

## CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR SCIENCE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND SCALE-UP (CoE-SISU)

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Established in 2016, the main objective of the CoE-SISU is to timely generate and embed knowledge related to healthcare practice. The Centre aims to bridge gaps to allow successful scaling up and implementation of interventions by focusing on testing different methodologies, generating evidence-based interventions and innovations, and translating them into standard protocols for policy-makers in Bangladesh.

Research conducted at the Centre reviews potential evidence of successful interventions that can showcase the application of science of implementation for scaling-up. Guidelines and policy briefs are produced for policymakers on implementation of various health programmes and scale-up in Bangladesh. Advocacy efforts include the development of communication materials to showcase successfully implemented or scaled up programmes. Training and short courses are offered under the Centre on implementation research and, monitoring and evaluation to build capacity of development professionals, implementers, researchers and government officials.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS IN 2019

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### - **ASSESSING BRAC'S INNOVATIVE HEALTH LOANS IN PROTECTING THE POOR AGAINST HEALTH AND ASSET VULNERABILITY IN BANGLADESH**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Coordinator: Muhammed Nazmul Islam, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: July 2018 - November 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: Identify demand and supply side barriers of the standard MTL programme and to improve the programme by revising the product design and developing a decentralised implementation protocol that allows both better access for vulnerable clients and a better monitoring system for BRAC; evaluate whether the revised product MTL+ generates a measurable increase in overall uptakes, equitable inclusiveness into the programme, formal healthcare utilisation, and reduction in out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures net of loan; evaluate the implementation process to disentangle the differences in uptakes of MTL and MTL+ due to product design from the differences in implementation protocol; better understand the challenges for scale-up.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donor: The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany (BMZ)

Partners:

- BRAC Microfinance Department
- University of Heidelberg, Germany

- **A CASE STUDY ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE- GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY-  
HEALTH PROMOTION TRIANGLE: BANGLADESH**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Professor Syed Masud Ahmed, Director, CoE-HS&UHC, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Dr Mrityika Barua, Assistant Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH

Timeline: March 2019 - December 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To explore the characteristics of UHC, HS, and HP in Bangladesh with respect to existing policy and practices, focal agencies, key actors, synergies in the triangle, and identify gaps which needs attention; to explore the perceptions and experiences of the relevant stakeholders in policy and practice regarding the UHC, HS and HP triangle, both when these are aligned ('synergies') and not aligned ('fragmentation'), underlying causes of such alignment (or 'fragmentation'), and identify challenges of overcoming these gaps to build synergy; to arrive at a consensus on these issues and to suggest a way forward towards the development of a unified health system which is people centred, equitable, financially protected and resilient to infectious disease threats and AMR.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donor: Wellcome Trust

Partner: University of Heidelberg, Germany

- **BASELINE AND END-LINE SURVEY TO MEASURE CHANGES AND OUTCOMES THAT  
RESULT FROM THE ENTERTAINMENT EDUCATION (EE) CAMPAIGN ON SELECTED  
ADOLESCENT RELATED KAP AREAS WITH FOCUS ON CHILD MARRIAGE**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Muhammad Nazmul Islam, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: March 2017 - November 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To assess the effects of edutainment campaigns in behavior related to different adolescent development issues including child marriage; to identify whether the campaign caused the effects on adolescents and their caregivers over the period of campaign.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donor: UNICEF Bangladesh

Partner: Asiatic Marketing Communication Limited

## - **THE ETHICS OF HEALTH POLICY EXPERIMENTS: A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN AND OVERSIGHT**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean, and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Dr Mrityika Barua, Assistant Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: October 2017 - December 2020

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To test and refine 'deliberative interviews,' a cognitive qualitative interview technique based on deliberation to determine its applicability in designing a framework that examines ethical aspects of health policy experiments; to assess if deliberative interviews are socially and culturally acceptable in the four study countries; to identify if a higher knowledge level on health issues can be reached by using the deliberative interview style, which takes into account major, widely-known aspects of a particular health theme and has both interviewer and interviewee engage actively in the interview.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donors:

- Wellcome Trust, UK;
- University of Heidelberg, Germany.

