



BRAC University Bulletin

2011/december

Architecture Updates

Symposium held by the Department of Architecture on architecture, history and urban design of Bangladesh

A team of 40 architects, academics and architectural historians from the USA visited BRAC University recently as a part of a 4-day study trip to Bangladesh. A 'Symposium-Discussion session on Architecture of Bangladesh' was held on 30 December at BRAC Center Auditorium arranged by the Department of Architecture and the Institute of Architects Bangladesh [IAB]. **Dr. Adnan Morshed**, Associate Professor, Catholic University of America, USA and the team leader welcomed the guests. **Dr. Ken Breisch**, Vice President, Society of Architectural Historians [SAH] USA spoke on the role of SAH in the teaching and profession of architecture. In his encouraging speech, **Mr. Dan Mozena**, Honorable Ambassador of the USA to Bangladesh shed light on the importance of good relationship between Bangladesh and USA. **Professor Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University; **Dr. Zainab Faruqui Ali**, Professor, BRAC University; **Ar. Mubashshar Hussain**, President IAB; **Ar. Jalal Ahmed**, IAB; **Professor Perween Hasan**, Acting Vice Chancellor, Central Women's University; **Dr Abu Sayeed**, Head, University of Asia Pacific and **Professor Shamsul Wares**, Dean, University of Asia Pacific spoke on various historical, urban and architectural aspects of Dhaka and Bangladesh. The 40 person team will be visiting Delhi and Chandigarh in India next.

Critique Week

Generally, the last week of the semester is scheduled for the final Critiques of the design studios. Final Critiques were held this Fall 2011 semester from 8 December to 14 December, 2011. **Ar. Shamsul Wares, Ar. Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, Ar. Marina Tabassum, Ar. Zakiul Islam, Ar. Nayeem Ahmed Kibria, Ar. Patric D' Rozario** were present as guest critics in different critique sessions.

Design Jury in National Museum



The jury of design project took place in the **Sufia Kamal** auditorium in the National Museum, Shahabagh, Dhaka on 12 December 2011. The project 'Conceiving a city center: Designing the Old Airport, Tejgaon' was focused to make a city center which will bridge the city with nature and people. Transforming the 350 acres of vacant land (old air port site) into a huge public park with water bodies and housing some civic functions, like various types of museums, libraries, book markets, art galleries and theatre village, the exercise concluded with six different proposals. **Professor Dr. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Professor Dr. Fuad H. Mallick, Professor Dr. Zainab F. Ali**, Environment thinker **Professor Dijwen Sarma**, former advisor of caretaker Government of Bangladesh **Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Ar. A.S.M. Ismail**, Chief Architect, Department of Architecture, Government of Bangladesh, **Ar. Mubasser Hossain**, IAB President and many other eminent architects, professionals and a number of students of department of architecture were present in the jury. The studio was conducted by guest faculty **Dr. Adnan Zillur Morshed**(associate professor of Catholic University of Washington) and **A.K.M. Sirajuddin, K.H. Kabir , F.H.Khan**.

3rd Solo Sketch Exhibition of Sajid-Bin-Doza



Architect **Sajid-Bin-Doza**, Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture, organizes his 3rd Solo Sketch Exhibition entitled 'Enlightened Arena: Sketched of Historical Mosque'. The occasion was inaugurated on 30 December 2011at 5:30 pm by the **Professor Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University. Professor **Perween Hasan**, Department of Islamic History and Culture, University of Dhaka and **Professor Abu Sayeed**, Head of Architecture, University of Asia Pacific, were present on the occasion. The exhibition will continue till 12th

January 2012 in the La Gallery of Alliance Francaise. A booklet has published mentioning brief history of the exhibits on this occasion.

Faculty attended a conference on Climate Change

Imon Chowdhoree, lecturer of the Dept. of Architecture was invited to present his paper in the "8th International NAPSIPAG Conference on Reinventing Governance for Managing Climate Change and Its Adaptation" which was held in Hotel Manang, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal from 15 December to 16 December, 2011. The Conference was jointly organized by Central Department of Public Administration (CDPA), Tribhuvan University, Nepal and Network of Asia Pacific Schools and Institutes for Public Administration and Governance (NAPSIPAG). **Mr. Chowdhoree** presented his paper "A Case of River-side Settlement: Its Resilience to Flood, a Climate Change Variable through the Built Environment" on the first day of the conference. The principle aim of his paper was to find out the ways of adaptation to achieve resilience to flood (as a climate change variable) through the built environment which includes the measures to protect the settlement as a whole and construction systems of individual houses. It also identified the role of different actors and key factors to achieve the resilience. His paper is published in the conference proceedings.

PPDM Faculty attends ToT on "Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development"

M Aminur Rahman, Lecturer of the Postgraduate Programs in Disaster Management (PPDM) attended a Training of Trainers (ToT) on "Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development" held in Bangkok from 6 to 8 December, 2011. The objective of the ToT was to engage with training institutions for incorporating environmental concerns in ongoing disaster management training programmes and build national capacities for implementing ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (Eco-DRR). This ToT was a collaborative initiative led by the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR) member organizations, namely the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC). PEDRR is also working together with the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) and the Ecosystems and Livelihoods Adaptation Network (ELAN) in delivering this ToT.

BBS Updates

"KALPURUSH 1971"- 160 minutes with freedom fighters

"Kalpurush 1971" was a Victory day program, organized for the first time by BRAC Business School (BBS) - the precious 160 minutes with the Freedom Fighters; that made their contribution more unforgettable to all of us. The program was hosted by **Tanjim Ferdous** who gave a magnificent prologue with his wonderful speech regarding the purpose of the program, why we should have immense respect towards our freedom fighters and why they are considered as the most ideal inhabitants of our country. The program was set in motion with the freedom fighters sharing their tragic, yet inspirational moments, preceded by a very poignant letter from the collection "Ekatturer Chhithi", read out by

Ananda, a student of BRAC University.



The first speaker to share a story was **Ferdausi Priyobhashini**, a woman who is considered to be a "Birangona". She shared her distressing story of how the Pakistanis had tormented her during the war, a story that brought tears in the eyes of every single spectator present in that room. Then came the Guerilla fighter **ASM Shahidullah Khan Badal**, who is currently the publisher of 'The Daily New Age'. He told us stories of how the most brilliant young people of that period joined the Crack Platoon and terrorized the Pakistanis, keeping them petrified every moment along with the entire Dhaka city. Next was Ajay Das Gupta to share his part of the story. He reminisced how his journey began from Barisal and how he and **Mr.Khaled Mosharrof** had worked together to build up armed forces out of the amateur freedom fighters. **Mr. Mahfuz Anam**, the Editor of 'The Daily Star' was also one of the speakers. He shared the stories of his diplomatic broadcasting, the condition of the war both behind the scenes and face to face, his stories of joining the army and how it was the immense help from the 'Mukti Bahini' that went through innumerable hurdles and brought the Indian army inside our border through scouts, that made the surrender of the Pakistanis possible. He also talked about the possibilities for everybody to do something for the country from their repetitive designations. Wrapping up the session was Retd. Major General ATM Abdul Wahab, the sub-sector commander of Sector-8 at that time, who shared his tale. He referred to how difficult it was to administer a war under an umbrella and narrated explicably how it was made possible to see the light of victory.

