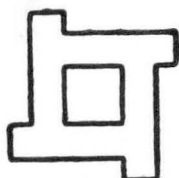


THE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DIVISION

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BRAC

BANGLADESH RURAL ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

66 MOHAKHALI COMMERCIAL AREA

DHAKA-1212

THE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DIVISION
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Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
66 Mohakhali Commercial Area
Dhaka

INTRODUCTION

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a Bangladeshi non-governmental organisation (NGO). It was started in early 1972 as a relief effort to help the returning refugees of a remote area of Sunamganj district following the War of Liberation. Recognizing that mere relief was not a longterm solution to improving people's lives, BRAC started a community development programme in late 1972. By 1977, it became clear to BRAC that a community approach to development would not reach those most in need i.e., the landless and other disadvantaged sections of the community. The whole strategy of BRAC was changed and the effort was targetted at those who were landless and/or sold their manual labour for living.

During the past 15 years or so, BRAC has developed and expanded enormously. It is now the largest NGO in Bangladesh. Activities now range on a wider area of rural development. BRAC's Rural Development Programme (RDP) is a front-line project in which credit is disbursed to landless and other target groups. In Integrated Development Programme (located in Sulla, Manikganj and Jamalpur) different programmes relevant to the need of rural Bangladeshis including education, health, agriculture and economic activities are tested and implemented. The Child Survival Programme (CSP), a successor to BRAC's nationwide oral rehydration therapy (ORT) programme for diarrhoea, is testing two approaches to primary health care: (a) a selective programme on ORT, immunization and vitamin-A conducted in several areas of North Bengal and greater Chittagong district and (b) a comprehensive programme with eight components in five upazilas. The Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) programme is an effort to develop and test out educational programmes for those children who can not attend or drop out of the formal system. Apart from the above, BRAC projects also include a Training and Resource Centre (TARC), a Rural Enterprise Programme (REP) and a Research and Evaluation Division (RED).

THE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DIVISION (RED)

The Research and Evaluation Division is an independent unit within BRAC. Established in 1975 to compile monthly reports on different field programmes, the Division has grown into a large professional unit. The Division now occupies almost a full floor of BRAC's 6 storey office building at Mohakhali in Dhaka.

Compared to 1975, when only one statistician working for RED could not be utilized full time, the Division now has twelve full-time staff including three Ph.Ds. Even this is not considered enough to carry out the many studies needed for different BRAC projects. The total strength of RED now is more than 80 with 55 in the field.

The focus of RED activities is essentially the BRAC need for research and evaluation. It plays an effective and significant role in the conception, planning, implementation and evaluation of BRAC programmes. Research not directly related to BRAC but relevant to rural Bangladesh is also carried out so that BRAC and other partners

can better understand and conceptualize rural processes. Depending upon the availability of staff time and other necessary resources, REI also helps other NGOs in evaluating their programmes.

RED in 1987

The year 1987 was a very busy year for the Research and Evaluation Division. Many Studies which were initiated in 1986 or before were completed and several new studies undertaken. The following gives a summary of activities of RED in 1987.

New Recruitment and Staff Development

In order to meet the growing need of increased activities, several new staff members joined to strengthen RED.

- a) Dr. Safiqul Islam, a former Assistant Professor at Budapest University, joined as Research Economist
- b) Dr. M. Nazrul Islam, a former physician at the Chandpur project of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), joined as Medical Officer (Research)
- c) Mr. Munir Ahmed, a former staff of the Child Survival Programme of BRAC who worked as a process documentor, joined RED as Economist
- d) Mr. Chitta Ranjan Das, a former staff of the Child Survival Programme of BRAC who worked as a process documentor, joined RED as Sociologist
- d) Dr. L. A. Banu and Dr. M. Mahmud joined RED as short term consultants on Education and Economics respectively.

Three staff members were also promoted. They are Mr. Zafar Ahmed (Research Economist), Mr. Sadequr Rahman Chowdhury (Staff Statistician) and Miss Zarina Nahar Kabir (Staff Economist).

The following gives a brief of the staff development activities of RED in 1987.

