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BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health launched “Amena Azfar and Hurmatunnessa Rob Scholarships”

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH), BRAC University, launched a new scholarship named “Amena Azfar and Hurmatunnessa Rob Scholarships” for women pursuing a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree at the School. The launching ceremony of “Amena Azfar and Hurmatunnessa Rob Scholarships” took place on December 1, 2018, at the BRAC JPGSPH campus.

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed KCMG, Founder and Chairperson of BRAC and BRAC University was present as the Chief Guest. Hafiz Ahmed Mazumder and Barrister Nahid Kabir, President of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industries were also in attendance as Special Guests. Concluding remarks were made by Professor Sabina Faiz Rashid, Dean, BRAC JPGSPH.

The scholarship comes from a generous gift given by Dr Mushtaque Chowdhury, founding Dean of the School. Dr Chowdhury played a critical role in establishing the school in 2004 and has been an advisor to the institution since 2014. “A real impact of the school is making public health education a popular subject for higher education,” he said.

After selling the land that he owned in Uttara, Dhaka, Dr Chowdhury used the money for the purpose of this scholarship. He said the scholarship was named after his mother, Amena Azfar and his mother-in-law, Hurmatunnessa Rob - two very important women in his and his wife’s lives. “This will help the school to move forward as well as help bring in more students, particularly young women, and in turn benefit future generations,” he said. He also explained that, with economic development and growing middle and upper classes, many individuals do not know where to invest their money. Dr Chowdhury also said, “By creating this scholarship, I want to show them that there are different ways of giving.” He hopes to lead by example and inspire other Bangladeshis to contribute to the future of the country’s education by starting similar scholarship programs across various academic institutions.

Watch the footage of the Interactive Student Event on our YouTube channel.

For more photos of the event, visit our official Facebook page.
BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health Team wins Second Prize in the Geneva Challenge 2018!

Bangladesh represented Asia as one of the five finalists at the Geneva Challenge 2018. Consisting of four members, the team from Bangladesh included three students from the current batch (14th) of the MPH programme at BRAC JPG School of Public Health; Sachina Paudel (Nepal), Shagoofa Rakhshanda and Syed Hassan Imtiaz (Bangladesh); and Salman Khan Promon, Master student in Biotechnology at BRAC University.

The five finalist teams, one per continent, publicly defended their projects on November 27, in front of a jury chaired by Ambassador Jenö Staehelin and composed of Janet Peace, Florian Schatz, Maria Luisa Silva, and Masao Takahashi. Ambassador Jenö Staehelin and Mrs Nane Annan presented the prizes to the teams.

The 2018 edition of the contest addressed the challenges of climate change. The title of the selected project from Asia was “A Step towards Sustainable Ecology: Green Urbanization.” The team from Bangladesh proposed a solution for urban plantation using a mobile app named ‘Shamol’ to encourage and assist Dhaka city residents with rooftop gardening. As one of the most densely populated cities in the world, Dhaka is more prone to experiencing the adverse effects of climate change. This proposed model aims to assist in increasing the green spaces in the city to address the problem of rising temperature due to greenhouse gases.

“Since starting my journey in public health eight years ago, climate change had been an interest of mine. To negate the effects of climate change we need simple solutions readily accessible by people. We decided to adopt a participatory approach using mobile technology to mitigate climate change, focusing on urban areas.”
- Sachina Paudel

“The big picture is often hidden behind small problems. And, a global challenge can be solved through simple innovative solutions. With these notions in mind, my team and I are willing to initiate this first step to help address climate change.”
- Shagoofa Rakhshanda
The attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 11, 12 and 13 are targeted in this proposed project. This app will provide two different service packages, and the users can choose the one that suites them.

The first package is for house owners who can rent their rooftop for gardening. While the other is for users, who want to buy produces from us that we would grow on rooftops.

The 2018 edition of the “Geneva Challenge” is a project funded by Swiss Ambassador Jenö Staehelin and is supported by Kofi Annan, the high-patron of the contest. The Challenge aims to encourage integrative problem solving among master students on advancing human development within the scope of a relevant topic. This year, students were invited to develop analysis-based proposals on “The Challenges of Climate Change”.

“If I want to solve people’s problems, first I need to know how they think and what benefits they want. People-centered approach or including people in the system, in most cases, indulges the community to incorporate both the system and the solution.”

- Sayed Hasan Imtiaz

“While working with different communities, I found the emerging involvement of digitalized network, client service, and offers including monetary benefits. Keeping that in mind, our team aimed to establish a responsive citizen network where they will contribute their resources for urban plantation. Increased greenery will potentially play a key role to reduce the surface temperature of the target areas.”

- Salman Khan Promon
BRAC JPGSPH organized an Interactive Student Event for prospective MPH candidates

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH), BRAC University organized an interactive student event for prospective candidates who are interested in pursuing a career in Public Health. The overall goal was to give access to information and create awareness on public health education and potential professional opportunities in Public Health.

Like last year, the event brought many interested and enthusiastic participants from different universities. Taking place on Saturday, November 10, 2018 the day-long event included different activities. Around 200 participants including students, health practitioners, researchers as well as public health professionals from different public health organizations took part in the event and got to know about the BRAC JPGSPH MPH programme along with related career opportunities.

