

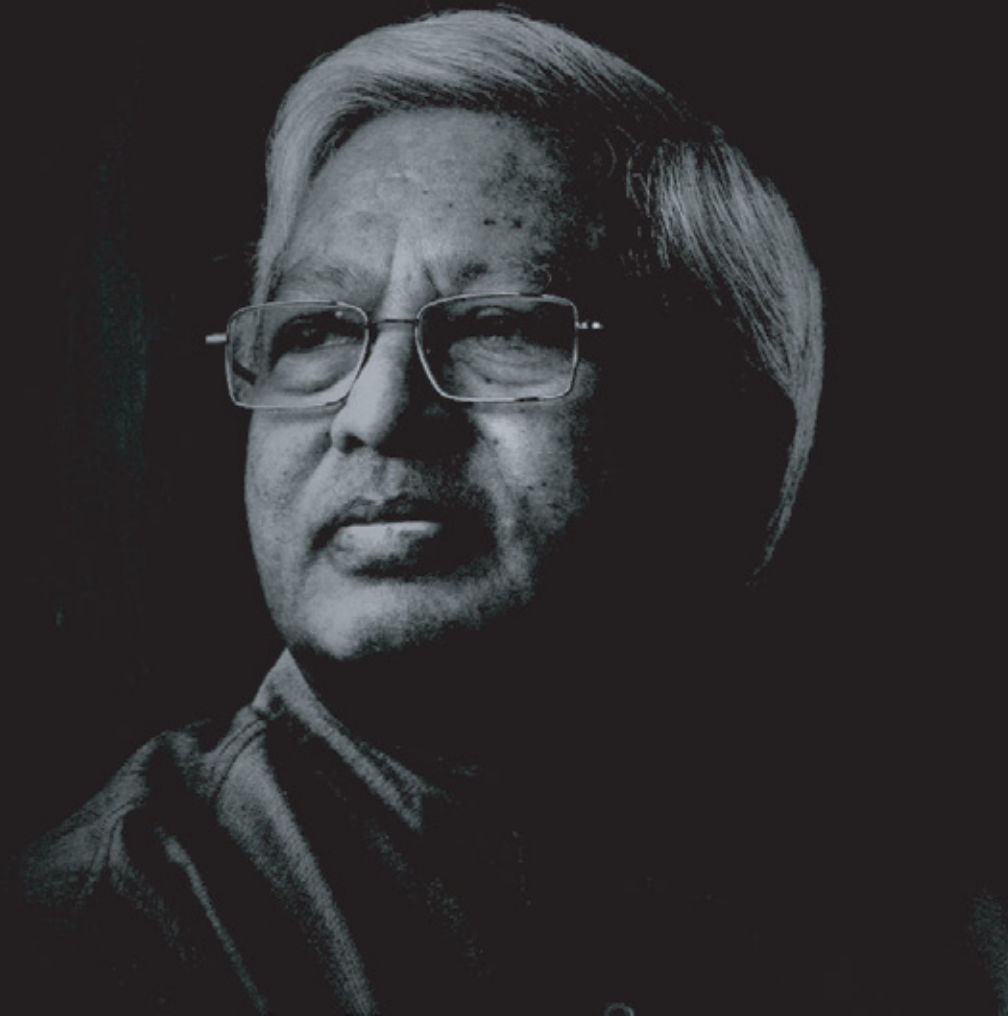


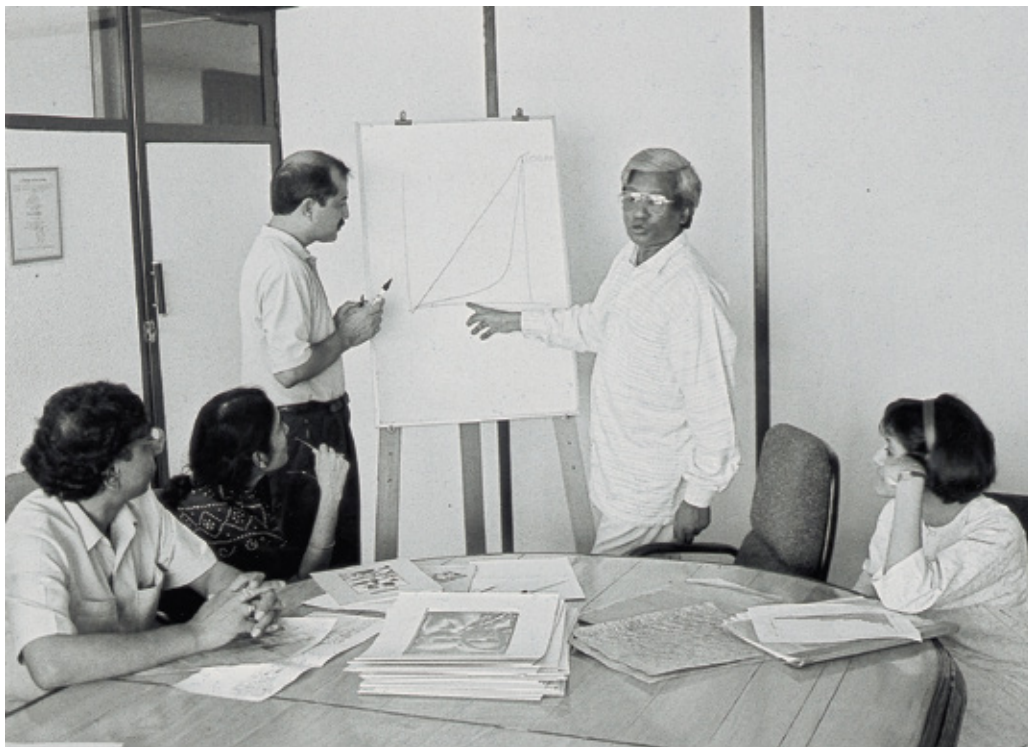
E-NEWSLETTER

Nov - Dec 2019

**SIR
FAZLE HASAN ABED
KCMG**

1936 - 2019





WE WILL NOT SAY 'REST'
IN PEACE.
THE ABED BHAI WE KNOW
WOULD NOT REST UNTIL
WE BUILD AN EQUAL WORLD

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BRAC JPGSPH RECEIVED 'PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION LEADERSHIP AWARD'

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, received the 'Public Health Education Leadership Award' for significant contributions in promoting public health education, at the 9th biennial South East Asia Public Health Education Institutions Network (SEAPHEIN) meeting held on 13-15 November 2019 in Jaipur, India.

Dr Syed Masud Ahmed, Professor and Director of the Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC), received the award on behalf of the school.

SECOND INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

The 2nd International Symposium on Community Health Workers (CHWs) was held on 22-24 November 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The symposium was organized by icddr,b with the collaboration of BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University; Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh; and Save the Children, Bangladesh. Other partners of the symposium are USAID, European Union, UKAID, Management Sciences for Health (MSH), UNICEF, BRAC, UNFPA, WHO, and Vital Strategies.

With the theme 'Potentials of CHWs in Prevention and Control of NCDs in the Context of UHC,' the symposium facilitated better strategic pathways for developing community-based programmes to prevent and control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in the context of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Dr Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, Adviser to BRAC JPGSPH, delivered one of the keynote speeches, titled 'From 10 to 100,000: Evolution on BRAC's CHW Programme' on Day 2 of the symposium.

Dr Syed Masud Ahmed, Professor, BRAC JPGSPH; and Director of the Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC); chaired two parallel sessions at the symposium. On Day 1, he chaired the session on 'CHWs in Special Situation,' and on Day 3, he chaired a session on 'CHWs in Low and Middle Income Countries.'

A parallel session on 'CHWs programmes in Low and Middle Income Countries' was held on Day 1. **Dr Nahitun Naher**, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH made an oral presentation, titled 'Learning from community health workers (CHWs) driven programmes in different contexts in Bangladesh: a scoping review' at the session. This session was chaired by **Dr Kaosar Afsana**, Professor, BRAC JPGSPH and moderated by **Shahed Hossain**, Professor, BRAC JPGSPH. Dr Afsana also moderated a panel discussion on 'BRAC's Community Health Workers and Impact on Public Health' at the symposium.

Dr Selina Amin, Project Director DMP & Head, Midwifery Education Programme; and **Dr Sharmina Rahman**, Strategic Advisor, DMP; participated in a panel discussion, titled 'Midwives as a part of Health Workforce', which was moderated by Dr Afsana. Dr Amin gave a presentation on 'Midwife as Community Health Worker' and Dr Rahman gave a presentation on 'Midwife Led Care Centers, Importance for Skills Building' at the panel discussion. DMP also showcased its overall project activities at the CHW Symposium 2019.

BRAC JPGSPH PARTICIPATED IN DHAKA LIT FEST 2019

BRAC JPGSPH participated in Dhaka Lit Fest held on 7-9 November 2019.

A documentary titled Narratives of Single Working Women in Dhaka City, produced by the Centre for Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR) at BRAC JPGSPH, which is a collection of stories of single working women in Dhaka that reflects their challenges and choices to navigate society, was screened at the event.

The screening was followed by a discussion on the stigma surrounding single working women in Bangladesh, and what women are doing to challenge this by carving out new directions for themselves, breaking through stereotypes; sometimes drawing on fiction to give inspiration to support their choices. **Farhana Alam**, Assistant Director, CGSRHR; and **Josepha Elizabeth**, participant in the documentary, together held the discussion with author and women's rights advocate **Antara Ganguli** and **Rumana Habib**, the founder of School of Fun.



BOOK LAUNCH: 'FROM THE GROUND UP' - FEATURING BRAC'S WORK IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The launch event of the book **'From the Ground Up: BRAC's Innovation in the Development of Agriculture in Bangladesh and Beyond'**; co-edited by **Dr Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury**, adviser to BRAC JPGSPH; was held at the BRAC Center in Dhaka on 4 December 2019.

The book has been published by University Press Limited (UPL). The other co-editors of the book are Muazzam Husain, Md A Saleque and Hugh Brammer. The chapters in the book have been written by Dr Jiban Krishna Biswas, Professor S D Chowdhury, Dr A K Fazlul Haque Bhuiyan, and Professor Md Saifuddin Shah.

Muhammad Abdul Mannan, Planning Minister of Bangladesh, was present as the chief guest at the event. At the event, the minister said, "There was once a scarcity of food in Bangladesh, but not anymore, due to our agriculture. We must be vigilant in all possible agricultural cases."

Dr Mushtaque Chowdhury, in his speech, said, “This book journals the significant contributions of BRAC in agriculture for the past 40 years.”

Asif Saleh, the executive director of BRAC, opened the event with his remarks, “BRAC first brought the Amrapali mango to Bangladesh. Even small contributions lead to big results and that is unknown to most people. The book highlights such contributions.”

BRAC chairperson **Hossain Zillur Rahman**, who chaired the event, remarked, “With Sir Fazle Hasan Abed’s guidance, there have been a lot of innovations in agriculture. Agriculture is not just a proud history for us, but also holds the key to a bright future.”



Photo: Dr Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury with guests, co-editors and writers at 'From the Ground Up' book launch ceremony

DR SABINA FAIZ RASHID ATTENDED THE ‘EXPANDING THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR POLICY AND INTERVENTIONS IN COX’S BAZAR’ EVENT IN DHAKA

Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid, Dean and Professor; and Director, Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR), BRAC JPGSPH attended the ‘Expanding the Evidence Base for Policy and Interventions in Cox’s Bazar’ event on 3 December 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The event was hosted by The International Growth Centre (IGC), Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA), and Yale University’s Y-RISE initiative.

Dr Rashid delivered the introduction speech of the Gender and Adolescence session of the event. The daylong event discussed analytics from the Cox’s Bazar Panel Survey (CBPS) on several topics including gender and adolescence based on the Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) and research interventions focusing on Early Childhood Development initiative.