When all the speakers were done with their dialogue, a documentary was shown based on the life of a martyr **Safi Imam Rumi**, giving a small glance to his story and few of the letters he wrote during the war, a moment that truly touched the deepest corner of everyone's heart. Following the documentary was a panel discussion, moderated by **Professor Mamun Rashid**. The discussion was initiated by the woman whom we often see in pictures. During war time when the East Pakistanis were not allowed to sit in the assembly, it was **Mrs. Rokeya Sultana Raka**, a student from Dhaka University, who, with a rifle in hand called for the first ever procession, being the one to both instigate and lead it forward. Continuing the discussion with his epigrammatic viewpoints was **Mr. Nuh Alam Lelin**, who talked about his expectations from the people currently dwelling in

the country. After that was the most awaited speech of **Dr. Akbar Ali Khan**, the former advisor of the Caretaker Government. During war, he was an SDO in Habiganj. Though he worked as a Pakistani officer and in spite of all the warnings of sending him to Karachi, he arranged for a place to store guns for the East Pakistani fighters, using the power that he had. He shared his memories of diplomacy and how he joined the 'Mujibnagar Government', covering aspects of its achievements during the war as well as its post-war failures. Last, but not the least, was the enthusiastic speech of the Director of Gender, Justice & Diversity and Advocacy, BRAC- **Ms. Sheepa Hafiza**, who talked about the position of women in our country and their role in development.



The end to the panel discussion tagged along with it a cultural program where **Shaan, Ruhi, Tasbita** and **Aniruddha**, students from BRAC University performed patriotic songs and songs from 'Shadheen Bangla Betar Kendro'. Our chief artist was **Mr. Sadi Mohammed** who mesmerized us with his patriotic solo performance, preceded with a duet with **Ms. Zainab Ali Farooqui** and a solo by **Topon Bhattacharjee**. The program was given a spectacular finale with our national anthem-'Amar Shonar Bangla', sung by all with downright respect. The program was organized by the students of BBS headed by **Tanjim Ferdous**, and his team members, **Trisha, Shihab, Rumman, Shimul** and **Tasbita** under the supervision of **Mrs. Samina Haque** and **Mr. Saif Hossain**, faculty members of BBS. Although our new generation has not experienced the liberation war, they are fighting their war against all the social, economical and political ties of our nation, declaring a war to bring a better environment and a new ray of hope for the country.

BBS organizes a seminar on '40 Years of the Victory of Bangladesh: Economic Challenges and Prospects'



It has been 40 years since Bangladeshi people achieved their own free land. But did they ever have a good economy in these years of journey? - With these controversial questions, a seminar on "40 Years of the Victory of Bangladesh: Economic Challenges and Prospects" was held in BRAC University on 14th December, 2011 at GDLN center. BRAC Business School (BBS) and Bonik Barta- the first bangla daily business newspaper in Bangladesh in association with BRAC University Heritage Forum arranged the seminar. The seminar was chaired by former advisor of caretaker government and professor of BRAC Business School **Dr. Akbar Ali Khan**. Chief Guest: **Dr. Mirza Md. Azizul Islam**, visiting faculty of BRAC Business School. **Dr. Rushidan Islam Rahman**, Research Director- BIDS ; **Dr. Fahmida Khatun**, Head of Research - CPD; **Dr. Zahid Hussain** - Senior Economist, World Bank; **Dr. Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University; **Dr. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**, Pro-VC of BRAC University; **Dr. Mamun Rashid**, Director of BRAC Business School also attended the program. The program started with three consecutive presentations which were presented by three brilliant students (two from BRAC Business School and one from Economics and Social Science Department). Their presentation covered agriculture; readymade garments (RMG) and stock market sectors in detail. The guests made further comments on the topic and related it with their discussions in terms of main topic. They said all the sectors are equally important and contributing a lot in our country's GDP. These sectors are dealing with some problems from the very beginning of the birth of Bangladesh. They agreed on the point which states that through the way our economy grew up, it has become very much interesting to the economists around the world. They also sorted out the structural problems those have become the greatest barriers for the economic growth and development. They encouraged and invited active participation of young minds in these types of issues. The total program was organized and designed by some energetic students who will be the future pioneers also appreciated by the honorable guests respectively. The whole event was coordinated by the **Muhammad Intisar Alam**, Lecturer, BRAC Business School (BBS) and Co-Advisor of BRACU Heritage Forum.

FAS BIZ WARRIORS

On 1st December 2011, BRAC Business School (BBS) in participation with Entrepreneurship Development Forum (EDF) organized an intra university financial quiz competition - FAS BIZ Warriors. The entire event was sponsored by

FAS Finance and Investment Ltd, a sister concern of Nitol Group. The quiz competition focused on issues related to finance and economics around the globe. The aim of the competition was to promote financial education amongst the future leaders of the country and create a single platform and competitive environment for many of our young talents to stand out and get a wider exposure. The competition was open for both BBS and ESS students.



A total of 13 groups comprising of 3 students in each group participated in the competition. The entire competition had three rounds, the initial round, semi final round and the final round. From the initial round, the top 4 groups - El-Dorado, Hedge Fund and Sapling, Warriors

without Weapons made it to the semi-final round. In the semi-final round, the top four teams faced the challenge of buzzer round. The top 2 teams made it to the final round and they were El-Dorado and Hedge Fund, leaving Sapling as the 2nd runner up. In the final round, the top two teams El-Dorado and Hedge Fund faced a tough competition and finally the round was won by Hedge Fund leaving El-Dorado as the first runner up.

After the end of the final round, BBS faculty member and the co-coordinator of BIZ Warriors **Ms. Samina Haque** spoke a few words about the whole event. The chief guest of the event, **Mr. Abdul Matlab Ahmed** also spoke a few words about the show. At the end of the session prize giving ceremony was held, the winner of the competition Hedge Fund was handed over with a cash prize of Tk. 30,000, the runner up El-Dorado was given Tk. 15,000, and the second runner up Sapling was given Tk. 9,000. **Mr. Mamun Rashid** - Director BRAC Business School ended the quiz competition with a thanking note.

BDI Updates

Publication of Two Working Papers by Pathways

The Pathways programme has published two BDI working papers based on their research. BDI working paper no. 5, titled 'Does Paid Work Provide a Pathway to Women's Empowerment? Empirical Findings from Bangladesh,' is authored by **Naila Kabeer, Simeen Mahmud, and Sakiba Tasneem**. The other working paper is titled 'Mobilizing Support and Negotiating Change: Women's Organizations building Constituencies in Bangladesh'. This paper, marked BDI working paper no. 6, is written by **Sohela Nazneen and Maheen Sultan**.

Presentations of BDI Research Works at the Conference Titled 'Cultural Transformation: Development Initiatives and Social Movement'



The two-day long biennial international conference of the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACSS) was held on 17th and 18th December 2011. The conference explored development as a social phenomenon and depicted the interface between culture, collective values and development among Asian countries. It

was hosted by BRAC University and organized by BRAC Development Institute (BDI) and English and Humanities (ENH) Department.

