



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



# Annual Report

# 2024

# The School's Journey at a Glance

**2004**

The School was founded with the vision to create a leading global public health institute

**2006**

1st cohort of the MPH programme graduated

**2007**

Established the Centre for Professional Skills Development (CPSD)

The School started hosting the Secretariat for Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW)

**2008**

Featured by WHO as one of the region's top 6 public health schools

Established the Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR)

**2012**

Launched the Developing Midwives Project, Bangladesh's first-ever private sector midwifery education initiative

**2013**

Established the Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC)

Established the Centre of Excellence For Urban Equity And Health (CUEH)

**2016**

Established the Centre of Excellence for the Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU)

**2017**

Established the Centre of Excellence for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN)

**2019**

Received the Public Health Education Leadership award by the South-East Asia Public Health Education Institutions Network (SEAPHEIN)

**2021**

Established the Humanitarian Research Hub

**2023**

Established Research Hubs on Climate Change, Environment and Health (CCEH), Evidence in Public Health Policy and Practice (HEPP), and Qualitative Inquiry (Qualinq)

**2024**

Celebrated the School's 20th Anniversary in its new office at BRAC Tower

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# Overview of the School

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH/The School), BRAC University, was founded by Sir Fazle Hasan Abed in 2004 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to tackle pressing public health challenges in the developing world. The School is committed to advancing public health through immersive, community-focused education and training on critical

and emerging global health issues, fostering future public health leaders and innovative solutions. By integrating education, training, research, and advocacy, JPGSPH addresses diverse health realities, particularly those impacting disadvantaged communities.



## Vision

To be the leading global public health institute for the world's critical health challenges affecting disadvantaged communities.

# Partnership with BRAC

The School works in close collaboration with its institutional partner BRAC, the world's largest NGO. Research partnership with BRAC allows the School to contribute evidence to inform BRAC's programmes and

policies. BRAC field operations in communities offer a dynamic and diverse learning laboratory for our Master of Public Health (MPH) students.



## Mission

To create innovative public health leaders and solutions through cutting-edge, experiential Education, Training, Research and Advocacy.

# Message from the Dean



As we reflect on the past year, I am proud to present the 2024 Annual Report of the James P Grant School of Public Health at BRAC University. This year has been a testament to our continued commitment to advancing public health education, training, research, and policy impact. This year held special significance as we celebrated a major milestone: our 20th anniversary, and marked a new chapter with our move to BRAC Tower.

Over the past 20 years, our school has evolved into a beacon of excellence in public health education and research. Our faculty, staff, and students have upheld the mission and values that have guided us since our inception, making significant contributions to public health challenges worldwide. This anniversary year was a time for celebration and reflection on our impactful journey. We celebrated our 20th anniversary with events that brought together faculty, staff, students, and partners to reflect on our impact and envision the future. These gatherings highlighted our shared accomplishments while reinforcing our commitment to driving health equity and innovation in the years to come.

Simultaneously, our relocation to BRAC Tower offers us enhanced facilities and resources to further our mission. As we embrace this new beginning, we remain dedicated to nurturing future public health leaders and addressing global health challenges. Our move symbolizes not just a change in our physical space but also our ongoing commitment to adapt and grow in response to the changing needs of our community and the world.

In 2024, we made significant strides in expanding our academic programmes and research initiatives. Our dedicated faculty continued to inspire and equip the next generation of public health leaders, while our students and alumni continued to make remarkable contributions to addressing complex health challenges in local and global contexts.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to our faculty, staff, students, and collaborators for their unwavering commitment and exceptional work. It is through our collective efforts that we continue to uphold the legacy of our founder, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed KCMG, and strive towards a healthier, more equitable world.

Thank you for your continued support of and partnership with the BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health. I invite you to explore the highlights of the past year in this Annual Report and look forward to our journey ahead as we continue to impact public health positively. Together, let us look forward to addressing the public health challenges of the future with optimism and resolve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Reichenbach".

**Laura Reichenbach, MPA, ScD**

Dean and Director  
Centre of Excellence for Science of  
Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU)  
BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health,  
BRAC University

# Message from the Deputy Dean



As we reflect on 2024, the BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH) continues to build on its legacy of advancing public health education, research, training and policy impact. This year has been a testament to our unwavering commitment to education, innovation, inclusion, and impact in addressing critical public health challenges.

Our academic programs have grown in strength, equipping future public health leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to drive change. The Master of Public Health (MPH) program welcomed a diverse cohort of students from across the globe, fostering a rich learning environment that bridges theory and practice. We have also expanded our capacity-building initiatives, partnering with national and international institutions to enhance public health competencies. Our Executive MPH program received approval from the academic council, the Caregiving training expanded and new initiatives for expanding the midwifery programmes have been undertaken. Community engagement remained at the heart of our mission. Through our field-based experiential learning model and strong partnerships with grassroots organizations, we continued to bring public health education and services closer to the communities that need them most.

In research, our faculty and scholars have made significant contributions, particularly in the areas of health systems, urban health, gender and sexual health, nutrition, and non-communicable diseases.

Our commitment to evidence-based solutions has led to impactful collaborations with policymakers and stakeholders, ensuring that our findings translate into action. In 2024, we not only contributed to studies to estimate the burden of diseases but also took initiative to develop and implement solutions to reduce the burden of diseases and their risk factors.

In training, we continued to strengthen the knowledge and skill of professionals already working in the public health and related sectors. Bangladesh Health Watch published an important report highlighting the status of public health education in Bangladesh.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication of our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners. As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable approach to public health that resonates both locally and globally.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we will continue to shape a healthier future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Kanti Mridha'.

## Professor Malay Kanti Mridha, PhD

Deputy Dean and Director

Centre for Non-communicable Diseases and  
Nutrition (CNCDN)

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health,  
BRAC University

# Numbers that matter



**254** Current staff members  
**197** Multi-disciplinary research staff  
**52%** Female representation among all staff



**690** Master of Public Health graduates from 35 countries since inception  
**32** Graduates from the latest MPH batch  
**1,253** Midwifery Education Programme graduates since inception  
**90** Current students in midwifery education



**340** Skills building seminars and workshops since inception  
**10,240** Professionals trained through these  
**1,250** Professionals received training in 2024

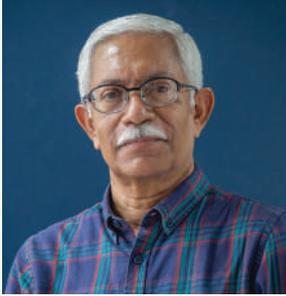


**396** Research projects since inception  
**40** New research grants in 2024  
**65** Research projects ongoing in 2024  
**480** Peer-reviewed articles published in international journals since 2017



**465** Advocacy engagements with stakeholders since inception  
**62** Advocacy engagements were conducted in 2024

# Accolades



**Professor Syed Masud Ahmed**, Director, Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC), ranked top #2 scientist in Bangladesh in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities, according to Research.com, a leading academic platform for scientists.



**Professor Kaosar Afsana**, Lead, Humanitarian Hub, was appointed to the Board of Directors of Welthungerhilfe (WHH), one of the largest private aid organisations in Germany.



**Professor Sabina Faiz Rashid**, Mushtaque Chowdhury Chair in Health and Poverty and Director, Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR), was appointed as a member of the Research Advisory Group (RAG) within the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom.



(Left to Right) **Farhana Alam**, Research Coordinator and Adjunct Faculty, BRAC JPGSPH; **Muhammad Riaz Hossain**, Deputy Project Coordinator, BRAC JPGSPH; and **Nazia Islam**, Learning, Evaluation, and Documentation Specialist, BRAC JPGSPH, were selected as Emerging Voices from Bangladesh for the Emerging Voices for Global Health (EV4GH) 2024 venture.

# Leadership at the School



## Laura Reichenbach

Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (SISU)



## Malay Kanti Mridha

Deputy Dean and Director, Centre of Excellence for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN)



## Sabina Faiz Rashid

Professor, Mushtaque Chowdhury Chair in Health and Poverty and Director, Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR)



## Syed Masud Ahmed

Professor and Director, Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC)



## Kaosar Afsana

Professor and Lead, Humanitarian Hub



## Zahidul Quayyum

Professor and Co-Director, Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH)



## Dr Md. Tanvir Hasan

Associate Professor and Co-Director, Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH)



## Dr Farzana Misha

Associate Professor and Lead, Climate Change, Environment and Health Hub (CCEH)



## Ataur Rahman

Director, Centre for Professional Skills Development in Public Health (CPSD)



## Dr Santhia Ireen

Deputy Director, Education and Research



## Dr Sharmina Rahman

Director and Head, Midwifery Education Programme

# Research Strategy Team



**Malay Kanti Mridha**  
Deputy Dean and Director,  
Centre of Excellence for  
Non-Communicable  
Diseases and Nutrition  
(CNCDN)



**Dr Md. Tanvir Hasan**  
Associate Professor and  
Co-Director, Centre of  
Excellence for Urban Equity and  
Health (CUEH)



**Dr Farzana Misha**  
Associate Professor  
Lead, Climate Change,  
Environment and Health  
Hub (CCEH)



**Bachera Aktar**  
Deputy Director, Centre of  
Excellence for Gender,  
Sexual and Reproductive  
Health and Rights (CGSRHR)



**Dr Nahitun Naher**  
Assistant Director  
Centre of Excellence for Health  
Systems and Universal Health  
Coverage (HS&UHC)



**Humayra Binte Anwar**  
Senior Lecturer & Assistant  
Director, Centre of Excellence  
for Science of Implementation  
and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU)



**Farzana Sehrin**  
Research Fellow  
Centre of Excellence for  
Urban Equity and Health  
(CUEH)



**Farzana Quddus**  
Senior Manager, Grants and  
Data Repository



**Atiya Rahman**  
Assistant Scientist

# Hear from the staff

*I take great pride in being part of BRAC JPGSPH for the MPH program, which contributes to pioneering public health education both nationally and globally. In my role, I am involved in ensuring IT services for regular lectures, group work, field visits, solution projects, development of presentation and report writing skills, as well as operational management. It has been an inspiring experience working alongside passionate individuals committed to improving health outcomes.*

## Md. Al Mahmud

Deputy Manager,  
Information Technology



*Since joining BRAC JPGSPH in 2019, my journey has been filled with transformative experiences and challenges. As an HR professional, it has been rewarding to observe our institution's development and contribute to fostering a positive and evolving work culture, which is still a work in progress. I found our management kind, compassionate, and considerate of employees' learning and work-life balance at the school. The times of transformation, especially after the COVID outbreak, have taught me valuable lessons, strengthening our resilience and dedication to excellence. I'm excited about our ongoing progress and success together.*

## Nazray Morshed Khan Anam

Assistant Manager,  
Human Resources



*I began my journey at BRAC JPGSPH in 2014, and over the past 11 years, my career here has been anything but smooth—it has been a path of continuous learning, growth, and challenges. When I first joined as a fresher, stepping into this new field felt daunting, but I embraced the experience with determination. One of the most invaluable aspects of my journey has been the collaborative and supportive work environment. Under the guidance of our Deans and my co-workers, I have had the opportunity to learn, experiment, and refine my skills. Their mentorship and teamwork have shaped my understanding of the field, reinforcing the idea that progress is always a collective effort.*

## Rumin Akter

Senior Logistics Officer,  
Administration



*I am honoured to have been part of one-fourth of BRAC JPGSPH's journey, serving as its longest-standing communications team member. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to navigate key milestones, from being Interim Head of Communications for eight months during COVID-19 to establishing the School's first Contacts Archive and LinkedIn page. I've also been able to contribute to communications for flagship initiatives like EV4GH, our first international conference EquiCity, the 20-year celebration, and the International COVID-19 Conference with health experts from 18 countries. Through challenges, I have learnt and grown immensely, I remain committed to amplifying BRAC JPGSPH's impact on global public health.*

## Asif Faisal

Deputy Manager,  
Communication



# In memoriam: Dr Richard A. Cash



Dr Richard A. Cash was a cherished Adjunct Professor at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH) and a true friend of Bangladesh. A pioneering public health researcher and humanitarian, Dr Cash's contributions have shaped global health, particularly in Bangladesh, which he called his second home.