The event featured academics and researchers from Yale University (USA), Monash University (Australia), George Washington University (USA), Chittagong University (Bangladesh); icddr,b; and others.



DR MALABIKA SARKER PRESENTED ON IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH AT YALE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE UNITED STATES

Dr Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Professor, BRAC JPG School of Public Health and Director of the Centre for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), visited the Center for Methods in Implementation and Prevention Science (CMIPS) at Yale School of Public Health on 20 November 2019 and gave a presentation on ‘Implementation Research a Catalyst for Bridging the Knowledge Gap between Discovery to Delivery.’

Dr Sarker was invited to Yale School of Public Health by Professor Donna Spiegelman. The school’s new CMIPS was created to develop and disseminate innovative methodologic approaches to address these implementation gaps and directly improve health outcomes worldwide.



DR SYED MASUD AHMED ATTENDED THE SOUTH EAST ASIA PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS NETWORK (SEAPHEIN) MEETING IN JAIPUR, INDIA

Dr Syed Masud Ahmed, Professor and Director of the Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC), BRAC JPGSPH, attended the 9th Biennial South East Asia Public Health Education Institutions Network (SEAPHEIN) meeting in Jaipur, India on 13-15 November 2019.

Dr Ahmed was a Key Speaker of the 1st Plenary Session on Day 1 of the meeting. On behalf of BRAC JPGSPH, he also received the Public Health Education Leadership Award for significant contributions of BRAC JPGSPH in promoting public health education.

More than 50 public health experts from 8 member countries of WHO-SERO including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Indonesia attended the SEAPHEIN meeting hosted by IIHMR University.



Professor Syed Masud Ahmed with health experts from around the world at the 9th Biennial SEAPHEIN meeting in Jaipur, India

DR KAOSAR AFSANA ATTENDED THE PARTNERSHIP FOR MATERNAL, NEWBORN & CHILD HEALTH (PMNCH) BOARD MEETING IN KENYA AND THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR IMPROVED NUTRITION (GAIN) BOARD MEETING IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Dr Kaosar Afsana, Professor, BRAC JPG School of Public Health, BRAC University, participated in the 34th Boarding Meeting of the PMNCH as an external reference group member in Nairobi, Kenya organised by the PMNCH housed in World Health Organization on 8-9 November 2019. At the meeting the members agreed on a process and timeline to develop the next PMNCH strategy covering the period 2021 to 2025.

Dr Afsana also participated in the Board Meeting of Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) as a member of the Board of Directors in Geneva, Switzerland on 5-6 December 2019.

DR ZAHIDUL QUAYYUM CHAIRED A SESSION IN THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS (CHWS)

Dr Zahidul Quayyum, PhD, Professor; and Co-Director of Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH), chaired a session on ‘CHWs in Universal Health Coverage’ in the 2nd International Symposium on Community Health Workers (CHWs).

The event was held on 22-24 November 2019 at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka. The theme of the symposium was ‘Potentials of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in Prevention and Control of NCDs in the Context of UHC.’



UPDATES FROM DR NEPAL C DEY, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, BRAC JPGSPH

Dr Nepal Chandra Dey, Adjunct Professor, BRAC JPGSPH, gave a talk on WASH in coastal area of Bangladesh at 5th Sub-Regional Workshop on Community Resilience to Climate Change in the Bay of Bengal as Special Guest, held on 20 November 2019, Spectra Convention Centre, Dhaka.

He also gave a lecture on Impact of climate change in agriculture and food security at the Workshop on “Impact of Climate Change on Rural Livelihood”, held on 2-4 December 2019 at CCDB HOPE Foundation, Baroipara, Savar, Dhaka.

Dr Dey joined as Co-Chair in the session on Environmental Degradation at International Symposium on Environment, Disaster and Health, held on 18-21 December 2019 in University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

He also joined as a Member of Board of Examiners of a Doctoral Thesis Defense, IWFM, BUET, held on 17 Dec 2019.



Spectra Convention Centre, Dhaka



CCDB HOPE Foundation, Baroipara, Savar, Dhaka



University of Dhaka, Bangladesh



IWFM, BUET



MPH STUDENTS FROM THE FIFTEENTH COHORT CONDUCTED PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION FOR SUMMATIVE LEARNING PROJECT (SLP)

The 15th cohort of Master of Public Health students of BRAC JPGSPH conducted primary data collection from the field for SLP from 23 November 2019 to 15 December 2019.

The students worked in groups and conducted quantitative survey and qualitative interviews with the targeted respondents in different population and sites in the urban areas of Dhaka city on issues related to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) of young people; Heat, Housing and Health; Urban Health; Non-Communicable Disease (NCD); and Model Pharmacy.

The SRH group conducted interviews with students and teachers from 10 Bangla medium secondary schools in Dhaka to explore the current situation of integration and implementation of comprehensive sexuality education in secondary schools of Bangladesh.

The Heat, Housing and Health group interviewed the urban slum residents of Korail, Dhaka to look at the perceptions, prevalence, coping mechanisms, and associated housing characteristics regarding heat-related health problems, including heat stress and sleep disturbance.

The NCD group carried out a quantitative survey with female breast cancer patients at the National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital (NICRH), Mohakhali, Dhaka.

The Urban Health Group collected data from college-going students, between 15-19 years of age, in Dhaka metropolitan area on the influences of lifestyle behaviours and neighbourhood environment on the nutritional status of older adolescent college students.

The group working on model pharmacy interviewed dispensers, consumers at model pharmacies in both Dhaka City Corporations to understand the current situation regarding compliance with the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) guidelines for model pharmacy and model medicine shop, challenges and opportunities of implementing the program and perspectives of the stakeholders (providers, consumers, authorities) involved. The group also interviewed policymakers of different levels related to drug administration.



THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP OF THE ERASMUS+ TRANS4M-PH PROJECT

The 4th international workshop of the ERASMUS+ Trans4m-PH project was held on 4-7 November 2019 at Asian University for Women campus in Chattogram, Bangladesh.