BDI programme factions, including Pathways, and Citizenship, presented their research works at the conference. **Sohela Nazneen**, from the Pathways programme, presented 'Women in the Right: Activism and Mobilization in Politics.' **Sahida Khondakar's** address was titled 'Pahari Media: Negotiating Realities and Spaces' while **Samia Huq** presented a paper titled 'Women Performing the Nation.' 'Digital Stories of Empowerment' by Pathways has also been screened. In addition, a photo essay, written for Pathways by **Samia Rahim** and **Firdous Azim**, was on display at the conference. The main theme of the photo essay was women and changing cityscape.

From the Citizenship wing, **Lopita Huq** presented their research on 'Sex Preference and Daughter Devaluation in Bangladesh.' Her documentary on RMG workers 'Ami Kichu Bolte Chai' was also screened. Another documentary, entitled 'Shahinotar Kotha' (Tales of Freedom) by the Lead Researcher **Dr. Mirza Hassan**, was also screened at the conference.

Urban Poverty Workshop on 'Building Capacities and Creating Communities: Towards a Multi-Sector Initiative in Urban Slums of Bangladesh'

Urban Poverty wing of BDI has organized a workshop on December 29th, 2011 to reflect on the findings of the action



research and lessons learnt during the last three years. The action research is based on the urban slums studies and titled 'Building Capacities and Creating Communities: Towards a Multi-Sector Initiative in Urban Slums of Bangladesh.' The discussion of the workshop has focused on the following broad issues: tenure security, nature of community mobilization, child labor and education, built environment, access to finance and livelihood, access to utility, and access to health services.

The workshop brought together slum level community leaders, local government representatives as well as local and national level officials of UPPR (Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction) project of UNDP and WaterAid. In addition, programme officials of other agencies that have intervention programs in the five treatment slums were invited to participate in the workshop.

CfL Updates

Launching Ceremony of King Sejong Institute, Dhaka



Centre for Languages of BRAC University, and the HRD Korea launched the King Sejong Institute, Dhaka on 7 December, 2011 with the vision of preparing Bangladeshis with Korean language, that would enable them obtaining a wide range of opportunity to attain scholarships and work in different countries, especially in Korea, which has been a friend to Bangladesh for a long time. Korean Ambassador, Taiyoung Cho and BRAC University Pro-Vice Chancellor, **Professor Dr. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir** cut the ribbons to launch the institute. **Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury**, Registrar, BRAC University, **Lady Syeda Sarwat Abed**, director of King Sejong Institute and Centre for Languages, BRAC University, **Kyung Sik Lim**, Director General of Foreign Workshop Bureau, HRD Korea, BRAC University teachers, officers, students and journalists were present in the occasion.

The prime objective of this institute is to provide a high standard, well-designed course of Korean language and culture, which will include internationally standardized text-books and multimedia aids.

It is worth mentioning that King Sejong Institute is the first Korean Language and Cultural institute that has affiliation with an institution of higher education in Bangladesh, BRAC University and is supported directly by the Korean Embassy, Dhaka.

At this point, experts believe that this collaboration would further strengthen the bond of friendship shared by Bangladesh and Korea.

Pecha Kucha Event



Centre for Languages, BRAC University organized an interesting session titled Pecha Kucha event on 12 December 2011 in Room UB0202. It was

conducted by **Roxana Ahmad Chowdhury** along with **Golam Kader Zilany**, faculty members of CfL. Students of ENG- 091 course participated in the session. To illustrate, Pecha Kucha draws its name from the Japanese term "chit chat". It was a presentation devised by **Asfrid Klein** and **Mark Dytham** architecture, in Tokyo. It is a methodology in which twenty slides are shown, each slide for twenty seconds where people can put their thoughts, share ideas, works and finally form a network. Pecha Kucha is happening in more than two hundred cities around the world.

ENH Updates

Performance by English 102 Students



On 7th December 2011, students of Eng 102: English Composition-I organised a performance showcasing all the elements of the course. The highlight of the performance was a Bangladeshi adaptation of Guy de Maupassant's short story The Necklace. The event included recitation of poems taught in the course and launching of a wall magazine by the students. The event was co-ordinated.

Guest Lecture on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

On 12th December 2011, **Senjuti Masud**, ELT Producer, BBC Learning English and World Service Trust, Bangladesh came to the M.A. class Eng 646: Computer



Assisted Language Learning as the guest lecturer. She shared how BBC has been playing an important role by implementing technology in making animations and television programs based on real life situations to teach the common people English.

International Publications of ENH Faculty Members

A collection of **Nausheen Eusuf's** poems titled What Remains has been published by Longleaf Press, Methodist University, USA.

Sabreena Ahmed's English translation of **Saleha Chowdhury's** short story "A Punk and Gulshan Ara" was anthologized in the in the compilation of stories titled As the Story Goes edited by Mark Richardson and published by New Fiction publishers, UK.

International Conference Hosted by ENH

The biggest highlight for the ENH Department this year was the hosting of Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACSS) international conference titled "Cultural Transformations: Development Initiatives and Social Movements". This conference was participated by around 65 international participants from countries like Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, China, USA and India. About 200 guests and 150 participants attended the two-day conference. The Chairperson of the Department, **Professor Firdous Azim** arranged the event with the help of all the faculty members of Department of English and Humanities (ENH), Economics and Social Sciences (ESS) and BRAC Development Institute (BDI).



Inaugural Session

Keynote speakers with the chair of the session

Firdous Azim welcomed the audience at the first session of the event. **Professor A.K. Azad Chowdhury** (State Minister), Chairperson, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh was the chief guest of this inaugural session of the conference. Professor **Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University chaired this session while Professor **Syed Hashemi**, Director, BRAC Development Institute and Acting Chairperson, Department of Economics and Social Sciences delivered the vote of thanks.

The keynote papers were delivered by **Ashish Rajadhyaksha**, Senior Fellow Centre for the Study of Culture and Society (CSCS), Bangalore, India and **Professor Perween Hasan**, Vice Chancellor, Central Women's University, Dhaka. **Professor Rajahyaksha's** paper was titled "Being Someone's Symbolic

Other: A Cultural Studies for South Asia" while **Professor Hasan's** paper was titled Presence of the Past: Cultural Connectivities and Continuities in Asia. This session was chaired by **Professor Kuan Hsing** Chen, from the Graduate Institute for Social Research and Cultural Studies, National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan.

With a special focus on the issues of social movement and development, the conference had many panels of group presentations from different countries titled "Cultural-Spatial Politics and Social Movements in Hong Kong", "Culture, Sexuality and Feminism", "Cross-sectoral Synergy in Cultural-Creative SMEs in Hong Kong", "The 'Other' Koreans: Mobile Multimedia or Diasporic Subalterns? ", "Remapping Post Cold War Asia: Mobility, Imaginary Space, and Emerging Identities", " Assam", "Transformation of Japanese/South Korean Cinema and Industry: The Past and Present". A special panel titled "Culture, Health and Development" by James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University was held on the second day of the conference. On the second day, a mesmerizing dance named "Fireflies" comprising a selection of haikus by Rabindranath Tagore was performed by Shadhona-A Centre for Advancement of South Asian Culture. The conference also included papers on performing arts (music, theatre and dance), queer theory, literature and cultural studies, nation/region/identity and cinema.

