



# BIDS

# NEWSLETTER

Vol. 10 Issue 1 June 2022

## BIDS Launched Master's in Development Economics (MDE) Program

Given the long tradition of excellence in research, the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) launched an academic program, the Master's in Development Economics (MDE). It is being run under the BIDS Graduate School of Economics (BGSE), affiliated with the University of Dhaka. Classes for the first session started on 18 April 2022. The MDE is a one-year, full-time Master's degree program with a strong emphasis on the application of contemporary economic theory to economic development and policy. This degree will be conferred by the University of Dhaka. The MDE is a 36-credit program comprising 10 courses (30 credits) and a dissertation (6 credits). This program will cover three semesters and be completed in one year. