**, Associate Dean and Director, Center of Excellence for Science of Implementation & Scale Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH. Nominated focal persons from the collaborating partner organizations also participated at the launching ceremony.

Professor Chang delivered the welcome speech at the event. Professor Dr John C Chambers, and **Dr Malay Kanti Mridha**, Associate Professor and Director, CNCDN gave their presentations. The representatives from the founding partner organization officially launched the Centre by signing the memorandum of understanding. The event concluded with the closing remarks from the Chief Guest, Professor Enayet Hussain.

Dissemination Seminar held in Cox's Bazar on Health Care for Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMNs) – Access, Behaviour and the Challenges

BRAC JPGSPH hosted a dissemination event on 15 April, 2019 at the Sayeman Hotel in Cox's Bazar. Findings from two research studies on the various health aspects of the Rohingya community were presented at the event.

The BRAC study on “Health Care and Health-seeking Behavior among Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar” was conducted in 10 selected camps covering 364 households, and gathered information on the socio-economic status, illness patterns and health seeking behavior of 337 individuals. The study found that 93% of the sampled household members were suffering from acute illnesses, where, 46% of household members were suffering from both chronic and acute illnesses. The facilities managed by national and international non-government organizations (NGOs) are the main providers. However, a demand for private health services from pharmacies/drug stores in the camps, and from non-traditional caregivers within displaced Rohingya community was noted. **Irin Akhter**, Sr Field Coordinator; and **Nazrana Khaled**, Research Associate at BRAC JPGSPH presented the findings from the study.

Bachera Aktar, Sr Coordinator, BRAC JPGSPH presented the findings from the second study titled “Situation Analysis for Delivering Integrated Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Services for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, funded by WHO. **Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean**, BRAC JPGSPH is the PI of the project. The research was undertaken to assess SRH needs, services seeking behavior, and demand and supply side barriers in accessing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services by adolescent girls and women in 10 randomly selected Rohingya refugee camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. A household survey with 403 Rohingya women and adolescent girls, qualitative assessments with Rohingya community people, formal and informal healthcare providers and key stakeholders were done in the study.





In addition, a facility assessment was conducted to assess readiness of health facilities for delivering comprehensive SRHR services to the Rohingya refugees. The survey found that about 82% of women received at least one Antenatal Care (ANC) service and 50% received postnatal services where the number of visits are increasing over time. Most of the deliveries were conducted at home. Traditional birth attendants (TBA) mostly influenced them for home delivery. The study indicated that efforts need to be made to improve awareness about availability and utilization of SRH services.

Dr Md Akramul Islam, Director, Communicable Diseases and WASH Programme, BRAC; **Dr Sandra Harlass**, Senior Public Health Officer, UNHCR; **Dr Yulia Widiati**, Health Specialist, UNICEF; **Dr Khalid El-Tahir**, Incident Manager and Lead, WHO, and **Dr Zahidul Quayyum**, Professor and Co-Director of the Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH), BRAC JPGSPH participated in a panel discussion after the presentations. The panelists emphasized on the need to focus on infectious diseases and mental health. They recommended a sustainable plan from the government and donors to implement long term health services with respect to the need of the population. The session was moderated by **Dr Kaosar Afsana**, Professor, BRAC JPGSPH.



The Chief Guest for the event was **Mr Mohammed Abul Kalam**, Commissioner of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission (RRRC); with Special Guest **Dr Mohammad Abdul Matin**, Civil Surgeon at the DGHS, Ministry of Health and Welfare (MoHFW). They provided a review of the Rohingya refugee situation, highlighting key areas of concern, expressing the need for sustainable financial support to set demand-based services in the camps.

Transformative Competency-based Public Health Education for the Developing World: The BRAC JPG School of Public Health Experience in 10th Annual CUGH Conference

At the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), 10th Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, USA, from March 7-10, 2019, BRAC JPG School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH), were invited to present their unique Competency-based Curriculum design and implementation that responds to developing world health contexts. The Conference was attended by over 173 Universities from North America and around the world.

BRAC JPGSPH conducted a concurrent session on 'Transformative Competency-based Health Education for the Developing World,' moderated by Omar Khan, President and CEO of the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA) & CUGH Education Committee Member; and chaired by Dr Mushtaque Chowdhury, Vice Chair, BRAC, Bangladesh & Advisor, to the Midwifery program at BRAC JPGSPH.

Professor Sabina Faiz Rashid, Dean, and Mikhail Islam, Strategy & Design Consultant leading on the Competency-based MPH Curriculum design, presented the MPH Programme's contextualized developing world Public Health Learning, with its focus on experiential community-immersion. Students simulate, practice and apply real-world public health skills within public health environments. This allows for students to develop employable professional Public Health, technical, management and soft skills.

Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean, and Director Research & Director, Center of Excellence for Science of Implementation & Scale Up (CoE-SISU) shared on designing and implementation experience on the Implementation Science Research module, which connects students with real-world health practitioners, to examine the critical need of community-based, program-centric research for effective health service delivery. The final presentation was made by Dr Selina Amin, Head, Midwifery Education Programme at BRAC JPGSPH, who shared the lessons learned from implementing a community centric, competency-based Midwifery Education Programme, in six rural areas of Bangladesh, with the aim to develop a new cadre of midwives to improve maternal health for the most disadvantaged women.