Partners:

- University of Heidelberg, Germany;
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health;
- School of Public Health and Social Sciences, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS), Tanzania

## - **IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH FOCUSING ON HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING IN UNICEF SUPPORTED AREAS IN COX'S BAZAR DISTRICT, BANGLADESH**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Yameen Mazumder, Senior Project Consultant, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Avijit Saha, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: January 2019 - September 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: Understand the key implementation challenges/barriers with the implementation of MNCH programme related activities for the FDMNs in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh; explore solutions to overcome the challenges/barriers to propose a policy guideline and to adapt and modify the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) for emergency setting.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donor: UNICEF New York

Partner: UNICEF Bangladesh

- **EMBEDDED IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH ON HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING FOR MATERNAL, NEWBORN AND CHILD HEALTH (MNCH) PROGRAMME IN COX'S BAZAR, BANGLADESH**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean, and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Yameen Mazumder, Senior Project Consultant, BRAC JPGSPH.

Coordinator: Avijit Saha, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: January 2019 - September 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: A comprehensive understanding of the existing implementation challenges of MNCH programmes among Rohingya refugees as well as solutions that can help policymakers to reshape and streamline assistance for FDMNs until repatriation occurs.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donor: UNICEF Bangladesh

Partner: UNICEF Bangladesh

- **ASSESSING THE PREVENTIVE CHEMOTHERAPY COVERAGE PROVIDED BY A COMPREHENSIVE SOIL TRANSMITTED HELMINTHIASIS (STH) CONTROL PROJECT BY BRAC IN SYEDPUR, BANGLADESH**

PI: Avijit Saha, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Advisor: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Coordinator: Avijit Saha, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: January 2019 - April 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To assess the preventive chemotherapy coverage provided by a Comprehensive Soil Transmitted Helminthiasis (STH) control Project by BRAC in Syedpur, Bangladesh.

Methodology: Quantitative

Donor: BRAC

Partner: BRAC

- **IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH ON BIRTH AND DEATH REGISTRATION PROCESS IN BANGLADESH WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE KALIGANJ MODEL**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Yameen Mazumder, Senior Project Consultant, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Saima Mehjabeen, Senior Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: May 2019 - October 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To explore critical implementation drivers and barriers of the birth and death registration system in Bangladesh;

- Identify potential solutions to overcome the barriers, especially focusing on the Kaliganj model, to ensure universal birth and death registration within 45 days of the event.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donor: UNICEF Bangladesh

Partner: UNICEF Bangladesh

- **CLIMATE CHANGE, MIGRATION AND HEALTH SYSTEMS RESILIENCE IN HAITI AND BANGLADESH (CLIMHB)**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal:

- Dr Mowtushi Matin, Senior Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH;

Timeline: June 2019 - December 2022

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To analyse the capacities and vulnerabilities of health systems in Haiti and Bangladesh, through the lens of climate change-induced migration flows.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donors:

- French National Research Agency (ANR)
- Institut De Recherche Pour LE Développement (IRD)

Partner: CEPED – IRD

- **BEHAVIORAL DIAGNOSTIC TO IMPROVE MATERNAL, CHILD, AND ADOLESCENT NUTRITION OUTCOMES IN BANGLADESH: QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES**

PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Sayema Akter, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: September 2019 - December 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To gain a holistic understanding of the social and behavioral barriers that impede proper feeding practices; identify potential areas of intervention that can lead to sustained behavior change related to consumption of appropriate and diverse food items within the targeted demographic groups.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donor: The World Bank

Partner: BRAC

- **PROCESS EVALUATION PROTOCOL OF THE INTEGRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF VERBAL AUTOPSY IN THE CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEM OF BANGLADESH**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr. Yameen Mazumder, Senior Project Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Saima Mehjabeen, Senior Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: October 2019 - January 2020

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To explore whether VA activities have been implemented as intended; assess the fidelity of the implementation process, identify the underlying reasons for working and what not and recommend potential solutions to improve the VA process further and understand the distribution of causes of reported deaths and its validity for further scale-up of VA across the country.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donor: Vital Strategies

Partner: Vital Strategies

- **YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES' LIVED EXPERIENCES, ASPIRATIONS AND CURRENT ENGAGEMENTS IN LIVELIHOODS IN BANGLADESH, AND HOW THEY CAN SHARE WITH LOCAL DECISION MAKERS**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Sayema Akter, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Technical Lead: Dr Mrittika Barua, Assistant Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH

Timeline: June 2020 – December 2021

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: The general objective of the study is to understand the experiences, aspirations and challenges of youths with disability in their livelihood in Bangladesh and, to explore the inclusion of young people with disabilities into policy dialogues around the implementation of SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth.