Dr Harriet Mutonyi, Uganda Martyrs University, was a guest mentor at the workshop.

This workshop was on Components 3 and 4, Faculty Facilitator Development and Faculty Professional Skills Training with technical partner Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and all the implementing partners of the project.

The purpose of this workshop was to finalize facilitator development training to the implementing partners (Asian University for Women, International Centre for Climate Change and Development, and BRAC JPGSPH) and to demonstrate pedagogical methodologies.

The objective of this workshop was to train the course instructors and facilitators on how to conduct learner-centric and competency-based classrooms as well as how to generate a competency-based assessment for both learners and facilitators.



WORKSHOP ON FUNDAMENTALS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: 'THINKING QUALITATIVELY'

BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University organized a three-day-long workshop on fundamentals of qualitative research, titled 'Thinking Qualitatively' on 17-19 December 2019.

This training workshop aimed at introducing the basic ideas behind the qualitative research and teach the participants about data collection, analysis and interpretation in qualitative research. The training also involved hands on exercises. 30 participants from different organizations took part in the workshop.

The workshop was conducted by **Dr Shahaduz Zaman** who is working as a Reader in Medical Anthropology and Global Health at the Department of Global Health and Infection, University of Sussex, UK.



HAITI HEALTH SYSTEM: STANDARDS AND PRACTICE

The seminar was delivered at the Video Conference room of BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University on 25 November 2019 by **Dr Alain Casseus**, a Project Manager who is overseeing a USAID related project, a PIH Canada funded project on malnutrition, and two Mass General Hospital research projects funded by NIH and The Gates.

Dr Casseus explained the healthcare system in Haiti and spoke about issues such as the challenges faced by Community Health Workers (CHW), the shortage of funds and human resources. Dr Alain also spoke about how the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Haiti collaborates with NGOs and INGOs working in Haiti to tackle the challenges in health care and sustain their current health care regime.



‘MATERNAL HEALTH VOUCHER SCHEME AND CAESAREAN SECTION RATE: ESTIMATING THE EFFECT OF SUPPLIER-INDUCED DEMAND IN RURAL BANGLADESH’

Dr Mahmud Khan, Professor in the Department of Health Services Policy and Management at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, USA, presented at the seminar held at the Tele-Video Conference room of BRAC JPGSPH on 26 December 2019.

In his presentation, he shared the findings from the study on the rate of C-section; the **Maternal Health Voucher Scheme (MHVS)**, a demand-side financing strategy; and how the incentives affected consumer behaviour. The study was carried out on poor rural women specifically. In 2015-2016, the DSF-MHVS enrolled about 107,000 beneficiaries, about 3% of all pregnancies in Bangladesh.



SMOKELESS TOBACCO CONSUMPTION AND STILLBIRTH: POPULATION-BASED CASE-CONTROL STUDY IN RURAL BANGLADESH

BRAC JPGSPH held the seminar in the Tele-Video Conference Room on 4 December 2019 which was delivered by **Dr Mohammad Shakhawat Hossain**.

Dr Hossain is a researcher of the Centre for Primary Health Care & Equity, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. In his presentation, he shared the findings from his study on the consumption of smokeless tobacco among women in rural Bangladesh and the role it plays in increasing the rate of stillbirth.



IS HEALTH MICROINSURANCE A VIABLE ROUTE TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE INFORMAL ECONOMY?

A seminar titled ‘**Is Health Microinsurance a Viable Route to Provide Health Care to the People of the Informal Economy?**’, organized by BRAC JPGSPH, was delivered by **Dr Syed Abdul Hamid**, at the Tele-Video Conference Room on 21 November 2019.

Dr Syed Abdul Hamid, PhD in Economics (UK), is a Professor of Health Economics and served as the Director at the Institute of Health Economics (IHE), University of Dhaka.

In this presentation, Dr Hamid showed how Health microinsurance (HMI), which has been used around the globe since the early 1990s for financial risk protection against health shocks in poverty-stricken rural populations in low-income countries to increase access to healthcare or utilization of healthcare, fails to provide financial risk protection against health shocks under its current practices in South Asia.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs) IN BANGLADESH

CONSISTENCY AND QUALITY CHECK OF SURVEY DATA

The nationwide survey among individuals with disabilities of the 'Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Bangladesh' project concluded on 22 October 2019.

More than 5000 PWDs were interviewed across 8 divisions of Bangladesh. To recheck the responses to improve data quality, a team of 8 external researchers have completed 5% data recheck from 8 December 2019 to 21 December 2019 to confirm the validity and reliability of the collected data. The team has started analyzing survey data.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative data collection of the project have started in November 2019 and is still ongoing. The research team has adopted a focused ethnographic approach to repeatedly follow the selected participants for case studies along with community mapping, informal discussions and observations.

Participants for case studies are being selected purposively from quantitative sample based on certain criteria and expected to explore the situation of persons with disabilities in rural, urban and peri-urban areas from different zones of Bangladesh, including coastal, riverine, hill tracts and drought-prone areas.

The concentration areas for this focused ethnography are: understanding and perception around different types of disabilities, persons with disabilities, their living experiences, SRHR knowledge, sexual and reproductive health sufferings, perception around sex & sexuality, SRHR care seeking behaviors, needs and barriers in accessing SRHR services. To triangulate the findings from these case studies Key Informant Interviews are also being conducted with health care providers from both formal and informal sector at all three tiers of health facility (primary, secondary, tertiary) in the respective zones. In addition, Facility observations are being done using a validated checklist to identify if the health facilities are 'Disabled Friendly'.





BRAC JPGSPH RESEARCH ASSISTANT ATTENDED 'THE FOURTH WORLD DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION CONFERENCE 2019' IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Amina Amin, Research Assistant of BRAC JPGSPH attended 'The 4th World Conference on Disability and Rehabilitation Conference, 2019' organized by the International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIIM) in Bangkok, Thailand on 7-8 November, 2019.