BRAC JPGSPH Colleagues attended the CREA Reconference in Kathmandu

CREA, an international feminist institution in sexual reproductive health rights activism and training, organized its second global conference – “Reconference - Rethink, Reimagine, Reboot” from April 10-12, 2019 in Kathmandu, Nepal, bringing together over 500 activists, artists, and allies to critically engage on the state of feminism in the world.

Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean, BRAC JPGSPH, and Director of the Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR), BRAC JPGSPH joined CREA Reconference, she is on the Advisory Board of CREA. She was accompanied by **Shahana Siddiqui**, Adjunct Faculty at BRAC JPGSPH; and **Barrister Sara Hossain**, Honorary Director of the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust (BLAST), and Adjunct Faculty at BRAC JPGSPH.

The conference was designed a little differently than usual practitioners and academic gatherings, whereby accommodating extensively to various young artists to be featured throughout the conference days. Alongside, there were brilliant performances such as Sex Workers Opera, live reading and interview of Arundhati Roy by Shohini Ghosh.

Shahana Siddiqui, Adjunct Faculty, BRAC JPGSPH and Barrister Sara Hossain, Honorary Director of the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust (BLAST), and Adjunct Faculty at BRAC JPGSPH were part of one of the main plenaries on the second day of the conference, focusing on the nuances around consent. At the plenary titled “Many Lives of Consent”, they presented on the various forms, contestations, challenges, and differences in experiences around consent in our respective programmatic, research, and advocacy work, along with other speakers from Australia, India, Sri Lanka.



International Conference on Natural Sciences and Technology 2019 in Chittagong

Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean, BRAC JPGSPH, attended the two-day long 6th International Conference on Natural Science and Technology (ICNST'19) at Asian University for Women (AUW), Chittagong, Bangladesh. She joined the two-day conference both as a Keynote Speaker for the Public Health session on 30 March, 2019 and as a panelist speaker for Women in Science session on 29 March, 2019.

Roundtable on Decolonizing and Repositioning Global Health in Kuala Lumpur

Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean, BRAC JPGSPH, spoke in a roundtable discussion titled “Global Health and Global Health Think Tanks: Repositioning Low-and Middle-Income Countries” on 12 April, 2019 at the United Nations University's International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. UNU-IIGH is the designated UN think tank on global health and the Institute serves as a policy translation hub for UN member states, agencies, and programmes.

This roundtable was a gathering of global health and policy experts to explore the role that global health think tanks can play in low- and middle-income settings. The aim of the workshop was to interrogate what it means to be a global health think tank in a LMIC setting and to identify practical approaches to decolonize global health.



Photo Courtesy: UNU-IIGH twitter page



The Belt and Road Initiative: New Types of Globalization and Global Governance in Beijing

Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean, BRAC JPGSPH, presented in the 28th Wanshou Forum “The Belt and Road Initiative: New Types of Globalization and Global Governance” on 27 April, 2019 in Beijing, China. First launched in 2016 by International Department of the CPC Central Committee, the Wanshou Forum functions as a global platform for dialogue, exchange and mutual learning among government officials and think tanks in China.

The 28th Wanshou Forum was attended by 37 Foreign Heads of State and Government, and representatives from more than 150 Countries and 90 International Organizations.

Workshop on “Partnership to Ensure the Sustainability of a Public Health Palliative Care Project in Bangladesh through Community Theatre” in Brighton

A two-day long workshop with UK and Bangladeshi partners took place on 28-29 March, 2019 in Brighton, United Kingdom. **Dr Shahaduz Zaman**, University of Sussex, Global Health and Infection Department, UK was the workshop coordinator. **Professor Malabika Sarker**, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH, and Co-PI of the project attended the workshop. She was accompanied by Sayema Akter, Sr Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH. BRAC JPGSPH team shared their experience on the current project in this workshop. ‘Theory of Change’ discourse to assess the transferability of the results of the urban slum project to the peri-urban and rural areas was discussed at the workshop. The aims and objectives of the follow-on project were also defined.

The partners of the project from Bangladesh include BRAC, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and University of Liberal Arts and the partners from UK include University of Sussex, University of Glasgow and University of York. This project was funded jointly by Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Medical Research Council (MRC), UK.

BRAC JPGSPH received a grant from Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), UK for a follow-on project to ensure the sustainability of a public health palliative care project in peri-urban and rural setting of Bangladesh through community theatre.

The same study was done in an urban poor setting back in 2018. This was a collaborative partnership project which provided a unique opportunity to the researchers and practitioners of the arts and humanities, medicine and development in both the UK and Bangladesh.





Annual Consortium Meeting for STRIPE Project in Baltimore

The John Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University (BRAC JPGSPH) entered a five-year (2018-2023) partnership on a research project named “Synthesis and Translation of Research and Innovations from Polio Eradication (STRIPE)”, funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).