Dr Cash played an instrumental role during Bangladesh's 1971 Liberation War, for which he was awarded the 'Friends of Liberation War Honour.' His efforts in mobilising international support, raising funds, and advocating for Bangladesh's recognition by the U.S. were a testament to his deep connection to the country. His lifelong dedication to Bangladesh began when he joined Dhaka's cholera hospital (now ICDDR,B) in the late 1960s, choosing to save lives instead of going to war. Dr Cash's groundbreaking work on oral rehydration therapy (ORT) revolutionized the treatment of diarrheal diseases, saving millions of lives worldwide.

At BRAC JPGSPH, Dr Cash's legacy is foundational. He coordinated and taught the Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases course at the School for many years, enriching the minds of future public health leaders. His presence in our classrooms, insights, and mentorship have left an indelible mark on our faculty and students.

On behalf of BRAC JPGSPH, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Dr Cash's family and loved ones. His legacy of compassion, innovation, and public health leadership will live on through the countless lives he touched.



# BRAC JPGSPH celebrates its 20th anniversary

The School celebrated 20 years of pioneering contributions to public health education, training, research, and advocacy on 12 December 2024 at The Westin Dhaka. The event brought together distinguished faculty, researchers, students, public health educators, development practitioners, and governmental partners to commemorate this significant milestone. Chief guest Dr Sayedur Rahman, Special Assistant to the Chief Advisor, and Dr Syed Ferhat Anwar, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, graced the occasion, underscoring the School's profound impact on public health in Bangladesh and beyond.

Founded in 2004 by the visionary Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, BRAC JPGSPH was established to address the unique health challenges faced by communities in the developing world. Over the past two decades, the School has remained steadfast in its mission to empower the most vulnerable, guided by Abed Bhai's vision. Affiliated with BRAC, the world's largest NGO, the School has leveraged this partnership to create a unique platform for education, research, and advocacy, fostering innovation and social change.

As the School reflects on its journey, it remains committed to addressing emerging challenges, such as climate change and health equity, while expanding its educational offerings, including an executive MPH program. The celebration honoured the contributions of past deans and reaffirmed the School's dedication to advancing public health knowledge from the Global South. With a vibrant community of over 200 professionals, BRAC JPGSPH looks to the future with renewed energy, striving to create a healthier, more equitable world.



“There is no tool more powerful than education and no greater catalyst to bring about positive change.”

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed  
Founder  
BRAC James F. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University

# Our Big Move

BRAC JPGSPH relocated to a new office in BRAC Tower, Mokhakhali, Dhaka, after four months of remote work. This move ushered in an exciting new chapter for the School as the team reunited once again in a fresh environment. We look forward to continuing our journey of impactful work in this new space, and we are excited to make the most of the opportunities ahead.



Pohela Boishakh



Pohela Boishakh

# Snapshots of internal events

BRAC JPGSPH prioritises cultural celebrations and internal events as an integral part of its work culture. These gatherings strengthen unity, enrich the School's cultural diversity, and foster a collaborative and inclusive environment.



Cheer for '24



Women's Day



Cheer for '24

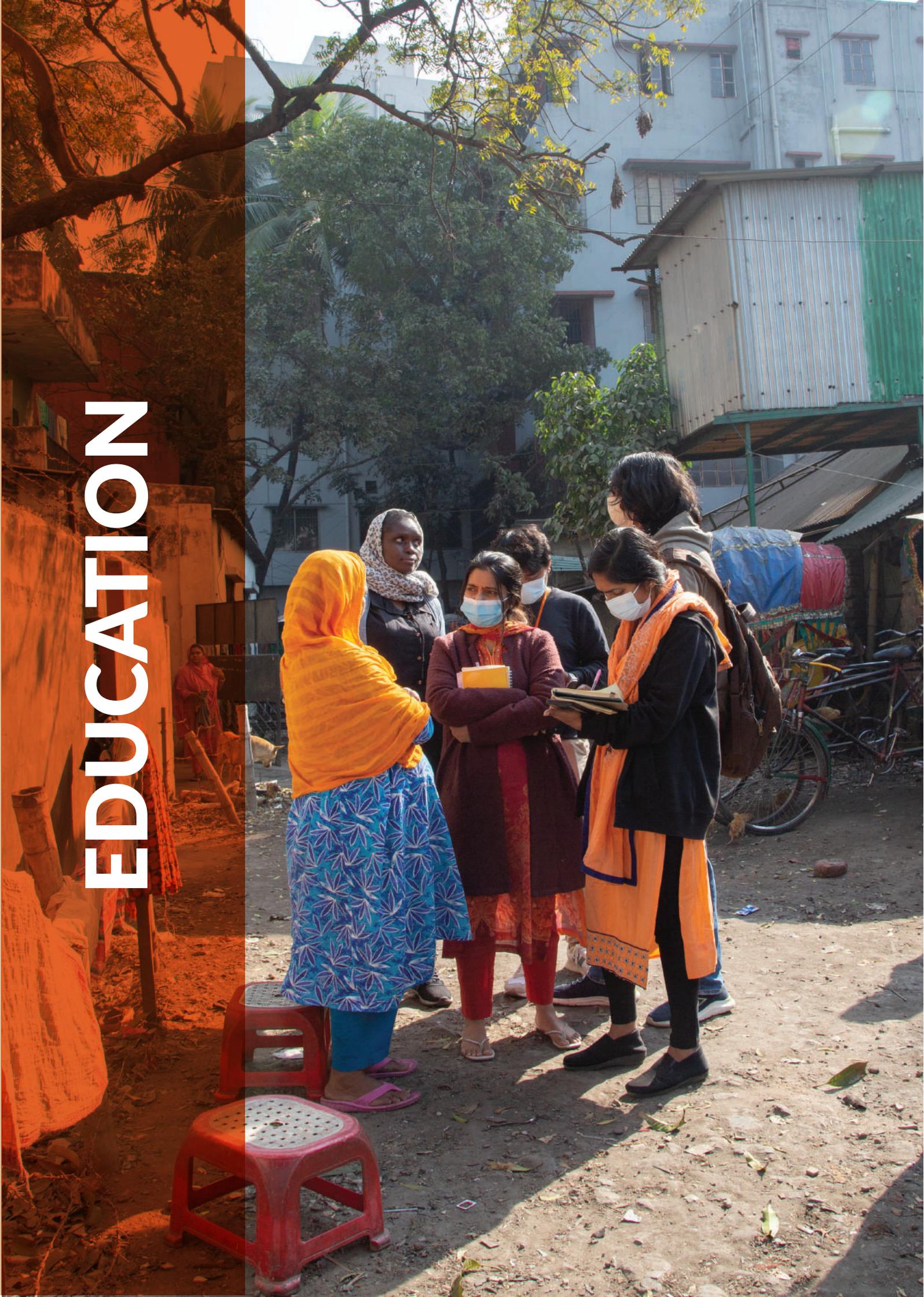


Women's Day



Boshonto Utshob

# EDUCATION



# Master of Public Health Programme

Since 2004, the Master of Public Health (MPH) Programme at the School has been offering transformative public health learning to develop next-generation leaders for emerging critical public health challenges. The programme has been recognised for its excellence in education by Johns Hopkins University, World Health Organization (WHO), and South-East Asia Public Health Education Institutions Network (SEAPHEIN). The uniqueness of the 18-month full-time international programme is the focus on experiential community immersive teaching through rigorous fieldwork in urban and rural contexts.

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**690** Graduates from 35 countries  
since inception

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**36** Experiential urban and rural field  
sites including sites of the  
Government and BRAC

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**7** International  
visiting faculty

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**41** National faculty, practitioners  
and facilitators

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**24** Academic partners

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# MPH programme's awards and accolades



One of the **7 global academic** institutions selected by WHO's Training in **Tropical Diseases Research (TDR)** Fellowship



**SEAPHEIN Public Health Education Leadership Award**

## Scholarships offered at MPH programme

- WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) scholarship
- Sir Fazle Hasan Abed scholarship
- Amena Azfar & Hurmatunnessa Rob scholarship (partial/full)
- Scholarship (full) from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)
- Up to 50% Special Waiver for Bangladeshi nationals

## Hear from the team



**Dr Santhia Ireen**  
Deputy Director  
Education & Research

*Leading the Master of Public Health (MPH) program at BRAC JPGSPH has been a completely new experience compared to my work over the past 15 years. However, the journey has been incredibly rewarding and full of learning. Collaborating closely with students, teachers, and public health experts has helped foster a strong and supportive educational environment. The inclusive work culture at JPGSPH promotes innovation and teamwork, enhancing collaboration and growth. This role has reinforced my belief in the importance of training future public health leaders in finding solutions to global health challenges.*

# Hear from the faculty



## Dr Fariha Haseen

Associate Professor  
Head, Division Reproductive  
and Child Health;  
Director, Centre for Gender and  
Women's Health Research  
Department of Public Health  
and Informatics, BSMMU,  
Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Adjunct Faculty, BRAC JPGSPH

*As a faculty member at BRAC JPGSPH, it has been a fulfilling experience to teach and collaborate with such a diverse and passionate cohort. The MPH programme offers a unique environment where academic rigour is paired with practical, real-world applications, ensuring students are well-equipped to tackle pressing public health challenges. I am proud to be part of a school that prioritises excellence in education and a holistic approach to global health.*



## Dr Nandan Mukherjee

Postdoctoral Research and  
Knowledge Exchange Specialist  
Energy Environment and  
Society, School of Humanities,  
Social Sciences and Law,  
University of Dundee

*I found the MPH programme engaging and transformative, going beyond conventional public health training. I witnessed the emergence of many future world leaders, cultivating deep critical thinking abilities and the humane skillset necessary to tackle global challenges.*



## Dr Emily Gurley

Co-Coordinator, Professor of  
the Practice, Departments of  
Epidemiology and International  
Health, Johns Hopkins  
Bloomberg School of Public  
Health, USA

*Since my first guest lectures at the school 13 years ago, I've been consistently impressed by the students – both by their dedication and breadth of experience. I was lucky enough to teach the epidemiology module in the past and was very excited to join the school again last year as a co-instructor for the ID epidemiology module. I'm proud to be associated with an MPH programme focused on applied public health education for students best poised to make major contributions in high-need settings.*



## Dr Zahidul Quayyum

Professor (Health Economics)  
and Director Research  
Chair, Institutional Review Board  
Co-Director Centre of Excellence  
for Urban Equity and Health  
(CUEH) BRAC JPGSPH

*The Master of Public Health Programme at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health exemplifies an innovative blend of theoretical knowledge and practical field experience, essential for developing effective and cost-effective public health solutions in diverse contexts.*

# Student experience | Hear from the students of the 20th cohort



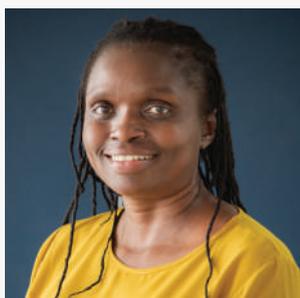
**Dr Mahaz Rahman Ahmadzai**  
Afghanistan