Amina Amin presented an abstract titled 'Documenting the Challenges of Conducting Research on Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) of Persons with Disabilities: Lessons from Bangladesh' for which she has also secured the best presenter award for the respective Panel. Her presentation was based on the findings from a nationwide study of BRAC JPGSPH: 'Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh'. The main theme of the paper was documenting the field level challenges encountered by the research team while conducting this research and the strategies adopted to resolve those challenges.



UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS OF YOUNG MALES IN BANGLADESH: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

Qualitative data was collected from 22 October 2019 to 22 November 2019 for this project, funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which aims to learn about the knowledge, practices and perceptions of male youth towards SRHR.

Before collecting qualitative data, the team conducted a pilot field study at Dhobaura in Mymensingh. The study used a focused ethnographic case study approach to collect qualitative data. The team selected these four sites based on ecological diversity, geographical setting, and availability of targeted age respondents to capture different scenarios through a focused ethnographic approach. A team of eight researchers comprising of four groups (two members in each group) spent one month in each of the four locations – Bandarban, Chattogram, Sunamganj, and Satkhira districts – to collect qualitative data. Data analysis and coding are simultaneously ongoing.

The project is implemented under the Center of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR). **Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid**, Dean and Professor, BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University, is the PI of this project. **Farzana A Misha**, Research Coordinator, BRAC JPGSPH is the project coordinator.



DISSEMINATION SEMINAR ON THE ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES OF ROHINGYA WOMEN IN ROHINGYA CAMPS OF COX'S BAZAR

BRAC JPGSPH; and World Health Organization (WHO) hosted a dissemination seminar on 28 November 2019 in Cox's Bazar to disseminate the study findings of an ethnographic assessment on the SRH behaviour of Rohingya Women in the refugee camps of Cox's Bazar.

Dr Kaosar Afsana, Professor, BRAC JPGSPH, and PI of the project, chaired and moderated the dissemination seminar and commenced the program with a welcome address. **Adama Thorlie**, Risk Communication consultant, WHO, subsequently gave an opening speech describing the purpose of the study. The study findings were then presented by **Nazrana Khaled**, Deputy Coordinator, BRAC JPGSPH.

Dr Mohammad Abdul Matin, Civil Surgeon, Cox's Bazar District, attended the program as a special guest and **Dr Abu Mohammad Toha**, Health Coordinator, Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner's (RRRC) Office gave the closing speech. **Dr Pintu Kanti Bhattacharjee**, Deputy-Director, Family Planning and **Professor Brigadier General (Retd.) Mohammad Ali**, Chief Coordinator from the Ministry of Health and Family Planning in Cox's Bazar were other notable guests in attendance.

147 participants including health professionals, development workers, academicians, researchers, stakeholders from the government of Bangladesh, UN bodies, and NGOs working at the forefront of the Rohingya crisis joined the seminar along with local media representatives. A group discussion was held later for the participants to identify practical recommendations based on the findings of the study.

The project Co-PI is **Atiya Rahman**, Senior Research Fellow (former), BRAC JPGSPH. **Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid**, Professor and Dean, and Director of the Centre for Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR); **Dr Zahidul Quayyum**, Professor and Director, Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH); and **AKM Mazharul Islam**, Adjunct Professor, BRAC JPGSPH are the technical experts of this project.



SHARING FINDINGS FROM EARLY CHILD MARRIAGE PROJECT FUNDED BY IDRC (CANADA)

BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University hosted a knowledge dissemination event on 1 December 2019 for the Prevention of Early Child Marriage in Urban Slums of Bangladesh project, funded by International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

The Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (CGSRHR) at BRAC JPGSPH organized the event which was held at the Six Season Hotel in Gulshan.

The study, which was led by Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and Dean, and Director of CGSRHR, aimed to understand the factors that shape early marriage among adolescent girls in urban slums and to review programs and policies in relation to early marriage in Bangladesh.

The research findings from the three-year-long project were shared with multiple stakeholders working on issues of child marriage, gender and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in Bangladesh and the region. Additionally a book titled "Lives of Adolescent Girls in Urban Slums" based on the research findings was launched at the event.

Dr Navsharan Singh, Senior Programme Specialist of Governance and Justice at the International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) Asia regional office, was present as the chief guest at the event.

A mobile app in Bangla for Android devices featuring SRHR information for young people was also launched at the. The app was funded by NWO-WOTRO (Netherlands) and unveiled in the presence of Special Guest Mr Jeroen Steeghs, Deputy Head of Mission and Head of Economic Affairs and Development Cooperation, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

In that event, three other research projects of CGSRHR also presented their research findings. Bachera Aktar, Assistant Director, CGSRHR presented findings from Digital Sister project and Kazi Sameen Nasar, Research Associate presented findings from Breaking the Shame project. Both the projects are funded by NOW-WOTRO, the Netherlands. Farhana Alam Bhuiyan, Assistant Director, CGSRHR presented findings from a project titled Exploring Sexuality of Physically Disabled People Through Photo-Narratives in Bangladesh, funded by Share-Net International.

PATHWAYS TO EQUITABLE HEALTHY CITIES

BRAC JPGSPH RESEARCH TEAM VISITED THE LANDFILLS IN DHAKA

A research team of BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University, under the Wellcome Trust funded project 'Pathways to Equitable Healthy Cities,' implemented under the Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH), visited the Matuail and Aminbazar Landfill on 27 November 2019 and 24 December 2019 respectively.

These two landfills are the final disposal site for the municipal solid waste of the Dhaka South City Corporation and Dhaka North City Corporation respectively. The purpose of the visit was to explore the solid waste management system of these two landfills, which included observing the waste transfer, management, leachate collection and treatment process and also the effects of the landfill on the surrounding population and environment.

Dr Zahidul Quayyum, Professor and Co-Director of CUEH is the PI of the project and **Dr Tanvir Hasan**, Assistant Professor & Co-Director of CUEH, is the Co-PI. Imperial College London is the partner in this four-year-long project that started in 2018.