Different booths were designed to provide information on the MPH programme, scholarship opportunities and post MPH employment. Apart from these, participants were engaged in different brainstorming sessions such as quiz, debate, problem identification through visuals & learning with Gapminder to have ideas on dimensions of public health problems.

In addition to these, several interactive sessions with faculty members and BRAC JPGSPH alumni were also organized to engage participants in open discussions on prospects of public health field.

Watch the footage of the Interactive Student Event on our YouTube channel.

For more photos of the event, visit our official Facebook page.
New Projects under the Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR) at BRAC JPG School of Public Health

BRAC JPGSPH receives ERASMUS+ Grant for Capacity Building in Higher Education

BRAC JPG School of Public Health, BRAC University (BRAC JPGSPH); International Centre for Climate Change & Development (ICCCAD), Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB); and Asian University for Women (AUW) have been awarded the European Union’s 2018 ERASMUS+ Capacity Building in Higher Education grant.

Led by BRAC JPGSPH, this pioneering tripartite institutional partnership will collaboratively design and implement the “Transformative Competency-Based Public Health Education for Professional Employability in Bangladesh’s Health Sector (TRANS4M-PH)” project, from 2019-2021, to strategically address the high-skilled workforce shortages in the Public Health Sector of Bangladesh. A total of 12 courses from BRAC JPGSPH, IUB and AUW will be transformed into competency-based curricula and 36 faculties will be trained to facilitate competency-based public health courses that will enhance the professional employability of public health graduates in the health sector of Bangladesh. The partners will also collaborate with two leading European Universities - Maastricht University (UM), Netherlands and Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex, United Kingdom.

Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands signs contract with BRAC JPGSPH for Two Studies on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR)

Funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Bangladesh, two new studies will be implemented by BRAC JPGSPH.

The study titled “Male Youth and their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Bangladesh: A Mixed-Methods Nationwide Study” aims to explore the SRH needs of male youth (aged 15-24 years) in Bangladesh. The research will explore existing SRH interventions; identify the gaps and challenges to improve SRH interventions and/or services; and identify the barriers of implementation and recommendations for policy advocacy.

The second study titled “A Nationwide Study of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Bangladesh” aims to conduct primary research among PWDs to better understand their SRH needs, knowledge about SRH, SRH sufferings, perception around sex and sexuality and barriers in accessing SRHR services. The study will review existing interventions and/or services relevant to SRHR of PWDs and generate new knowledge by reviewing laws and policies relevant to disability and SRHR.

Both the studies will be 18 months in duration and will begin from December 2018.
**Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid participated as a Speaker in the 2018 SEEP Conference**

Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid Professor and Dean, BRAC JPG School of Public Health, participated as a speaker in the Peer Learning Session at the 2018 SEEP Annual Conference on 1-3 October, 2018, in Arlington, Virginia.

This year 440 inclusive development leaders representing 180 organizations came from 45 countries to convene at the SEEP Annual Conference under the theme, “Collaboration for Impact”.

Watch Dr Rashid’s SEEP 2018 interview here: [https://vimeo.com/296426355](https://vimeo.com/296426355)

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**Dr Rashid attended a Regional Inception Workshop in the Philippines**

Dr Rashid and Rushdia Ahmed (Sr Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH) attended the Regional Inception Workshop on "Advancing Inclusive and Resilient Urban Development Targeted at the Urban Poor" as part of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Technical Assistance Mission in Manila, Philippines on 22-23 October, 2018.

Funded by ADB, this regional technical assistance is designed to support three developing member countries, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines, to strengthen capacity for designing and implementing resilience building investments targeted at the urban poor with support from national and international experts and consultants. The workshop was also attended by 50+ participants from national and local governments from each of Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines. Rushdia Ahmed also represented BRAC JPGSPH on the Core Partners Planning meeting at ADB Headquarters on 24 October, 2018 following the Regional Inception Workshop.
Dr Rashid attended the IDRC Regional Workshop in Nepal

Dr Rashid, PI of the IDRC funded 'Understanding the Nature of Child Marriage in Urban Informal Settlements in Bangladesh' Project attended the "IDRC Regional Workshop on Early, Child and Forced Marriage" held on October 26-27, 2018 at the Radisson Hotel, in Kathmandu, Nepal. She was accompanied by Raia Azmi, Research Fellow and Acting Manager for the Project. They presented on the Project findings and dissemination plans respectively, and participated in the workshop discussions.

The objectives of the workshop was to share and discuss findings from the four Projects in the South-Asia region that are conducting research on child marriage issues funded by IDRC, and thereby identify synergies and learning from across the projects/region for future collaboration.

Dr Malabika Sarker attended the M4M Annual Board Meeting in Maryland, USA

Dr. Malabika Sarker, Professor & Associate Dean, and Director Center of Excellence for Science of Implementation & Scale Up (CoE-SISU) attended the M4M (Metrics for Management) annual Board meeting as a Board Member on December 6, in Baltimore, Maryland, USA.
A team from BRAC JPGSPH including Senior Management attended the Fifth Global Symposium on HSR 2018 Conference at Liverpool, UK

A team from BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, participated in the “Fifth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research 2018” in Liverpool, UK from October 8-12, 2018.