- a) Dr. A.M.R. Chowdhury attended a short Senior Management Training Programme at Cox's Bazar, which was sponsored by a Bangladeshi management consultant firm and conducted by a management trainer from India.
- b) Mr. Jalaluddin Ahmed, a Senior Staff Demographer, went to England to read for an MSc in Community Health in Developing Countries, at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London.

- c) Mr. Shams Mustafa, a Senior Staff Economist, went to England to read for an MSc in Development Studies at the University of Bath.
- d) Mr. Fazlul Karim, a Senior Programme Organizer, attended the First Asian Course on Tropical Epidemiology at Mahidol University, Thailand.
- e) Mr. Sadequr Rahman Chowdhury, a Staff Statistician, attended the First Asian Course on Tropical Epidemiology at Mahidol University, Thailand.

Workshop/Seminar Organised

During 1987, RED organised the following Workshops/Seminars at BRAC.

- a. Workshop on "Family Planning incentive schemes for BRAC", held at BRAC, Dhaka, January, 1987
- b. Seminar on "Royal Tropical Institute", by Dr. Ferenc Ory of the Royal Tropical Institute of Amsterdam, held at BRAC, Dhaka, January, 1987
- c. Workshop on " Research on floods", held at BRAC, Dhaka, August, 1987
- d. Seminar on "Recent works on population anthropology in South Asia" by Dr. Moni Nag of the Population Council, New York, held at BRAC, Dhaka, December, 1987
- e. Seminar on "Alternative Development", by Dr. Amalendu Guha of the Institute of Alternative Development Research, Oslo, Norway, held at BRAC, Dhaka, December 1987

Papers Accepted for Publication in Journals

- 1. "An Evaluation of the BRAC ORT Programme in Rural Bangladesh". World Health Forum
- 2. "Use and Safety of Homemade ORT : An Epidemiological Evaluation from Bangladesh". International Journal of Epidemiology
- 3. "The Problem of Diarrhoeal Diseases in Developing Countries". Bangladesh Journal of Child Health.
- 4. "Oral Rehydration Therapy for Diarrhoea". Bangladesh Journal of Child Health.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Reports Published/Prepared

1. "Some Research Areas in the Study of the Rural Development Programme". This paper reviewed the objectives and activities of BRAC's Rural Development Programme (RDP) and sought to identify issues of research in this programme. (10 Pages)
2. "Searching for Employment: a Preliminary Report on the Female Haat Traders in Jamalpur". This reports on a group of landless females who courageously ventured out to trade at village haats. It analysed their pasts and prospects for future. (36 Pages).
3. "The Livestock Programme at Manikganj". This is a documentation of the livestock programme at the Manikganj project and the Mirzapur centre of RDP and also outlines the research issues. (9 Pages).
4. "From Progress to Development in Sulla". This is a policy oriented paper on BRAC's oldest project which reviewed past activities and achievements and suggests a guideline for future. (45 Pages).
5. "The Ujangaon Women's organization in Sulla". This paper summarises the experiences of two researchers who want to test research methodologies for group evaluation. It gives an overview of the activities and present status of this group. (18 Pages).
6. "Indicators for Evaluating Village-level Organizations". This methodological paper gives a checklist of indicators which are necessary in studying village-level organizations. (28 Pages).
7. "Report on Monohardi Workshop on Institution Building". This reports the workshop which was designed to explore a possible structure of institution building for the BRAC target population particularly at the central level, held in the Monohardi Centre of RDP. This report summarises the present structure of the Monohardi Central level landless organization and the views expressed by landless participants regarding an alternative structure. (10 Pages).
8. "Institution Building in Mirzapur: A Workshop Report". This reports the proceedings of the second workshop on institution building at the central level. The paper also reviews the progress made by the Mirzapur Centre of RDP. (11 Pages).
9. "Moderanization, Dependency Theories and the NGO Approach. A comparative Analysis of Implications and Relevance to Development". This paper reviews the theoretical contents of the NGO approach vis-a-vis moderanization and dependency theories. It also explains how the NGO approach visualise the solution of some of the burning problems not properly addressed by other two. (15 Pages).