MEETING WITH JICA WASTE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The BRAC JPGSPH research team under this project conducted a meeting with the waste management unit of JICA at Dhaka South City Corporation, Nagar Bhaban on 19 December 2019. The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss the various aspects of waste management from the primary collection of waste from households all the way to the final disposal of waste at the landfill.

During the course of the meeting, JICA mentioned many important initiatives which they are undertaking in partnership with the Dhaka North and Dhaka South City Corporation. They are also coordinating with the two city corporations regarding compilation and publication of Dhaka North and Dhaka South Waste Management reports and New Clean Dhaka Master Plan 2018-2032. At present, JICA is pursuing a ward-based approach to implement sustainable waste management and there are 4 different ward-based approaches ongoing.

JICA also mentioned they conduct need-based awareness building and community engagement programmes, for a variety of stakeholders in association with the DNCC and DSCC including leaflet distribution, public advertisements. The meeting ended on a cooperative note and both the BRAC JPG team and JICA team discussed the scope for further collaborations.





STAKEHOLDER MEETING: ‘LANCET COMMISSION STUDY: UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE- GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY- HEALTH PROMOTION TRIANGLE: BANGLADESH CASE STUDY’

A stakeholder meeting with key members from the Government of Bangladesh was held for **Lancet Commission Study** project, under the Centre of Science of Implementation and Scale-up (CoE-SISU), BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University.

At the meeting, members concluded that there is a significant lack of synergy between UHC and GHS which needs to be resolved through proper coordination between different agencies within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

The PI of the project is **Dr Malabika Sarker**, Associate Dean & Professor; Director Research, and Director of CoE-SISU. **Dr Syed Masud Ahmed**, Professor & Director of Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC) is the Co-PI of the project. **Mrittika Barua**, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH, is the Project Coordinator.

The project is funded by Wellcome Trust; and the University of Heidelberg, Germany is the partner of this project.

IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH ON KANGAROO MOTHER CARE SERVICES IN BANGLADESH

The research findings of the UNICEF funded KMC project, implemented under Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU), was presented in the National Newborn Health Conference on 17 November 2019 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC).

Mr Zahid Maleque, MP, Honourable Minister of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was present in the conference as chief guest. The conference was organized by Directorate General of Health Services. The daylong conference also celebrated world prematurity day. On behalf of the research team, **Dr Saima Mehjabeen** presented the findings. **Dr Mowtushi Matin**, Research Associate of BRAC JPGSPH, also took part in the conference.

Dr Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Professor, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University; Director, Research; and Director, CoE-SISU, is the PI of the project and **Dr Yameen Mazumder**, Senior Project Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH, is the Co-PI.





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

Data collection for the project 'Process Evaluation of the Integration and Implementation of VA in the CRVS System of Bangladesh' has been completed in all three sites. The study was being conducted adopting qualitative approach from October 2019 to December 2019.

Study sites include three sub-districts of Gazipur, namely Gazipur Sadar, Kapasia and Sreepur where Verbal Autopsy (VA) has been implemented for the longest.

In Bangladesh, VA is being used for death outside health facilities in selected areas. The primary purpose of VA in CRVS is to provide statistical trend data at population level on the cause-specific mortality fractions for monitoring major health interventions, universal health coverage and sustainable development goals. Since 2017, close to 25,000 VAs have been conducted in 13 sub-districts of eight districts across Bangladesh. The process evaluation of the implemented program will help the involved agencies to identify any gaps and factors responsible and also effective strategies to address those which can be included in policy change if necessary.

Dr Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Professor, Director Research; and Director CoE-SISU, is the PI of the Project and **Dr Yameen Mazumder**, Senior Project Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH, is the Co-PI. Cabinet Division, Government of Bangladesh is the partner in this project which is being funded by Vital Strategies, Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health (D4H) initiative.



Dr Malabika Sarker



Shabab Haider

TWO MEMBERS FROM THE 'CLIMATE CHANGE, MIGRATION, AND HEALTH SYSTEMS RESILIENCE IN HAITI AND BANGLADESH (CLIMHB)' PROJECT ATTENDED THE PROJECT LAUNCH WORKSHOP IN PARIS, FRANCE

Dr Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean & Professor, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, and Director of Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU); and **Shabab Haider**, Research Assistant, CoE-SISU; attended the Launch Workshop for the two-year-long project 'Climate Change, Migration, and Health Systems Resilience in Haiti and Bangladesh (ClimHB).'

The workshop was held on 12-13 December 2019 in Paris and was attended by representatives of the research teams from each of the three countries involved (France, Haïti and Bangladesh) as well as additional consultants. The purpose of the meeting was to determine a research entry point and reframe the research questions accordingly; design a methodological framework, and develop a work plan for protocol submission.

This project will be examining the effects of climate change-induced migration on the health system resilience of Haïti and Bangladesh.

The project partners are the **Centre Population et Développement (CEPED)** of l'Université Paris Descartes, l'Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), and l'**École Supérieure d'Infotronique d'Haïti (ESIH)**. The project is funded by **L'Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR)**. Dr Malabika Sarker is the PI of the project and Shabab Haider is the project coordinator.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM BRAC JPGSPH ATTENDED THE ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING ORGANIZED BY SOCIAL POLICY, EVALUATION, ANALYTICS AND RESEARCH (SPEAR) SECTION OF UNICEF BANGLADESH

The SPEAR section of UNICEF Bangladesh organized a half day-long annual review with its ongoing and promising partners collectively on 9 December 2019 at Hotel Intercontinental, Dhaka.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the progress of the activities, outputs accomplished, solutions to challenges/bottlenecks if any in the period of January-November 2019 and to plan high priority activities and agreed upon outputs for the year 2020.

Since the establishment, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) and SPEAR, UNICEF have been working together under PCA in various related fields like implementation research, development of advocacy materials and conduction of advocacy programmes, basic training and orientation programmes for Government officials, development of course curriculum etc.