The team consisted of Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid (Professor and Dean), Dr. Malabika Sarker (Professor and Associate Dean), and Dr. Syed Masud Ahmed (Professor and Director, the Centre of Excellence for Health Systems & Universal Health Coverage, CoE-HS&UHC). Dr. Nahitun Naher (Research Fellow), Roksana Hoque (Sr. Research Associate) and Muhammad Shaikh Hassan (Sr. Research Associate) also represented CoE-HS&UHC at the Symposium. This year theme of the conference was “Advancing Health Systems for all in the SDG Era”. The CoE-HS&UHC team proactively participated in oral, satellite, skill building and different plenary sessions.

Professor Sabina Rashid moderated the closing plenary session of the conference titled “Leaving no one Behind: Health Systems that Delivered for All” on October 12, 2018. The session explored how health systems can be mobilized to be the vanguard of efforts towards social justice and showcasing experiences of how health systems can help realize the rights of marginalized populations.

Professor Malabika Sarker organized a debate session title “CHWs provide ‘Second Class Care’ and are a Temporary Fix to the Human Resources Crisis and Health Systems Constraints” which emphasized the role of Community Health Workers (CHWs) regarding health promotion, disease screening, referral and palliative care on October 11, 2018.
The session had very provocative discussion to showcase whether investing in CHWs is good for health system strengthening within the current global context & SDG era.

The Center of Excellence for Health Systems & Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC) co-hosted a satellite session on “Anti-corruption by Design: Understanding and Tackling Health System Corruption on the Road to Universal Health Coverage” with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and World Health Organization (WHO) on October 9, 2018.

The session described the ongoing research experiences of SOAS Anti-Corruption Evidence (ACE) from Bangladesh, Tanzania and Nigeria. WHO facilitated work stream on “anti-corruption, transparency and accountability in the health sector”. Ms. Roksana Hoque presented qualitative findings of ACE research titled “Exploring Absenteeism from the Perspectives of front line Health Care Providers at Levels in Bangladesh”.

Dr. Nahitun Naher presented different innovative anti-corruption strategies of South and South-East Asian Countries in the session title “Corruption and Accountability in Health Systems” on October 11, 2018. The title of her presentation was, “Fighting Health Sector Corruption in the South and South-East Asia: ‘Carrot and Stick’ or Time for Innovation”. This session brought together new evidences on the drivers of corruption in health systems and the effectiveness of local mechanisms intended to improve accountability.

Many regional and global researchers participated in all three sessions and garnering attention for BRAC JPG School of Public Health, BRAC University.
The ‘3rd Bangladesh Flagship Based Course on Health Systems Strengthening and Universal Health Coverage’ was organized by the Health Economics Unit (HEU), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) with support from the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank and the Department of International Development (DFID) Bangladesh in association with BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH) from October 21-25, 2018.

42 participants from government sectors, NGOs, renowned academic institutes and also from different development partners completed the five-day long Bangladesh Flagship Based Course on Health System Strengthening and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in BRAC-CDM, Rajendrapur.

Facilitated by national and international experts in health systems strengthening, the course engaged participants in structured and strategic reflections about what it takes to move Bangladesh health systems towards universal health coverage. The course covered essential topics on health systems reforms, including health financing, the essential service package, related implementation issues, provider payment mechanisms and equity.

The course was designed for policy makers, mid-level technical government officers in health and other relevant sectors, senior managers working in private sector, people from civil society, professionals from developing organizations, media sector as well as development partners. The aim of the course is to enhance stakeholders’ competency for influencing health policies towards transforming the country’s health systems in order to attain the goals of UHC by 2030 using the ‘Flagship Framework’.

The course successfully ended distributing certificates among participants by Mohd. Shahadt Hossain Mahmud, DG, Health Economics Unit (HEU).
Situation Analysis for Delivering Integrated Comprehensive SRHR Services for Rohingya Refugees in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh

The WHO Rohingya Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) project is currently doing a situation analysis to assess demand and supply side barriers in accessing SRH services by Adolescent girls and women aged 12-59 years in Rohingya refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. Data collection has been completed in November.

Data was collected in 10 Rohingya refugee camps through a household survey and qualitative interviews with adolescent girls and women, community influential, formal & informal healthcare providers, and Government & NGO stakeholders.

The methodology of the project was presented in a 2-day workshop organized jointly by WHO and UNFPA on November 4-5, 2018 in Cox’s Bazar. The title of the workshop was “Sexual & Reproductive Health in Emergencies: Planning Workshop on Assessing Gaps and Needs for 2019”.
Health Care Needs and Health Seeking Behavior among Rohingya Refugees in Cox’s Bazar

BRAC JPG School of Public Health has initiated a study project titled “Health Care Needs and Health Seeking Behaviour among Rohingya refugees in Cox’s Bazar”. The project is funded by BRAC. The study aims at determining the illness patterns, access and utilization of health services in selected Rohingya camps in Cox’s Bazar, where BRAC and other national and international NGOs have been providing primary healthcare services. The project activities have started on October 2018. Professor Zahidul Quayyum is the Principal Investigator (PI) and Assistant Professor Md. Tanvir Hasan is the Co-PI of the project.