As a part of this collaboration, an all-partners meeting was hosted by John Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health on 17-19 April, 2019 in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. The objectives of the meeting were to present key findings from each stream of work from year 1, to formulate teaching teams in order to work together over the second year and to outline a plan for validating curricula and rolling out courses over the final 3 years of the project, and to form writing groups and prepare plans for completing scientific products.

Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH; and **Dr Humayra Binte Anwar**, Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH participated in the meeting. The team presented a summary of key findings across data streams including reflections on polio program organization, implementation challenges, implementation strategies and unintended consequences, key lessons learned in Bangladesh. They also contributed in the year 2 planning for the project.





Professor Kaosar Afsana Joins BRAC JPGSPH

Kaosar Afsana is a Professor at James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), BRAC University, Bangladesh. She had served BRAC in Bangladesh for over 26 years and completed her tenure as the Director, BRAC Health, Nutrition and Population Programme. Dr Afsana has started to work for BRAC JPGSPH since its inception in 2004 and became Professor in 2011. She is an MD with an MPH from Harvard University, USA and PhD from Edith Cowan University, Australia.

She has been honored with many prestigious awards for her academic achievements and contribution to maternal and child health and women's empowerment. Dr Afsana has authored books and widely published papers in journals and books. She represents BRAC JPGSPH and BRAC at national and global levels playing a critical role in policy-making and planning, and providing technical guidance, particularly, in sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health and nutrition and health system strengthening.



Papers presented at an International Conference and a Seminar in Dhaka

BAPA-BEN International Conference

Nepal C. Dey, Adjunct Professor, BRAC JPGSPH presented a paper titled “Impact of Flash Flood on Livelihood and Health in haor area of Bangladesh: Some policy recommendation” at BAPA-BEN International Conference on Delta Plan 2100 and Sustainable Development Goals, held on 11-12 January, 2019 at Krishibid Institution of Bangladesh, Dhaka.

Seminar on “Research Career in Bangladesh & Global Perspective”

Nepal C. Dey, Adjunct Professor, BRAC JPGSPH also joined a seminar on “Research Career in Bangladesh & Global Perspective” as a Keynote Speaker. The seminar was organised by Youth Centre for Research and Action (YCFRA) on 23 March, 2019 at Jagannath University. Over 400 participants from different universities participated in the seminar.





Short Course: Strengthening Voices and Capacities for Addressing Gender Based Violence in Bangladesh

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University; and Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) successfully organized and completed the first of the three planned short course on Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) and Law funded by CREA. The short course was organized by Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR).



Sixteen participants joined the four-day short course which included BLAST Panel Lawyers, District Project Officers, and Paralegals from eight districts of Bangladesh. **Advocate Sanaiyya Faheem Ansari** facilitated the sessions. **Sudipta Mukhopadhyay**, resource person from India conducted sessions on understanding gender and SRHR, the evolution of SRHR agenda including ICPD and Yogyakarta principle. Furthermore, **Dr Debjyoti Ghosh**, Assistant Professor of Comparative Law at the Asian University for Women (AUW), Chittagong conducted a session on how India brought an end to the decriminalization of Section 377 with a comparison to Bangladesh. Apart from this, there were sessions on struggles and challenges of Hijra community where a transgender and activist named Shova Saker shared her experience to the participants.



Other sessions included Diversity and Sexuality; Domestic Violence and Masculinity, Understanding Bangladesh Legal Framework to SRHR, Laws & Procedure on rape, sexual harassment and child sexual abuse, issues of choice and consent within the context of sexual assault. Participants were given certificates after completion of the course.



The Ethics of Health Policy Experiments: A Global Framework for Design and Oversight

Data collection is ongoing in the pilot phase of the project “The Ethics of Health Policy Experiments: A Global Framework for Design and Oversight”. This project is a collaboration between BRAC JPG School of Public Health with Researchers from University of Heidelberg; TH Chan School of Public Health, Harvard University; School of Public Health and Social Sciences, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS), and is funded by Wellcome Trust. The project is being implemented under the Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH.

Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH, is the PI of the study. **Dr Atonu Rabbani**, Associate Scientist is the Co-PI. **Puspita Hossain**, Research Associate is working as an Investigator for the project. **Sharmin Akter Shitol**, Research Assistant is also part of the research team.



Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance for Health System Strengthening and Advancing UHC Agenda in Bangladesh: The Role of Frontline Healthcare Service Providers in Improving Performance

Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance for Health System Strengthening and Advancing UHC Agenda in Bangladesh: the Role of Frontline Healthcare Service Providers in Improving Performance project is currently being implemented under Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC) at BRAC JPGSPH.

Professor Syed Masud Ahmed, Director of Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC) is the PI and **Dr Nahitun Naher**, Research Fellow, is the Co-PI of the Bangladesh study of the project. The research team also includes **Roksana Hoque**, Senior Research Associate and Raihan ul Ismail, Research Associate.

The research team is currently working on the quantitative component of the study which comprises a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) including a provider survey on doctor's absenteeism. Approval for data collection was obtained from different hospital authorities. Professor Syed Masud Ahmed, Director, CoE-HS&UHC and Professor Mushtaq Khan, Director, ACE met the hospital directors to facilitate the process.