Along with the academic papers, the organisers of the conference created an exhibition space where posters of Naripokkho and Mohila Porishad were displayed. Pathways of Women's Empowerment of BDI and Safia Azim displayed their photographs in the exhibition which was previously published in the photo essay of IACS Journal . A booth was set for constant screening of several short films made by BRAC Development Institute (BDI), and BRAC University students in the exhibition. Pathshala had their separate digital display titled "New Waves" in the exhibition.

This conference was preceded by the Steering Committee Meeting of the IACSS Consortium on 16th December 2011 at GDLN centre, BRAC University. The conference ended with the closing of Consortium for Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Institutions (CIACSI) at the last session of the conference. Thirty three faculties and nine students became members of the IACSS on spot in the conference.



The triumph of this event has not only gathered praise and appreciation from the local and international participants, but has also paved the way for future possibilities of allies between all the participating countries and their institutions for cultural studies. Thus this event has not only made the ENH Department proud, but also featured the potential of

BRAC University to the world.

ESS Updates

Faculty attended in conference and seminar

Kamrul Hasan presented a paper titled "Quality of primary health care services in rural Bangladesh: Patients' perspectives" at the International Conference on Sustainable Development 2011. The Conference was held on 5-7 December, 2011 in Putrajaya, Malaysia and was organized jointly by Ontario International Development Agency (OIDA), Laurentian University in Canada and Universiti Tun Abdul Razak in Malaysia. The Conference was sponsored by the Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, Malaysia.

Tanveer Reza Rouf attended a daylong seminar titled "Linking Research to Policy: Growth and Development Issues in Bangladesh" organized by International Growth Centre (IGC), Bangladesh at the Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon, Dhaka on 20 December 2011. The seminar brought together both young and senior Bangladeshi researchers working on education, governance, trade and poverty related issues.

GDLN Updates

Distance Learning Course on the Microfinance Training of the Trainers (MFTOT)

The Eight delivery of the Microfinance Training of Trainers course (MFTOT-7) started on Dec 15 2011 and will continue till April 2012 .



Microfinance is recognized as an effective development interaction that enhances access to financial services by low income individuals. While there is great demand for microfinance

services the main constraint is not a lack of funds but a lack of capacity in operating a sustainable institution. To address this problem, the ADBI, TDLC which is a member of GDLN Asia Pacific and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Launched the MFToT program in 2005.

The interactive microfinance distance learning course (MFDL) developed by UNCDF was the core learning material for study. Four (4) Interactive Video Conference sessions take place in 4 months at BRAC University Premises along with online tutoring, e-discussion and online exams. Submission of assignments and receiving online tutoring will help participants to master the knowledge of best practice of microfinance.

GDLN general meeting in New Delhi, India

Global Development Learning Network Asia Pacific (GDLN AP) organized its annual general



meeting in New Delhi, India, hosted by GDLN center of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI- DLC). The meeting took place from 05 to 10 December 2011. BRAC University is the only GDLN Affiliated center in Bangladesh and **Ms. Fahima Khanam** Assistant Director, IT, attended in that GDLN AP regional general meeting. More than 40 representatives from South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific have gathered in TERI, New Delhi to discuss how the region could boost its provision of knowledge exchange and capacity building through the Global Development Learning Network and updated each other their on ongoing programs.

GDLN connects the world through learning. It is a partnership of recognized global institutions which collaborate in the design of customized learning solutions for individuals and organizations working in development. Through tailored learning programs, knowledge and technical assistance programs and state of the art videoconferencing and internet-based learning, GDLN can connect development stakeholders around the world and bring key resource person for the required field as needed by its clients.

GDLN provides a unique mix of delivery infrastructure, partnership networks, and understanding of how to make effective use of modern information and communication technologies for learning and knowledge exchange. The purpose of our meeting this week has been to share experience on how to make best use of our network to foster economic and social development in the Asia Pacific region.

The five-day meeting was an opportunity for GDLN Asia Pacific members and partners to assemble and discuss innovative programs and the latest network development and technology enhancement. GDLN Global objectives and strategies were also discussed. An introduction to the status quo was made, and ideas for GDLN global governance and services were presented. The participants discussed how they could work together and what the major differences were between East Asia Pacific region and South Asia region of GDLN.

Meeting attendants were split up into groups and discussed how to create a mechanism of joint programs, what governance is needed, and how this integration was going to benefit both regions. A lot of ideas were raised by all participants. Participants also focused on writing effective proposals. They took the lead from World Bank Institute trainers on thinking more strategically and to look more broadly at clear targets. They were divided into groups, and each group was given a specific scenario for practical simulations. The exercise involved the planning of convincing presentations, teamwork, and competition. Toward the end of the session, the five groups judged each other. It was fun and very educational experience for all the participants.

GDLN began as a World Bank initiative in 1997 but has now grown as a worldwide partnership that includes universities, government institutes and private sector organizations in 120 affiliated centers around the world.

This meeting was an important step for the development learning and knowledge exchange programs in the region and as this meeting was held in South Asia region so it was much more useful for our next activities to this network.

IED Updates



The Programme Head, IED BRACU attended a training course on Skills Development, Human Resources Development in Rural Areas: South Asian Scenario between December 12th and 17th, 2011 in Islamabad, Pakistan, organised by SRDRC. She presented the 'Country Report on Skills Development in Bangladesh and an individual paper on 'The Role of Human Capital in Rural Development'.

A workshop on 'Improving the Quality of Education: Role of Teachers in Achieving Quality in Education in South Asia (December 26 -28, 2011) was co-organised

by the SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) Islamabad, Pakistan and IED BRACU, Dhaka. The main objectives of the workshop were to explore the current situation of quality of education with respect to teacher's role and develop strategies to improve quality of education for the future. This provided participants with the opportunity to share their experiences and knowledge with the experts of the field and learn further about ways to improve Teacher's Role in Achieving Quality of Education. Participants from Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh were attended the workshop.



A Research Seminar on Early Childhood Development (ECD) was held on 20th

and 21st December, 2011 at BRAC Centre, Dhaka. This seminar was organised by Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) with the aim of

encouraging policy and action based scientific knowledge and generate further research interest on ECD. The seminar was inaugurated by

Rasheda K Choudhury,

Executive Director
CAMPE. The research

seminar carried out successfully through several research presentations, poster presentations and panel discussion on research findings. Around 80 people participated in the seminar. The seminar ended with commitments of working for children through evidence based policy advocacy and effective policy implementation.