On behalf of CoE-SISU, **Dr Yameen Mazumdar**, Senior Project Consultant, BRAC JPGSPH; and **Dr Mowtushi Matin**, Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH, presented the progress in activities, discussed outputs accomplished and also took part in question-answer session in response to queries. Representatives from Cabinet Division, Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and other related partners of SPEAR were present in the meeting.



Presentation by Dr. Yameen Mazumder



Presentation by Dr. Mowtushi Matin

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

Final report of the Study from this UNICEF funded project has been submitted on 31 December 2019.

The study had two phases, where the first phase was completed for formative research from May 2019 to June 2019. The second phase of the study started adopting embedded mixed-methods design using both quantitative and qualitative approach. Data collection of the second phase started from 21 September 2019 and was completed on 24 October 2019. Study sites included Kaliganj (Gazipur district), Mohonganj (Netrokona district), Anowara (Chattogram district) and Fultola (Khulna District).

Dr Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Professor, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University; Director, Research; and Director, CoE-SISU, is the PI of the project and **Dr Yameen Mazumder**, Senior Project Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH, is the Co-PI. The Cabinet Division, Government of Bangladesh is the partner in this project.



Conducting FGD



Interview at Union Digital Centre



Video shooting on Kaliganj Model



ONE HEALTH CONFERENCE 2019

Representatives from Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC), BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University, attended the 10th One Health Conference 2019 held on 26-28 November 2019 in Dhaka.

The event was organized by the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

Dr Syed Masud Ahmed, Professor and Director, CoE-HS&UHC, attended a panel session as a panellist. The session was titled **‘Inter-professional Workforce Development for Achieving Health Security’**. In this session, he shared the current scenario of Bangladesh health system, the role of the pharmaceutical industry, and its future perspective.

Dr Nahitun Naher, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH, presented her abstract on the 2nd day (27 November 2019) of the conference. Her poster presentation topic was **‘Addressing governance challenges of preparedness and response to infectious threats and antimicrobial resistance through a sustainable, coordinated international network: SoNAR-Global’**, where she highlighted the importance of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in Bangladeshi context and SoNAR-Global project objectives, initiatives, and activities as well.

Samiun Nazrin Bente Kamal Tune, Senior Research Associate, BRAC JPGSPH, shared the findings of a scoping review on the 3rd day (28 November 2019) of the conference. The title of her abstract was **‘Prescribing antibiotic drugs for Bangladeshi patients: evidence from a scoping review’** where she explained the current scenario of prescribing antibiotics by formal and informal health service providers in Bangladesh.





‘GLOBAL SOCIAL SCIENCES NETWORK FOR INFECTIOUS THREATS AND ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (SONAR-GLOBAL)’ PROJECT TEAM MEETING WITH PARTNER NIVEL

A two-day-long meeting was conducted by Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC) team on 2-3 December 2019 with the partner, Mr Michel Duckers from NIVEL for the project **SoNAR-Global** project.

The meeting was held at Dean's Conference Room of BRAC JPGSPH. During this meeting, the JPGSPH team shared the SoNAR-Global project update with the partner. Based on meeting discussions, further steps and project decisions were made.

JPGSPH team presented the findings of two rapid reviews. One is about Community Engagement (CE) and another is on Vulnerability Assessment (VA) in Bangladesh context. Based on these review findings and partners' suggestions, tools will be developed for field data collection. The overall study plan and timeline were also reviewed and finalized during this meeting.

The project is funded by the European Union and it has one national and 10 international partners from eight countries. **Dr Syed Masud Ahmed**, Professor and Director of CoE-HS&UHC, BRAC JPGSPH, is the PI and **Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid**, Dean and Professor, BRAC JPGSPH, is the Co-PI of the project. **Dr Nahitun Naher**, Senior Research Fellow, BRAC JPGSPH, is the project coordinator.





‘UNDERSTANDING THE PATTERNS AND DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH OF SOUTH ASIAN PEOPLE: SOUTH ASIAN BIOBANK’ PROJECT RECRUITED A NEW TEAM

The Centre for Non-communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN), BRAC JPGSPH, has recruited the third team for the NCD surveillance project titled ‘Understanding the patterns and determinants of health of South Asian people: South Asian Biobank.’ The team received twenty days of extensive training for data collection in December 2019 at Parbatipur field office. The team was later deployed in Sylhet for data collection.

Dr Malabika Sarker, Associate Dean and Professor, BRAC JPG School of Public Health and Director of the Centre for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU) is the PI of the project and **Dr Malay Kanti Mridha**, Associate Professor & Director of Centre of Excellence for Non-Communicable Disease (CNCDN) is the Co-PI. The Project is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The project partners are Non-communicable Disease Control (NCDC), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS); Imperial College London; National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD); Bangladesh Institute of Research and Rehabilitation for Diabetes, Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (BIRDEM); BRAC and Bangladesh University of Health Science (BUHS).



DEVELOPING MIDWIVES PROJECT (DMP) CELEBRATED 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

DMP celebrated 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, an international campaign to challenge violence against women and girls on 12 December 2019. This year's theme was 'Orange the World: Generation Equality Stands against Rape.'

On this occasion, DMP, BRACU Hub shared a book amongst students of all 7 academic sites of the partner organizations. The book, titled 'If Only Someone Had Broken the Silence' by Kamla Bhasin, is about sexual violence on children. Based on the book, a drama was developed and staged which was evaluated by inspiring local women. These women also shared their journey towards becoming a woman leader to inspire students. Some academic sites also arranged a discussion session on midwifery and cultural programmes on the theme. In the LAMB academic site, a rally was brought outside the campus.

In Dhaka, urban academic students were divided into 10 groups. Guests visited all groups and evaluated their performances. Dr Kaosar Afsana, Professor, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, was present as a special guest and she shared her journey of growing up as a woman leader.



DMP ATTENDED TWENTY-EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE AND FORTY-SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Representatives of the DMP attended 28th 'International Scientific Conference and the 46th AGM with the theme 'Quality Care for Women's Health' organized by Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh (OGSB) on 18-21 December 2019.

