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International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh: Implementation Research on Health, Nutrition, and Population Services

An award was made in March 2011 to the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) to conduct implementation research that will inform equitable, sustainable, high-quality health, nutrition, and population services in Bangladesh. The purpose of the research is to identify programmatic gaps in the areas of maternal health, newborn/child health, nutrition, population/family planning/reproductive health, and tuberculosis, and develop interventions to address these gaps.

Background

Bangladesh, which is one of the poorest countries in the world, has made remarkable gains in health and health equity over the past 40 years. The country has been especially successful in improving the health and development of poor women. This success is largely due to investments in micro-credit, education, and continued commitment to developing more effective health interventions and delivery systems. However, in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals, the country must scale-up and build upon their successes, especially in the areas of maternal health, newborn and child health, nutrition and food security, population and family planning, and tuberculosis.



Research Overview

ICDDR,B's research will be structured based on TRAction's Framework for Implementation Research, which involves a four-step process: 1) describe the current situation, 2) design interventions to improve implementation, 3) deliver the interventions/programs, and 4) evaluate the intervention.

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Translating Research into Action, TRAction, is funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under cooperative agreement number GHS-A-00-09-00015-00. The project team includes prime recipient, University Research Co., LLC (URC), Harvard University School of Public Health (HSPH), and sub-recipient research organizations. The ICDDR,B sub-award is funded under Contract No. FY11-G04-6990 beginning March 31, 2011. The USAID contacts for this research are Neal Brandes, MPH, and Esther Lwanga, MPH.

This research process will be followed for each of the following five technical areas.

Maternal Health

ICDDR,B will support implementation research to identify policy and programmatic issues with current maternal health interventions and develop strategies for increasing access, utilization, quality, and impact for these services. The research will test community and facility-based interventions for improving the prevention and treatment of pre-eclampsia, eclampsia, and post-partum hemorrhage, in addition to increasing access to emergency obstetric care and other ante-partum and post-partum services in underserved and hard-to-reach populations.

Newborn and Child Health

This research seeks to improve the package of low-cost, effective child survival interventions to reduce under-five child mortality, especially neonatal mortality, which represents more than half of all under-five child deaths. The research studies will inform the development of effective community-based approaches for improving and expanding coverage of essential newborn care, including proper wrapping and drying of newborns, clean cord care, immediate and exclusive breastfeeding, and management of childhood illnesses such as pneumonia and infections.

Nutrition

TRAction and ICDDR,B will support research on reducing the high prevalence of malnutrition among children and pregnant women in Bangladesh. The research will take a multi-sectoral approach by mainstreaming nutrition programming into other existing health and food security interventions. Priority will be given to research on strategies for reducing hunger and micronutrient deficiencies among vulnerable populations, and on appropriate policy changes and evidence-based planning.

Family Planning

ICDDR,B FP research aims to develop innovative approaches for addressing the major population and family planning issues in Bangladesh. Priority will be given to research on programs to delay age at marriage, delay

early pregnancy, and improve access to FP services for young married couples. Some of the research will focus on increasing the availability of long-acting and permanent birth control methods, engaging men in FP, and involving community leaders to create an enabling environment for promoting FP services.

Tuberculosis (TB)

This research aims to improve Bangladesh's TB control initiatives, with the goal of achieving universal and early access to TB services by all. The studies will inform strategies and programs to effectively engage the private sector in improving TB case detection in urban areas, scaling-up diagnosis and management of childhood TB, and introducing and operationalizing state-of-the-art technology (i.e. GeneXpert) for diagnosing MDR-TB.

The Principal Investigator for this research is Abbas Bhuiya, PhD, Deputy Executive Director of ICDDR,B and Head of the Social and Behavioural Science Unit and the Poverty and Health Programme.

TRAction Project Overview

The Translating Research into Action (TRAction) Project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), funds studies to develop, test, and compare approaches to more effectively deliver health interventions, increase utilization, achieve coverage, and scale-up evidence-based interventions for priority health problems. Through implementation research, the TRAction Project addresses “know-do” gaps, or delays between discovery of effective ways to combat the causes of poor health and the application of these proven interventions on a wide scale. TRAction research aims to close these “know-do” gaps so that each country's Millennium Development Health Goals can be met in the targeted timeframes. TRAction emphasizes local ownership and partnerships in order to scale up equitable and sustainable efforts to “do what works.”

For more information on the TRAction Project:

301-941-8483 • tracinfo@urc-chs.com • www.tractionproject.org