

Architecture Update

Director, Post Graduate Programs in Disaster Management in Ottawa

Professor Fuad H Mallick, Director, Post Graduate Programs in Disaster Management, briefed the officials of the Disaster Management Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Canadian government about the programs of study in Disaster Management at BRAC University in a meeting at the ministry in Ottawa on 28th September. He also gave them an overview of the state of Disaster Management in Bangladesh. The session was attended by 9 officials and Professor Mallick responded to their enquiries.

Professor Fuad H Mallick Attends EMMA Meeting in Nice, France

As the new coordinator of the EMMA program for BRAC University, Professor Mallick attended a 2-day meeting of EMMA coordinators from Bangladeshi and European Universities at the University of Nice on 3rd and 4th September. The meeting discussed the progress of EMMA beneficiaries at various Universities in Europe. There are 19 beneficiaries from BRAC University in various European universities in France, Germany, Rumania, The Netherlands, Spain, Poland and Turkey.

Students Work as Research Assistant

Seven Senior level students: Suhailey Farzana, Fahim Mostafa, Durdana Parvez, Ahmed Bin Parvez, Arijita Areen Chowdhury, Shekhar Adittay Sayeed, Fabiha Pinaz participated in data collection for the research work on 'Adaptation to Climate Change in Cities' under the supervision of Huraera Jabeen, Senior Lecturer of the department. They worked for a week in an informal settlement in Mohammadpur Beri Badh area gathering information through household surveys. The main focus was on understanding the perception of climate variability by the urban poor living in the area as well as type of vulnerability from flooding and heat stress from the built environment perspective. They documented each household through sketches and photographs as well as structured questionnaires.

Study visit in North-East Bangladesh

Students and teachers from the course ARC-202 (Design studio IV) went for a study visit to experience the design of nature. They visited Lawachara preserved forest, Madhabkunda water fall and near Jainta hills in the north-east of Bangladesh. The documentation of the study visit was done through photographs and sketches.

Faculty leaves for higher studies

Huraera Jabeen, Senior Lecturer left for pursuing her PhD studies in the Development Policy and Management in the School of Environment and Development of the University of Manchester. She will be researching on adaptation to climate change by the urban poor through asset accumulation under joint supervision of Professor Caroline Moser and Professor Simon Guy. She received 'BWPI PhD Studentship: Climate Change Resilience and Poverty in Urban Bangladesh' from her studies offered by the Brooks World Poverty Institute.

BDI Update

Introductory Course on Financial Services for the Poor

BRAC Development Institute conducted a two week introductory course on financial services for the poor. Thirty students from Japan from various academic and professional backgrounds attended the course. This course was targeted primarily to an international audience, with little or no knowledge of microfinance. It was grounded in the experience of Bangladesh but provided a broad global picture of the state of microfinance, its emergence and challenges, the diversity of financial products on offer and the need to have a strong poverty focus. It was team taught, using different pedagogical methods, and included extensive field visits. A ceremony was organized to mark the end of the course. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, VC, BRACU distributed the certificates.

CGAP- Ford Global Graduation Program

BDI is managing and implementing the CGAP- Ford Global Graduation Program. The Graduation Program targets the extreme poor and links safety nets with financial services to 'graduate' the poorest out of

extreme poverty. This is a pilot project partnering with local organizations in 9 sites in 7 countries.

In September, Syed Hashemi, Director BDI and Sandeep Kaur, Research Associate, visited Yemen to move implementation of the pilot project forward. Meetings were held with the Steering Committee comprising of representatives from the partner organizations- CGAP, governmental partners-Social Welfare Fund and Social Fund for Development. The main aim was to discuss progress to date, challenges faced and the next steps to move forward.

Sandeep Kaur also visited Ethiopia and met with partner organization Relief Society of Tigray (REST) and external evaluator Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA). The main aim of the visit was to meet with stakeholders and finalize programmatic components.

Planning Meeting for the Nagorik Adhikar Mela (Citizenship Rights Fair)

On 5th September 2009, the Deepening Democracy, Building Citizenship and Promoting Participation team organized a planning meeting in BRAC University for the upcoming Nagorik Adhikar Mela (Citizenship Rights Fair) in January. Representatives from 51 local NGOs participated in the meeting such as Nijera Kori, BLAST, RDRS, Rupantar, Ain O Shalish Kendra, Proshika, Gonoshasthya Kendra and BRAC. Logistics, budget, fund raising and sponsorships opportunities were discussed in the meeting. The fair aims to build a platform for the NGOs to exhibit their work, build development partnerships and raise awareness on citizenship rights. The target audience includes government officials, policy makers, factory workers and students.