10. "Credit Infusion in an Integrated Development Strategy: The BRAC Approach, Principles, Processes and Mechanisms". This paper documents the BRAC approaches to rural credit within the framework of its total development approach and shows in what ways the BRAC approach is different from traditional ones. (15 Pages).
11. Processes, Policies and Empirical Issues in Rural Industrialization from a Historical Perspective: Implication for BRAC's Industrialisation Approaches". This report analyses the processes which resulted in the decline of rural industries throughout the Third World and shows how rural reindustrialisation can lead to sustainable development and reversal of unjust economic processes. It also critically reviews Bangladesh situation vis-a-vis the BRAC policies. (55 Pages).
12. "Indebtedness and Supply of Credit in an Alternative Setting: Trend and Pattern in Three Deep Tubewell Areas". This paper documents the impact of BRAC's agro-modernisation programmes on the demand and supply of rural credit. (10 Pages).
13. "Jamaluddin: From Frontier to Battle of Life". This is a short case study of a landless who received credit from RDP. (16 Pages).
14. "Review of BRAC's Nutrition Centre at Betila, Manikganj". This is a first review of the nutrition centre which has been functioning for several years. It identifies the strengths and weaknesses in the planning and implementation policies and recommends future policies. (69 Pages).
15. "A Manual on Cause of Death Reporting by Non-medical Interviewers" (draft). This is a manual intended to be used by non-medical interviewers who are currently registering vital events in different locations as part of monitoring impact of health programmes. (26 Pages).
16. "The Health, Family Planning and Nutrition Programme of Manikganj Integrated Project". This is a documentation of the various programmes of the Manikganj project on health, family planning and nutrition (30 Pages).
17. "The Child Survival Programme - A Report on a Pilot Experiment in Sonargaon Upazila". This is a documentation of the pilot project which was done prior to the launching of the Child Survival Programme and reports experiences on ORT teaching and immunizations (BCG, TT, DPT, Polio and Measles). (26 Pages).
18. "Comparative Community Study on the Safety and Acceptance of Rice-based and Gur-based ORS-Interim Report on the Implementation of Teaching Programme". This is a report on the experiences of teaching the gur-based and rice-based ORS methods to mothers in three different areas with a population of about 40,000. It particularly dealt with the cost of the programme. (36 Pages).

19. "Teaching ORT to Mothers - Individually or in Groups?" This is a research report on a study which tried to compare the outcomes of teaching ORT by two different methods - individually and in groups. (9 Pages).
20. "A Study on the Perceptions About Six EPI Diseases and Vaccination". This reports results from an indepth study in 8 villages of Manikganj and Joypurhat districts which looked at the perceptions of the villagers about the six EPI diseases and vaccination. It discussed the implications of such perceptions for the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) in Bangladesh. (31 Pages).
21. "Mortality Effects of the BRAC ORT Programme in Rural Bangladesh: An Assessment of the First Phase Experience". This is a first report on the study initiated in 1981 to measure the impact of BRAC's ORT programme on infant and child mortality. (21 Pages).
22. "An Assessment of the Tetanus Toxoid Immunization Programme in Two Villages of Manikganj Project". This report evaluated the coverage of the TT programme in Manikganj prior to the undertaking of a broader immunization programme against the 6 EPI diseases and looked at the reasons why many women were not immunized. (9 Pages).
23. "The Vitamin A Capsule Distribution Programme: A Coverage Survey in Six Rural Areas of Bangladesh". This reports on the survey which was done following the June-July 1987 distribution cycle of VAC in six unions under the districts of Manikganj and Joypurhat. (7 Pages).
24. "The Primary Health Care Programme of BRAC: Some observations from a trip to Santhia Upazila". This is a spot observation report which discussed the problems of the PHC programme particularly focusing on village health committee, Shastha Shebika (Village Health Worker), growth monitoring and the question of the involvement of doctors in the programme. (14 Pages).
25. "Incentives for Family Planning: A review of Experiences and Their Relevance for BRAC". This is a background paper prepared for a workshop on "Family Planning Incentive Schemes for BRAC".
26. "Provision of Old Age Security for Sterilization Acceptors: Draft Proposal for a Pilot Project". (14 Pages).
27. "The ORT Programme in Bangladesh: Description, Evaluation Methods and Results". This is a paper which was prepared for the First Meeting of the Community Epidemiology/Health Management Network. (30 Pages).
28. "An Evaluation of Two Rehabilitation Projects of Assistance for Blind Children (ABC)". This evaluation was done at the request of ABC to look at two of their projects for blind children. (50 Pages).