The field activities covering ten camps at Ukhiya and Teknaf upazila in Cox’s Bazar has been completed. A total of 364 households were surveyed to elucidate the patterns of illness and health care utilization. This was supplemented by 12 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with ill persons or caregivers. Two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also conducted to further explore and obtain in-depth information on the perceived illness, access and utilization patterns. The study team is now analyzing data and working on finalizing the study report.
Partnership to ensure the Sustainability of a Public Health Palliative Care Project in Bangladesh Through Community Theatre

The first community theatre was organized by BRAC Community Empowerment Programme (BRAC CEP) at the Korail slum on October 3, 2018, which was attended by Sayema Akter (Sr. Research Associate), Puspita Hossain (Research Associate), S.J.M Shourov (Research Assistant), Mahbuba Alam Ripa, Abdul Jabbar Tapu, Tanzima Parvin Setu.

A rapid assessment of the performance was done at Korail by the research team from BRAC JPG School of Public Health, comprising of Sayema Akter and Puspita Hossain on October 10, 2018.

A second performance was organized by BRAC CEP at Korail on November 1, 2018, attended by Puspita Hossain (Research Associate). A rapid assessment of the performance was done at Korail by Sayema Akter (Sr. Research Associate) and Puspita Hossain (Research Associate) on November 11, 2018.

Funded by AHRC UK, “Partnership to Ensure the Sustainability of a Public Health Palliative Care Project in Bangladesh through Community Theatre”, is a collaboration between BRAC JPG School of Public Health with partners in UK and Bangladesh. BRAC JPG School of Public Health is leading the research component of the project with help from the project partners, BSMMU, ULAB, University of Sussex, the University of York and the University of Glasgow.
The Ethics of Health Policy Experiments: A Global Framework for Design and Oversight

“Testing of a Qualitative Interview Technique across four Countries” as a pilot to designing a global framework for health-policy experiments has started this October under “The Ethics of Health Policy Experiments: A Global Framework for Design and Oversight” project.

Working across four world regions, the study will work to create a global solution to the challenge of improving the delivery of healthcare interventions in the real world. Dr. Malabika Sarker (Professor and Associate Dean, BRAC JPG School of Public Health, and Director, CoE-SISU) is the PI and Dr. Atonu Rabbani (Associate Scientist, BRAC JPG School of Public Health) is the Co-PI of this study. Puspita Hossain, Research Associate, is also working in this study as an Investigator.

Funded by Wellcome Trust, 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).
Baseline Research for the BRAC Ready-Made Garments Workers Well-being Project


BRAC JPG School of Public Health is conducting baseline research for BRAC UDP to examine if the interventions improve the well-being of the RMG workers. The main objectives of the baseline research are to assess the present socioeconomic condition of RMG workers regarding primary health care, skills training, financial inclusion (DPS, health insurance), on-line health, legal & psychosocial support by Maya Apa, service integration and workers to owners’ relationship for the wellbeing of RMG worker and the sustainability of the One Stop Service Centre.

This project will also assess the RMG Workers Empowerment, Priority Services for RMG Workers, Workers Satisfaction, Challenges to form Workers Unions/Committee, Service Seeking Behaviour of RMG Workers, Living Environment at Slum Level, Gaps of Service Integration/GO-NGO Services and Sustainability of BRAC One Stop Service Centre. A mixed methods approach for data collection has been employed by using both quantitative and qualitative techniques from a range of stakeholders (such as garments workers and their supervisors, corporate social responsibilities personnel, garments owners).

We interviewed 486 garments workers in our quantitative survey and in the qualitative component we have conducted 21 In-depth Interviews of garments worker, 11 Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) and 4 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also conducted among different types of garments worker. The study team is now working on finalizing the preliminary report of this research.
Facility based data collection is completed and the final facility assessment at Tangail District Hospital and Kalihati Upazilla Health Complex had been done in September 2018. Field visits were being conducted by Avijit Saha (Sr Research Associate), Dr. Saima Mehajbeen, (Research Associate), Dr. Mowtushi Matin (Research Associate) and Dr. S.J.M Shourov (Research Assistant).

The UNICEF, Bangladesh funded, Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) project is under the Centre of Excellence on the Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) at BRAC JPGSPH. The project is led by, Dr. Malabika Sarker (Professor & Associate Dean, and Director, CoE-SISU) with Dr. Yameen Mazumder (Sr Project Specialist) and Dr Rajat Das Gupta (Research Associate).
Panel Discussion on “Implementation and Scaling up of Kangaroo Mother Care in Health facilities in Bangladesh”

Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) of BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), with the support of UNICEF Bangladesh arranged a panel discussion on the topic “Implementation and Scaling up of Kangaroo Mother Care in Health facilities in Bangladesh”. The discussion event took place on November 19, 2018 at Hotel Amari Dhaka. The objectives of the panel discussion were to discuss the situation of KMC implementation in Bangladesh, scale-up plan in the NNHP and HPNSP 2017-2022, share and discuss preliminary findings from the KMC implementation research project of UNICEF: Barriers and enablers for KMC practices in public health facilities, discuss implementation bottlenecks and health system challenges to scale-up of KMC and also to recommend implementation strategies to inform the upcoming revision of the national new-born health strategy.