*My experience at BRAC JPGSPH has been truly transformative. The MPH programme provided a dynamic and immersive learning environment, mixing rigorous academic training with real-world public health challenges. The diverse cohort, with students from different countries and backgrounds, enriched discussions and fostered a global perspective on health issues. The School's unique pedagogy, supported by both national and international faculty, ensured a well-rounded learning experience.*



**Sadah Hasan**  
Bangladesh

*The MPH programme demanded long days in the field to learn from the community and intense evenings refining assignments, which pushed me to grow both academically and personally. Being part of a global cohort broadened my perspective and enriched my understanding through the lens of different contexts. This MPH journey has been a profound lesson in listening, learning, and leading with empathy—values that will guide me throughout my life and career.*



**Florence N. Ojwang**  
Kenya

*The MPH programme challenged me in ways I never expected, pushing me beyond my comfort zone with its dynamic, real-world approach to public health. The courses were rigorous and deeply engaging, blending classroom learning with immersive fieldwork. The faculty, a brilliant mix of global experts, didn't just teach, they inspired, mentored, and encouraged us to think critically. And my cohort—A diverse, passionate group that became my second family. Every challenge only strengthened our bond. This journey shaped me into a more resilient, capable, and purpose-driven public health professional.*



**Conrad Russel Stanis**  
Papua New Guinea

*At BRAC JPGSPH, I'm immersed in a diverse, collaborative, and learning atmosphere. As a WHO-TDR International Postgraduate Training fellow, embarking on this master's programme was a golden opportunity. The concept of the 'Ground-Reality lens' profoundly resonated with me as we visited informal settlements in Dhaka, as part of the School's experiential learning methodology. With a bright outlook, I'm committed to shaping a future where every community member thrives in health and productivity.*



## Snapshots of field visits

As part of the experiential learning, the 20th cohort of MPH students participated in 15 field trips during their course



# Student Research Day

At the Student Research Day, students showcased their individual thesis posters and delivered presentations on their projects' findings.



# Graduation Ceremony

The Graduation ceremony for the 32 graduating students from 9 countries was held in January 2025.



# Student awards

Outstanding students were honoured with awards in recognition of their remarkable dedication and achievements.

## Allan Rosenfield Award for Best Overall Performance

Tasbiha Tabassum  
(Bangladesh)



## W. B. Greenough III Award for Best Dissertation

Sita Kumari  
(India)



## Richard Cash Award for Best SLP Poster



Sita Kumari  
(India)



Sadah Hasan  
(Bangladesh)



Fariha Hassan  
(Bangladesh)

## Richard Cash Award for Best Thesis Presentation



Fabi Sumaiya Huda  
(Bangladesh)



Meghna Chakravartty  
(Bangladesh)



Sadah Hasan  
(Bangladesh)

## Sir Fazle Hasan Abed Award for Leadership

Conrad Russel Stanis  
(Papua New Guinea)



# Faculty and Teaching Fellow awards

Esteemed faculty members were awarded in acknowledgement of their unwavering commitment and immense contributions.

**Begum Rokeya  
Sakhawat Hossain**

**Teaching Excellence  
Award**



**Tahmeed Ahmed**  
Professor & Coordinator  
Public Health Nutrition



**Steve Luby**  
Guest Facilitator & Coordinator  
Epidemiology of  
Infectious Diseases



**Timothy Grant Evans**  
Adjunct Professor  
Health Systems Management

**Begum Rokeya  
Sakhawat Hossain**

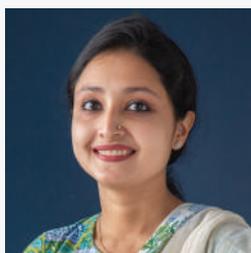
**Teaching Fellow  
Award**



**Maliha Mehnaz Mitu**  
Quantitative research methods



**Sabina Akter Tumpa**  
Biostatistics



**Farzana Shehrin**  
Biostatistics

# BRAC JPGSPH to Launch Executive Master of Public Health (EMPH) Programme

The upcoming Executive Master of Public Health (EMPH) programme at BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University, is a two-year, part-time programme designed to develop the next generation of public health leaders. Tailored for professionals from diverse health sectors, the programme offers five specialised streams: Epidemiology, Health Care Management, Non-Communicable Diseases, Public Health Nutrition, and Reproductive, Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health.

Students will complete 12 core courses, 6 electives, and a 16-credit research project, totalling 70 credits as per guidelines by University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh. The curriculum emphasises public health foundations, research methods, biostatistics, epidemiology, health policy, and communication.

With academic collaborations and an applied learning approach, EMPH integrates research, policy, and practical strategies. Students will gain hands-on experience, guided by leading public health researchers and practitioners, fostering a holistic, community-centered perspective on health systems. Graduates will emerge equipped to drive impactful public health programmes and policies globally.





# Midwifery Education Programme

Since 2012, the Midwifery Education Programme (MEP) has been developing competent and committed midwives. Its 3-year diploma in midwifery aims to reduce maternal-neonatal mortality and morbidity in Bangladesh.

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**40** Students enrolled in the  
11th batch (latest)

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**1253** Students graduated

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**1253** Licensed midwives

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**29** Students passed in licensing  
exam in 2024

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# Selected updates from MEP



## High official visit of BRAC & BRAC University

A special delegation including Asif Saleh, Executive Director, BRAC; Tamara Hasan Abed, Chairperson, Board of Trustees, BRAC University (BRACU); Professor Dr Syed Ferhat Anwar, Vice Chancellor, BRACU; Ariful Islam, Chief Financial Officer, BRACU; and Professor Dr Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, Founding Dean, BRAC JPGSPH, BRACU, and Convener, Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW); visited the Midwifery Education Programme on 24 December 2024. The visit highlighted the program's impact on professionalising midwifery in Bangladesh, empowering marginalised communities, and promoting women's rights.



## Empowering minds through workshops

The MEP Counseling Unit conducted several impactful workshops to foster student well-being and leadership. A Suicide Prevention workshop was held at the Dhaka academic site, educating students on risk factors, warning signs, and available support systems to promote mental well-being. Following the student leader elections, a leadership training was organised to prepare newly elected leaders with essential skills in communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and ethical decision-making. Additionally, an anti-bullying workshop took place, focusing on awareness, intervention strategies, and fostering an inclusive, supportive academic environment.



## Midwives in action

MEP marked International Midwifery Day with the theme "Midwives: A Vital Climate Solution," featuring an inspiring speech by Faridah Luyiga from International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), community outreach, a rally, and a cultural showcase highlighting midwives' critical role in maternal care. MEP also celebrated "Safe Motherhood Day" with an engaging Pop-Up Fair, colourful posters, and community health services, including free health check-ups and family planning services. The event also featured a book review, a debate on maternal health, reinforcing MEP's dedication to advancing midwifery education, research, and policies for safer childbirth.



## Scholarships to empower disadvantaged students

The Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery (DGNM) awarded scholarships to two indigenous MEP students, showcasing a robust public-private collaboration aimed at advancing midwifery education. bKash also awarded scholarships to 20 MEP students to support talented individuals who would benefit from financial assistance. These scholarships will enhance skilled midwifery care and maternal health services in Bangladesh.

# Student experience



**Jahanara Akter Lima**  
10th Batch

## **A Journey of Growth: From Rural to Global**

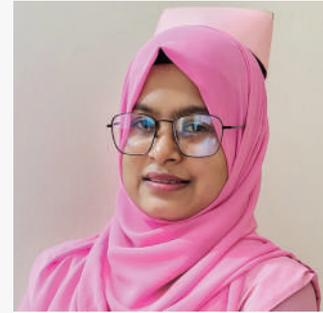
*I feel truly blessed to be a student of the Midwifery Education Programme at BRAC JPGSPH. I have developed a strong vision to become a skilled midwife, and I believe I will have the opportunity to work abroad, thanks to the significant improvement in English language through the weekly special English classes offered each semester. The entire environment here fosters continuous learning and growth, and I am grateful for the chance to be part of this enriching experience.*



**Rokhsana Akter**  
10th Batch

## **Overcoming Challenges: From Fear to Faith**

*When I first started midwifery, I was afraid of adapting to the new environment, and curriculum, and studying in English. However, with my teachers' support, the ways of teaching helped me to understand my potential, and I improved significantly. The hostel atmosphere, extracurricular activities, and skill practice in hospital settings continuously inspire us to grow. My goal is to become a great midwife, promote safe motherhood, pursue higher education abroad, and one day become a teacher.*



**Mito Akter**  
11th Batch

## **Midwifery as a Mission: Turning Dreams into Reality**

*I chose BRAC University because it prioritises the quality of education. After researching midwifery, I realised it's not just a profession but a critical mission to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality in Bangladesh. I aspire to contribute to this cause. To the upcoming batches, I would say, BRAC JPGSPH is the best platform to turn your dreams into reality.*

## Hear from the team



**Dr Sharmina Rahman**  
Director & Head  
Midwifery Education Programme  
BRAC JPGSPH, BRAC University

*Leading the Midwifery Education Programme has shown me how economic empowerment strengthens midwives to make a greater impact on their families and communities. When midwives gain financial stability and professional growth, they are better equipped to provide high-quality care, advocate for women's health, and inspire change. Witnessing midwives grow into confident, respected healthcare providers—while improving the health of mothers and babies—has shown me the incredible power of education and empowerment.*

# Caregiver Development Programme

Launched in June 2024, the School's Caregiver Development Programme (CDP) ensures quality education in caregiving. The career path progresses from General Caregiving Level 2 to Expert Level 5, equipping learners with caregiving skills such as vital sign measurement, basic first aid, CPR, basic nursing care, and specialised support in children care, elderly care, palliative care, autism care, dementia management, and basic physiotherapy. Completing at least 2 levels and 720 hours of training opens diverse career opportunities as professional caregivers, nursing assistants, elderly care specialists or home health aides while advancing through more levels enhances skills and expands career prospects.

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**252** Enrolled in 13 batches

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**137** Trainees completed training  
(7 batches)

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**115** Current trainees  
(6 batches)

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# Exploring global careers

In collaboration with the Japanese caregiver recruiting agency and BRAC Probashbondhu Limited (BPL), three dynamic workshops were organised to guide aspiring caregivers toward international opportunities if they choose. These sessions provided valuable insights into career pathways in Japan, the migration

process, and essential cross-cultural collaboration skills. Equipping participants with the necessary knowledge, the workshops empowered students to build self-confidence toward a rewarding caregiving career abroad.

## Student testimonials

### A mother's transformational journey in caregiving

*"Taking the caregiving course at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, was a life-changing experience for me as a mother of a baby with intellectual disabilities. It helped me with the knowledge, patience, and practical skills to provide better care, ensuring my child's well-being while strengthening my emotional resilience. This journey not only deepened my understanding of caregiving but also empowered me to embrace my role with confidence and compassion."*

- Fatema Begum

### Learning to earning: How a caregiving course shapes career

*Completing the caregiving course at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, provided me with invaluable healthcare knowledge. Now, as a caregiver at Mysha Care, the skills I acquired through this course have been instrumental in my professional success. The course not only enhanced my abilities but also played a vital role in securing my job, giving me the confidence to embark on my career path.*

- Takrim



# TRAINING



Committed to advancing excellence in public health, BRAC JPGSPH delivers impactful training programs through dynamic initiatives. Leading these efforts is the Centre for Professional Skills Development in Public Health (CPSD), our premier international training hub dedicated to strengthening the capabilities of health professionals worldwide—globally, regionally, and nationally.

