



BRAC University Bulletin

2012/august

Architecture Updates

Faculty designed and built a house with a family in Ladakh, India



Khondaker Hasibul Kabir, senior lecturer, Department of Architecture, designed and constructed a house in Ladakh, India, in May-June, 2012. Ladakh is a cold desert where temperature can go down to -30 degree C in winter. Kabir stayed two months with a traditional Ladakhi family in a village named Shey by the Indus River. The family members needed to build a house for them to use it mainly during winter. They wanted **Kabir's** help as an architect. He surveyed the local building techniques and building materials and developed design options with the help of family members and local builders.



The final proposal was an improvement upon the local construction technology and space organization using the same building materials and keeping the family's budget in mind. Building materials were stone for foundation, mud blocks for walls, timber for roof and door and window frames, and glass for window infill. With the help of local masons and carpenters he finished the construction of the lower floor of the two-storied house. The upper floor will be constructed by the family during summer of the following year. During his stay in the village **Kabir** also helped developing a green house and planting in a local school campus (Druk Lotus White School) with the students, teachers and volunteers.

Critique Week

Generally, the last week of the term is scheduled for the final Critiques of the design studios. Final Critiques of design works of freshmen through final year were held this term from August 07 to August 13, 2012. **Bashirul Haq, Marina Tabassum, Naim Ahmed Kibria , Muhamad Nafizur Rahman** were present as guest critics in different critique sessions. **Prof. Fuad H Mallick, Prof. Zainab F Ali**, all members of the faculty and students of the department attended the jury as well.

Final Year Thesis Project Critique

The students of the final design studio presented their graduating projects on 12 and 13 August 2012. The projects included Islamic Information center, Tongi Dhaka; Bangabondhu Smriti memorial, Innani , Cox's Bazaar; Artist village, Savar, Dhaka; Defense museum, Savar, Dhaka; Design and Technology center, Agargaon; Integrated Industrial Design Research and Educational institution, Savar, Dhaka; Air force museum, Bijayshoroni; Square Headquarter, Tejgaon , Dhaka; Bulbul Lalita Kala Academy, Uttora , Dhaka; Towards freedom, Shahbag Dhaka; Infusing public interaction in mix used development, Mirpur 2 ,Dhaka; Robotic research institute, Agargaon , Dhaka; Idea Exchange Center, Hatirjhil, Dhaka; Ragpur heritage museum and cultural complex, Rangpur.

Ehsan Khan, Jalal Ahmed, Mustafa Ameen, Prof. Shaheda Rahman, Prof. Fuad H Mallick, Prof. Zainab F Ali, members of the faculty and students of all design studios were present at the critique. Students from architecture departments of different universities attended these sessions.

Faculty leaves for higher studies

Muhammad Nafisur Rahman, Lecturer II left for pursuing his Masters in Design, majoring in graphic design in the University of Illinois at Chicago, USA. The school is providing him full tuition waiver. Nafisur is from the first batch of graduating architecture student of BRACU. Soon after his graduation he was appointed as lecturer in the department.

BDI Updates

Centre for Social and Gender Transformation (CGST), BDI

Event News:

The South Asia Women Parliamentarians Conference took place from 9 until 11 July

2012 with three days of intensive discussion on issues related to women's empowerment in the socio-political arena. The conference focused on finding ways to promote more effective roles for women leaders across South Asia through greater regional collaboration.



A new regional network based at Centre for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST) /BDI of BRAC University was formed to provide ongoing opportunities for exchange and serve as a regional coordination center for future activities supporting women MPs from the participating countries. Maheen Sultan, Deputy Coordinator of CGST/BDI and Dr. Sohela Nazneen, Research Fellow of CGST/BDI are responsible for maintaining the secretariat.

Members of parliament from seven South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka), representatives from political parties, civil society and gender experts attended the conference. They highlighted the continuing gender inequality in parliaments and potential solutions to these enduring trends. Participating delegates also developed their country action plans to guide future efforts towards increasing women's leadership and enhancing gender-responsive governance in their respective home countries. The conference was organized by The Asia Foundation and funded by the U.S. Government, through USAID, and the United Kingdom through DFID. State Minister of Women and Children Affairs Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Ambassador Dan Mozena, USAID/ Bangladesh Mission Director Richard Greene, Chief Whip of BNP Zainul Abidin and Coordinator of CGST/BDI of BRAC University Simeen Mahmud were present at the closing ceremony. (Source and photo: Asia Foundation)