Dr Selina Amin, Project Director DMP & Head, Midwifery Education Programme, was present as a panellist at a roundtable session on 'Promoting Vaginal Birth and Optimizing CS' where she shared her views in favour of midwives. On the following day, Dr Selina Amin gave a presentation on 'Respectful maternity care as an integral part of midwifery Impact in increasing normal vaginal delivery' and Dr Sharmina Rahman, Strategic Advisor, presented on 'Community engagement in Midwifery education enhanced the competence and confidence of midwives.'



DMP & MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA) TOGETHER HELD A TRAINING SESSION ON UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

Intending to ensure student's wellbeing, DMP partnered with Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) to design a simple training on understanding mental health sessions for 14 Gender Focals and Hostel Managers on 5 November 2019 at the LAMB Academic Site, Dinajpur. Monira Rahman, National Trainer for Mental Health First Aid Bangladesh and Rubina Jahan, Counsellor of DMP, conducted the training sessions.



DMP CELEBRATED OPEN SCHOOL DAY

DMP observed 'Open School Day' program across seven academic sites in November 2019. On this occasion, academic sites organized discussions on midwifery education in the country coupled with cultural events.

Apart from these programs, stalls on family planning, nutrition, vaginal delivery and helping baby's breath, postpartum haemorrhage were exhibited to augment awareness on health issues. People from the local community visited stalls displayed by midwifery students and received relevant information related to health and hygiene.

NOVEMBER

Study protocol to assess the impact of an integrated nutrition intervention on the growth and development of children under two in rural Bangladesh. Authors: Gulshan Ara, Kazi Istiaque Sanin, Mansura Khanam, Shafiqul Alam Sarker, Sihan Sadat Khan, Mahfuza Rifat, Imran Ahmed Chowdhury, Sufia Askari, **Kaosar Afsana**, and Tahmeed Ahmed. Published in BMC Public Health | Published on November 1, 2019.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7777-y>

Health shock and preference instability: assessing health-state dependency of willingness-to-pay for corrective eyeglasses. Authors: **Muhammed Nazmul Islam**, **Atonu Rabbani**, and **Malabika Sarker**. Published in the BMC Health Economics Review | Published on November 7, 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13561-019-0249-3>

Association between height and hypertension in the adult Nepalese population: Findings from a nationally representative survey. Authors: **Rajat Das Gupta**, **Shams Shabab Haider**, Mohammad Rashidul Hashan, Muhammad Aziz Rahman, and **Malabika Sarker**. Published in the Wiley Online Library - Health Science Reports | Published on November 7, 2019

<https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.141>

Prevalence of multimorbidity among Bangladeshi adult population: a nationwide cross-sectional study. Authors: Khan N, Rahman M, Mitra D, **Afsana K**, Published in BMJ Open. First published November 28, 2019. Online issue publication

November 28, 2019. doi: [10.1136/bmjopen-2019-030886](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-030886)

DECEMBER

Estimated societal costs of stroke in the UK based on a discrete event simulation. Authors: Anita Patel, Vladislav Berdunov, **Zahidul Quayyum**, Derek King, Martin Knapp, and Raphael Wittenberg. Published by the Oxford University Press on behalf of the British Geriatrics Society | Published on November 7, 2019.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afz162>

Determinants of health seeking behavior for chronic non-communicable diseases and related out-of-pocket expenditure: results from a cross-sectional survey in northern Bangladesh. Authors: Rasul BF, Kalmus O, **Sarker M**, Adib HI, Hossain MS, Hasan MZ, Brenner S, Nazneen S, Islam MN and De Allegri M. Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition. December. (2019) 38:48

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41043-019-0195-z>

Mapping disparities in education across low- and middle-income countries Authors: Nicholas Graetz, Lauren Woyczynski, Katherine F. Wilson, Jason B. Hall, Kalkidan Hassen Abate, **Rajat Das Gupta**, Emmanuela Gakidou & Simon I. Hay Published in Nature. Published: 25 December 2019.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1872-1>



‘ব্র্যাক, আবেদ ভাই ও আমি’ ‘BRAC, Abed Bhai and I’

<http://bit.ly/2MYv16C>

<http://bit.ly/36ss0Iz>

| Bonik Barta

‘আবেদ ভাই: সাম্প্রতিক কিছু কথোপকথন’ ‘Abed Bhai: Some recent conversations’

<http://bit.ly/আবেদ-ভাই-সাম্প্রতিক-কিছু-কথোপকথন>

| Prothom Alo



Prof Mushtaque Chowdhury made adviser to FAO

http://bit.ly/Prof_Mushtaque_FAO_adviser

| Dhaka Tribune

<http://bit.ly/2THdunF>

| Kaler Kantho



যেহীন আহমদ ও চার দশকের গ্রামোন্নয়ন
(Jeheen Ahmed and Four Decades of Rural Development)

- Prof Mushtaque Chowdhury

<http://bit.ly/38oDgRX>

| BDNews24



আমাদের অর্জন আমাদের উদ্বেগ

Our Achievements Our Concerns - Ahmed

- Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury

<http://bit.ly/2R9gart>

| Prothom Alo



‘বস্তিতে বাল্যবিবাহ ৮২%’

82% Child Marriage in Slums

http://bit.ly/childmarriage_in_slums

| Prothom Alo



Promoting a broader understanding of SRHR

<http://bit.ly/2NjIsP3>

| The Daily Star



কৃষি খাতের সব ক্ষেত্রে হতে হবে স্াবলম্বী

We must be vigilant in all possible agricultural cases

<http://bit.ly/3ac3uJ9>

| Prothom Alo

<http://bit.ly/2Tqvzq7>

| Amader Shomoy

<http://bit.ly/2FQICsV>

| Bangla Tribune

<http://bit.ly/36WVZUp>

| Bangladesh Shongbad Shongstha (BSS)

<http://bit.ly/2uOKk8w>

| Ajker Bazar