BDI to conduct Impact Evaluation of "Legal and Judicial Capacity Building Project"

BRAC Development Institute (BDI) is conducting an impact evaluation of the World Bank "Legal and Judicial Capacity Building Project" and will carry out a qualitative and reliable impact evaluation of this program. BDI will observe and acquire information on whether the project has led to improvements in case management and court administration of the Supreme Court and Subordinate Courts of Bangladesh. BDI aims to see whether the implementation of the project led to reduction in delays and case backlog. It will also investigate whether implementation of the project has improved access to justice, especially for the poor and women. Field researchers at BDI conducted focus group discussion (FGDs) and key informant interviews in formerly operation pilot courts in Khulna and Gazipur and the roll out courts in Mymensingh and Bagerhat. Judges also travelled to Dhaka to participate in focus group discussions. The final report is due on the 29th of October 2009.

Workshops on Mobilizing Resources for Women's Organization

Pathways of Women's Empowerment program held two workshops to gather data on resource mobilisation and activism by women's organizations. The first workshop was held with member of the Doorbar women's network on 5th September and the second with Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association (BNWLA) members on 16th September.

BDI to publish "Mapping Women's Empowerment: Experiences from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan"

BDI signed a contract with the University Press Limited (UPL) to publish the papers presented at the Scoping Workshop of the Pathways Programme held in August 2006. The proposed volume, titled "Mapping Women's Empowerment: Experiences from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan" has contributions from 11 authors across the region and is edited by Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson, Department of English BRAC University and Maheen Sultan. The book is scheduled to be out at the end of the year.

"Women on the Move"- co-authored by Professor Firdous Azim and Samia Rahim

A photo-essay titled "Women on the Move", co-authored by Professor Firdous Azim and Samia Rahim, has been published in the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Journal's September issue. The essay is based on the traveling photography exhibition that was organized by the Pathways South Asia hub in December 2007, which depicted the "Changing Images of Women in Bangladesh".

BDI Senior Staff meets Fazle Hasan Abed

Senior management of BDI met with Mr. Fazle Abed, Chairperson, BRAC, and senior BRAC officials on 10th September, 2009 to present an overview of BDI strategy, current work, research findings and future plans for the Institute.

CfL Update

CfL Completes the 5th Medhabikash Training

CfL has successfully completed a two-week training for Medhabikash participants. Fifty-three students attended the session from different colleges of Bangladesh. Similar to the previous phases, BRACU students provided ample support to the CfL faculty members. Apart from the communicative English Language training, participants were also given basic computer training by HoV BU.

CfL Faculty Attend Open University MYTEC Assessor Training for English in Action

CfL faculty members have started observing cluster meetings of MYTEC (Make Your Teaching Experience Count) at English in Action (EIA) after a two-day training conducted by Dr James Collins of Open University (OU), UK. The visits aimed to ensure better understanding of the classroom strategies used by school teachers and, observed reflective teaching practices. It is to be noted that CfL is working in collaboration with OU and English in Action for the development of English language teaching all over Bangladesh; and its core responsibilities will be to assess teachers progress participating in the MYTEC course.

CfL launches Pre-University Mentoring Program

CfL has launched a Mentoring Program for the Pre-University Students from Spring 2009. It has adopted the idea of Mentoring Program from BRAC Post Primary Basic and Continuing Education (PACE) with the aim to developing active, independent and learning-oriented students. This successful program has been undergoing with the objectives of building leadership skills, ensuring learners participation, generating the demand for quality education and above all, making the schools participating in the program more learner-friendly. Pankaj Paul, CfL faculty member, who attended a mentoring workshop arranged by BRAC PACE, is now facilitating the Pre-University Mentoring agenda. In this program, classes will be divided into several groups with a responsible group leader. Each group will get an opportunity to discuss problems related to their study. Facilitators will supervise the group activity twice a week and address the learners problems instantly. CfL is expecting to expand the Pre-University Mentoring Agenda from the next semester.