MDMP Students Visit to Karail Slum

On August 05, 2012 BRAC Development Institute arranged a field visit for the MDMP students. Course teacher **Professor Riaz P Khan** and Deputy Academic Coordinator **Alamgir Kabir** accompanied the students in the field site. The purpose of this field trip was to observe the Urban Partnership for Poverty Reduction Project (UPPRP). **Mr Joynal Abedin**, Manager of the project for Dhaka city accompanied and guided the whole trip. The focus was drawn upon how the under privileged women of Karail slum formed their network and operate services such as- training, waste management, daycare center etc. A meeting was arranged with the women involved in the UPPR project. Students gathered in the office of Kishori Bikash Kendro (Juvenile Development Center) for briefing and orientation. Around 20 housewives from the project were present. After introduction **Mr. Joynal Abedin** gave a briefing on the project. Then the Community Development Committee leaders described the network in details. They explained why only non-working housewives were selected for the committee. Students were informed about the various services provided by this project. About 10000 families live in this slum and

most of the men are rickshaw pullers. The UPPR project seeks to reduce urban poverty and improve lifestyle and livelihood of the slum dwellers.

As the question-answer session started the response from the women were lively and spontaneous. They told the visiting team about their life history and how



did they end up at Karail slum. Most of them claimed that they were living a better life than they had in the past. They shared their fear of displacement and their dream for a permanent residence. The students asked questions covering a wide range of topics concerning the project and their lifestyle. The session ended with a meaningful exchange of information from both sides.

MDMP Students' Visit to Department of Environment (DoE), Govt. of Bangladesh

On August 12, 2012 BRAC Development Institute arranged a visit for the MDMP students to the Department of Environment. The purpose of the visit was to obtain information about the governmental activities regarding the predicament of the tanneries at Hazaribagh. Earlier in the morning of the same day students visited the tannery area at Hazaribagh and shared their findings with the DoE officials. There were interesting discussions about the issue. One of the students wrote her reflection of the visit as follows:



"The tanneries are situated in a residential zone and are responsible for bringing about a number of environmental and health hazards to the residents, workers and commuting students in the area. The uncovered

drains in the area carry all the tannery chemicals and cause air pollution resulting in bronchial diseases of the residents. The strong odor of the chemicals and wastes of the tanneries pervade the atmosphere and lead to many other health issues. Moreover, the chemicals and by-products are dumped into the nearby river, polluting river water and interconnected water bodies. Given all these environmental concerns, the DoE has been working in order to relocate the tanneries at Savar in an allotted industrial zone with a Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) that would be used to process the chemical wastes before release into the environment. This would help to lessen the negative impacts of the tanneries on the environment and would also be economically feasible since each firm does not need to have an individual ETP, rather all the firms can use the common ETP for processing their wastes. However, there are political difficulties in achieving this, as the DoE

informed. Besides, the space allocated for the relocation is not adequate for all the tannery firms. Negotiation with the owners has been a difficult process."

The Social Impact of Microfinance on Gender Norms and Behaviour

The Social Impact of Microfinance on Gender Norms and Behaviour is a research being conducted in partnership with Institute of Microfinance, The Population Council, New York and BRAC Development Institute (BDI), BRAC University. It has been undertaken in 300 PSUs (primary sampling units) all over Bangladesh including both rural and urban areas.

Some preliminary quantitative analysis of the community and household survey data were completed during the month of August. Preliminary findings of the qualitative study were finalized. The research findings will be presented at the Institute of Microfinance (InM) in September, 2012. Two research briefs were also prepared during this time which will soon be published by InM.

BIL Updates

New Logo for BRAC Institute of Languages



BRAC University has recently selected the logo of its newly formed institute, BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL), which was formerly the BRAC University Centre for Languages (BRACU-CfL).

The newly designed BIL logo includes four vertical arches with consecutive colours of black, yellow, pink and light blue.

The arches connote the major skills required for learning any language- writing, reading, speaking and listening. In the logo, two arches bend to the left while the other two bend to the right symbolizing the sign of victory and the indomitable spirit of learning.

The design also gives the feeling of brightness resembling sparks of fire; of life and growth through the image of petals and leaves; and of the essence of diversity with its array of colours. The overall image represents the dynamic nature of BIL which never compromises in its voyage for capacity-building, national development, and bringing peace through effective and lucid communication.

The text, "BRAC" is coloured with blue representing the strong sense of belonging that BIL has to BRAC University.

BIL arranged training for RAI scholarship returnees



BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL) started a training programme from 21st July 2012 on professional grooming for the returnees of RAI Foundation Scholarships at Devpro Centre, Gulshan. It has been completed after running its one month course. The participants are the selected few of BRAC Medhabikash program, who were chosen for RAI

Foundation Scholarship to complete their bachelor degrees in reputed Indian Universities. The purpose of the training was to enhance the participants' skills in English language, in facing interview and in social communication and behaviour. The programme also addressed the art of writing email, business letters, memos and meeting minutes.

In addition, BIL faculty members helped the participants prepare their individual CVs, which were sent to different employers. Some of them have already received good responses from different organizations in this regard.

Female drivers completed English language course for the first time in Bangladesh!