Beyond CPSD's specialized focus, the School incorporates tailored training modules into its wide-ranging research projects. Serving practitioners, policymakers, and diverse public health stakeholders, our comprehensive programs underscore our dedication to enhancing expertise and driving knowledge dissemination across the field

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**340** Skills building seminars and workshops since inception

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**10,240** Professionals trained since inception

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**30** Training sessions conducted in 2024

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**1,250** Professionals trained in 2024

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# Selected training updates



## World Bank Future of Health Systems Program: Bangladesh

### Key topics covered:

- Systems thinking for health system transformation
- Human-centered design for healthcare innovation
- Future thinking to address emerging challenges
- Collaborative problem-solving workshops

### Facilitators:

- **Wameq Azfar Raza**, Senior Health Specialist, World Bank
- **Liza Mitgang**, Health Specialist, World Bank
- **Tanja Hichert**, Consultant, World Bank
- **Ataur Rahman**, Director, CPSD, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Shubham Gupta**, Consultant, World Bank



## Economic Evaluation: Cost-Effectiveness and Cost-Benefit Analysis in Health Care

### Key topics covered:

- Principles of economic evaluation in healthcare
- Designing cost-effective healthcare benefits packages
- Hands-on training in cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis
- Critical assessment of economic evaluation studies

### Facilitators:

- **Professor Zahidul Quayyum**, Co-Director, Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Professor Syed Abdul Hamid**, Health Economist, Institute of Health Economics, University of Dhaka
- **Professor Nahid Akhter Jahan**, Health Economist, Institute of Health Economics, University of Dhaka



## Basic Quantitative Research Methodology

### Key topics covered:

- Fundamentals of quantitative research design
- Data collection methods and tools
- Basic statistical analysis using software
- Interpreting and presenting quantitative data

### Facilitator:

- **Mrittika Barua**, Assistant Professor and Deputy Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up, BRAC JPGSPH



## Introduction to 'R' for Data Analysis

### Key topics covered:

- Introduction to R programming
- Data manipulation and visualization
- Basic statistical analysis using R
- Hands-on exercises with real datasets

### Facilitator:

- **Dr. A.H.M. Mahbub Latif**, Professor of Applied Statistics and Data Science, ISRT, University of Dhaka



## Qualitative Data Analysis using NVivo for Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)

### Key topics covered:

- Introduction to qualitative data analysis
- Data coding and thematic analysis using NVivo
- Interpreting and presenting qualitative findings
- Hands-on exercises with real datasets

### Facilitators:

- **Mrittika Barua**, Assistant Professor and Deputy Director, Centre of Excellence for Science of Implementation and Scale-up, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Muhammad Abdul Mannan**, Senior Research Assistant, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Md. Jahedul Islam**, Senior Research Assistant, BRAC JPGSPH



## Learning by Doing: Qualitative Data Analysis Using NVivo

### Key topics covered:

- Introduction to NVivo software
- Data coding and thematic analysis
- Interpreting and presenting qualitative findings
- Practical exercises with real datasets

### Facilitators:

- **Atiya Rahman**, Assistant Scientist, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Muhammad Abdul Mannan**, Senior Research Assistant, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Md. Jahedul Islam**, Senior Research Assistant, BRAC JPGSPH



## Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

### Key topics covered:

- Fundamentals of MEL frameworks
- Designing result-based monitoring systems
- Data collection and analysis techniques
- Using MEL for program improvement

### Facilitators:

- **Ms. Amina Mahbub**, MEL Advisor, Bangladesh America Maitree Project, BRAC
- **Dr. Ataur Rahman**, Director, CPSD, BRAC JPGSPH



## Introduction to Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis in Health Research

### Key topics covered:

- Steps in conducting a systematic review
- Meta-analysis techniques and software
- Critical appraisal of systematic reviews
- Hands-on exercises with real datasets

### Facilitators:

- **Dr. Nafisa Lira Huq**, Adjunct Faculty, BRAC JPGSPH
- **Razib Mamun**, PhD, Visiting Researcher, Graduate School of Medicine, Nagoya University, Japan



## Emerging Voices for Global Health (EV4GH) 2024: Empowering Global Health Voices – Hosted by the BRAC JPGSPH Secretariat

As the proud Secretariat of **Emerging Voices for Global Health (EV4GH) 2024**, BRAC JPGSPH played a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of global health leaders. Held in Nagasaki, Japan, in conjunction with the Health Systems Research Symposium (HSR2024)—the world’s largest gathering on Health

Policy and Systems Research (HPSR)—this transformative programme brought together **37 early-career global health professionals** from 28 countries, spanning six continents, for **skill-building, mentorship, and policy engagement**.



### Leadership & Representation

**Bachera Aktar**, Deputy Director, CGSRHR, co-chaired and facilitated the venture, alongside **Asif Faisal**, Deputy Manager, Communications, and **Patricia Gomes**, Deputy Manager, CPSD. Their leadership played a key role in shaping discussions and enhancing participant engagement.

Notably, all three Bangladeshi EVs—**Muhammad Riaz Hossain**, **Nazia Islam**, and **Farhana Alam**—are from BRAC JPGSPH. They also contributed to **HSR2024**, the largest global Health Policy and Systems Research (HPSR) conference, by presenting research, moderating discussions, and participating in key policy debates.

### #EV4GH2024

- ◆ **Workshops & Training:** Research dissemination, policy engagement, stakeholder mapping, social media strategy, and health diplomacy.
- ◆ **Interactive Learning:** Lectures on global governance, climate change & mental health, and participatory health approaches.
- ◆ **Field Immersion:** Visits to **Nagasaki Peace Park** and **Unzen City**, connecting health with historical and cultural contexts.
- ◆ **Global Impact:** EVs actively contributed to **HSR2024** through panel discussions, poster presentations, and high-level policy dialogues.

Through EV4GH2024, BRAC JPGSPH is reinforcing its leadership in global health research, communication, and advocacy. Preparations are underway for our next venture in 2026, to be held in **Dubai, UAE**.

## Hear from the team



**Dr Ataur Rahman**  
Director, Centre for  
Professional Skills Development  
in Public Health

*Leading the Centre for Professional Skills Development in Public Health has been an incredible journey of growth and impact. Over the past year, we have worked to strengthen research capacity, train mid-level health managers, and equip professionals with hands-on skills in research methodologies, monitoring and evaluation, and data analysis. Seeing professionals grow in leadership, critical thinking, and evidence-based practice has been truly rewarding. Through short courses, internships, and capacity-building initiatives, we are shaping the next generation of public health leaders in Bangladesh.*

# RESEARCH



The School leverages its extensive global and national partnerships and networks to foster multi-disciplinary research teams that drive innovation across its five Research Centres and four Research Hubs. These platforms address critical challenges in diverse domains, including urban and rural health systems, socioeconomic development, poverty alleviation, and equity-focused initiatives. Their work prioritises marginalised communities—such as refugees, slum dwellers, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and adolescents—while tackling pressing health issues like infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, nutrition disparities, antimicrobial resistance, and maternal and child health. Additionally, the Centres and Hubs advance research on gender equity, sexual and reproductive rights, digital health solutions, violence prevention, human rights, healthcare workforce development, equitable financing models, and financial inclusion. By bridging urban and rural contexts, the School's initiatives aim to strengthen health equity, social justice, and sustainable well-being nationwide.

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**396** Research projects  
since inception

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**65** Ongoing research projects  
in 2024

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**200+** International research partners  
in the last 5 years

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**480** Peer-reviewed articles published in  
international journals since 2017

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**52** Peer-reviewed publications  
in 2024

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# Our research centres



Established in 2008, **Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR)** promotes a broader understanding of Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Bangladesh and the region through research, advocacy, and capacity-building activities. It generates and translates knowledge into advocacy-based action for social and structural changes.



Established in 2012, **Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (CoE-HS&UHC)** generates evidence to inform key stakeholders on necessary health system interventions or modifying existing interventions. Research areas include universal health coverage, equity, and social determinants of health, Human Resources for Health (HRH) and, pharmaceutical R&D.



Established in 2013, **The Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH)** addresses challenges of the urban health system to ensure equity for urban poor. Research areas include climate change, environment, migration, strengthening of health systems, urban health governance, innovations in service delivery models, strategies for equitable healthy cities, etc.



Established in 2016, **The Centre of Excellence for the Science of Implementation and Scale-Up (CoE-SISU)** links research and practice to accelerate the implementation and scale-up of health policies, programmes, and practices by emphasising partnerships between implementors, researchers, and stakeholders. Research areas include maternal, neonatal, child health, disability, health systems, vaccination, climate change, and migration.



Established in 2017, **The Centre of Excellence for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition (CNCDN)** develops research, training, guidelines, policies, partnerships, and networks to prevent and control non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and malnutrition in Bangladesh and the Global South. Research areas include NCDs, malnutrition, practices in clinical and population settings, etc.

# Our research hubs

## Humanitarian Research Hub

Established in 2021, the Humanitarian Hub conducts research in collaboration with the Centres of Excellence on the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals and host populations to comprehend the gaps in public health service delivery and to identify challenges to improve their health and well-being.

## Hub for Qualitative Inquiry (Qualinq)

Established in 2023, the Hub aims to strengthen the capacity of junior and mid-level researchers and development practitioners in qualitative research.

## Hub for Climate Change, Environment and Health (CCEH)

Established in 2023, the Hub offers teaching, programme design, and research efforts involving health, education, and the economy of climate change. It also collects and collates existing evidence and generates new evidence relating to climate change, environment, and health.

## Hub for Evidence in Public Health Policy and Practice (HEPP)

Established in 2023, the Hub engages in capacity building in accessing, acquiring, and making available public health practice and policy evidence.

# Field experience from researchers



**Dr Jakia Sultana**  
MBBS, MPH  
Research Medical  
Officer

*My work involves engaging with communities in various rural areas, each presenting its own unique challenges. This requires us to stay vigilant, adapt to diverse situations, and maintain a strong community-centered approach. While we strive to stay prepared at all times, we embrace new challenges with confidence, positivity, and a forward-thinking approach, always prioritizing the needs of the community.*



**Dr Pragna  
Paramita Mondal**  
MBBS MPH  
Senior Research  
Associate

*My experience at the Humanitarian Hub has been highly enriching, providing valuable learning opportunities. Engaging with diverse humanitarian and marginalized communities across research areas such as family planning, nutrition, animal health governance and others has strengthened my expertise as a public health professional. Additionally, involvement in budgeting, government liaison, and stakeholder collaboration has further enhanced my leadership and coordination skills. The mentorship I have received has been truly impactful, offering invaluable real-world guidance.*



**Dr Sabiha M Khan**  
Senior Research  
Associate

*As a part of our research where we studied the effects of climate change on health, our team navigated rough terrains and flood-affected areas to reach community clinics to conduct health facility climate resilience. We witnessed firsthand how water shortages, power outages, and extreme weather severely strained healthcare delivery to the local communities.*



**Muhammad Riaz  
Hossain**  
Deputy Project  
Coordinator

*Over the past decade in public health research, I have witnessed how vulnerable communities increasingly welcome research initiatives. However, perceptions of research impact remain mixed—some see its value, while others remain sceptical. A key challenge is the lack of an active platform to connect with similar or potential development organizations. More crucially, we must push for greater engagement from government public health bodies. As researchers, our role extends beyond data collection—we should actively contribute to national health policies, not as politicians, but as advisors shaping evidence-based decision-making for a healthier future.*



**Dr Masudur Rahma  
Kanchon**  
Senior Research  
Associate

*My journey in public health has deepened through hands-on fieldwork and interdisciplinary collaboration, driven by a passion for strengthening health systems and generating evidence for impactful policy changes. Overcoming challenges has strengthened my resilience, and I aspire to advocate for the implementation of evidence-based interventions within the health system to advance equitable healthcare solutions and translate research into meaningful action for a healthier future.*

# Selected research project updates

## Countering Backlash and Reclaiming Gender Justice

Centre of Excellence For Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health And Rights

Donor: ARROW

The project focused on addressing backlash against women's rights and gender justice, exploring the erosion of gender agendas and their co-option, which leads to stereotyping effects. It sought to advance new opportunities for women's movements and rights defenders to reclaim gender justice.