The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Yameen Mazumder (Sr Project Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH). Professor Sabina Faiz Rashid (Dean, BRAC JPGSPH) delivered the welcome speech of the panel discussion. Ms. Shemma Sen Gupta (Deputy Representative, UNICEF Bangladesh) delivered the closing remarks. Around 30 public health professionals, researchers and academicians in Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health representing the government, UNICEF Bangladesh, Save the Children, Dhaka Sishu Hospital, ICMH, UNFPA, IFRC and icddr,b attended the panel discussion.
A team from Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) at BRAC JPG School of Public Health (JPGSPH) is making a video documentary on premature birth effect of neonates and role of Kangaroo Mother Care for the management of pre mature neonates. As part of developing the script for the documentary, the CoE-SISU team visited the Institute of Child and Mother Health (ICMH), Matuail, Dhaka on 28th November 2018.

The objective of this field visit was to understand the context of ICMH in managing pre mature neonates. The video team was led by Mr. Rafee Muhammad Tamjid (Communication Officer). Other members of the team included Mr. Syed Maruf Hossain Proteek (Video Specialist), Dr. Saima Mehjabeen (Research Associate), Dr. Mowtushi Matin (Research Associate), Mr. Shams Shahab Haider (Research Assistant), Suhan Ahmed (Communication Assistant) and Ms. Sharmin Akter Shitol (Research Assistant). Dr. Md. Muzibur Rahman, Assistant Professor and In Charge of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), ICMH facilitated the video team.
Health, Hygiene and Housing (Phase II)

Implemented under the Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) at BRAC JPG School of Public Health, the study focuses on upgrading housing (through concrete floor construction) and finding outcomes in children’s (under five) risks of exposures (to intestinal infections and diarrhea, respectively) 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 successful completion of Phase-I of the Health, Hygiene and Housing project, the donor ARCHIVE Global agreed to extend the program. The study now focuses on – (i) reducing the risk of bacterial and parasitic infection through flooring reconstruction in homes that currently have dirt/mud floors, and (ii) understand and evaluate the changes in behavioural characteristics of the household. The Phase I was conducted with 120 households and Phase II will be conducted with 300 Households.

Dr Malabika Sarker (Professor and Associate Dean, BRAC JPG School of Public Health, and Director, CoE-SISU) is the PI of the study. Dr. Atonu Rabbani (Associate Scientist, BRAC JPG School of Public Health) is the Co-PI. Mushfiqur Rahman (Sr Research Assistant), Rubaiya Riya Siddiqua (Sr Research Assistant) and Jony Barnard Mackfield (Field Coordinator) are part of the Research Team.
Enhancing Nutrition Services to Improve Maternal and Child Health in Africa and Asia (ENRICH)

“Enhancing Nutrition Services to Improve Maternal and Child Health in Africa and Asia (ENRICH) - Midline Evaluation: Bangladesh” is a five-year-long project that is funded by World Vision and implemented by the Center for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN) at BRAC JPG School of Public Health in collaboration with the University of Toronto. Professor Malabika Sarker (Associate Dean and Director, Center of Excellence for Science of Implementation & Scale Up, CoE-SISU, BRAC JPGSPH) is the PI of the project in Bangladesh region.

The M&E plan is expected to generate data for estimating outcome indicators outlined in the project’s Logic Model (LM), the PMF, through activities programmed into the Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and Annual Work Plans (AWP). The specific objectives of overall M&E plans are to determine the provisions and utilization of services, coverage and outcome measures and to assess whether any observed effects are in fact due to the project or program, accounting for the contextual factors that might influence the effectiveness of interventions.

A cross-sectional survey using the structured questionnaire in 884 households of Thakurgaon district (the intervention site for the project) as part of the midline evaluation and Health Facility Assessment (HFA) in 25 union and ward level health facilities took place recently. A seven-day long rigorous training for the field data enumerators was completed before going to the field. Avijit Saha (Sr. Research Associate) acted as the project manager during the whole process while Md. Ashraful Alam (Sr. Field Coordinator) and Md. Abdul Jabbar (Assistant Project Coordinator) worked as data collection supervisor for the HH survey. BRAC JPGSPH Research Associates Dr. Rajat Dasgupta, Dr. Animesh Talukdar and Dr. Abhijeet Roy along with Avijit Saha took part in the HFA.
Data Collection for the “Survey of the Implementation Science for Global Health: Lessons Learned from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI)” Project has been Completed

The GPEI project is implemented under the Centre of Excellence on the Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) at BRAC JPG School of Public Health and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The data collection for the GPEI survey has been completed across six divisions of Bangladesh. The respondents included people who have been responsible for polio eradication activities since 1988 in Bangladesh. Respondents were identified through snowball sampling. People from the Bangladesh government, WHO, Rotary International and front line workers took part in the survey. This survey was able to find out about the success and challenges related to Global Polio Eradication Initiative in Bangladesh.