For the first time in the history of Bangladesh, female drivers have been trained in English language, which has successfully been arranged at BRAC Learning Centre (BLC), Uttara from 4th August to 6th August, conducted by BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL). It has been observed that due to the lack of proper training and education, road accidents are inevitable daily occurrences all over Bangladesh. Considering the necessity and urgency of enriching the female drivers in this regard, BRAC Driving School (BDS) has conducted a fully equipped course for their training. Besides this, to improve their communication skill at home and abroad, the BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL), BRAC University has provided an English language course for them to upgrade their knowledge and skills in professional English. The participants considered this course a big opportunity for developing themselves and expressed deep satisfaction in their improvement.

C3ER Updates

Expert Meeting on a Range of Approaches to Address Loss and Damage

Mr. Nandan Mukherjee, Program Manager, Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER) attended the "Expert meeting on a range of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather events and slow onset events" held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on June 13th through 15th, 2012. The Meeting was organized by UNFCCC on the work programme on Loss and Damage, and was regarding the range of approaches and tools to address risk of loss and

damage, as well as resource requirements for these tools, and lessons learned from existing efforts in the public and private sectors. A focus of the meeting was on the need to tailor various approaches to national contexts, and determine which tools will be most appropriate under various circumstances. At the meeting, **Mr. Nandan Mukherjee** presented a paper entitled "Range of Approaches for Addressing the Risk of Loss and Damage due to Climate Change in Bangladesh". C3ER is carrying out a research program targeted on this issue.

Public Consultation Meetings in Pabna for project on "Strengthening Governance in Wetland Management Policies"



Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), organized a field visit, from August 2nd through 5th, 2012, as part of inception of the project entitled "Strengthening Governance in Wetland Management Policies". This is a project of IGS that is being carried out in association with C3ER. **Dr. Elvira Graner**, Research Fellow at IGS, is in-charge of the project. **Professor Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor, **Professor Fuad H. Mallick**, Chairperson of the Department of Architecture, and **Mohammad Aminur Rahman**, Senior Lecturer of Department of Architecture, participated in the field work along with other members of the C3ER team. During the field trip, four public consultation meetings were held with local people at Bera, Sujanagar, and Santhia Upazilla, Pabna, as well as one consultation meeting with concerned government officials.



It was observed during the field visit that the Pabna Irrigation Project, completed in the eighties, did not pay any attention to concerns related to wetland biodiversity and the ecosystem. Recent efforts for rehabilitation of wetland biodiversity has not experienced the desired pace of success, mainly due to lack in the inter-agency coordination among the concerned government agencies. Community based

management approach has been selected for this purpose and the IGS-C3ER team is looking into the current governance practices and will recommend steps for its improvement.

Community Workshops in Satkhira for project on "Role of Governance against Climate Change Induced Migration"

Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), organized a series of field level consultation meetings in Gabura and Munshiganj Unions of Shyamnagar Upazilla of Satkhira from August 7th through 15th, 2012, to collect ground level information and data for the project entitled "Role of Governance against Climate Change Induced Migration". C3ER also arranged a meeting with government officials present at the Upazilla level. **Professor Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor, and **Professor Syed M. Hashemi**, Director, BDI, along with staff of C3ER, took part in the information gathering process. The team was joined by **Dr. Suresh Raghavan** and **Dr. Prarthana Rao** of Public Affairs Centre, based in Bangalore, India, who had received a grant from ANSA Project of IGS for implementing a similar project in Southern India. They were visiting Bangladesh to share their share their experience with IGS and C3ER.



During the field visit, data were collected on out-migration that was taking place from the Aila-affected areas of Satkhira. However, it was evident that such human movements were not essentially the sole outcome from climatic stressors like storm surge. Rather, slow onset climatic events (such as sea level rise) coupled with rapid onset events (such as storm surge) and anthropogenic responses (such as reduction of freshwater flow from upstream, shrimp cultivation, etc.) have been putting life and livelihood at risk, leading to short term as well as permanent migration from the locality.

CSO Updates

Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) Summer 2012

Classes for Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) commenced from 28th June. As the core facilitator Ms. Asma Banu, Senior Assistant Director, Career Services Office conducted a thirteen week lesson plan in order to meet sustainable career development for last semester students. A total number of 150 registered students are doing this Program.