The initiative aimed to enhance understanding and build the capacities needed for women's rights organizations and other gender justice defenders. It also identified key opportunities to strengthen these organizations in the face of evolving challenges. The study involved activists, community leaders, and those directly impacted by gender injustice.

Key outcomes included the creation of knowledge products, such as policy briefs and human-interest stories, to highlight best practices in defending gender justice. The project's ultimate goal was to build resilience and amplify the voices of those advocating for gender equality, providing actionable insights for scaling up efforts in global gender justice movements.

## Building Rohingya Refugee and Host Community Resilience in Cox's Bazar

Centre of Excellence for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition

Donor: European Union (EU) & UNICEF

CNCDN conducted a study in Cox's Bazar to enhance the resilience of Rohingya refugees and host communities. Supported by the European Union (EU) and UNICEF, the project addressed nutrition, food security, education, WASH, and social protection. The research engaged diverse beneficiaries, including pregnant women, adolescent girls, farmers, and tailoring groups, alongside service providers such as healthcare workers, nutrition counselors, and agricultural officers. In Cox's Bazar, 4,973 beneficiaries were interviewed, alongside 645 observations and 223 service provider interviews. In five Rohingya camps, 2,490 beneficiaries were

surveyed, with additional key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions.

A literature review examined Bangladesh's nutrition policies and their alignment with multisectoral nutrition programs (MSNP). The study produced knowledge products, policy briefs, and human-interest stories, highlighting best practices in nutrition interventions. A documentary was created to showcase the project's impact. Key stakeholders included government ministries, NGOs, and international organizations like UNICEF and CARE Bangladesh. Findings will support scaling up the Multi-Sectoral Minimum Nutrition Package (MMNP) and strengthening service resilience in humanitarian-development contexts.

## Gender and Equity within Antimicrobial Resistance (GEAR up)

Centre of Excellence for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Donor: UKAID, Department of Health and Social Care, The Fleming Fund project, Fleming Fund Regional Grant

The project aims to address the growing concern of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in informal urban settlements in Bangladesh through a comprehensive examination of community and service provider perspectives. The study seeks to identify the social determinants of AMR, focusing on how local factors influence the prevalence and spread of resistance in these settings. A key aspect of the research is to explore the gender and equity dimensions of decision-making, particularly regarding the use of medicines, including antimicrobials, and adherence to prescribed treatments. The project delves into how gender and equity influence health behaviors and choices, providing a deeper understanding of the dynamics within urban informal settlements.

Additionally, the study aims to gain insights into the current discourse on gender and equity among policy-makers and healthcare professionals, shedding light on barriers and opportunities to integrate these considerations into AMR policymaking. Finally, the project will identify gaps in current AMR policies and programs, offering actionable recommendations to embed gender and equity more effectively in future interventions.

## Addressing Gaps in the Hypertension and Diabetes Care Continuum in Rural Bangladesh through mHealth and Decentralized Primary Care: The Dinajpur Study

Centre of Excellence for Non-Communicable Diseases and Nutrition

Donor: National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

The Dinajpur Study aims to enhance hypertension and diabetes management in rural Bangladesh through decentralized care and mHealth interventions. Implemented by CNCDN in collaboration with global and national partners, the study runs from January 2024 to September 2026. It evaluates three intervention models across three sub-districts: Multicomponent Decentralized Care, integrating digital tools, community clinics, and CHWs; mHealth, focusing on digital patient management; and Usual Care as a control.

Using a type 2 effectiveness-implementation hybrid design, the study assesses intervention impact on NCD care accessibility, adherence, patient retention, financial burden, and clinician practices. Initial findings from 6,868 surveyed participants, 179 health facilities, and qualitative research provide crucial insights.

Key activities include community-based registration of 16,059 participants, screening of 7,254 individuals, digital health interventions (Simple app, KoboToolbox), and health economic analysis. Expected outcomes include reduced CVD incidence, improved patient management, and decreased socioeconomic disparities. Findings will inform policy recommendations for scalable NCD care solutions in Bangladesh and similar settings.

## Assessment of Public and Private Blood Transfusion Services under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS)

Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage

Donor: The World Health Organization (WHO)

This study aims to assess the current state of blood transfusion services (BTS) in both the public and private sectors of Bangladesh, identifying gaps and needs to provide feasible recommendations for

improvement. With challenges such as a shortage of voluntary blood donors, limited trained personnel, and inadequate infrastructure, the study will use both quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate the BTS landscape. It will engage key stakeholders, assess compliance with national and global standards, and gather insights from user experiences to inform the development of a more efficient and sustainable blood transfusion system in Bangladesh. Key outcomes include a detailed assessment of the current BTS landscape, identification of key gaps, data-driven recommendations for enhancing effectiveness, equity, and sustainability, and a framework for strengthening BTS policies and operations in Bangladesh and other low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

## Implementation of Health System Assessment for System-Level Quality Improvement in Bangladesh

Centre of Excellence for Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage

Donor: The World Bank

This study focuses on assessing the healthcare system in Bangladesh, specifically identifying opportunities for system-level quality improvements, with a particular emphasis on Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health (MNCH) and Chronic/Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs).

The research will analyze current healthcare delivery models, evaluate service quality, and explore structural and operational challenges, particularly at the primary healthcare (PHC) level. By conducting a comprehensive assessment of health facilities, provider practices, and patient satisfaction, the study aims to develop evidence-based recommendations to improve care quality. The findings are expected to support reforms in Bangladesh's PHC system, especially for MNCH and NCDs, and provide insights for further investments in health infrastructure and digital health solutions. Key outcomes include in-depth analysis of service quality gaps, identification of operational and structural challenges, and recommendations for integrating digital health solutions to improve care quality and system efficiency.

## Teaching Global Health Leaders about the Lessons Learned from Polio Eradication (STRIPE)

Centre of Excellence for the Science of Implementation And Scale-Up

Donor: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

The Synthesis and Translation of Research and Innovations in Polio Eradication (STRIPE) project in Bangladesh, led by BRAC JPGSPH in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University (JHU) and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is making a real difference in public health by equipping mid-level health managers with the tools to turn research into action. Through MOOC-based training, Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops, and case study integration in MPH programs, STRIPE has helped institutionalize implementation science (IS) in policy and practice. By working closely with government and non-government entities, the project has strengthened capacity-building efforts, ensuring that health managers can effectively apply evidence-based solutions in their communities. STRIPE's impact extends beyond training—its contributions include the IS MOOC, six publications on polio eradication, and a growing network of implementation science practitioners. Recognized globally, STRIPE is bridging the "know-do" gap and demonstrating how research, collaboration, and policy engagement can create scalable, lasting improvements in public health. Through partnerships with UNICEF, WHO, and key policymakers, STRIPE is a shining example of how research can be transformed into real-world solutions.

## Reducing Barriers to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in the camps for Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Centre of Excellence for the Science of Implementation And Scale-Up

Donor: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (IFRC)

The study, which focuses primarily on the FDMN, aims to identify behavioural barriers related to institutional delivery and family planning method uptake. It is funded by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (IFRC). The study employs a quasi-experimental (before/after study)

design and embedded Implementation Research (IR) component to document challenges, facilitators, and strategies for improvement and scale-up. The research team successfully completed baseline data collection in Rohingya camps, along with a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), to gain in-depth insights into existing community practices, sociocultural norms, and behavioural perspectives related to SRHR.

## Pathways to Equitable Healthy Cities

Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health

Donor: Wellcome Trust, UK

This multi-country research project is being conducted in 6 cities in 5 countries (Dhaka, Bangladesh; Vancouver, Canada; Accra and Tamale, Ghana; London, UK; and Beijing, China), in partnership with 14 institutions from 6 countries. This study aims at developing actionable policy scenarios considering the health impacts of various sectors on health outcomes, validating them with stakeholders, thus contributing to advancing urban health policy and practice globally through renowned partnerships. From 2019 to 2024, the projects initially identified some of the key problems of Dhaka city in stakeholders' workshops and co-created research studies on waste management, identifying waterlogged areas, distribution of green space, assessment of indoor daylight, monitoring environmental pollution. The project also estimated poverty at a small area level and identified the wards with the proportion of poor households. The project in its study on air and noise pollution monitoring (real time and gravimetric air quality monitoring) collected data across 70 sites of Dhaka. The project also took the opportunity of collecting heat monitoring data across 69 sites of Dhaka. The other two studies of the project include: Transportation Accessibility and Safety in Dhaka City: A Gender Based Assessment, and Healthy Dhaka: Way Forward for a Bicycling Friendly City. This project hosted 3 co-production workshops with more than 200 participants including government, non-government, and academia stakeholders.



## Community-led Responsive and Effective Urban Health Systems (CHORUS)

Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health

Donor: FCDO, UK

CHORUS is a multi-country research programme consortium, including partners such as Leeds and University of York, with BRAC JPGSPH serving as a key national partner. The consortium is committed to strengthening urban health systems by addressing challenges in delivering equitable health services, tackling the double burden of disease, and considering the broader social determinants of health in Bangladesh, Nepal, Ghana, and Nigeria. In 2024, CHORUS team at BRAC JPGSPH conducted a comprehensive qualitative study to assess the feasibility of implementing strategic purchasing and performance-based financing for urban primary health care (PHC) in Bangladesh. The team is also conducting a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) with residents of informal settlements in Dhaka to develop a PHC service package that aligns with community needs, preferences, and expectations. Additionally, the team is leading several innovative small-scale projects on urban health. These include poverty estimation using Small Area Estimation (SAE) technique to provide detailed and accurate estimates of poverty at the ward level in Dhaka City incorporating a ground-level validation to ensure the reliability of the results for enhanced policy-making and targeted interventions, heat vulnerability assessments using GIS techniques and exploring health-related challenges of heat waves and community adaptation strategies, and research on how urban health evidence is utilized by the media and policymakers. Through these initiatives, CHORUS continues to drive impactful, evidence-based solutions to enhance urban health systems and inform policy.

## The Adolescent Menstrual Experiences and Health Cohort (AMEHC) Study

Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health

Donor: Australian National Health and Medical Research Council and Reckitt Global Hygiene Institute's early career fellows' scheme

The Adolescent Menstrual Experiences and Health Cohort (AMEHC) study, initiated in 2022, aims to build comprehensive evidence on the unmet menstrual

health needs of adolescent girls and the long-term impacts of these needs on their education and health outcomes. The study focuses on understanding how menstrual health requirements evolve over time and seeks to provide valuable insights for developing age-appropriate education and health interventions. The project is being conducted by BRAC JPGSPH, in collaboration with Burnet Institute, WaterAid Bangladesh, and Nabolok, Khulna. The study employs a mixed-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to provide a holistic understanding of the challenges faced by adolescent girls in managing menstrual health and the influence of unmet needs on their health and educational outcomes. A longitudinal cohort design is utilized to effectively measure the cumulative impact of unmet menstrual health needs over time. In 2023, the study enrolled 2,016 adolescent girls beginning class 6 (secondary school) from both rural and urban areas of Khulna District. Baseline data were collected through surveys conducted with the girls and their guardians, along with school checklists assessing the availability of menstrual health related facilities and support. To monitor the changing experiences of the girls, annual surveys and school performance data will be gathered. The study's findings are expected to inform policies and programs related to menstrual health of adolescent girls in Bangladesh.