A 12-person team including research and senior research associates from BRAC JPG School of Public Health conducted the survey. The survey was conducted under the guidance of the GPEI Project Lead Professor Malabika Sarker (Associate Dean & Director, CoE-SISU) and Project Co-Lead Dr Yameen Mazumder (Sr Project Specialist). A total of 104 survey have been done in both national and sub national level.
GPEI Project Data has been shared with John Hopkins University

As the world is in close to eradicating polio, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) has begun to wind down its operations; especially, in countries where polio eradication has been achieved, including Bangladesh. Public resources (infrastructure, systems, and knowledge assets) produced by this initiative will be lost if they are not properly articulated and effectively disseminated. Therefore, it is essential to map and synthesize the explicit knowledge regarding this initiative in Bangladesh.

We conducted a literature review for grey literature (protocols, general standard operating procedure, and reports) on the GPEI program in Bangladesh since the inception of the program (from 1988 to date). The major stakeholders were requested to search their files, documentation centre/store and database and also contact field staff to find the relevant grey documents. A snowball sampling was conducted to identify relevant people in different organizations for collecting grey documents regarding polio eradication initiative in Bangladesh. Web searches were conducted, which includes Government and GPEI core partner’s website and also use of Google or Google Scholar. We would like to thank EPI headquarter, Mohakhali and WHO, Bangladesh for their outstanding support.

A total of 92 documents were identified following the above search strategy in which 23 were excluded as they were already included in the global grey literature review and scoping review and containing insignificant and repeated information regarding polio eradication initiative. Data of remaining 69 documents were successfully extracted in an excel version of data extraction matrix and shared with John Hopkins University for review and analysis.
Surveillance on Food Security and Nutrition in Bangladesh: First Meeting of Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

The first meeting of Technical Advisory Group (TAG), chaired by Md. Habibur Rahman Khan, Additional Secretary, PH&W, Health Services Division, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare took place on November 19, 2018 at the Institute of Public Health Nutrition (IPHN), Mohakhali, Dhaka.

The meeting was organized by National Nutrition Services (NNS), Institute of Public Health Nutrition (IPHN), Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University. Dr. Malay Kanti Mridha, Associate Professor and Director of the Centre of Excellence for Non-communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CoE-NCDN), BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), was a presenter at the meeting.

Investigators of the study Dr. Samir Kanti Sarkar, Director, Institute of Public Health Nutrition (IPHN) and Line Director, National Nutrition Services (NNS), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS); Dr. S M Mustafizur Rahman, Assistant Director (DGHS) & Program Manager-1, NNS, IPHN; Mohammad Aman Ullah, Deputy Program Manager, NNS, IPHN; Md. Emdadul Haque, Director, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Dr. Dipak Kumar Mitra, Professor, Department of Public Health, School of Health and Life Sciences, North South University; Abu Ahmed Shamim, Associate Scientist (JPGSPH); Md Showkat Ali Khan, Assistant Scientist (JPGSPH); Dr. Mehedi Hasan, Senior Research Associate (JPGSPH); Md. Mokbul Hossain, Senior Statistician (JPGSPH) and Md. Moyazzam Hossaine, Deputy Project coordinator (JPGSPH) also attended the meeting.

Other participants from BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University included Md. Monjurul Alom; Project Officer and Omma Habiba, Admin Assistant.
International Steering Committee Meeting of Non Communicable Disease (NCD) Project in Sri Lanka

Dr Malay Kanti Mridha, Associate Professor and Director of Centre for Non-communicable Disease and Nutrition of BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, participated in the international steering committee meeting of Non Communicable Disease (NCD) project held in Sri Lanka between November 28-29, 2018. He presented a frontline health worker proposal in the meeting.

Scientific Training Workshop

Md Showkat Ali Khan (Assistant Scientist) and Dr Mehedi Hasan (Sr. Research Associate) were invited to participate in a scientific training workshop held in Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Singapore. The purpose of the training was to train the master trainer on medical devices that will be used in the NCD project. The training was conducted from November 12-16, 2018.
Steps towards Antimicrobial Resistance through One Health Approach

One Health Secretariat Bangladesh organized a daylong seminar on the occasion of ‘One Health Day’ in collaboration with the Department of Livestock Services (DLS), the Directorate of General Health Services (DGHS), the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b), and other partners on Saturday, November 10, 2018 at the Sasakawa auditorium of icddr,b, in Dhaka.

From the Centre of Excellence in Health System & Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC), BRAC JPGSPH, Ms. Roksana Hoque and Mr. Muhammad Shaikh Hasan Senior Research Associates joined the seminar. Professor Dr Abul Kalam Azad, Director General, DGHS and Dr Hiresh Ranjan Bhowmik, Director General, DLS, were present as special guests in the seminar.

The seminar included technical sessions on Antimicrobial resistance and Communication & Advocacy.
**Advocacy Workshop on Antimicrobial Awareness Week - 2018**

Director General of Drug Administration (DGDA) arranged an Advocacy Workshop on the occasion of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Awareness Week-2018 on 12th November, 2018 in joint collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO), inviting all the relevant key stakeholders in DGDA office, Mohakhali, Dhaka., From the Centre of Excellence in Health System & Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC), BRAC JPGSPH - Dr. Nahitun Naher, Research Fellow and Roksana Hoque, Senior Research Associate participated in the workshop.