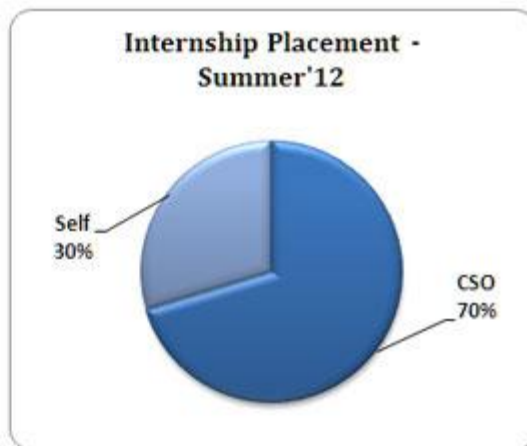
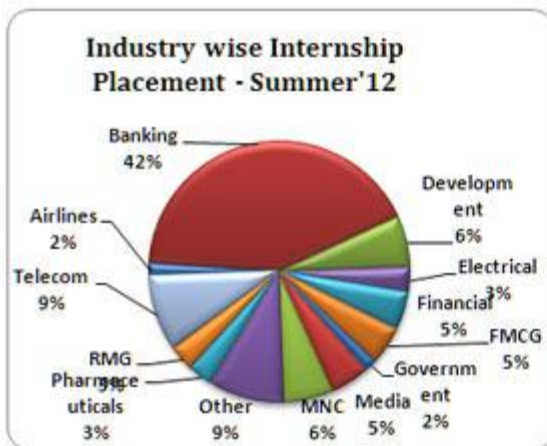
Mr. Mujib A Siddiqui, Head of Human Resources, Dhaka Bank Limited is one of the leading HR experts shared his thoughts in this program. His lectures on Interviewing, Job Search Strategies and Company Research helped the student to have a clear understanding on current job market.

Similarly Fabiha Ashekeen Ahmed, Talent Acquisition Specialist of Standard Chartered Bank, gave her lecture on current financial aspects as well as the 'Trends in the workplace, Success at work; Net working, Interpersonal skills. This is an in-depth, practical program designed to help students to build up their self-confidence, self-esteem and professionalism. The program is also expected to make students aware about the need for developing communication skills and provide students an opportunity to refine their image and appearances. During the entire period of this program students were asked to perform various tasks and performed presentations on various concerns in order to build their confidence and conquer interview fright. Finally, students are preparing themselves for the Mock Interview session which is 29th September, 2012.

Internship Placement Summer'12

BRACU-Career Services Office has successfully completed the placement of Summer'12 internship for all the registered students. 64 students from BBA, 8 students from EEE, 2 from ENH and 33 students from MBA were registered for internship in the semester Summer'12. The students were placed in different renowned organizations. These include:

- A B Bank, BRAC Bank Limited
- Citibank, N.A., Dhaka Bank Limited
- Dutch Bangla Bank Limited
- Export Import Bank, HSBC
- Prime Bank Limited, Standard Bank Limited
- Standard Chartered Bank Limited
- The City Bank Limited, Borak Real Estate (Pvt.) Ltd.
- Center for Development & Competitive Strategies Ltd.
- Save the Children
- Rahimafrooz Gastech Limited
- IDLC Finance Limited
- Aranee Food Products, Bengal Solutions Ltd.
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
- Amar Desh Amar Gram
- British American Tobacco Bangladesh
- CEAT Limited
- MJL Bangladesh Limited,
- Unilever Bangladesh Limited
- Amra Group of Companies
- EZZY Group
- PeopleScape
- Stock Bangladesh Limited
- Summit Communications Limited
- Tri-Star Toothbrush & Co.
- Beximco Pharmaceuticals
- GlaxoSmithKline (Bangladesh) Limited
- Scandex Knitwear Ltd., Zeal Knitwear Ltd.
- Airtel Bangladesh Limited
- Grameenphone Limited
- Robi Axiata Limited.
- Times Media Limited



ENH Updates

Workshop on Shakespeare

All students of ENG213: Survey of English Literature-I attended a workshop on

Shakespeare entitled "Are the Sonnets Autobiographical?" on Thursday, August 02, 2012. The workshop was conducted by **Rukhsana R.Chowdhury**, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English and Humanities. The half day workshop was aimed at enabling the students to come to a better understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare. A selection of sonnets was used to help students interpret and analyse the rhythm, images and thematic ideas of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

Attendance in Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACS) Summer School 2012 in Bangalore, India

Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH attended the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACS) Summer School 2012 as one of the core discussants of the salon titled "Gender and Culture", held on 8th August 2012. The summer school was organised jointly by Centre for the Study of Culture and Society (CSCS) and The Centre for Internet and Society Bangalore. The full event was hosted by Centre for Contemporary Studies, Indian Institute of Sciences, Bangalore from 2nd to 16th August 2012. The co-organisers of the summer schools were Consortium of Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Consortium Institutions and Institute of East Asian Studies, Sungkonghoe University, Korea.

Sabreena Ahmed, Lecturer of ENH has attended the core course on Cultural Studies and an optional course titled Body, Technology and Culture under the IACS summer school.

IED Updates

Counselling and Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR)

IED's psycho-social counsellors visited a SCOPE Centre to assess the needs of students and teachers. They observed students and the teaching-learning process and talked to the teachers about the challenges they faced in dealing with students. Based on the findings, designing of a 5-day Psychological First Aid Training for teachers began, which will include content on stress identification, behaviour management, communication with students and qualities of supportive teachers.