The Pilot ENG103 Course with BRACU and GWU

In the Spring 2009, BRAC University CfL and Assistant Professor of Writing Steven Salchak at The George Washington University (GWU) piloted a collaborative approach to teaching a project initiated by Professor Salchak. Through this approach, students in CfL's ENG103: Advanced Writing and Presentation course and Prof. Salchak's writing course (under GWU's Women's Leadership Program) have the opportunity to work together. This partnership is continuing for Fall 2009. Throughout the semester, students will discuss shared readings; co-write articles based on these readings; develop ideas for research papers; and, provide peer feedback. The objective of the partnership between BRACU and GWU students is to create an opportunity for the students to participate in a larger discourse community. Through correspondence and collaboration, students will broaden their perspectives of themselves, the world, and their place in the world. The Fall 2009 courses are being taught by Professor Salchak and current English Language Fellow Lisa Ponzetti. Note: Former English Language Fellow Beth Trudell and CfL Lecturer Sadra Siddiky developed the ENG103 course.

Md. Golam Jamil Completes MLitt. at University of St. Andrews, Scotland

Md. Golam Jamil has returned to CfL BRACU after successfully completing his MLitt. in English Language Teaching (ELT) programme at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. As a part of the degree requirements, he attended one semester at the Centre for Research and Foreign Language Education (CRFLE) at Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), China and was involved in teaching to the secondary school students, studying linguistics and assisting some on-going research activities. At the University of St. Andrews, he studied ELT related academic modules and wrote his dissertation on 'The Lexicogrammatical Approach to Teaching English Prepositions'. He attended various workshops and seminars conducted by renowned ELT researchers and practitioners such as Mario Rinvulcri, Mike Sharwood Smith, Peter Grundy and Eddy Moran. Jamil also conducted three sessions on 'Poverty, Education and Empowerment' at Kirkaldy High School and Community College, Fife.

ENH Update

Discussant of Paper

Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH Department was the discussant of the paper "Disappearance and Displacement in Srilanka" which was delivered by Malathi De Alwis from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. The discussion was held on 2nd September, 2009 at the Senate House in Dhaka University. This is part of the special lecture series of the Woman and Gender Studies department, Dhaka University.

Attendance at Conference

Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH Department presented a paper at the feminist review conference on Feminist Theory and Activism in Global Perspective held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on 26th September, 2009.

Lecturer joins Bangla-Urdu Sahitya Forum

Rukhsana Rahim Chowdhury, Lecturer became a member of The Bangla-Urdu Sahitya Forum. Poet Asad Chowdhury, the President of the organization welcomed her and other new members in a meeting organized by the forum on 4th September 2009. All the members of the forum are Bangladeshi writers and poets who actively engage in literary activities like writing and translating Bangla into Urdu and English for a wider coverage among the new generation.

IGS Update

IGS organised a workshop on Proposal Writing and Fund Raising for Financial Sustainability on 2nd and 4th September 2009 at its conference room. Mr. Andrew Jenkins, Team Leader, Integrated Planning for Sustainable Water Management (IPSWAM), Bangladesh Water Development Board conducted the workshop. The objective was to give the participants an overview on different aspects of fund raising for the sustainability of an organisation. The workshop was attended by the Research Team of the Institute.

IGS has been registered with Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS), UK on 9 September 2009, as the first CIPS study centre in the South Asia region. CIPS is an international organisation, based in the UK, serving the purchasing and supply profession. Dedicated to promoting good practice, CIPS provides a wide range of services for the benefit of members and the wider business community. With more than 49,000 members worldwide, CIPS has grown to become an enduring force in the purchasing and supply profession. IGS will be initially delivering Level 4 Foundation Diploma and Level 5 Advanced Diploma Courses for CIPS qualification in Bangladesh.

A roundtable on ethics and standards for journalists was held on 17 September (Thursday) at Journalism Training & Research Initiative (JATRI) at Karwan Bazar, Dhaka. The round table was followed by a presentation of survey findings on "Ethics & Standards of Dhaka based Journalists" recently conducted by JATRI. Eminent journalist ABM Musa was present as the Chief Guest and Head of News of ATN Bangla Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul moderated the round table. Senior journalists Joglul Ahmed Chowdhury and Anowarul Hoque, daily Ittefaq's chief reporter Mainul Alam, Taleya Rehman, Executive Director of Democracy Watch, Professor Jude William R. Genilo, Head of the Media Studies and Journalism Department of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh took part in the discussion among others. Manzoor Hasan, Director of the Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) of BRAC University and Jamil Ahmed, Head of Programs of JATRI also spoke at the round table.

The Certificate Programme on Environmental Governance offered at the Institute and the Master in Resource and Environmental Management (MREM) at Department of Environmental Science and Management (DESM), North South University (NSU) under the Building Environmental Governance Capacity in Bangladesh project was launched on the 30 September 2009 at North South University campus. Professor Hafiz G A Siddiqi, Vice Chancellor, NSU chaired the session. Professor Nazrul Islam, Chairman University Grants Commission was the Chief Guest and Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury Vice Chancellor, BRAC University, H.E Robert Mc Dougall, High Commissioner of Canada attended the programme as Special Guests. The BEGCB project is in partnership with NSU, Natural Resource Institute (NRI) at University and University of Manitoba, Canada and Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS).