The team collected data for the DCE including a provider survey from various departments of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College & Hospital (ShSMC). 'Session' to 'Individual Approaches' has been used to access and collect data from the doctors practicing in the hospital with an experience of working in Upazilla (sub-district) level within past ten years. Departmental morning sessions were used as a platform to brief doctors on background, objective and approach of the study. Data collection will continue throughout the upcoming months in other hospitals as well.





Exploring the Health Care Seeking Behaviour of Street Dwellers/Floating Population in Dhaka City, Bangladesh: A Pilot Study

Exploring the Health Care Seeking Behaviour of Street Dwellers/Floating Population in Dhaka City, Bangladesh: A Pilot Study is being implemented under CoE-HS&UHC at BRAC JPGSPH. The objective of the study is to explore the scenario regarding health care seeking behavior and available health care services, and identify gaps at the policy and programme levels for achieving universal health coverage in Bangladesh by 2030 for the street dwellers and floating population. The study is being funded by BRAC Advocacy Department.

The study team conducted 15 In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and 6 informal discussions with the adult (age>18 years) male and female street dwellers/floating populations in three selected areas (Kamalapur, High Court Mazar Premises, and Sadarghat Launch terminal) between 17 January - 30 January, 2019. The team also conducted 6 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with government and non-government healthcare providers and 3 KIIs with policymakers. The early findings of the study have been shared with BRAC in the first week of March 2019. The first draft of the study will be prepared by the first week of May, 2019. The final version will be submitted to the donor by the end of May, 2019.

Professor Syed Masud Ahmed, Director, CoE-HS&UHC is the PI of the study. The research team also includes **Dr Nahitun Nahar**, Research Fellow; **Samiun Nazrin Bente Kamal Tune**, Senior Research Associate; and **Roksana Haque**, Senior Research Associate.



Pathways of Antibiotic Use in Bangladesh: The PAUSE Study

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC university conducted a research project titled “PAUSE (Pathways of Antibiotic Use in Bangladesh: The PAUSE Study)” on the scenario of Antimicrobial Resistance in Bangladesh with icddr,b in collaboration with Loughborough University, Durham University, and the University of Bristol, United Kingdom.

The PAUSE study has been looking at how antibiotics are used by people in Bangladesh for illness in humans and also for their livestock and animals. The study has identified important behaviors around antibiotic use such as where people go for antibiotics, what illnesses they seek antibiotics for, and their understanding of how antibiotics work. The study has interviewed 46 urban and rural healthcare providers ranging from qualified doctors and veterinarians to unqualified drug shop owners, 48 at household level and 24 Key Informant Interview to find out the challenges they face in the dispensing and sale of antibiotics.

A dissemination seminar was organized at Sasakawa auditorium in icddr,b, Mohakhali, Dhaka to share insights regarding pathways of antibiotic use in human, animal and environment in Bangladesh. Professor **Dr Abul Kalam Azad**, Director General of DGHS, MOH&FW attended the event as the Chief Guest along with **Md Salahuddin**, Assistant Director, DGDA, MOH&FW and other representatives. **Professor Syed Masud Ahmed**, Director, Centre for Excellence in Health System & Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC) and **Roksana Hoque**, Senior Research Associate attended the program. Roksana Hoque, Senior Research Associate joined as panelist in the dissemination workshop. They discussed the use of antibiotics in Bangladesh by human, livestock and animal and relevant policies of antibiotic use in human, animal and environment.



Health, Hygiene and Housing (Phase 2) Project

Implemented under the Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) at BRAC JPGSPH, the study focuses on upgrading housing (through concrete floor construction) and finding outcomes in children's (under five) risks of exposures from mud floors. The implementation is conducted by ADESH (Association of Development for Economic & Social Help), and the program is funded by ARCHIVE Global. Upon completion of 6 months since the intervention, the team is preparing to conduct both qualitative and quantitative data collection for end-line.

Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH, is the PI of the study. **Dr Atonu Rabbani**, Associate Scientist is the Co-PI. **Mushfiqur Rahman**, Research Associate; and **Rubaiya Riya Siddiqua**, Sr Research Assistant are working as Investigators. **Jonny Barnard Mcfield**, Field Coordinator is also part of the team.



Entertainment-Education Campaign

UNICEF Bangladesh has launched a trans-media entertainment education campaign for changing social norms of engaging in child marriage in high prevalent child marriage areas in Bangladesh. This campaign is focused on shifting community perception and attitude regarding child marriage along with other closely related critical issues like menstrual hygiene, adolescent health and healthcare seeking behavior, safe sex, enrolment, and retention in secondary schools, sexual abuse and harassment.

BRAC JPGSPH with the support of UNICEF formulated and operationalized an evaluation framework to evaluate the impact of this trans-media campaign on the expected improvement of attitude and shift of perception regarding adolescent developmental issues. Multiple surveys (baseline, midline, and end line) on the same cohort of the population with a mixed-method approach was designed to evaluate the impact of the 13 trans-media campaign. The 3rd block rapid assessment survey was conducted and the report on analysis and results was shared with UNICEF and Asiatic JWT. The team is now preparing to conduct the end-line survey through tool development, enumerator recruitment and training.



Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH is the PI of the study. **Atonu Rabbani**, Associate Scientist is the Co-PI. **Md. Nazmul Islam**, Research Fellow; **Mushfiqur Rahman**, Research Associate; **Sanjana Nujhat**, Research Associate; **Ibrahim Hossain Sajal**, Statistician, are working as investigators for the project. **Rubaiya Riya Siddiqua**, Sr Research Assistant; **Jony Barnard Mcfield**, Field Coordinator; and **Md. Ashrafal Alam**, Sr Field Coordinator are part of the Research Team as well.

Assessing BRAC's Innovative Health Loans in Protecting the Poor against Health and Asset Vulnerability in Bangladesh

Since 2013, BRAC has been running its innovative Medical Treatment Loan (MTL), offering medical loans with individually defined, repayment schedules to microcredit clients in need of medical care. While the first implementation phase proved largely successful in improving social protection of BRAC's clients, who are largely poor by international standards, demand of MTL remains low in general and in particular, several access barriers have been identified for the most vulnerable group of clients. With the support from the Inequality Challenge Project, The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has commissioned a grant to BRAC JPGSPH to address these challenges by complementing the existing MTL program through a decentralization and digitalization reform, as well as through innovations in product design. In addition, the proposed program design allows for a rigorous evaluation regarding the effects and processes of BMC's implemented revised MTLs.

The developed product designed by BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University has been finalized and approved by BRAC Microfinance team. The team is working with BRAC Microfinance team in launching the product among the beneficiaries. Data collection plans are being developed accordingly.

Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH, is the PI of the study. **Atonu Rabbani**, Associate Scientist is the Co-PI. **Md. Nazmul Islam**, Research Fellow; **Mushfiqur Rahman**, Research Associate; **Sanjana Nujhat**, Research Associate; **Ibrahim Hossain Sajal**, Statistician- are working as investigators for the project. **Rubaiya Riya Siddiqua**, Senior Research Assistant, and **Jony Barnard Mcfield**, Field Coordinator are part of the Research team.

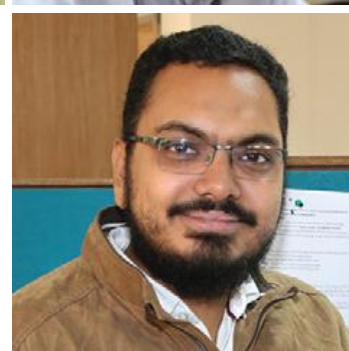




Photo Credit: ASM Shahabuddin, PhD, Health Specialist, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Photo Credit: ASM Shahabuddin, PhD, Health Specialist, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Implementation Research Focusing on Health System Strengthening in UNICEF Supported Areas in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh

BRAC JPGSPH with UNICEF undertook a system-focused embedded implementation research strategy to strengthen health systems for MNCH programmes in emergency settings. The initiative aims to identify the key implementation challenges and explore opportunities for scale-up of MNCH programme in UNICEF supported areas in Cox's Bazar district, Bangladesh for improving the health and well-being of the Rohingya people. Keeping that in mind, several key implementation challenges regarding the implementation of MNCH programme for the Rohingyas were identified using a scoping review of literature and a series of Key Informant Interviews (KII) were done with key personnel working in the field during Phase-1; which ended in March 2019.

A formative research was conducted between January - March, 2019. Initially, a scoping review of literature was conducted. 42 organizational reports, fact sheets and peer-reviewed journal articles were included in this research and the researchers also analyzed to record and identify key implementation challenges of MNCH programs. To complement the results of scoping review 11 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were also conducted with representatives from the Government, UN organizations, National and International organizations which have been providing MNCH services to the Rohingyas. A day long workshop on IR question prioritization was organized on 19 March, 2019 in Cox's Bazar. Several stakeholders from different partner organizations participated in the workshop.

In Phase-2, the activities will include refining IR questions, developing details methodology and obtaining ethical approval for the project. The data collection will start after obtaining ethical approval, potentially from May 2019. Phase-2 activities will continue till October 2019.

Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH, is the Principal Investigator (PI) for the project. **Yameen Majumdar**, Sr Project Consultant; **Avijit Saha**, Research Fellow and Focal Person; **Ipsita Sutradhar**, Research Fellow; **Mowtushi Matin**, Research Associate; and **Saima Mehjabeen**, Research Associate are also involved in the project.



4th Annual Learning by Doing - The Power of Experiential learning in Management Education in Mumbai

A team from BRAC JPGSPH attended an International Summit on April 4 - 5, 2019 in Mumbai, India titled- “4th Annual Learning by Doing - The Power of Experiential learning in Management Education” organized by S. P. Jain Institute of Management & Research (SPJIMR) of Mumbai in collaboration with Global Business School Network (GBSN) of USA.