## Menstrual Hygiene and Reproductive Health: Understanding the Linkages through the Adolescent Menstrual Experiences and Health Cohort in Bangladesh

Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health

Donor: Reckitt Global Hygiene Institute (RGHI)

Launched in 2022, the Adolescent Menstrual Experiences and Health Cohort (AMEHC) study follows 2,000 adolescent girls in Khulna, Bangladesh, starting at menarche (around age 12), to explore their evolving menstrual health (MH) needs. Adolescence is a critical period marked by complex and non-linear changes in menstrual experiences, body image, and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs. To deepen the understanding of how MH, body image, and SRH interrelate during adolescence, the Reckitt Global Hygiene Institute (RGHI) funded the study "Menstrual hygiene and reproductive health:

understanding the linkages through the Adolescent Menstrual Experiences and Health Cohort in Bangladesh.” This study employs a qualitative approach to offer insights into how these factors influence menstrual hygiene practices and reproductive health. The study’s key objectives include: extending the AMEHC cohort with a third wave of data to assess the impact of unmet menstrual health on education and health outcomes, conducting a second guardian survey to explore parental support, household WASH, and menstrual product affordability, and integrating longitudinal qualitative sub-studies to explore changes in menstruation experiences across adolescence and their links to body image and SRH. Additionally, the Girls’ Advisory and Research Translation Group (GAT-G) was established to involve adolescent girls in decision-making, co-developing policy recommendations to improve menstrual health practices in schools and communities. The study combines quantitative and qualitative methods to highlight the connections between menstrual hygiene and broader health and educational outcomes, contributing to policies that better support adolescent girls’ health and well-being.

### **Indo-Pacific Initiative for Sustainable Animal Health Cooperation (IPI-SAHC): Strengthening Animal Health and One Health in Bangladesh through Small-Scale Pig Farming**

**Humanitarian Hub**

**Donor: Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)**

In collaboration with Griffith University (Australia), Sunway University (Malaysia), the Philippine College of Veterinary Medicine (Philippines), the London School of Economics (United Kingdom), Simon Fraser University (Canada), HausKuk Initiative (Papua New Guinea), and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (Bangladesh), this ACIAR-funded research addresses the critical threats posed by zoonotic diseases such as brucellosis, anthrax, avian flu, and swine flu to health, agriculture, and food security across Asia. In Bangladesh, smallholder pig farmers—often from marginalized communities—face heightened vulnerabilities due to cultural sensitivities,

inadequate veterinary infrastructure, and weak disease surveillance. This study aims to enhance animal health governance in the Indo-Pacific region by assessing disease prevention knowledge, identifying local challenges, and examining governance dynamics at both the community and national levels. Through a qualitative approach, the research will contribute to strengthening systems that support the One Health strategy, prevent disease outbreaks, and promote more equitable and inclusive health governance while evaluating the pig-human health interface in the region.

### **Targeting Strategies for Balanced Energy Protein (BEP) Supplementation in Pregnancy: An Effectiveness Trial**

**Humanitarian Hub**

**Donor: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

In collaboration with the Department of Human Nutrition at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Johns Hopkins University) and The JiVitA Project (Bangladesh), this ongoing effectiveness trial in Gaibandha, Rangpur, examines the impact of Balanced Energy and Protein (BEP) supplementation in pregnancy to address maternal undernutrition—characterized by low pre-pregnancy body mass index (BMI), micronutrient deficiencies, and inadequate gestational weight gain. The study compares targeted and non-targeted approaches to determine whether providing BEP specifically to underweight women and those with inadequate gestational weight gain is more effective than non-targeted supplementation or standard care with multiple micronutrient supplements (MMS) containing iron-folic acid. Alongside the trial, qualitative research explores community acceptability, adherence strategies, perceived benefits, and potential barriers to implementing BEP supplementation in rural Bangladesh. Findings from a formative study that informed the trial design have been published in a special supplement issue of the *Maternal & Child Nutrition Journal*.

## Improving Food and Nutrition Security by Enhancing Women's Empowerment

Humanitarian Hub

Donor: Dutch Research Council (NOW), the Netherlands

In partnership with the University of Groningen and others, this five-year project focuses on achieving SDG 2—ending all forms of malnutrition by 2030—through evidence-based interventions that address the underlying determinants of malnutrition. The project aims to enhance food and nutrition security, improve health care, WASH, and promote women's empowerment to improve nutritional outcomes for under-five children and women. The project has three main objectives: 1) to develop a conceptual framework outlining the pathways from various dimensions of women's empowerment to improved household nutrition outcomes; 2) to understand psychological and social constraints as moderators of women's empowerment concepts; and 3) to inform policymakers and practitioners about the study's key findings. To achieve these objectives, the project has utilized complex data analysis from DHS and other sources, designed an intervention to integrate a psychological aspiration module (addressing gender roles, goal setting, self-efficacy, and teamwork dynamics) into BRAC's microfinance platform, and conducted baseline data collection with plans for an endline survey. Additionally, the project has engaged stakeholders through meetings and conferences in Bangladesh, workshops in the Netherlands, and wider dissemination through conferences and publications.

## Adapting Climate Change Education, Skills and Sustainability for Advancing Locally-Led Solutions | ACCESS4ALL

Hub for Climate Change, Environment and Health

Donor: ERASMUS+ Capacity Building for Higher Education, EC (European Commission), EU

This project seeks to reshape the discourse on climate change curriculum development in the Global South, addressing the gap between higher education learning and employability in Bangladesh. Through a

collaborative approach, we will co-design and co-develop two practice-based short courses with key stakeholders, focusing on green transformation skills and locally-led solutions.

These courses will equip graduate students, professionals, and practitioners with the green skills increasingly demanded by employers. Eventually, they will be adapted into online open courses, expanding accessibility and impact. By bridging academic learning with practical applications, this initiative aims to strengthen climate resilience and sustainable development efforts in Bangladesh.

## NIHHIS Urban Heat Island Mapping | CAPA Heat Watch 2024 Project

Hub for Climate Change, Environment and Health

Donor: National Integrated Heat Health Information System (NIHHIS)

The HUB for Climate Change, Environment, and Health (CCEH) at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, has partnered with CAPA Strategies, LLC to conduct a large-scale NIHHIS Urban Heat Island Mapping Project in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This initiative aims to map approximately 100 square miles of the city, identifying neighborhoods experiencing disproportionately high temperatures due to the built environment. By analyzing urban heat distribution, the project seeks to highlight vulnerable communities most affected by extreme temperatures, informing climate adaptation strategies and urban planning efforts. Findings will provide data-driven insights for policymakers, urban planners, and public health experts to develop targeted interventions that enhance climate resilience.

As extreme heat becomes an increasing threat to public health and urban livability, this project will play a crucial role in shaping evidence-based policies to create a more sustainable and heat-resilient Dhaka.





# RESEARCH IN FOCUS

## Urban Health and Equity

### Why It Matters

Dhaka, one of the world's fastest-growing cities, faces severe environmental and social challenges that threaten the health and well-being of its residents.

**The Centre of Excellence for Urban Equity and Health (CUEH)** is committed to addressing these issues through **research, policy engagement, and action-oriented solutions.**

Since 2018, the **Pathways to Equitable Healthy Cities** project has mapped pollution levels, urban inequalities, and social determinants of health in Dhaka. The study co-produced knowledge on pressing urban environmental issues with government, non-government, academic, and development partner stakeholders through a series of co-production workshops each year. A set of 10 policy briefs has been shared with relevant stakeholders to map the pathway towards improving the urban environment and reducing inequities for a better and healthier Dhaka city.

### Research Objectives

- Develop actionable policy scenarios validated by stakeholders.
- Create an integrated analytical framework to quantify health impacts of policies.
- Build locally parameterized models to assess population health outcomes.
- Engage stakeholders, build capacity, and facilitate policy implementation.



**Waste Management & Waterlogging**



**Knowledge Coproduction**



**Housing & Neighborhood:**  
Modelling Indoor Daylight  
Urban Green Space

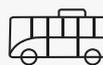
### Research Areas



**Poverty and Inequality:**  
Small Area Poverty Estimation



**Measurement & Monitoring**  
AIR, Noise, and Heat

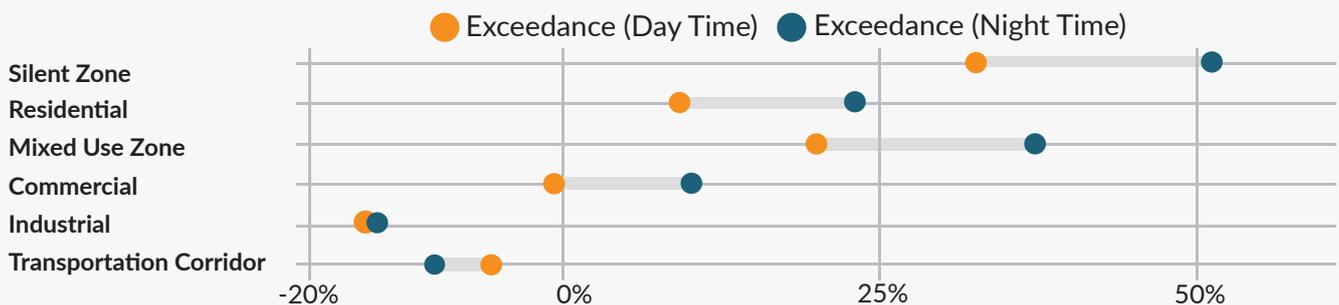


**Tranpost and Mobility:**  
Transportation Accessibility and  
Safety in Dhaka City: A Gender  
Based Assessment  
Bicycling Accessibility

### Key Findings

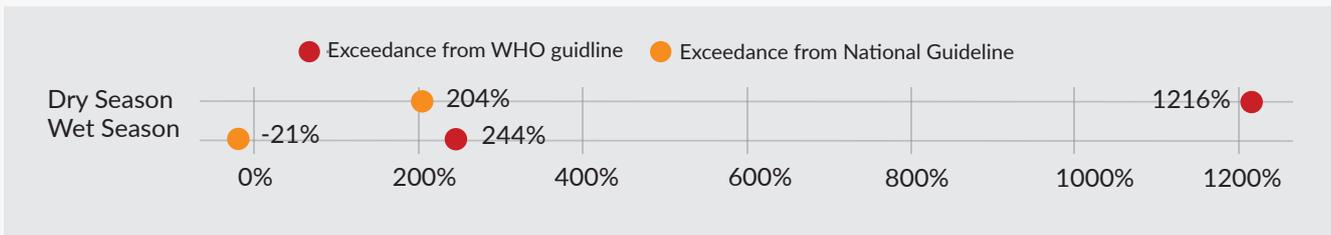
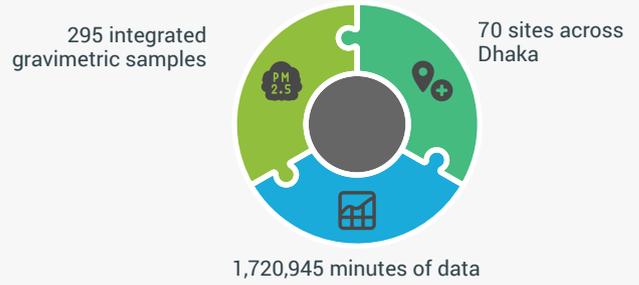
**Noise Pollution** – Noise pollution monitoring data collected for 2 seasons at **68** sites across Dhaka city. Total **7,01,769** minutes of noise data collected mainly during the wet season (July to September 2023). Residential area day time noise level was found 19% higher than national guideline and

mixed area noise level was **27%** higher than national guideline, whereas for night time, it was **32%** and **47%** higher respectively. This indicates that Dhaka's high noise levels can lead to increased risks of hearing loss, cardiovascular issues, sleep disturbances, and cognitive impairments.