IGS Updates

Condolence News



IGS deeply mourns the premature demise of **Dr. Jalal Alamgir**, a Visiting Research Fellow who died in Thailand on the 3rd. of December, 2011. **Dr. Jalal Alamgir** was an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts, Boston and Fellow of the South Asia Initiative at Harvard University. **Dr. Alamgir** was based at IGS since the beginning of 2011. He was working for his upcoming book on political violence with the assistance of junior researchers of IGS and writing op-ed in national dailies on governance issues. He was also advising IGS researchers on their ongoing research works for State of

Governance (SOG) and State of Cities (SOC) reports. IGS family sincerely prays for the eternal peace of this brilliant academic scholar.

Other Activities of IGS

Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA) - Engagement with World Bank Country Team and PRAN (in Nepal)

In December 2011, ANSA-SAR has established connection with World Bank Country Team in Bangladesh and PRAN (in Nepal) for expertise support on Social Accountability tools and Third-Party. ANSA is also associating with World Bank Institute in the delivery of online Social Accountability course targeted at the South Asian audience. Moreover there have been agreements of collaborative works with the Water & Sanitation Program (WSP) around their Horizontal Learning Program (HLP) with the Governance team on RTI and support to LGSP-II and with the CMU for providing knowledge support to their Third Party

Monitoring (TPM) efforts in Bangladesh.

'Capacity Building for Promoting Governance' Programme under The Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education'

From 10th-19th December 2011, a 4 member team, 2 from IGS and 2 from BPATC (Bangladesh Public Administration Training Center) went on a 10-day visit to The Netherlands. The IGS team consisted of **Dr, Rizwan Khair**, Director- In-Charge & **Munir Uddin Shamim**, Senior Programme Manager and BPATC team included A. A. M. Shafiqul Alam, Rector and **Dr. Md. Mahmudul Hasan**, MDS. The purpose of the visit was to finalize the 4-year project named "Capacity Building for Promoting Governance". This is a collaborative initiative of IGS, BRAC University and BPATC being implemented in partnership with Free University of Amsterdam, Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University and MDF Training and Consultancy B.V (MDF). The project has been undertaken under The Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC). The project aims at building capacity in IGS and BPATC to transform the public sector in Bangladesh to be responsive to the needs of its citizens.



During the visit, the Bangladeshi team and Dutch Partners finalized the project document through a series of meetings, participatory discussions, question-answer sessions, reviewing documents, presentations and visiting relevant organizations.

Procurement Training courses for Public Sector officials

Advanced Diploma in Purchasing & Supply Chain (Level 5) Course of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) has been started for Batch-2 of public sector officials in December 2011 and it will continue up to February 2012.

Private Public Stakeholders Committee (PPSC)

The 5th PPSC quarterly newsletter has been published. The contents comprised of e-tender to prevent corruption, news snippets regarding public procurement & experiences of 3 governmental organizations in relation to citizens in the public procurement process.

Bangladesh Youth Survey



A field trip was organized to conduct Focus Group Discussions, (FGD)'s, with different groups of youths in Chittagong and Sylhet divisions by two different teams to retrieve in depth information on different issues. In Chittagong division, the team conducted FGD's in Chittagong City, Rangamati, Bandarban and Comilla. The other team in Sylhet conducted FGD's in Sylhet Sadar, Moulavibazar and Kamalganj. A MoU was signed with UNDP, Bangladesh, to fund some activities of BYS. Neilsen Bangladesh has conducted a survey for the BYS. They have worked in different parts of Bangladesh for the month of December.

11th Asian Urbanization Conference at Hyderabad

Ms. Rubayet Hamid, a research team member of IGS, has presented a paper at the 11th Asian urbanization conference at Hyderabad organized by Osmania University. The paper was titled " Children of the City: An Inter-Generational Account of Urbanization, Poverty and Child Well-Being in Dhaka City.

Lectures conducted at BPATC

In December 2011, **Dr. Rizwan Khair**, Director-In-Charge of IGS, has delivered lectures in ACAD and Senior Staff Course at BPATC.

Journalism Training & Research Initiative (JATRI)



On December 29th, JATRI organized a view exchange meeting which was attended by Nobel Laureate, **Professor Amartya Sen**. The meeting was attended by Salma Sobhan Fellows, who have obtained Salma Sobhan Fellowship, **Professor Rehman Sobhan, Professor Rawnak Jahan, Dr. Rizwan Khair, &**

Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, Registrar at BRAC University. The session was moderated by Jamil Ahmed, Chief Executive of JATRI. The Salma Sobhan Fellows talked about how they were evaluated everywhere after obtaining this fellowship and it has added to their careers by opening up new opportunities.

MNS Updates

Third Inter-University Mathematics Olympiad

The Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS) of BRAC University organized "Inter University Mathematics Olympiad-2011" on Friday, December 9, 2011 in collaboration with Bangladesh Mathematical Society (BMS). The aim of this Mathematical Olympiad was to create the opportunity for our young talented undergraduate students in the country to stand out and illustrate their mathematical and analytical skills. In addition, the event was aimed to create a national awareness for the development of mathematics education at the tertiary level and skills. A total of 146 talented students from 22 different Institutions from all over the country took part in this national competition. **Professor Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**, Pro Vice Chancellor, BRAC University was present as the Chief Guest and **Professor Md. Abdus Sattar**, President, Bangladesh Mathematical Society, as the Special Guest in the Inauguration Ceremony. **Professor A.A. Ziauddin Ahmad**, Chairman, Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences chaired the ceremony.

In the Closing and Prize Awarding Ceremony held in Xinxian Restaurant in Dhanmondi, Dhaka, former Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University, **Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury** was present as the Chief Guest. The Chief Guest informed that due to the lack of facilities our students were not that prepared for the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) which was an annual event for pre-collegiate students. The first IMO was held in Romania in 1959. It has since been held annually, except in 1980. It is gratifying that Bangladesh has been participating at this IMO quite regularly during the recent past. The function was presided over by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, **Professor Dr. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**. He congratulated the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of BRAC University for successfully organizing this Third Inter-university Mathematics Olympiad in technical collaboration with Bangladesh Mathematical Society (BMS). He expressed his opinion that this Olympiad had achieved its goal of motivating the participants to improve their analytical and problem solving skills. **Professor A.A.Z. Ahmad**, Chair of the Organizing Committee delivered the welcome address. He said the budding mathematicians who were participating in the competition should fill in the gaps left by the great mathematicians like **Varaha Mihir, Arya Bhatta, Leelabati, Ramanujan, Abdus Salam** and so many others who were born and left their marks in mathematics and astronomy in the past in this very subcontinent.

Out of 250 students who registered online, a total of 146 students participated finally. The syllabus of the olympiad included calculus and coordinate geometry, differential equations, linear algebra, vector algebra, complex variables and basic theory of probability and statistics. Questions were divided into two groups: Analytical part was for one hour and another thirty minutes were allocated for MCQ's. The language of the Olympiad was English. It was an individual contest. The competition selected 10 winners for the 10th position to the 1st position. The

first prize winner **Sheikh Ziauddin**, of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE), Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) got Tk. 10,000. The second and third prize winners were **Forsad Al Hossain** and **Md. Emroz Khan** of the same department who got TK. 7,000 and Tk. 4,000 respectively. The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh prizes went to **Md. Rezaul Karim, Moinul Hossain Rahat, Md. Mukhlasur Rahman Tanvir and Moinul Hossain Rahat** also of the Department of EEE, BUET. The eighth prize winner was **Md. Nazim Uddin Bhuiyan** from the Department of Mathematics, University of Dhaka. The ninth prize was won by **A. S. M. Sohidull Islam** of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, BUET and the tenth prize winner was again from the EEE Department, BUET, **Partha Sarathi Sarker**. The last seven winners got Tk. 2000 each as prize money. The Chief Guest awarded crests, prize money and certificates to the winners of the competition. The Closing and Prize Awarding Ceremony was followed by dinner.