29. "Jhithka Reports"

1. First quarterly report on Jhithka (10 Pages)
2. Second quarterly report on Jhithka (breast - feeding) (22 Pages)
3. Third quarterly report on Jhithka (supplementary feeding) (30 Pages)
4. This is a continuation of the former 'positive deviance' study jointly undertaken by BRAC and the Tufts University, Boston, U.S.A. In this experimental research project an attempt was made to develop health messages and to bring about behavioural changes with the participation of the community. The project concentrated on three areas a) Colostrum feeding b) Lactating Mother's Nutrition and e) Supplementary feeding 6-11 months babies nutrition. Longitudinal data on dietary intake, anthropometric and morbidity were collected. These data will be jointly processed by BRAC and Tufts University. The above reports summarize the field experiences on a regular basis.

30. "Use of colostrum in Rural Bangladesh". The importance of colostrum is well established in Medical Science. However, there has been very little research done on colostrum in Bangladesh. What do the Bangladeshi rural mothers think about colostrum? Do they feed their babies colostrum? This short paper makes an attempt to discuss some of these issues. (11 Pages).

31. "Peasant Perception Towards Child Marriage, Dowry and Divorce". This study was the first report in the law series and highlighted the attitudes of the landless to certain sensitive and pertinent issues, and the laws relating to these, which directly affected the people in their daily lives. (12 Pages).

ON-GOING RESEARCH

As mentioned previously, the year 1987 has been a busy year for the Research and Evaluation Division. The following gives the title and a short description of the research studies which were being carried out as on 31 December 1987.

1. "The Continuous Evaluation Study of the Rural Development Programme". This study is being carried out in two branches of RDP and looking at aspects such as employment, wages, income, expenditures of selected members of landless groups organised by RDP as well as changes in power relations.
2. "An Overview of BRAC's Credit Programme in 43 RDP Branches". This study is looking at the credit operations particularly the overdues, by using programme information.

3. "Changes in Household Income, Employment and Resource Entitlement through BRAC Intervention". This is an attempt to identify changes in income, employment and ownership of assets of the RDP group members by comparing their present position with those at the baseline period.
4. "The role of BRAC in the transformation of informal market for rural finance". The study is comparing the baseline data of 1981 with those of the present time to see how BRAC has effected the situation of rural indebtedness.
5. "Measuring the impact of RDP on income and employment of the group members in the first phase branches". This study evaluates the impact of RDP intervention by comparing the income and employment situation of group member with a "control group" in four randomly selected branches.
6. "Dynamics of village level power structure in Bangladesh". This is an analysis of the baseline situation utilising data which were collected in 1981 when the continuous evaluation study was undertaken in 16 villages.
7. "Demographic and Socioeconomic characteristics of the population of 3 unions of Manikganj district". This is based on the baseline study which was done in early 1987.
8. "Demographic and Socioeconomic characteristics of the population of 3 unions of Joypurhat district". This is based on the baseline study which was done in early 1987.
9. "Immunization coverage, prevalence of night blindness and VAC distribution in Manikganj". This is based on a baseline study which was done in early 1987.
10. "Immunization coverage, prevalence of night blindness and VAC distribution in Joypurhat district". This is based on a baseline study which was done in early 1987.
11. "Diarrhoea and other health practices in Manikganj". This is based on a baseline study which was done in early 1987.
12. "Diarrhoea and other health practices in Joypurhat district". This is based on a baseline study which was done in early 1987.
13. "Study of the effective usage of ORT in 10 villages: This is a study which is looking at the effective usage (What, how much and when) of ORT which is being done through weekly surveillance in 10 villages.
14. "Study on the measurement of level, pattern and change over time of morbidity". This study is being done through weekly surveillance in 10 villages.