4 discussion sessions with 41 girls and 18 boys from 2 Grade VI SCOPE Centres in Savar took place to explore the SRHR knowledge and skills of the students. Based on the discussions, which revealed gaps in knowledge and wrong practices, contents on SRHR began development to be delivered to the students at SCOPE Centres.

2. SPARKS: Study & Promotion of Adolescent's Research Knowledge & Skills

A new group was formed to explore the possibility of developing adolescent researchers. Members of this group met to discuss the different activities the project would entail, including selecting adolescents, designing training workshops for them on research, training them, etc. Based on the discussion a draft concept note was prepared which provided an overview of the project, a skeleton of what the training modules would contain and a timeline of activities. Project details were shared and discussed at a meeting of the Research & Development Group and the IED director.

3. Adolescent Depression Study

Few studies have examined the associated factors of depressive and anxiety symptoms of adult women in Bangladesh. To fill in the gap and to gain knowledge and insights, IED BRAC U has taken an initiative to assess depression of adolescent mothers and its implications for maternal mental health and infant development. The Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC will design and accomplish the study following the survey of 2440 respondents (both urban and rural, and boys and girls) by November, 2012.

4. Shongee

The group in charge of Shongee (the helpline for adolescents) has produced a concept note on the various aspects involved in its development, ranging from the technical aspects to recruitment and retention of helpline counselors, counselor training, business models, advocacy, branding, etc. The Shongee group is also working towards creating an initial knowledge base of the various issues regarding adolescents to aid counselors, such as anxiety, depression, stress, bullying, sexual and reproductive health, relationship issues, etc. In the process, Shongee has also set meetings with various organisations and stakeholders for learning purposes, such as Marie Stopes, Bangladesh (since they have also been running a helpline for adolescents in collaboration with Plan Bangladesh). The Shongee pilot is expected to start from March 2013.



IED Team Attended the ITAA-SAATA Conference in Chennai, India

A three member team from IED attended the 'International Transactional Analysis Conference, 2012' in Chennai, India from 9th to 12th August. More than 330 participants from 26 countries including members of International Transactional Analysis Association (ITAA) and South Asian Association of Transactional Analysis (SAATA) attended the conference. The conference was on 'Transactional Analysis', 'a theory of personality and behaviour and a systematic psychotherapy tool for personal growth and personal change', coined by American psychiatrist Eric Berne. The conference sessions were focused on four core areas: Psychotherapy, Education, Counseling and Organisational Development. Sessions related to these areas were conducted by renowned international and local faculties. IED team members also attended the Post-Conference Institute on 'Learning Relationships Using Transactional Analysis' Prior to the conference. They also joined a two days basic course on Transactional Analysis.

Third Batch MSc. in ECD Thesis Presentation

Students of the third Batch MSc in ECD have completed their theses. The students presented theses on July 29th and 30th in front of the panel members. A total of seven theses have been presented. Among the panel members **Dr. Manzoor Ahmed**, Senior Advisor, IED, **Dr. Fahmida Tofail**, Associate Scientist, ICDDR,B, **Dr. PC. Sarker**, Vice



Chancellor, Prime University and **Dr. Erum Mariam**, Director, IED were present at the presentation and were provided with their thoughts and remarks. **Dr. Nishat F. Rahman**, Assistant Professor, IED and coordinator of the MSc programme was also present at the presentations to conduct the sessions. Students presented their theses with the presence of their local mentors from IED.

This is to mention that each thesis was mentored by an IED mentor and an international supervisor. This year **Dr. Cassie Landers**, Associate Professor, Columbia University, **Dr. Indrani Talagala**, Faculty, Open University, Sri Lanka, **Dr. Steffen Saifer**, President, Educational Consulting, Portland, USA, **Seema Laasi**, Faculty, Human Development Programme, Aga Khan University, Pakistan and **Dr. Adarsh Sharma**, visiting Professor, Ambedkar University, India supervised the theses.

IGS Updates

'Giving Youth A Voice' - Dissemination Workshop on the findings of Bangladesh Youth Survey



A dissemination workshop titled, "Giving Youth A Voice" was held on 9 August 2012 at BRAC Centre Inn. The workshop was organised by the Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University to disseminate the findings of the results obtained from the Bangladesh Youth Survey research.

The aim of the workshop was to gather a national group of scholars, policy makers

and development partners for the analysis and brainstorming of youth issues from policy perspective. The researchers involved in the BYS project - Research Assistants, **Nazmul Arifeen, Fatema Samina Yasmin and Rigan Chakma**, Senior Research Associate, **Syeda Salina Aziz** and Research Fellow, **Dr. Elvira Graner** made a presentation on the findings of the project which was followed by a question and answer session.