First Bangladesh Urban Forum Conference

Ms. Moushumi Zahur, Assistant Professor of MNS, BRACU attended and worked as rapporteur at the first International Conference of Urban Forum, held on 5 to 7 December, 2011, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The three-day long conference held in Bangabandhu International Conference Centre was inaugurated by the Honourable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Twenty different sessions were organized on different themes regarding urban problems and issue in Bangladesh. The Conference adopted resolution for the development of urban areas taking due cognizance of sustainability.

Conference Proceedings (ICAEE-2011)

A research article of **Muhammad Lutfor Rahman** Lecturer at the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences titled "Impact of Cr³⁺ on the structural and magnetic properties of Mn-Cr-Zn ferrites" was presented at the International Conferences on Advances in Electrical Engineering 2011 (ICAEE-2011), which was held at Independent University on December 19-20, 2011. In this paper mainly focused on the magnetic properties of the bulk magnetic materials which are preferably used for the high frequency devices in the field of communication technologies. The organizer of the conference will arrange for the publication of this work in an international journal in near future.

Fifth International Botanical Conference 2011

Dr. Aparna Islam and **Ms. Jebunessa Chowdhury** attended the three-day long 5th International Botanical Conference 2011. The event was organized by the Bangladesh Botanical Society in collaboration with University of Dhaka (DU) and was held on 9-11 December, 2011, at the Department of Botany, DU. At the Inaugural Session **Begum Matia Chowdhury**, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, GoB was present as the Chief Guest, while **Professor Dr. A. A. M. S. Arefin Siddique**, Vice Chancellor, DU was the Special Guest. The conference brought together plant scientists from Germany, India, Japan, Korea, Nepal and Pakistan in addition to Bangladeshi botanists on this eve of 40 year celebration of the Bangladesh Botanical Society. A total of about 300 scientists participated in the conference. Several papers were presented in eight scientific sessions. Dr. **Aparna Islam** published a short article in the conference publication entitled "Climate change, emerging infectious diseases and food security". In the article

she emphasizes on the biotic problems that the world is facing due to climate change. The abiotic stresses like temperature, salinity, drought etc. have already been recognized as a causes for crop yield reduction. But not much emphasis has been given to combat climate change related emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) of plants. However, at present EIDs are already playing considerable negative role in food productivity. The impact of this unrecognized problem can be considerable having world wide effects. Therefore, through this article Dr. Islam urged plant scientists to take necessary action immediately.

MS Thesis Presentation

MS thesis viva of four MS Biotechnology students, **Nowrin Nowshaba**, **Md. Abdul Quayum**, **Md. Shoyeb** and **Abul Kalam Azad** was held on 11th, 15th and 22nd December 2011. All four students worked in various fields of biotechnology. Work of **Nowrin Nowshaba** and **Abul Kalam Azad** were aimed to analyse immune response to diarrhoea drugs. Title of **Ms Nowshaba's** thesis is "In vitro regeneration of three local potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) varieties of Bangladesh", while **Mr. Azad's** work was entitled "Comparison of memory B-cell immune response among different age groups after oral cholera vaccination". Both the research studies were carried out under joint supervision of Professor **Dr. Firdausi Qadri**, of ICDDR,B, and **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury**, BRACU. **Md. Abdul Quayum** worked on "Characterization of an ethanol producing yeast isolate and optimization of ethanol fermentation" and **Md. Shoyeb** worked on "Screening of some Bangladeshi medicinal plants for in vitro antioxidant, antimicrobial and insecticidal activities". The work on ethanol fermentation was supervised jointly **Dr. Monzur Morshed Ahmed**, BCSIR and **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury**, BRACU. The work on medicinal plant extracts was carried out at BRAC University lab under joint supervision of **Dr. Ashik Mosadek**, Pharmacy Dept, BRACU and **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury**, BRACU. The thesis evaluation exam was chaired by **Professor AA Ziauddin Ahmad**. **Professor Dr. Firdausi Qadri** and **Dr. Monzur Morshed Ahmed** acted as external examiners. **Dr. Mahboob Hossain** and **Dr. Aparna Islam** were among the other members of the examination committee. Some faculty members attended the viva-voce exams.

Life Science Article in the Daily Star

One scientific article titled "Probiotics: Bacteria as Medicine" by **Md. Riajul Hossain**, Lecturer in Biotechnology of the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences was published on December 06, 2011, in the "Tuesday's Science and Life Section" of the Daily Star. In the article the author stressed that continuous research on the friendly bacteria and investigating their interactions with the gut microflora might help us inventing alternative medication that would bypass antibiotic and some other ways of treatment and would also help preventing many diseases in the first place.

Pharmacy Updates

BRAC University Pharma Society (BUPS), the students' organisation designated for the Department of pharmacy, BRAC University, organized an awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS on World AIDS day December 1, 2011, in association from International Pharmaceutical Students Federation (IPSF), Department of

Pharmacy, BRAC University and James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University. The campaign was started by formation of a Human Red Ribbon at BRAC university Premises followed by a rally/procession on HIV/AIDS awareness throughout the Mohakhali and Gulshan Area of Dhaka City.



Then Seminar session was lunched at Banquet Hall, Hotel Abakash, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Mohakhali, Dhaka. **Professor Dr. Nazrul Islam**, Former Vice-Chancellor & Former Chairman, Department of Virology, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Medical University, and the pioneer of HIV/AIDS research in Bangladesh was present as the chief guest in the seminar. **Dr. Anwar Hossain Munshi**, Director, Modern Health Group and an activist on HIV/AIDS awareness was also present as special guest. Other guest for the campaign seminar includes **Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid**, **Dr. Malabika Sarker** from James P Grant School of Public Health, Professor **Dr. Mofiz Uddin Ahmed** from the Department of Mathematics, BRAC University. Around 200 students from 15 different universities, colleges and other educational institution of the Dhaka city took part in this campaign and seminar.

After the scientific talks quiz competition on HIV/AIDS, Poster exhibition and poster competition on HIV/AIDS were also done to celebrate the AIDS day. The welcome speech in the seminar session was delivered by **Mrs. Shahana Sharmin**, Co- Advisor of BRAC University Pharma Society. The seminar session included different documentaries on HIV/AIDS, global scenario, Bangladesh context, Social stigma on HIV/AIDS positive patient, HIV/AIDS awareness, Method of diagnosis and prevention of HIV/AIDS. After the seminar session, quiz competition involving the participating institutions took place on HIV/AIDS. About 15 teams each comprising of 3 members took place in the competition. In the meanwhile, an adjudication of the posters submitted took place. Southeast University win the champion trophy in Quiz competition and Department of Bio-Technology, Dhaka University secured 1 runner up and 2 Runner up was Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. Dhaka Imperial College garbed the best poster award. The vote of thanks was given by the chairperson of the Department of Pharmacy, BRAC University and the Advisor, BRAC University Pharma Society, **Professor Dr. Ashik Mosaddik**. The whole program was financially supported by Square Pharmaceutical Limited, BRAC Health Program and the student affairs of BRAC University.