15. "Study on the measurement of level, pattern and change over time of mortality and fertility". This is being done through the initiation of a vital events registration system in 6 unions in which the registrar collects data once every month.
16. "Study on the comparative social acceptance of rice-based and gur-based ORS". This study is being done in 3 unions where mothers were taught about the ORS methods.
17. "Study on the characteristics of EPI volunteers". This study is looking at the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of EPI volunteers and will try to compare the "active" and "Less active" volunteers.
18. "Study on the maintenance of cold chain between Upazila Health Complex and Immunization Centre". This study is looking at how much the EPI cold chain is being maintained at these levels and to find out problems.
19. "Study on the immunization coverage in selected unions". This study is a part of the six-monthly surveys which is being done in 6 unions where other research activities (such as vital events registration) are also being done.
20. "Study on VAC coverage". This is also a part of another series of Six-monthly surveys which is being done to monitor VAC coverage, in 6 unions.
21. "Analysis of data from the study to measure the impact of the former ORT programme on mortality". This is analysing data from the Second Phase of the BRAC programme.
22. "Study on the diet of children". This study is looking at the type of diet which the children under 6 years of age are given. This is being done through weekly surveillance in 10 villages.
23. "Study on the perception of villagers about night blindness". This is an indepth study which uses unstructured interviews and focus group discussion.
24. "TBAs in Bangladesh: a review of their training programmes with reference to BRAC". This review is intended to bring out research issues.
25. Jhithka project:

This is a continuation of the former 'positive deviance' study. This project focuses on the complex set of factors affecting food intake, behavioural change and nutritional status. This year the project will concentrate on two themes:

(a) Nutrition message development for adolescent girls

(b) Message development on supplementary feeding (12 to 24 months babies).

on

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"The attitude of the landless to the law enforcing authorities". This is the second study in the peasant perception law series. This report will highlight people's perception towards the relevant law enforcing agencies such as the Police, the courts (including the officers of the law judges, magistrates); the officers of the Administration (Tahsildar, Upasila chairman, Pourashava and Parishad members) and members of the Bar.

27

"Peasant Perception on the relationship between law and morality". This will be the final study in the peasant perception law series. This report will be focussing on what the landless perceived to be the relationship between law and morality. What are their views on the nature of law, in other words how should they be likely to answer the question what is law? Is any distinction made between the question what is law and what is the law?

28

"An evaluation of two female groups in Sulla". This study compares two groups - one "well organised" and other "weakly organized" - in Sulla project by looking at the qualitative differences between the two.

29

"A baseline survey on education". This study analyses data from a survey which was done in 20 villages prior to the opening of Non Formal Primary Education (NFPE) Schools.

30

"Flood damages". This study looks at the damages caused by the recent devastating floods in 12 villages.

31

"Impact of flood study". This study is collecting data on the long term impact of the floods on income, employments, wages, prices and expenditures which is being done in 10 villages through collection of relevant data (weekly, fortnightly or monthly).

"Socioeconomic impact of improved shrimp cultivation techniques". This is a contract job, undertaken by RED for a French Firm, which is being done in Cox's Bazar and Khulna areas.

PROPOSED RESEARCH

1. The economics and sociology of loan repayment in an expanding rural development programme.
2. An evaluation of the impact of BRAC's development programmes: a review of research findings.
3. A study on growth monitoring as conducted by the Child Survival Programme of BRAC.
4. Action research to examine the "old age security" hypothesis in family planning.

5. Impact of income earning on socio-demographic variable - the case of Ayesha Abed Foundation woman participants in Manikganj.
6. A study on the activities and effectiveness of village health workers.
7. An evaluation of the livestock programme in Manikganj and RDP.
8. Impact of the Manikganj programme on family planning acceptance with special reference to female sterilization.
9. Coverage studies on immunization in BRAC, CARE and government areas.
10. Coverage studies on VAC distribution in Bangladesh.
11. Study on the effectiveness and relevance of TBA training.
12. Impact on health practice: a study on an unintended effect of RI intervention.
13. A comparative study on the achievements by and backgrounds of students of NFPE and formal government primary schools.
14. A prospective study on the social, economic and demographic effects of NFPE programme on its female students.
15. Home gardening and its effect on Vitamin A levels of children.
16. Evaluation of landless secretariat in Sulla.
17. Developing a monitoring and evaluation system for RDP.
18. Developing a methodology for quick monitoring of the Child Survival Programme (using spot observation, indepth interview, focus group discussion and case control methods).