Methodology: Mixed Method

Donor: British Academy

Partner: Sightsavers

- **PARTNERSHIP TO ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF A PUBLIC HEALTH PALLIATIVE CARE PROJECT IN BANGLADESH THROUGH COMMUNITY THEATRE - A FOLLOW ON**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean, and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH;

International PI: Shahaduz Zaman, Senior Lecturer at Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS), UK

Focal: Sayema Akter, Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: November 2017 - April 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To expand the project activity to new user communities and audiences namely the peri-urban and rural communities of Bangladesh; to conduct an exploratory study in the peri-urban and rural community to compare the ideas about death, dying and end of life care that has emerged from the earlier research conducted in the urban slums and use the results for theatre script development; to adopt the theatre script already developed for urban poor communities to fit with

the new peri-urban and rural community; to conduct interactive public engagement through theatre to sensitise the peri-urban and rural community on the end-of-life care issues; to train interested community volunteers on the basics of home-based end of life care; to develop a comprehensive community engagement strategy for public health palliative care in resource-poor settings through performing arts.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donor: AHRC-MRC

Partners:

- Brighton Sussex Medical School, University of Sussex;
  - University of Glasgow;
  - University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University;
  - BRAC University;
  - BRAC
- **SYNTHESIS AND TRANSLATION OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS FROM POLIO ERADICATION (STRIPE)**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Yameen Mazumder, Senior Project Consultant, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Humayra Binte Anwar, Lecturer, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: April 2018 - December 2022

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: Map knowledge content from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI); package GPEI knowledge assets for a global health course and training materials on implementation science; validate GPEI-IS course, MOOC and training materials for the clinic; disseminate GPEI-IS knowledge products, courses, IS clinics to different targeted audiences; track impact of GPEI-IS knowledge product over time.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donor: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Partner: Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.



- **HEALTH, HOUSING, AND HYGIENE (HHH) IN BANGLADESH (PHASE II)**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH

Co-PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Focal: Mushfiqur Rahman, Deputy Research Coordinator, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: November 2018 - September 2019

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To reduce the risk of bacterial and parasitic infection among children under the age of five through flooring reconstruction in homes that currently have dirt/mud floors.

Methodology: Mixed method

Partner: Association of Development for Economic and Social Help (ADESH)

Donor: ARCHIVE Global

- **OLD AGE ALLOWANCE**

PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH

Co-PI: Viola Asri, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Konstanz; Kumar Biswas, Research Coordinator, The World Bank; Sebastian Fehrer, Professor of Economics of Social Policy, University of Bremen; Urs Fischbacher, Professor of Applied Research in Economics, University of Konstanz; Katharina Michaelowa, Professor of Political Economy and Development, University of Zurich

Focal: Viola Asri, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Konstanz; Kumar Biswas, Research Coordinator, The World Bank.

Timeline: February 2019 - December 2021

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To make the selection of beneficiaries more pro-poor by enabling the local government representatives to apply the eligibility criteria prescribed by the national government and make the selection based on the provided data on the target group.

Methodology: Quantitative

Donors:

University of Zurich, Switzerland; Thurgau Economic Research Institute of Economics, Switzerland; University of Konstanz, Germany; International Growth Centre, London School of Economics, United Kingdom; Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland.

Partners:

- Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh;
- ARCED Foundation.

## - **A MEDIA EXPERIMENT TO REDUCE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN BANGLADESH**

PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI:

- Nina Buchmann, PhD candidate, Stanford University;
- Paula Lopez-Pena, Postdoctoral Associate, Yale University.

Focal: Shakil Rahman Ayan, Assistant Research Coordinator, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: June 2019 - April 2022

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To understand the causal pathways and mechanisms of intimate partner violence through a survey, vignette experiment and a lab-in-the-field experiment; to design an evidence informed media campaign to reduce intimate partner violence and implement it through an RCT to evaluate the efficacy of addressing social norms in reducing intimate partner.

Methodology: Qualitative

Donors:

- South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC);
- The World Bank;
- Grand Challenges Canada;
- The National Sciences Foundation.

## - **MILLION COOL ROOFS CHALLENGE**

PI: Professor Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean, and Director, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH.

Co-PI: Dr Atonu Rabbani, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Associate Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH

Focal/Coordinator:

- Md. Shihab Ad Din, Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH;
- Muhammed Nazmul Islam, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH.

Timeline: July 2019 – October 2021.

Implemented by: Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU)

Objective: To improve access to sustainable cooling through the rapid scaling of cool roofs in countries with large numbers of people facing heat stress risks.

Methodology: Mixed method

Donors:

- Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD);
- France Nesta Enterprise Ltd.

Partner: Department of Architecture, BRAC University