**Air Pollution** – Air pollution monitoring data collected for 2 seasons (Dry season, January to March 2023 and Wet season, July to September 2023) and 124 unique sampling days. The monitoring covered 47 wards of Dhaka (35% of all wards). If considered for 500 meter radius buffer area for each site, it covers 75 wards of Dhaka (56% of all wards). This is the largest campaign to date on monitoring Dhaka's air pollution. Data is collected from near-surface human breathing levels to map the accurate PM2.5 concentrations, which are much higher than the PM2.5 levels from existing monitoring stations.

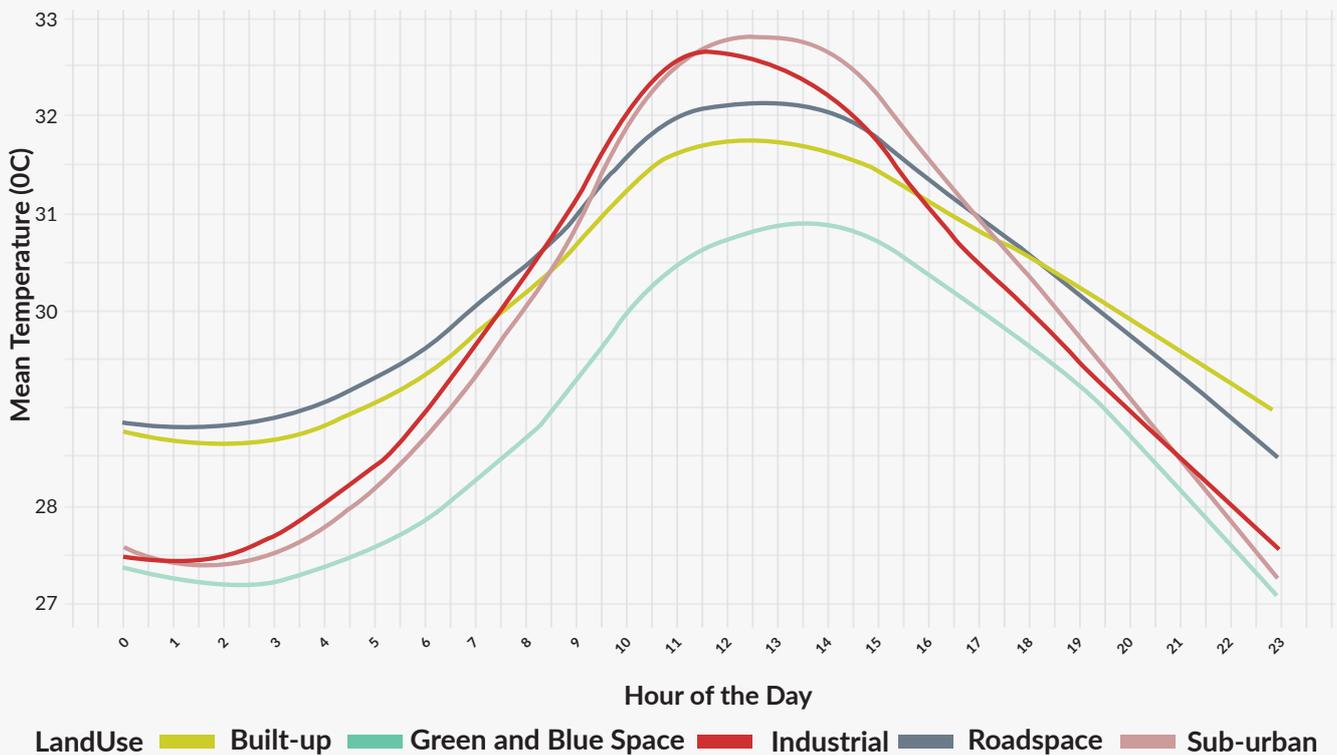
**Comprehensive Air Quality Monitoring in Dhaka**



**Heat Exposure** – Temperature data collected for 2 months at 69 sites across Dhaka city. Total 9,56,028 minutes of temperature data collected within the months of July to September 2023. Our analysis reveals that temperature distribution is

strongly influenced by land use, affecting urban residents disproportionately. Industrial and suburban areas experience sharp temperature increases, while densely built-up urban zones and road spaces retain heat for longer periods, prolonging exposure.

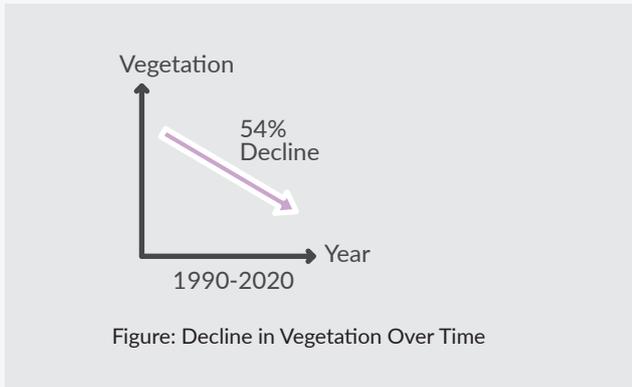
**Hourly Mean Temperature by Land Use**



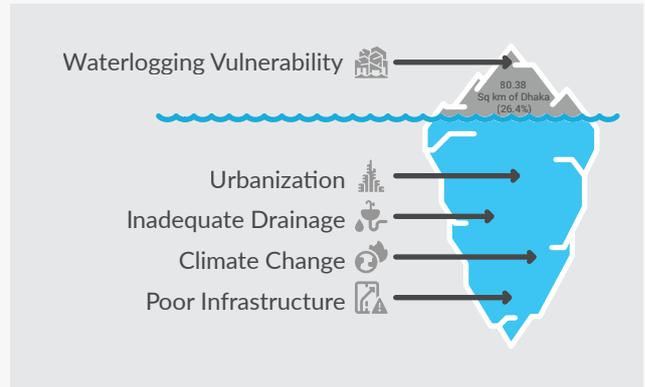
**Ambient Light** – A 3D daylight model was developed using RAJUK building structure data to map indoor daylight availability at each level of each building of the city. The model identified low-light areas within 47 wards of Dhaka (35%). This model identified areas and clusters of buildings that lack sufficient daylight which is essential for human health.

**Small Area Poverty Mapping** – Identified small area level (wards) poverty with population living below the poverty line. Study suggests 15 wards out of 92 (in 2016) has more than 40% population living below poverty line.

### Green-space Areas

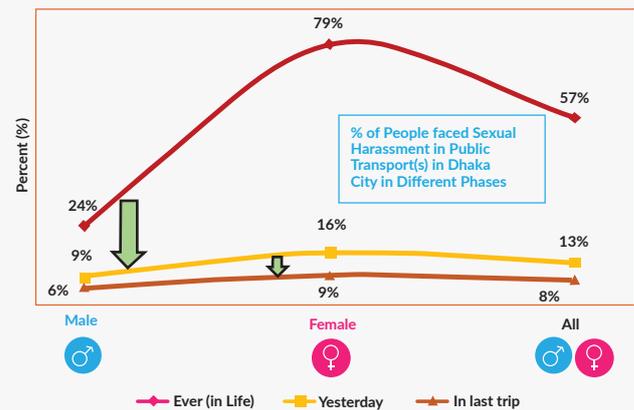


### Waterlogging Zones



### Transportation accessibility

In the long term, 79% of female commuters experience sexual harassment in public transport, compared to 24% of male commuters, highlighting gender disparities in transportation accessibility. However, well-managed transport systems like metro rail show potential for ensuring greater equity in travel compared to traditional public transport in Dhaka.



#### Public Bus

#### Metro Rail



Figure 2 : Level of Satisfaction of Commuting by Modes of Transportation and by Gender

# Selected peer-reviewed publications

## Seven core competencies and conditions for equitable partnerships and power sharing in community-based participatory research

**Authors:** Kim Ozano, Wafa Alam, [Bachera Aktar](#), Linet Okoth, Ivy Chumo, Jessica Amegee Quach, Nelly Muturi, Samuel Saidu, Ibrahim Gandhi, Neele Wiltgen Georgi, Lilian Otiso, Abu Conteh, Sally Theobald, Laura Dean, Rachel Tolhurst, Robinson Karuga, Jiban Karki, Surekha Garimella, Vinodkumar Rao, Anthony Mwanki, [Nazia Islam](#), Sia Morenike Tengbe, Sweta Dash, Prasanna Subramanya Saligram, [Sabina Rashid](#), Rosie Steege

**Published:** 17 November 2024 in **BMJ Global Health**

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2024-015497>

## Improving Accountability for Equitable Health and Well-being in Urban Informal Spaces: Moving from Dominant to Transformative Approaches

**Authors:** ARISE Consortium (BRAC JPGSPH is a member of this consortium)

**Published:** 23 February 2024 in **Progress in Development Studies**

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1177/14649934231225530>

## Worldwide trends in underweight and obesity from 1990 to 2022: a pooled analysis of 3663 population-representative studies with 222 million children, adolescents, and adults

**Authors:** NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC) [[Kaosar Afsana](#), Malay Kanti Mridha and Abu AM Hanif from BRAC JPGSPH]

**Published:** 29 February 2024 in **The Lancet**

**DOI:** [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(23\)02750-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02750-2)

## Distribution and disparities of healthy lifestyles and noncommunicable diseases risk factors between men and women aged 20–59 years in Bangladesh: Evidence from a nationwide survey

**Authors:** [Md. Mokbul Hossain](#), [Abhijeet Roy](#), [Abu Abdullah Mohammad Hanif](#), [Fahmida Akter](#), [Mehedi Hasan](#), [Md. Showkat Ali Khan](#), [Abu Ahmed Shamim](#), [Moyazzam Hossaine](#), [Mohammad Aman Ullah](#), S. M. Mustafizur Rahman, Mofijul Islam Bulbul, Dipak Kumar Mitra, [Malay Kanti Mridha](#)

**Published:** 4 August 2024 in **Chronic Diseases and Transnational Medicine**

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1002/cdt3.145>

## Understanding antibiotic purchasing practices in community pharmacies: A potential driver of emerging antimicrobial resistance

**Authors:** [Abdullah Al Masud](#), [Ramesh Lahiru Walpola](#), [Malabika Sarker](#), [Alamgir Kabir](#), [Muhammad Asaduzzaman](#), [Md Saiful Islam](#), [Ayesha Tasnim Mostafa](#), [Zubair Akhtar](#), [Mrittika Barua](#), [Holly Seale](#)

**Published:** 31 July 2024 in **Exploratory Research in Clinical and Social Pharmacy**

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rcsop.2024.100485>

## Perceptions and attitudes of Rohingya community stakeholders to pregnancy termination services: a qualitative study in camps of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

**Authors:** [Atiya Rahman](#), [Joe Strong](#), [Pragna Paramita Mondal](#), [Audrey Maynard](#), [Tasnima Haque](#), [Ann M. Moore](#), [Kaosar Afsana](#)

**Published:** 4 March 2024 in **Conflict and Health**

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-024-00574-9>

## The digital transformation and the right to health of young adults in Bangladesh and Colombia: A community-engaged Study

**Authors:** Digital Health and Rights Project Consortium [Md. Tanzirul Alam, [Afrida Faiza](#), [Syed Hassan Imtiaz](#), [Sabiha M. Khan](#), [Farzana Misha](#), [Sabina F. Rashid](#) from BRAC JPGSPH]

**Published:** December 2024 in **Health and Human Rights (HHR)**; Vol 26/2, 2024, pp. 45-60

## Choice of primary healthcare providers among population in urban areas of low- and middle-income countries—a protocol for systematic review of literature

**Authors:** [Md. Zahid Hasan](#), [Edward J D Webb](#), [Zahidul Quayyum](#) & [Tim Ensor](#)

**Published:** 22 November 2024 in **Systematic Reviews**

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-024-02714-x>

## Protocol for the Adolescent Menstrual Experiences and Health Cohort (AMEHC) Study in Khulna, Bangladesh: A prospective cohort to quantify the influence of menstrual health on adolescent girls' health and education outcomes.