MNS Update

Faculty Rejoining the Department of MNS

Iftexhar Mohammad Shafiqul Kalam who was on study leave joined the Department of MNS after

successfully obtaining the degree of Master of Population Studies from the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute (ADSRI) of the Australian National University (ANU), Canberra, Australia as a 2008 Endeavor Postgraduate award recipient.

Md. Jakir Hossen also joined the Department after finishing his Master of Science degree in Computational Science from the Department of Scientific Computing, Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA.

Departure for Higher Studies in Canada

Mr. Md. Rokibul Islam, Lecturer in Mathematics at the MNS Department left for Canada on September 03, 2009. He got a fully-funded scholarship to study for a Master's programme at the Memorial University, Newfoundland, Canada.

Visit of NOAMI by 4th TAS Trainees of Bangladesh Navy

Ten trainee officers of the 4th TAS (Torpedo Anti Submarine) specialization course of the Bangladesh Navy accompanied by a trainer officer came for a technical visit of NOAMI (National Oceanographic and Maritime Institute) on September 8 & 9, 2009. Professor A. A. Z. Ahmad, Chairman NOAMI gave a talk briefing them about the aims and objectives of NOAMI. He elaborated on the present R/D activities of NOAMI and also informed the trainees about NOAMI's past efforts for the promotion of the study of oceanography & dissemination of information regarding development of oceanic sciences through arranging training courses, conferences, symposia and workshops. He also informed the trainees about the different projects successfully completed by NOAMI since its inception in 1978 in the sectors of environment, river transport, meteorology etc.

Other members of NOAMI also gave lectures to the trainees on the topics of oceanography and its branches, applications of oceanography and under-water sound profile, marine life, sub-soil resources, geology and geomorphology of the Bay of Bengal. A lecture was given on UNCLOS submission of Bangladesh.

Visit by UGC Team for the Proposed UG Programme in Pharmacy

A team from the Bangladesh University Grants Commission (UGC) led by its member Professor Amena Begum, visited the MNS Department on September 13, 2009 to see the facilities for the above-mentioned programme. The other members of the team included Professor A. B. M. Faruque of the University of Dhaka and a couple of officials of UGC. The team was first given an introduction of BRACU and various programmes under the MNS department. They were then informed about the facilities including laboratory and library available for the pharmacy undergraduate programme. Professor A. A. Z. Ahmad, Professor Naiyyum Choudhury, Dr. Aparna Islam of the MNS department were present in the meeting. Professor A. S. A. Rouf of the Pharmacy Department of DU was also present. After the meeting the UGC team visited BRACU's library and lab facilities and expressed their satisfaction.

2nd HOPE Nobel Laureates Meeting, Kanagawa, Japan

Ms. Nadia Iftekharuddin, a MS Biotechnology student of the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences and a Research Officer at the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), has been nominated by Professor Naiyyum Choudhury, Coordinator Biotechnology Programme and President, JSPS Alumni Association to participate in the 2nd HOPE Meeting of the Nobel Laureates organized by the Japan Society for Promotion of Science (JSPS) to be held at the Prince Hakone, Kanagawa Prefecture, Tokyo, Japan on September 27 to October 01, 2009. Her nomination along with those for four other Bangladeshi postgraduate students has been accepted by the JSPS. The HOPE Meetings have been organized by the JSPS since 2007 to give opportunities to the excellent graduate students from the developing world to engage in discussion with Nobel Laureates and other distinguished scientists in Japan. The Meeting will be chaired by Professor Ryoji Noyori (Nobel Laureate, Chemistry, 2001) and will be attended by other Nobel Laureates like Professor Peter Agre (Chemistry, 2003), Professor Leo Esaki (Physics, 1973), Professor Makoto Kobayashi (Physics, 2008) and Professor Koichi Tanaka (Physics, 2002). The programmes of the 2nd HOPE Meeting include lectures by Nobel Laureates, small group discussion with the lecturers, poster presentations, social events etc. Ms. Nadia Iftekharuddin presented a poster based on her project and will have the opportunity to meet with Nobel Laureates and discuss new research ideas.

Courses

The course Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights (MPH 660) took place in August 30-September 10. The teaching faculties were Associate Professor Sabina Rashid JPGSPH, and Ms. Malabika Serkar from University of Heidelberg. The Teaching Assistant was Ms. Eram Cooper, Research Associate, JPGSPH.