The event was chaired by **Dr. Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury**, Registrar, BRAC University. The chief guest of the ceremony was **Rasheda K. Chowdhury**, Executive Director, Campaign for Popular Education and the special guests were **Urs Herren**, Ambassador of Swiss Embassy in Bangladesh and **Stefan Priesner**, Country Director of UNDP, Bangladesh. Participants from media, civil societies, development partners, policy makers, NGO's and academics from various sectors were present at the event.

Partnership with Social Impact (SI), Inc. on Democracy and Governance Programme Evaluation (DGPE)

IGS has entered into a partnership with the Social Impact (SI), with a 4-year long period project on Democracy and Governance Programme Evaluation, implemented by the USAID-Bangladesh. The activities of the project are comprised of a series of evaluative studies conducted for the guidance of the programme implementation and impacts that are brought out by the project.

Piloting of Third Party Monitoring of Public Procurement

IGS has finalised a work plan for conducting a third party monitoring of the public procurement exercise under the Public Procurement Reform Project-II in accordance to the World Bank review mission. The purpose of the work plan is to assess the feasibility of third party monitoring and acquire experiences from field work to develop a strategy on it. As part of the assignment, IGS organised a meeting at LGED with its representatives who are voluntarily assisting in this exercise. Primary information was collected in this meeting. The pilot exercise will be conducted in Narayanganj and Chapainawabganj district respectively for a period of 4-5 months. IGS team members include Mohammad Sirajul Islam, Research Associate; **Farhana Razzaque**, Research Associate; **Rubayet Hamid**, Research Assistant; **Jannatul Fardosh**, Research Assistant and **Munir Uddin Shamim**, Senior Programme Manager of IGS.

Workshop held at IGS

IGS hosted a workshop on Medefinancieringsstelsel II which is a Dutch project on 8 August 2012. The project is being conducted with the University of Bath, UK. The workshop was held to present the aspects of the project to the Dutch donors. Four team members from IGS are working on the project namely Research Assistants **Rubayet Hamid** and **Rigan Chakma** and Research Associates **Faiz Ahmed Chowdhury** and **Mariha Khalid**.

Affiliated Network for Social Accountability- South Asia Region (ANSA-SAR)

Community Radio programme on "Raising Awareness for Citizens Participation and Engagement in Budget Process at Chapainawabganj



A three days community radio programme recording on "Citizens' Involvement in Budget Preparation" took place respectively at Belbari, Gobratola Union Parishad; Ranihati Union Parishad; Upazilla and Zilla Parishad of Chapainawabganj from 31 August to 2 September 2012. The programme was organised by Bangladesh NGOs

Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC). The ANSA team headed by its Programme Manager Nuzhat Jabin, has recorded correspondingly the sync of the Union, Upazilla and Zilla Parishad Chairmen on Ensuring Citizen's participation in budget process. The combined team of BNNRC and ANSA recorded the Vox Pop of indigenous people of Belbari, Gobartola Union Parishad. The community radio programme recording sessions were designed to incorporate mass awareness songs, indigenous form of music- Ghambhira, Vox Pop of the community people and interviews of the elected representatives on citizens' involvement in budget preparation. The lyrics of the songs and Ghambhira have been well devised to convey the message on budget process and aware the community people to participate in budgeting. The recorded programme will be aired on the 3rd week of September by 14 community radio stations in thirteen districts.

ANSA-SAR announces partnership with the Indian magazine, "Governance Now"

Naimur Rahman, Chief Operating Officer, ANSA-SAR, announced a partnership with the Indian magazine, "Governance Now" on 13 August 2012. In the process it is expected that grassroots reporting in Saranda would be scaled up. It was decided latter to the partnership that the magazine will hire four reporters who will spend six months in a rural setting and monitor governance from the grassroots level. These reporters will track and report the progresses of four different flagship projects being implemented by the government in India on a regular basis of six months. It is expected that the constant reportage and monitoring will create an impact in New Delhi and pressurise the authorities to implement projects with more care and speed than usual.

Published Articles

Two articles of two IGS staff have been published in August. Please see the link below for the articles:

The Daily Star: Arresting regulatory failure in the financial system by **M. Shahidul Islam**, 31 August 2012

The Daily Star: Regime change, geopolitics and Syrian lesson by **Sultan Mohammed Zakaria**, 18 August 2012

"New faces in campus" and " Leaving us"

Ms. Rebeka Sultana Doly joined as Assistant Department Coordination Officer in ESS department. She has completed Bachelors of English from BRAC University. Her email address is r.sultana@bracu.ac.bd.

Ms. Tamanna Chowdhry, Department coordination Officer, ESS has been transferred to HRD with effect from 02 September, 2012. She is replacing Ms. Shahana Akter who was recently released to join BRACU-IED.