SPH Updates

FOOD SECURITY NUTRITIONAL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM (FSNSP)

James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University; Helen Keller International-Bangladesh (HKI) and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Ministry of Planning of Bangladesh are implementing the Food Security and Nutrition Surveillance Project (FSNSP) under financing from the European Union. The FSNSP monitors the food security, nutrition and health status of children and women in Bangladesh and promotes the use of this information for policy and program development and advocacy at the national and sub-national levels. The FSNSP organized its first stakeholders meeting on December 13, 2011 at Radisson Hotel. The first annual report of the project titled 'State of Food Security and Nutrition in Bangladesh: 2010' was launched during this meeting. This is a compilation of findings from the first three rounds of surveillance. The meeting was graced by the Honorable Minister, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, **Mr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque** as the chief guest. Participants from the government, NGOs, donor organization, media attended the meeting. BRAC University Vice Chancellor, **Professor Ainun Nishat** chaired the inaugural session.

GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA PROJECT

Observing World AIDS Day 2011



James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH) Consortium at BRAC University observed World AIDS Day 2011 as part of Expanding HIV prevention in Bangladesh-RCC project (Package 913). A rally was started in front of the National Museum, Shahbagh to Osmani Auditorium. Honorable Minister of Health, **Dr A. F. M.**

Ruhul Haque, led the rally. James P Grant School of Public Health Consortium at BRAC University held an information booth at the Osmani Auditorium featuring publications of the JPGSPH consortium. **Mr Asiful Haidar Chowdhury**, Data Management and Analysis Specialist working in the Capacity Building Package implemented by JPGSPH, BRAC University also presented a paper on "Overall Situation of HIV and AIDS: Bangladesh Context" at an awareness raising seminar for 'Youth on HIV and AIDS' organized by Pharmacy Department, BRAC University in observance of World AIDS Day.

Orientation on Standard Operating Procedures for Services to People Living with HIV and AIDS

Under the Expanding HIV prevention in Bangladesh-RCC project a six-day orientation on Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)



for Services to People Living with HIV and AIDS was held at BRAC Learning Center (BLC) from 7 to 13 December 2011. A total of 23 service providers from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), Infectious Disease Hospital (IDH) and Ashar Alo Society (AAS) participated in the SOP orientation. Participants included 14 doctors (including 1 Deputy Director-Hospital, 2 Associate Professors and 1 Assistant Professor), 8 nurses and 1 program person.. Persons who were involved during the development process of SOP facilitated the orientation. **Dr. Md. Abdul Waheed**, Line Director of National AIDS/STD Programme & Safe Blood Transfusion Program and **Ms. Ismat Bhuiya**, Team Leader of the project & Sr. Project Director of JPGSPH, BRAC University inaugurated and closed the orientation program. All participants were awarded certificates after successfully completing the orientation.

Technical Advisory Group Meeting

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting was held on December 26, 2011 at the BRAC Centre Inn conference room from 10 am to 1 pm. The agenda of the meeting was to update TAG members on the progress of project activities and share contents of the



two Behavior Change Communication (BCC) guidelines for Sex Worker and Injecting Drug User Interventions. **Dr. Md. Abdul Waheed**, Line Director of the National AIDS/STD Programme (NASP) & Safe Blood Transfusion Programme, chaired the meeting in absence of Dr Timothy G Evans, Dean of JPGSPH. Professor Dr. Md. **Nazrul Islam**, former Vice-Chancellor, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), **Mr. Abu Yusuf Chowdhury**, Executive Director of PIACT Bangladesh and Chairperson of STI/AIDS Network of Bangladesh, **Dr. Fadia Sultana**, Senior Manager & Focal Person from Save the Children International, **Ms. Ismat Bhuiya**, Team Leader of the Project & Senior Project Director at JPGSPH, BRAC University and other TAG members also attended the meeting. **Ms. Ismat Bhuiya** presented on the progress of project activities, discussing the challenges faced, and lessons learned. Since the project is being phased out, she also addressed in her presentation the steps which need to be taken to ensure sustainability of the project outcomes. A discussion was held on the importance of making the District AIDS Committee, one of the project activities, functional in all 64 districts of the country. The members provided their technical input on the BCC guidelines and suggested that they get reviewed and approved by the Technical Committee of National AIDS Committee.

Workshop with relevant stakeholders

A workshop was organized on December 26, 2011 at the BRAC Centre Inn conference room from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm with stakeholders closely working with Sex Workers and Injecting Drug Users to share the comments from the

Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and get their critical inputs on the two Behavior Change Communication (BCC) guidelines for Sex Worker and Injecting Drug User Interventions. The workshop was started with a welcome address from **Ms. Ismat Bhuiya**, Team Leader of the Project & Senior Project Director of JPGSPH, BRAC University. A total of 42 experts attended the workshop, most of whom had already used the draft guidelines at the field level for field testing. The experts shared their experiences on using these and other related guidelines in the field.

National Dissemination Seminar



A national dissemination seminar on the capacity building project titled "Building and Strengthening the Technical and Institutional Capacities of the government, NGOs and Implementing Partners" was held at the Sasakawa Auditorium of ICDDR,B on 29 December 2011 from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm. JPGSPH Consortium at BRAC University organized the event which was held from

9.30 am to 1.00 pm. The project, funded by The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), had been designed for sustainable progress in combating HIV epidemic in the country. The event was chaired by Pro-vice Chancellor of BRAC University, **Professor Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**. The Senior Adviser and Acting Managing Director of Rockefeller Foundation, Thailand, and former Dean of JPGSPH, **Dr A. M. R. Chowdhury** and Programme Director of HIV/AIDS Sector, Save the Children International, Dr Amzad Ali, were present as special guests. The Chief Guest could not attend the Seminar due to an urgent meeting that was being held simultaneously. Chairperson of STI/AIDS Network, Mr **Abu Yusuf Chowdhury** was present along with former Vice-Chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, **Professor Dr Nazrul Islam**. A total of 145 participants attended the seminar.

The capacity building project was designed with three pronged objectives: to develop skilled human resources both at national and district levels for high quality interventions; to develop standard tools and guidelines to enhance capacity of service providers; and to improve coordination of HIV/AIDS related activities at the district level. The project was implemented in 20 districts under seven divisions. A total of 10 tools and guidelines were developed- of them seven were training manuals and three were guidelines targeting organizations working with People living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) and most-at-risk populations to help provide uniform, standard, comprehensive and quality services. Regarding coordination at district level, the Terms of Reference for the District AIDS Committee (DAC) were developed and notified in the gazette of all 64 districts.