FIELD VISITS

As part of the MPH 660 course, students and faculty divided into three groups and visited sites at Azimpur Maternity, BRAC MANOSHI (birthing hut) at Konipara. And Shimantik at Khilgaon.(under the UPHCP).

Centres And Research Initiatives

Centre Of Health Systems Study

James P Grant School of Public Health organized three workshops in Bandarban, Jamalpur and Narail during the month of September. These were as parts of research activities of UNICEF funded District Investment Case Analysis (DICA), which School started August 2009. The workshops were to orient the government officials and other stockholders regarding this research project. This project is mainly to identify the health system bottlenecks along the possible remedial measures and their costs of Maternal and Child Health interventions in districts. The workshops were highly acclaimed by the UNICEF and the government of Bangladesh and other stockholders.

Faculty News

Conferences, Trainings, Workshops, Seminars Attended By Faculty Members

Dr. Dina M. Siddiqi, Visiting Professor at Centre for Gender, Sexuality & HIV/AIDS, JPGSPH, attended the NGO Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Development (ICPD +15) in Berlin, Germany, September 2-4 2009. She spoke at a satellite session entitled Of Gods, Sex and Politics: Gender, Religion and Sexuality organized by the Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW), on the subject of Organizing around Sexuality and Rights in the Age of Islamophobia.

Dr. Siddiqi also spoke at a panel on Sexuality, Development and Pleasure. She shared the findings of a study carried by the Centre for Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS on Contextualizing Sexuality and Rights in Urban Bangladesh.

Dr. Siddiqi also attended the Third Critical Studies Conference on the theme of Empires, States and Migrations organized by the Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata September 11-12, 2009. She presented a paper on Translating Feminisms across Imperial Borders.

Mr. Owasim Akram, Research Associate, JPGSPH, attended a pedagogical training in the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), UK held from 23rd September to 28th September, 2009. The training focused on Small Group Teaching (SGT), Large Group Teaching (LGT) and Lessons Planning. The training was sponsored by EU-Asia Link project of the school as part of Capacity Building on Education Skills.

RS Update

Residential Semester Fall 2009

A total of 190 students joined the Residential Semester, Fall 2009 on 11 September. The students are from BBA, CSE, ECE, ESS, LAW and ENH Departments. There are 102 male and 88 female students. Of them 168 are Muslim, 16 are Hindus and the remaining 6 are from Christian religion. The Residential Semester will be of 14 weeks duration. Regular classes started from September 13, 2009 and will end up on 17th December 2009.

Orientation

On September 12, 2009 an orientation session followed by a seminar was held in the Markuli Hall from the morning to evening. Mr. Mahfuzul Bari Chowdhury, Campus Superintendent, BRACU, Savar Campus and Ms.

Farrah Jabeen, Faculty, CfL conducted the program. Students were divided into six groups to decide the campus norms by themselves.

Student Affairs Update

BUPC & BUEAF

Karail is the biggest Bustee in Dhaka city. Around one hundred thousand people live in the area. One hundred thousand faces of newborn babies, children, girls, boys, teenagers, women, men, elderly people. The intention of this initiative is to know each other through photography, participation and exhibition. Students and advisors of BRAC University Photography Club (BUPC) and BRAC University Environment Awareness Forum (BUEAF) organized a photography workshop followed by two weeks of portrait photography in Karail.

Activities

- One-day workshop was conducted by photographer Hasan Saifuddin Chandan [31.08.09], advisors and presidents of the BUPC and BUEAF also participated
- Formation of photography group [selection] was completed
- Portrait photography with names, age and profession/occupation
- Showing portraits in Karail Boromath in alternative evenings
- Exhibiting photographs in the university campus
- Engaging students taking photographs in the weekends

It will take two semester breaks for 15 photographers to complete. If the photographers can use vacations and holidays during semester for the purpose then it would be possible to organize an exhibition will all portraits in Karail Boromath in January 2010.

HoV-BRACU: OSCEP at MEDHABIKASH

The pilot project under the title OSCEP (Open Source Computer Education Program) by HoV-BRACU at "Medhabikash" was a one-week long training program held from September 01-12, 2009. Bright students from underprivileged backgrounds, who were enrolled for training in communication skills and to develop their leadership qualities, were taken by surprise when the opportunity to enhance their computer and IT skills was presented to them. Putting everything aside HoV-BRACU is looking forward to implement the project on a larger scale the next time and make the impact much bigger.