**Authors:** [Julie Hennegan](#), [Md Tanvir Hasan](#), [Abdul Jabbar](#), [Tasfiyah Jalil](#), [Elissa Kennedy](#), [Erin Hunter](#), [Adrita Kaiser](#), [Sabina Akter](#), [Afreen Zaman](#), [Mahfuj-ur Rahman](#), [Laura Dunstan](#), [Alexandra Head](#), [Nick Scott](#), [Helen Anne Weiss](#), [Thin Mar Win](#), [G J Melendez-Torres](#), [Kyu Kyu Than](#), [Chad L Hughes](#), [Sonia Grover](#), [Mahadi Hasan](#), [Sabina Faiz Rashid](#), and [Peter Azzopardi](#)

**Published:** 10 April 2024 in **BMJ Open**

**DOI:** [10.1136/bmjopen-2023-079451](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2023-079451)

## Delivering non-communicable disease services through primary health care in selected south Asian countries: are health systems prepared?

**Authors:** [Prof Syed Masud Ahmed](#), [Prof Anand Krishnan](#), [Obaida Karim](#), [Prof Kashif Shafique](#), [Nahitun Naher](#), [Sanjida Ahmed Srishti](#), [Aravind Raj](#), [Sana Ahmed](#), [Lal Rawal](#), [Alayne Adams](#)

**Published:** 20 August 2024 in **The Lancet Global Health**

**DOI:** [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(24\)00118-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(24)00118-9)

# Other publications

## BOOK CHAPTERS

### Lockdown Is a Kick to the Stomach and Ego: Narratives of Masculinity and Stress During COVID-19 in Dhaka's Slums

**Authors:** Ishrat Jahan, Sharin Shajahan Naomi, Raafat Hassan, Israr Hasan & Sabina Faiz Rashid

**Published:** 15 July 2024 in **Handbook of Sex, Gender and Health**

**DOI:** [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-9265-0\\_5-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-9265-0_5-1)

### Health system resilience and COVID-19 - reflections from South Asia

**Authors:** Malabika Sarker, Syeda Tahmina Ahmed, Mrityika Barua, and Syed Masud Ahmed

**Published:** 12 September 2024 in **Handbook of Health System Resilience**

**Doi:** <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781803925936.00039>

## REPORTS

### Connecting Climate Minds: Central and Southern Asia – Research and Action Agenda

**Authors:** Ishrat Jahan, Sharin Shajahan Naomi, Raafat Hassan, Israr Hasan & Sabina Faiz Rashid

**Published:** 15 July 2024 in **Handbook of Sex, Gender and Health**

**DOI:** [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-9265-0\\_5-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-9265-0_5-1)

## POLICY BRIEF

### New Challenges for the 21st Century: Do NGOs in the Global South have a future?

**Authors:** Mushtaque Chowdhury, Emmanuel Gyasi, Raymond Offenheiser

[https://curate.nd.edu/articles/report/New\\_Challenges\\_for\\_the\\_21st\\_Century\\_Do\\_NGOs\\_in\\_the\\_Global\\_South\\_have\\_a\\_future\\_/26097484/1](https://curate.nd.edu/articles/report/New_Challenges_for_the_21st_Century_Do_NGOs_in_the_Global_South_have_a_future_/26097484/1)

# Conferences, abstract submissions presentation updates, seminars

### Session: Recognising Vulnerabilities: Climate-Related Health Impacts on Communities and Health Systems

**Chair:** Professor Dr Sabina Faiz Rashid

**Conference:** Global Symposium on Health Systems Research 2024 (HSR2024)

### Hybrid Governance of Health Service Delivery in Informal Urban Settlements in Dhaka City, Bangladesh: Systems, Actors, and Challenges

**Presenter:** Bachera Aktar

**Conference:** Global Symposium on Health Systems Research 2024 (HSR2024)

### Dietary Shifts and Influencing Factors During Ramadan Fasting Among University Students in Bangladesh

**Presenter:** Dr. Lamisa Rahman

**Conference:** "Delivering for Nutrition in South Asia: Connecting the Dots Across Systems" conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka

### Development of Integrated Nutrition Messages for Schools in Bangladesh

**Author:** Saira Parveen Jolly

**Conference:** Regional Consultation Meeting on Accelerating Transformation Process for Sustainable and Nutrition-Sensitive Food Systems in South Asia

### Impact of Salinity On Menstrual Health Of Girls And Women Of Reproductive Age In Two Coastal Regions Of Bangladesh

**Authors:** Md Jahedul Islam, Mohammad Abdul Mannan, Shahrear Alam, Nabila Purno, Animesh Biswas, Abu Sayed Hasan, Vibhavendra S Raghuvanshi, Mrityika Barua

**Conference:** Global Conference on Research in Public Health (GCPH 2025) in Sri Lanka

### Indigenous Women's Struggles in the Evolving Tourism Scene and Changing Landscape of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

**Authors:** Farhana Alam, Md. Sajid Sultan Haque and Dhanista Chakma

**Accepted:** Urban South Asia; Past, Present and Future, to be published by Springer - Nature.

### Health Vulnerability from Heat Waves, Adaptation, and Solutions in Dhaka City Using Validation through Ground Truthing of Satellite Imageries and Qualitative Insights

**Authors:** Zahidul Quayyum, Riaz Hossain Khan, Anisur Rahman Bayazid, Baby Naznin

**Accepted:** (1) Global Symposium on Health Systems Research 2024 (HSR2024); (2) International Conference for Urban Health (ICUH) 2024

# ADVOCACY



The School is dedicated to driving meaningful change in public health at national, regional, and global levels by conducting rigorous research, generating evidence, and advocating for policy and practice transformation to enhance well-being for all. We actively leverage our platform for advocacy, sharing our findings through conferences, seminars, webinars, workshops, exhibitions, media engagement, and dissemination efforts.

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**465** Active engagements with stakeholders since inception

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**62** Active engagements with stakeholders in 2024

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**70** Webinars since 2020

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**320** News articles and blogs published since 2020

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# Selected advocacy updates



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The School co-hosted the EquiCity 2024: Advancing Urban Health through Knowledge Exchange from the Global South conference in Kathmandu, Nepal with ISUH, ARISE consortium, and PHASE Nepal, fostering dialogue on urban health and equity.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

BRAC JPGSPH co-hosted the "Delivering for Nutrition in South Asia: Connecting the Dots Across Systems" conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, uniting regional experts to advance nutrition research and policy. School researchers contributed as session chairs and presenters.



WORKSHOP

BRAC JPGSPH Research Fellow Wafa Alam joined global leaders from Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, and India at the Connecting Climate Minds Global Research and Action Agenda Summit in Barbados, driving impactful climate action and shaping future research priorities.



CONSORTIUM MEETING

A team of BRAC JPGSPH researchers participated in a four-day consortium meeting for the Strengthening Health Systems by Improving Community Health Workers' Mental Wellbeing and Empowerment (SHINE) project in Nairobi, Kenya, hosted by LVCT Health (Kenya), where they shared experiences and insights.



COLLABORATION

The World Bank, in collaboration with BRAC JPGSPH, unveiled the "World Bank Future of Health Systems Program Bangladesh: Reimagining Primary Health Care for a Sustainable Future" in Dhaka, Bangladesh



DISSEMINATION

Findings of the extensive five-year study- Pathways to Equitable Healthy City, funded by the Wellcome Trust, were disseminated in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The event brought together key stakeholders from Dhaka City Corporations, RAJUK, BRAC, the University of Dhaka, East West University, BIDS, and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to discuss evidence-based solutions for a healthier, more equitable Dhaka.



WORKSHOP

BRAC JPGSPH, in partnership with the Non-Communicable Disease Control (NCDC) programme, DGHS, and BRAC Health Programme (BHP), convened a national consultative workshop in April 2024 in Dhaka under the SHINE project, advancing efforts to strengthen health systems by prioritizing community health workers' mental well-being and empowerment.



WORKSHOP

BRAC JPGSPH, as the coordinating institute of the EU Erasmus+ funded ACCESS4ALL project, led the first reflexive workshop at Independent University Bangladesh (IUB), uniting students from diverse disciplines to map essential skills for tackling climate change through Southern-led, locally-driven solutions.



ROUNDTABLE

A roundtable, organized by BYLC and The Daily Star, was held under the Empowered Youth Labor Force (EYLF) project, a collaboration including BRAC JPGSPH, emphasizing workplace safety and gender inclusivity.

# Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW) Updates

Established in 2006, Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW) is a multi-stakeholder civil society advocacy and monitoring network dedicated to improving the health system in Bangladesh through critical reviews

of policies and programmes and recommendations of appropriate actions for change. BRAC JPGSPH has been serving as BHW's secretariat since its inception.

## New funding secured for health initiatives

Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW) received 65 million BDT from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to implement the second phase of the project "Institutionalizing Accountability in Health Systems to Improve Access to Services." Additionally, BHW secured 30 million BDT from SIDA for the project "Financial Support for Injured Individuals from the Quota Movement."



## Biennial Report 2023-24 Launch

BHW unveiled its ninth biennial report, "State of Professional Public Health Education in Bangladesh," at BRAC Tower. The event highlighted key challenges and opportunities in public health education. Dr. Md. Sarwar Bari, Secretary of the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division, was the chief guest, with Miranda Beckman, Deputy Office Director at USAID, as the special guest.



## Emergency response protocol for road crash victims

BHW, in collaboration with BSMMU and CIPRB, developed an emergency response protocol to address gaps in Bangladesh's post-crash care system. The initiative, aligned with a High Court order, ensures rapid and safe transport of road crash victims within the critical 'Golden Hour.' The protocol has been endorsed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

## Investigative health reporting training for journalists

BHW trained 40 district correspondents from eight regions at BRAC Learning Centre on October 30-31 and November 20-21, 2024. The sessions, led by academicians, public health experts, and senior journalists, strengthened investigative reporting skills in health. As a result, participants published 17 investigative reports highlighting local health challenges.

## Youth capacity building in eight districts

BHW conducted capacity-building training for Youth Forum members across its eight Regional Chapters, focusing on the Right to Information Act (RTI) 2009 and Digital Media Usage. The sessions empowered youth with digital advocacy skills and responsible social media practices.



## Multi-stakeholder meetings to strengthen health governance

In 2024, 10 multi-stakeholder meetings were held at district and upazila health facilities. These forums enabled government representatives to address health facility-related issues and explore solutions in collaboration with community stakeholders.



## Strengthening Regional Chapters through focal training

A two-day workshop (December 21-22, 2024) at BRAC Learning Centre, Dhaka, gathered focal and co-focal persons from BHW's host organizations.

The workshop focused on strengthening Regional Chapters as civic platforms, sharing experiences, and drafting a sustainability plan while reviewing the existing operational manual.



**BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health  
BRAC University**

Floor 10-13, BRAC Tower  
65 Mohakhali, Bir Uttom A K Khandakar Road  
Dhaka - 1212, Bangladesh, Telephone: +880-2-48812213-18  
Email: [jpgsph.comms@bracu.ac.bd](mailto:jpgsph.comms@bracu.ac.bd)

[www.bracjpgsph.org](http://www.bracjpgsph.org)



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