Sixty-nine participants from seven countries attended the summit. Four members from BRAC JPGSPH’s GSK funded Public Health Leadership Development Training project - **Mikhail I. Islam**, Strategy and Management Consultant; **Anindya Das**, Coordinator; **Sairana Ahsan**, Research Fellow; and **Md Munirul Islam**, Sr Project Officer joined the summit from Bangladesh. The summit highlighted basics of experiential learning, why it is different from conventional academic learning, different experiential learning types and its benefits and assessment on the first day.

On the second day, participants were exposed to various experiential learning models of SPJIMR including their MBA students’ one to one mentorship program, design thinking hub, simulation, fun learning classroom etc. Through this vast exposure to experiential learning, BRAC JPGSPH team benefited in developing facilitators for GSK training.





Second National Policy Roundtable Discussion on Adolescent Nutrition at CIRDAP, Dhaka

On 8 April, 2019, the Centre for Non-communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN), BRAC JPGSPH and partners hosted the second National Policy Roundtable Discussion on Adolescent Nutrition at CIRDAP Auditorium, Dhaka as an initiative to address the second window of opportunity for adolescent growth and development. This was the last of a series of activities including a Workshop in 2017 and a Roundtable Discussion in 2018 to ensure prioritization of the issues of adolescent nutrition into the health and nutrition policy of Bangladesh.

Professor Shamsul Alam, Senior Secretary, General Economics Division, Planning Commission chaired the event and **Dr Md Shah Nawaz**, Director General, Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC) co-chaired the roundtable. **Md Abul Kalam Azad**, Principal Coordinator, SDG Affairs, Prime Minister's Office was the Chief Guest. Representatives from ministries, directorates, UN agencies, INGOs and academia participated in the roundtable. **Dr Ziauddin Hyder**, Senior Nutrition Specialist, The World Bank presented on the objectives of the round table discussion. **Dr Malay Kanti Mridha**, Associate Professor, and Director, Center for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN), BRAC JPGSPH, presented on "Adolescent Nutrition in Bangladesh: Challenges and Potential Evidence-Based Solutions". **Mr Abu Ahmed Shamim**, Associate Scientist; **Dr Abu Abdullah Mohammad Hanif**, Senior Research Fellow; and **Mr Mokbul Hossain**, Analyst Statistics were also present in the meeting from BRAC JPGSPH team.

Presenters informed that during adolescence, nutritional requirements upsurge for the rapid physical growth and cognitive development. While one-fourth of adolescent girls fail to achieve optimal growth; half of the girls suffer from anaemia during this period. Well-nourished adolescents will eventually help the economic growth of the country as productive workforce in future.

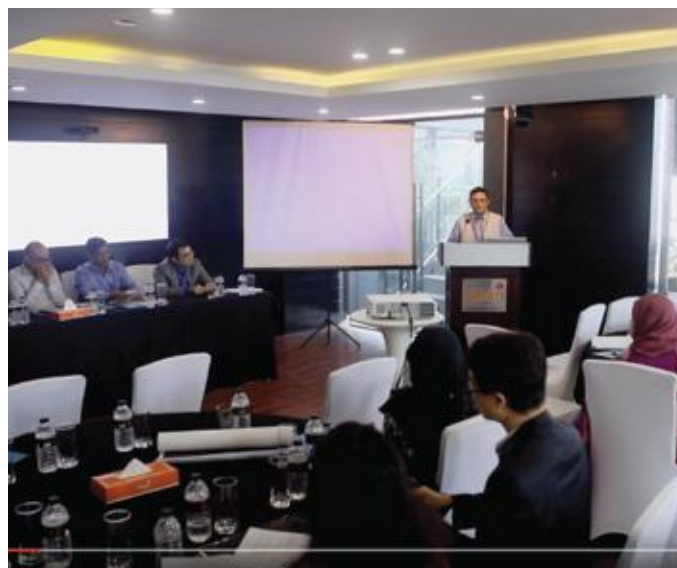


Implementation Science for Introduction of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) in Health Facilities of Bangladesh

The final report on the Implementation Science for Introduction of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) in Health Facilities of Bangladesh project has been accepted by UNICEF Bangladesh, the donor for the project. The project was implemented by the Centre of Excellence for the Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) at BRAC JPGSPH. This project aimed to find out the progress towards implementation of KMC as well as to identify the gaps, document the barriers, and classify the enabling factors of KMC implementation. Apart from conducting research, a panel discussion was arranged and a video documentary was made on the topic. The video documentary has been submitted to UNICEF Bangladesh for their approval. **Professor Malabika Sarker** and Associate Dean, BRAC JPGSPH, and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH is the PI of the study. **Dr Yameen Majumdar**, Senior Project Specialist, CoE-SISU is the Co-PI.