Represents from different national and international organizations, development partners, academic and research institutes e.g. USAID, FAO, BLRI, DLS, DGHS, World Fish, Square Pharmaceuticals, IEDCR attended the workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the different advocacy initiatives to prevent AMR in the light of National Action Plan (NAP) along with role of key stakeholders to fight against AMR in the country.

**‘Theory of Change’**


The workshop was organized by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in collaboration with UK AID, Bangladesh. In the workshop the theory of change was presented and discussed in detail as an approach of reducing corruption from different public sectors service provision in Bangladesh.
World Mental Health Day 2018
Celebrated with a two-hour workshop on Psychodramatic Social & Cultural Atom

BRAC JPG School of Public Health celebrated World Mental Health Day on October 10, 2018 with a two-hour workshop on the psychodramatic social and cultural atom. The workshop was facilitated by Deputy Project Coordinator Ashfique Rizwan and Supervised by Sue Daniel, Trainer, Educator and Practitioner of Psychodrama (T.E.P) and Director of Psychodrama Institute of Melbourne, Australia. Thirty-six enthusiastic participants from various departments of the school attended the workshop.

Starting with sociometry, a quantitative way to measure relationships, many of the participants discovered that despite working together for many years, they hardly knew much about each other. This warm-up exercise of socialization helped them to get to know a different side of one another. After the warm-up exercise, the facilitator demonstrated how to draw a social and cultural atom. The social atom includes the people, pets, and objects that have significance in our life, while the cultural atom are the roles by which we connect. Participants drew their own social, and cultural atom which helped them to become more aware of their roles and relationships.

Psychodramatic techniques were demonstrated afterwards with role reversal & mirroring using the social atom of a participant (the protagonist) to help them see their own relationships from a different perspective. The workshop concluded with participants sharing a moment in their life where they felt connected with the re-enacted drama of the protagonist.

“It was a great experience! I would like to attend another one. I believe this workshop helps to solidify relationships and reduce stress level.”
- Rubaiya Riya Siddiqua
Sr Research Assistant

“It occurred to me that we often think negatively of someone without being in the shoes of that person, but this concept of role reversal can help an individual to improve relationships.”
- Nusrat Jahan Chowdhury
HR Officer
Regional Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

Kuhel Faizul Islam (Sr Coordinator) attended the Regional Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) on September 6-7, 2018, in Bangkok, Thailand, as part of a team representing Bangladesh.

CSE attests to the culmination of an enormous collective effort and commitment from key stakeholders including government counterparts, civil society members, youth-led & youth serving organisations, women’s organisations, and United Nations (UN) agencies from fifteen different countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Resourceful and experienced delegates from all across Asia (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Maldives, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam) actively participated and contributed in the dialogue. An action agenda was developed to work towards effective planning and implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) at the national level.
Media Coverage of DMP activities in the Rohingya Refugee Camps

As a part of its advocacy and communications activities, DMP invited a group of media personnel to visit the Rohingya Refugee Camps in Cox's Bazar on September 26. The objective was to showcase the relentless work of BRAC University Midwifery Graduates who are providing services to the most destitute communities despite the challenges of working in refugee camps.

The media representatives observed first-hand how Graduate Midwives from BRACU are conducting successful normal deliveries using their knowledge and skills in a place like the refugee Camp. The media representatives thanked DMP for its initiative and appreciated BRAC University's endeavor to create midwives all over the country.

DMP was able to garner mass national attention with a media blitz through online, print and television campaigns related to its work in the refugee camps achieved by the positive stories published and aired by the invited media personnel. Coverage on various media:

**Online News Portals (Bangla)**
- Bdnews24.com ডাচ্চন মিডওয়াইফ আপা
- Sarabangla.net মিডওয়াইফ তাদের 'ডাটার আপা'
- Banglatribune রোহিঙ্গা কাম্পে ব্রাক মিডওয়াইফদের অনন্য সেবা

**Dhaka Tribune (English News Portal)**
- Trained Midwives Provide Healthcare to Rohingya Women
- Helping the Rohingya Stay Healthy
- Midwives: The Unsung Heroes Working in Silence for Rohingya Refugee

**TV Channels**
- BRAC University Midwifery Graduates
- Working in Rohingya Refugee Camps
- News24 | SomoyTV | Independent TV
- ডাচ্চন মিডওয়াইফ গ্রাজুয়েটরা নিয়ে রোহিঙ্গা শরণার্থী শিবিরে RTV
Bangladesh participated in the 10th Annual Asia Pacific Alliance on Human Resources for Health (AAAH) Workshop which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam in November 2018. A paper was presented by Bangladesh in this workshop, titled “HRH Priorities, challenges and prospective solution”. Among other participants representative of Developing Midwives Project, BRAC JPGSPH were also invited from Bangladesh. DMP’s advisor and BRAC Vice Chairperson Dr Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury was one of the keynote speakers in this event.

The workshop this year focused upon various in legal framework: Government, National Accreditation Board, and Accreditation Agency for Higher Education etc., Different stages of implementation on accreditation varying from settled establishment to beginning and well established system which will be including most health professionals.