Muhammad Nafisur Rahman, Lecturer II left for pursuing his Masters in Design, majoring in graphic design in the University of Illinois at Chicago, USA. The school is providing him full tuition waiver. Nafisur is from the first batch of graduating architecture student of BRACU. Soon after his graduation he was appointed as lecturer in the department.

MNS Updates

Seminar on Biological Networks, Rhythm and Function

The Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS), BRAC University organized a seminar on August 2, 2012, titled "Biological networks, rhythm and function" which was presented by **Dr. Abul Kalam al Azad**. **Dr. Azad** did his PhD in applied mathematics from the University of Exeter, UK. His recent research engagement is in mathematical neuroscience at the School of Computing and Mathematics, University of Plymouth & Xenopus Lab, School of Biological Sciences, University of Bristol, U.K. He talked on applying biophysical principles to determine the functional properties of small and large molecules in biological networks. The seminar was attended by the faculty members of the MNS Department and some students.

Iftar Party

The Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS), BRAC University organized an Iftar Party on August 7, 2012, to celebrate togetherness on the occasion of holy Ramadan. Most of the faculty members and staff of the department attended the Iftar. With their spontaneous participation, the party took a festive mood. It needs to be mentioned that this was the first time in the Department's history that an Iftar Party was organized officially.

Seminar on Detection of Outliers

The Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS), BRAC University organized a seminar on August 8, 2012, titled "Detection of Outliers" on August 8, 2012. The seminar talk was presented by **Dr. Rahmatullah Imon**, Professor of Statistics, Department of Mathematical Sciences, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, USA. An outlying observation or outlier is an observation that is markedly different from the bulk of the observations. The presence of outliers affects the results quite considerably not only in statistical field but also in others. **Dr.**

Rahmatullah gave several practical examples where outliers were usually occurring and how they probably might occur. He also discussed various sources of outliers and their consequences. As it is very likely for outliers to occur in practical data, he mentioned several robust methodologies which would eliminate the impact of outliers. As the usual methods of data analysis are affected by the outliers, different robust methods discussed by him can be used to detect the final result after identifying the outlier in the data sets. The seminar was attended by the faculty members of the MNS Department and some students.

Seminar on Small Compound Induced Salt and Drought Tolerance in Rice

The Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS), BRAC University, organized a seminar on August 8, 2012, titled "Small compound induced salt and drought tolerance in rice" by **Dr. Hemayet Ullah**, Associate Professor, Biology Department, Howard University, NW, Washington DC, USA. In this seminar **Dr. Hemayetullah** mentioned that he discovered a small molecule which interacted with RACK1 gene and made rice plant drought and salt tolerant. If his findings are confirmed, it may have huge impact in alleviating food crisis in Africa and elsewhere. Faculty members and students of MNS department participated in the seminar and actively participated in the discussion. **Dr. Hemayet Ullah** shared his teaching modules and expressed his strong desire to do research in collaboration with BRAC University.

SPH Updates

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

The MPH module (MPH 690) Health Communication: Theory and Application took place during July 29 through August 02, 2012. **Mahrukh Mohiuddin** coordinated the module while **Taufique Joarder** served as the co-coordinator. Other teachers in this module were **Shahriar Rahman**, **Imteaz Ibne Mannan**, and Dorothy Southern. The module involved a visit to Bangladesh Center for Communication Programs (BCCP).

The MPH module (MPH 681) on Ageing and Health was conducted from August 05 to August 10, 2012. **Dr. Zarina Nahar Kabir** was the course coordinator and the course schedule and outline were prepared by **Dr. Tanvir Ahmed** and **Kuhel Islam** (Teaching Fellow) and her. Other guest faculties were Dr. Sabrina Flora from NIPSOM, and **Dr. Tanvir Ahmed** and **Dr. Muntasirur Rahman** from the icddr,b, who co-taught the module as well. A brief debate was organized among the students to assess the feasibility of institutional care for elderly in a low-income country.

COMMUNITY MIDWIFERY EDUCATION PROGRAM (CMEP)

A Program Orientation meeting with the six Implementing Partner Organizations (IPOs) of the Community Midwifery Education Program was held on August 5, 2012 at the Dean's Conference Room, JPGSPH from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.. The objective of the meeting was to share and inform many issues regarding the project implementation.

The welcome address was delivered by **Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid**, Professor and Associate Dean, JPGSPH. She welcomed all participants to JPGSPH, thanking them for coming from different parts of the country and for their partnerships with

JPGSPH in implementing the Community Midwifery Education Program. Following the welcome address, representatives from the IPOs and members of the JPGSPH introduced themselves. **Dr. Shehlina Ahmed**, Health Advisor, DFID, spoke about the importance of developing community midwives especially to address MDGs 4 and 5. A project overview was given by **Ms. Ismat Bhuiya**, Director Programs. Topics surrounding the faculty development training, student selection process, student enrollment, activity plan vs. financial expenditure, etc were discussed in detail by the project personnel of Community Midwifery Education Program from JPGSPH. This was followed by a lively question and answer session where the IPOs brought up relevant ideas and concerns and responses were provided by the JPGSPH. The six IPOs then presented their Activity Plans for the July to September 2012 quarter. A discussion was held on the formation of the Partner Coordination Committee (PCC) which will hold day-long meetings every quarter for representatives from each IPO and the JPGSPH to discuss the progress of the program. The meeting concluded with remarks from **Ms. Ismat Bhuiya**, Director Programs, JPGSPH, who thanked the participants for attending the Program Orientation Meeting and for their commitment in implementing a novel, challenging but highly rewarding program with noble objectives.