A total of 4832 workforces were developed at the district level for HIV/AIDS program. Among them, 210 master trainers (MTs) from 130 member organisations of STI/AIDS Network were trained on HIV related issues and

subsequently 2024 field-level NGO staff were trained by the MTs. 300 mid-level managers from GO-NGO were trained on HIV/AIDS related issues, management, monitoring and evaluation. 2298 GO-NGO personnel were oriented on TOR of DAC, and coordination mechanism at district level.

The project equipped the organisations with the skills and capacity for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the activities related to national HIV strategies, plans and actions.

Culture, Health and Development Panel at the Inter Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACSS) Conference

On December 18, 2011, James P Grant School of Public Health participated in the Inter Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACSS) Conference on "Cultural Transformations: Development Initiatives and Social Movements" hosted jointly by the Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University and the BRAC Development Institute through a panel on 'Culture, Health and Development'. The session, held from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM, was chaired by **Dr. A. M. R. Chowdhury**, Associate Director and Senior Advisor, Health, Rockefeller Foundation and co-chaired by **Dr Malabika Sarker**, Professor, JPGSPH. Participants included faculty and staff from JPGSPH, health professionals, researchers and students. Faculty and staff from the School made presentations on the intersections of culture, health and development.

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

Mr Feroz Ahmed, Analysis and Reporting Officer, Food Security Nutritional Surveillance Project (FSNSP), JPGSPH & Helen Keller International (HKI), who has been working with **Dr Enamul Hasib**, Senior Research Associate and Lecturer, JPGSPH, **Ms Jillian Waid**, Senior Analysis Officer, FSNSP, HKI and **Ms Lutfa Ashraf**, Project Coordinator, FSNSP presented on 'Women Need Less Food? FSNSP Project Findings on the Gendered Field of Nutrition in Bangladesh'.

Mr Kuhel Islam, Research Associate and Internship Coordinator, JPGSPH, presented on 'Culture on the Move: Field Observations from a Community Health Project for Afghan Women'.

Ms Anuradha Hashemi, Researcher, Centre for Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS, JPGSPH, presented on 'Courting Violence: Understanding Gender, Power and Romance among Adolescents in Dhaka's Urban Slums'.

Dr Nasima Selim, Senior Lecturer, JPGSPH, presented on 'Negotiation of Cultures in Public Health: Critical Reflections on an Applied Discipline'.

Ms Maliha Bassam, Documentation and Communications Officer, The Global Fund Project, JPGSPH, presented on 'Transfiguring Perceptions: Media Representations of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh'.

Presentations on HIV/AIDS at 'Youth on HIV and AIDS' Seminar
Three members of the JPGSPH participated in a seminar titled 'Youth on HIV and AIDS' organized by the Department of Pharmacy, BRAC University in observance of World AIDS Day. **Dr Malabika Sarker**, Professor, JPGSPH, gave an Overview

on HIV/AIDS. **Dr Sabina Rashid**, Professor, JPGSPH, presented on Stigma and Discrimination in the National Context. **Mr Asiful Haidar Chowdhury**, Data Management and Analysis Specialist of the Capacity Building Package implemented by JPGSPH, presented on the "Overall Situation of HIV and AIDS: Bangladesh Context".

Student Affairs Updates

Club and Forum Updates

BUCC meeting with ESAB

Engineering Students Association Bangladesh (ESAB), a government approved organization created by students from AIUB, BUET, CUET, DU, BRACU etc. It's primary goal is to organize events helpful for the Engineering students as well as the nation. Their first event was on Android technology held on BUET in last October sponsored by Samsung R&D center. A good number of Computer Club (BUCC) members participated there. Being, impressed by our participation, ESAB is now interested to team-up with BUCC following creation of several other teams in AIUB, IUB. The General Secretary of ESAB visited BRACU on Wednesday 28th of December. The treasurer of ESAB, **Prianka Sengupta** was also present in that meeting. ESAB jointly with BUCC would be happy to organize a follow up event on Android in BRACU in the upcoming semester. The discussion also included volunteering opportunities in collaboration with CUET in organizing a "Project Show". It would be held in Chittagong targeting all school students of Bangladesh.

BUCC members volunteer in eAsia 2011 Dhaka



December of 2011 was the final month of the semester. Although we were at the last part of the semester, members of BRAC University Computer Club (BUCC) managed to

take part in a high profile seminar on info-tech titled eAsia 2011, held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), Dhaka during 1-3 December, 2011. This was the 5th annual eAsia conference and exhibition supported by the Access to Information (AZI) Program, Prime Minister's Office, Bangladesh, Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS), Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB), Association of Mobile Telecommunication Operators of Bangladesh (AMTOB) and Bangladesh Association of Call Centre & Outsourcing (BACCO). The conference consisted of two plenary sessions and around 30 focused workshops, debates and seminars. A large number of foreign delegates and international IT experts from at least 10 countries were present.

BRAC University and BRAC held the knowledge partner's responsibility of this

event. Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) with the assistance of the Department of English and Humanities (ENH) of BRAC University executed the task assigned successfully. Volunteers were selected from the School of Engineering and Computer Science (SECS) and ENH Department via interview. More than seventy volunteers through nine executive members of Computer Club (BUCC) were guided by faculty members **Mr. Abu Mohammad Hammad Ali, Mr. Annajiat Alim Rasel, Mr. Md. Shamsul Kaonain, Mr. Abdur Rahman Adnan** of the Department of Computer Science & Engineering (CSE) along with **Ms. Mushira Habib** of Department of English and Humanities. Everyone arrived at BRAC University Mohakhali campus before 8 am in the morning and left for BICC by bus every day. At the end of each day, students were dropped as close to their homes as possible. **Dr. Mumit Khan**, Chairperson of CSE department of BRAC University was present on all the three days to supervise the whole proceeding.

The volunteers were separated into a survey team and a rapporteur team. The survey team was in charge of asking the visitor different questions based on which the main survey would be done by the government. Some of the members of the survey team were handed tablet PCs, others had different sets of questionnaires. They served all day at the survey booth and helped visitors by providing information as well as guiding them to their desired events. The duty of the rapporteur team was to make pairs, taking one student from the SECS and one from ENH, and cover seminars or technical sessions and workshops held on these three days to make a full session report with a session summary. They gathered information and took draft notes in the seminar halls and later on posted the full fledged report to the faculties. The detailed reports are available at <http://easia11bracuniversity.wordpress.com>. Besides these assigned tasks, the knowledge team helped the event organizing team at the BICC countless times, moreover played an important role when **Professor Md Zafar Iqbal**, departmental head of CSE in SUST, and John Davies, Vice President & General Manager of Intel World Ahead Program came to a plenary session at the BICC on the final day.

Joining this international occasion highlighted BRAC University both nationally and globally. It allowed students to gain management skills and volunteering experience, and avail the unique opportunity where they could hear and meet the policymakers, practitioners, industry leaders and academicians of Asia-Pacific and western nations. Chief organizers of eAsia 2011 **Munir Hasan** thanked BUCC and BRAC University for being a part of the occasion, and making the event successful. BUCC will be happy to join in on any occasion in future where their experience might be useful.