BRAC JPGSPH with the support of UNICEF Bangladesh hosted a roundtable discussion on Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) Implementation and Scale Up at Amari Hotel on 19th November, 2018. The objectives of the roundtable discussion were to discuss the situation of KMC implementation in Bangladesh, to scale-up plan in the NNHP and HPNSP 2017-2022, to share and discuss preliminary findings from the KMC implementation research project of UNICEF: "Barriers and enablers for KMC practices" in public health facilities, to discuss implementation bottlenecks and health system challenges to scale-up of KMC, and to recommend implementation strategies to inform the upcoming revision of the national newborn health strategy. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr Yameen Mazumder, Senior Project Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH. **Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean**, BRAC JPGSPH gave the welcome speech of the panel discussion. Around 30 public health professionals, researchers, and experts in Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health from government organizations, UNICEF Bangladesh, Save the Children, Dhaka Sishu Hospital (A Specialized Hospital In Bangladesh For The Treatment Of Sick Children) UNFPA, IFRC and icddr,b attended the panel discussion. A short video on the roundtable discussion has been uploaded in YouTube.

You can watch the video [here](#)



SHARING FINDINGS FROM KMC
BARRIERS & ENABLERS

DISCUSSING SITUATION OF KMC
IN BANGLADESH



ATION OF KMC

QUESTION & ANSWERS SESSION

Launch of the Short Documentary: “Narratives of Single Working Women in Dhaka City” at BRAC Inn Auditorium, Dhaka

The documentary “Narratives of Single Working Women in Dhaka City” is a collection of narratives of single working women in Dhaka city. The video was produced by BRAC JPGSPH’s Centre for Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR), based on the research findings of a Share-Net International funded project.

In Bangladesh, shame and stigma around sex and sexuality is creating major barriers for dissemination of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)-related services and information – particularly for young populations and unmarried men and women. To tackle this challenge, it is important to sensitize development and health professionals around SRHR issues to insure effective service provision for those who need it the most including vulnerable populations like women, youth and other minorities. JPGSPH Researchers **Farhana Alam** (Coordinator), **Anushka Zafar** (Research Fellow) and **Sumona Siddiqua** (Research Associate) collected stories from unmarried women who live and work in Dhaka city; the purpose was to understand the challenges they face and choices they make in order to navigate their lives in a society that often overlooks their sexual reproductive health and rights. **Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean, BRAC JPGSPH** is the Director of the Centre for Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR).

The video aims to help professionals and lay persons to consider the perspective of single working women and acknowledge the challenges they face and begin addressing them to make more inclusive and effective public health policies and programming. Health professionals and development programmers are encouraged to use this video to facilitate discussions around sex, sexuality, gender roles, societal pressures and more among target audiences including other development workers working on issues of SRHR and even university students. The screening of the film took place in two parts. On 4 March, 2019 the first screening took place at BRAC Inn Auditorium, Mohakhali followed by a short Q&A session with research participants, as well as a theatrical performance by Bonhishikha (“Unlearn Gender”) developed from the interviews. For BRAC JPGSPH team, another screening of the film took place on 10 March, 2019 in the Video Conference room of the School.

[You can watch the documentary here](#)





DMP Celebrates International Women's Day across Seven Academic Sites

Developing Midwifery Project (DMP) celebrated "International Women's Day (IWD)-2019" on 8 March 2019, DMP by arranging cultural event at all its 7 academic sites. Weeks ahead of the event, students were given a book titled "Her Stories: Adventure of Supergirls" as a reference. This book features a number of short stories on powerful women such as Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, Pritilata Waddedar, Sufia Kamal whose contributions changed the way women are perceived in the country. The students were told to pick a character who inspires them the most, internalize her spirit and portray her through a creative presentation.

The students presented their characters in front of the invited guests and jury at the event. The winners were announced based on the best performance. The Head of the Jury and the Chief Guest of the event were invited from their respective locality for each of the academic sites.

Discussion Session on Midwifery in SAFOG Conference-2019 at BICC, Dhaka

South Asian Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecologist (SAFOG) and Bangladesh Obstetrics and Gynaecology Society of Bangladesh (OGSB) jointly organized the 12th SAFOG Conference in BICC. On 5 April, 2019 four BRACU Graduate Midwives joined a session titled "Comprehensive Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights by Midwives". An exhibition stall was allocated to BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University in this event. DMP showcased their activities through posters and skill lab equipment.





Dr Halida Hanum from Johns Hopkins University shared her Knowledge with Future Midwives at Dhaka Academic Site

A session titled “Life Cycle Approach to Women’s Sexual & Reproductive Health & Right” was organized in Dhaka academic site by Developing Midwives Project’s Midwifery Education Team (MET) on 1 April, 2019. Internationally renowned health practitioner Dr Halida Hanum Akhter, Senior Associate, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, conducted this session.

She focused on family planning, gender based violence, maternal mortality, adolescent health, sexual & reproductive health rights for women etc. The students from 5th Batch along with their faculty and other members of MET participated in the session.

Dr Akhter is a reproductive health epidemiologist with over 30 years’ experience at national and international level. She holds numerous professional affiliations in the areas of family planning, maternal and child health, and population research.