The Asia Pacific Action Alliance on Human Resources for Health (AAAH) is a response to international recognition of the need for global and regional action to strengthen country planning and action on health workforce system.
DMP Handed over Birthing Chair to OGSB

For the first time in the history of OGSB, a birthing chair will be used to deliver babies. This birthing chair has been introduced by Developing Midwives Project (DMP), BRAC JPG School of Public Health in the OGSB Hospital, located in Mirpur 13, Dhaka. A humble handover occasion was arranged at BRACU Urban Academic Site. Head of Midwifery Education and Project Director of Developing Midwives Project Dr. Selina Amain handed over the birthing chair and exercise ball to Professor Laila Arjun Banu, President, Obstetrics and Gynaecology Society of Bangladesh. Graduate Midwives of BRAC University, now employed by OGSB, will be conducting safe and normal vaginal delivery from now on using the birthing chair. DMP has been promoting normal birthing methods to reduce C-sections in Bangladesh. The advocacy for promoting normal vaginal delivery has been one of the priority areas of DMP since its beginning. Having OGSB officially as an ally of such mission is a milestone achieved for the project.
Innovation in Maternal Healthcare – Starts with a Chair
October 8, 2018

Inside the winding pathways of Darrusalam, Dhaka, BRAC, among its various maternal and child healthcare interventions, has been operating a maternity centre since the late 90s. For over a decade the centre had become a part of the community, offering significant services to pregnant women, mothers and infants. Recently, the centre has been reform into the BRAC Midwifery Led Care (MLC) Centre by the Developing Midwives Project (DMP from here on), in an effort to provide quality midwifery services at a low cost. Read more

Understanding the Cultural Context of Death Among Palliative Care Patients in Bangladesh
November 1, 2018

Palliative care has recently been acknowledged as a human right and identified as a global health challenge. Over time global interest has increased that care for terminally ill patient should be returned to communities which has been termed as public health palliative care. The main concept is that the service delivery model should be supplemented by a community development model, which we intend to initiate based on the traditions and practices of community-based theatre. Read more

Findings from Mapping Slum Dwellers’ Entertainment Preferences in Korail
December 5, 2018

Korail Slum is one of the biggest slums in Dhaka, Bangladesh. According to the inhabitants themselves, around half a million people live there. Our objective was to get a clear overview on how the slum dwellers meet their entertainment demands under the project titled “Partnership to ensure the sustainability of a public health palliative care project in Bangladesh through community theatre.” Read more
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http://www.ijhpm.com/article_3495.html

2. Book Chapter, "20: Social Determinants in Low-income Countries", Oxford Textbook of Public Mental Health. Authors: Syed Masud Ahmed with Mohammad Didar Hossain (former Sr. Research Associate, BRAC JPG School of Public Health). Published in: The Oxford University Press | Published on: September 27, 2018

3. A qualitative study to explore the attitudes of women and obstetricians towards caesarean delivery in rural Bangladesh. Authors: Tahmina Begum, Cathryn Ellis, Malabika Sarker, Jean Rostoker, Aminur Rahman, Iqbal Anwar, Laura Reichenbach. Published in: BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth | Published on: September 12, 2018

Abstract: https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/363/bmj.k3794.full.pdf

5. Determinants of Hypertension among Adults in Bangladesh as per the JNC7 and 2017 ACC/AHA Hypertension Guidelines. Authors: Gulam Muhammed Al Kibria, Krystal Swasey, Md. Zabir Hasan, Allysha Choudhury, Rajat Das Gupta, Samuel A. Abariga, Atia Sharmeen, Vanessa Burrowes. Published in: JASH | Published on: October 22, 2018


7. Prevalence of Chronic Kidney Disease in South Asia: A Systematic Review Authors: Mehed Hasan, Ipsita Sutradhar, Rajat Das Gupta, and Malabika Sarker Published in: BMC Nephrology | Published on: October 23, 2018. Abstract:

Abstract: https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/8/10/e022817.info

9. Prevalence and predictors of tobacco smoking among university students in Sylhet Division, Bangladesh. Authors: Muhammad Shaikh Hassan, Md Kamrul Hossain, Hafiz T A Khan. Published in: Oxford Academic, International Health Published on: December 4, 2018

10. Differences in prevalence and determinants of hypertension according to rural–urban place of residence among adults in Bangladesh. Authors: Gulam Muhammed Al Kibria, Krystal Swasey, Rajat Das Gupta, Allysha Choudhury, Jannatun Nayeem, Atia Sharmeen and Vanessa Burrowes. Published in: Journal of Biosocial Science | Published on: December 19, 2018
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https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)32281-5/fulltext

Collaborating Author: Mehedi Hasan, Rajat Das Gupta, Ipsita Sutradhar
https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)32278-5/fulltext

iii. Global, regional, and national incidence, prevalence, and years lived with disability for 354 diseases and injuries for 195 countries and territories, 1990–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017
Collaborating Author: Ipsita Sutradhar, Rajat Das Gupta, Mehedi Hasan
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Collaborating Author: Mehedi Hasan, Rajat Das Gupta, Ipsita Sutradhar
https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)31891-9/fulltext

Collaborating Author: Ipsita Sutradhar, Rajat Das Gupta, Mehedi Hasan
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sarabangla.net | December 3, 2018
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