BRAC HEALTHCARE INNOVATIONS PROGRAMME

The BRAC Healthcare Innovations Programme (bHIP) attained a No-cost Extension approval for its design phase from the Rockefeller Foundation. The design phase which was to end in October 2012 has been extended to June 2013. Meanwhile the service provision team returned from Mymensingh Sadar, where they collected data and developed care pathways for provision of health services. The research team returned from Rangpur with data on service providers and made data entry templates for data analysis. A qualitative assessment of people's conception of bHIP was also carried out in Rangpur Badargang by a team including the Program Head, Research Associate and other four bHIP members.

The IM team gathered information on DBBL mobile banking and continued discussion with bKash for consideration of making financial transactions with them. The team also attended a meeting on "Core Health Indicators and ways for improving Health Information System through collaboration" organized by DGHS-MIS.

FOOD SECURITY NUTRITIONAL SURVEILLANCE PROJECT (FSNSP)

The Phase-II of Round 8 data collection for the Food Security Nutritional Surveillance Project (FSNSP) was completed on 11 August 2012. During the phase, data was collected by 72 FSNSP Data Collection Officers from 6,144 households in 256 villages of 64 upazilas. Approximately 11 percent of the households were revisited by FSNSP Quality Control Officers to check the validity of the data and the anthropometric measurements.

During this month **Dr. Akram Hussain**, Project Manager and **Dr. Enamul Hasib**, Project Coordinator of FSNSP participated in the "Nutrition Working Group" meeting and the "Nutrition Cluster "meeting. Both Project Manager and the Project Coordinator also participated in the working group to finalize the nutrition indicators for mainstreaming into the Health Management Information System (HMIS). The Project Manager was also invited to a workshop on "Development of National Health Indicators" held at Directorate General of Health Services"

HEALTH IN TRANSITION (HIT)

A follow up meeting on Health in Transition (HiT) was conducted on August 28, 2012 at the Dean's conference room at JPGSPH. It was attended by **Dr. Tim Evans, Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Dr. Alayne Adams, Dr. Iqbal Anwar, Dr. Malay Kanti Mridha, Dr. Ferdous Arfina Osman, Dr. Md. Nazim Uddin, Dr. Taufique Joarder, Kuhel Islam and Herfina Nababan**. The meeting was followed up by formation of working groups and setting up of timeline for the whole project. A brief presentation on health information system in Bangladesh was conducted by **Dr. Iqbal Anwar and Kuhel Islam**.

ICDDRDB library had also prepared and distributed the bibliography to help with the review. Recently a progress meeting was held to discuss further the way forward with the project. A stakeholder's meeting is scheduled to be held on September 24, 2012 at JPGSPH.

MOVE-IT

In August 2012, the MOVE-IT Bangladesh project stepped into a new phase which is "Designing MOVE-IT Software System". MOVE-IT Bangladesh has started working on contracting software organization in consensus with the stakeholders including the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Directorate General Health Services, Local Government Division and mPower Health. Several meetings were conducted with stakeholders and several meetings are scheduled to be held in the future. The project is also working on its Newsletter, Volume 1- Issue 2 which will be disseminated in September 2012. MOVE-IT Bangladesh actively participated in a half-day session on the "Development of National Core Health Indicators and ways for improving health information system through collaboration" organized by MIS-DGHS on August 14, 2012.

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

A paper titled "Experiences of Discrimination among People Living with HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh" by **Md. Tanvir Hasan, Nabilah S. Khan, Owasim Akram, Tony M. Gomes and Sabina F. Rashid** has been published in the May-August 2012 issue of the Asia Journal of Public Health (Vol. 3, No. 2).

Mr Asiful Haidar Chowdhury, Data Management and Analysis Specialist, JPGSPH attended the 2nd Asian Population Association Conference which was held in Bangkok, Thailand from August 26 to August 29, 2012 and attended by over 800 participants from different Asian and South African countries. **Mr Asiful Haidar Chowdhury** made an oral presentation on "Strengthening safe sex decision making to reduce vulnerability of HIV among youth: A youth club based study in Bangladesh" in a session entitled "Issues on HIV" in the Conference as on August 29, 2012. His presentation was followed by a lively, interactive discussion.