Seminar by the Shanghai Health Development Research Center Team

A team from Shanghai Health Development Research Center visited BRAC JPGSPH on, the 16 March, 2019. The visiting group was led by Health Economist, **Professor Shanlian Hu**. Professor Hu has several social responsibilities, such as the senior consultant of Shanghai Health Development Research Center, Deputy Guiding Group Leader of Comprehensive Health System Reform in Shanghai Municipal and other four provinces, Member of Advisory Committee of Public Policy in National Health and Family Planning Commission and many more.

The seminar started with an introductory presentation on JPGSPH by **Professor Zahidul Qayyum**, PhD, and Co-Director, Centre for Urban Equity and Health, BRAC JPGSPH. Professor Qayyum welcomed the team at BRAC JPGSPH and thanked Professor Hu for making time to visit and sharing his expertise along with his team. The seminar covered various topics presented by the research team from Shanghai such as: “An Overview of Evolution of Policies for Elderly in China”, by Professor Shanlian Hu; “Research and Practice on Needs Assessment of Long-term Care Insurance in Shanghai”, by Senior Researcher **Dr Ding Hansheng**, “Longitudinal Study of Prescription Drug Expenditures for Chronic Diseases and Infections in Shanghai, China”, by Research Associate **Dr Lin Hai**, and “Patterns of Expenditure for Elderly Care in Shanghai”, by Research Assistant, **Ms Zhu Bifan**.



Seminar on: "Think Reasonably": Important Mind Skills You Should be Aware of"

Fakir Yunus, a graduate from BRAC JPGSPH (7th batch), and currently pursuing his doctoral degree in Nutrition at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, presented in a seminar titled "THINK REASONABLY: Important mind skills you should be aware of" at BRAC JPGSPH on April 11, 2019. Since Fakir Yunus started his career in public health, he realized that 'being a good research manager' is an important key to success in public health. He believes that 'having the basic research skill' is equally important to 'being a good research manager'. Given the fundamental differences between 'good manager' and 'good research manager', Yunus with support from Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean of BRAC JPGSPH, identified 16 mind skills which they believe would be useful to keep in mind to be a good research manager. The seminar ended with a long Q/A session.

Seminar on: Impact Assessment of Community Based Health Insurance Schemes in Rural India

Dr Wameq A. Raza, an applied micro-economist currently working as an Economist at the World Bank in the Poverty and Equity Global Practice, presented his paper on the evaluation of a community based health insurance scheme in India in 2016 to participants from BRAC JPGSPH at a seminar arranged on 18 April, 2019. He presented on the evaluation of a community-based health insurance (CBHI) scheme in India emphasizing on his study conducted using three CBHI schemes on healthcare utilization and expenditure. Since the 1990s, community-based health insurance (CBHI) schemes have been proposed to reduce the financial consequences of illness and enhance access to healthcare in developing countries. Convincing evidence on the ability of such schemes to meet their objectives is scarce. The results suggest that CBHI schemes of the type examined in this paper are unlikely to have a substantial impact on access and financial protection in developing countries.



LATEST PUBLICATION:

- Association between socioeconomic status and prevalence of non-communicable diseases risk factors and comorbidities in Bangladesh: findings from a nationwide cross-sectional survey.**
 Authors: Tuhin Biswas, Nick Townsend, Md Saimul Islam, Md Rajibul Islam, **Rajat Das Gupta**, Sumon Kumar Das, Abdullah Al Mamun.
 Published on: March 13, 2019 | Published in: BMJ Open
- Frequency of television viewing and association with overweight and obesity among women of the reproductive age group in Myanmar: results from a nationwide cross-sectional survey.**
 Authors: **Rajat Das Gupta**, Ibrahim Hossain Sajal, Mehedi Hasan, Ipsita Sutradhar, Mohammad Rifat Haider, Malabika Sarker.
 Published on: March 20, 2019 | Published in: BMJ Open
- Overall Care-Seeking Pattern and Gender Disparity at a Specialized Mental Hospital in Bangladesh.**
 Authors: Nazmun Nahar Nuri, **Malabika Sarker**, Helal Uddin Ahmed, Mohammad Didar Hossain, Fekri Dureab, Faith Agbozo, Albrecht Jahn. Published on: March 31, 2019 | Published in: Materia

MEDIA MONITORING:

Meet Nutrition Demand of Adolescents – The Daily Star

কিশোরীদের উচ্চতা কম, স্থূলতা বেশি - [Prothom Alo](#)

Dissemination seminar on Health Care for FDMNs – Access, Behaviour and the Challenges – Dhaka Tribune

৭৮ শতাংশ রোহিঙ্গা নারীর প্রসব ঘরেই - [e Prothom Alo](#)

NEW BLOG POST



Virtual Love and Friendship: In the Case of Bangladesh

Published Date: 6 March, 2019

Gone are the days of handwritten love letters and waiting at the balcony to see a glimpse of one's crush. With the proliferation of numerous dating websites and apps (like Tinder), smartphones have brought the chances of meeting someone compatible to the palm of one's hand. Subsequently, the advent of social media has also changed the scenario of love and friendship in Bangladesh drastically over the past decade. In a society where dating openly is stigmatized, young people have taken to virtual networking—and even falling in love—on social networking websites (like Facebook) with people from their own locality and beyond.

[Read More](#)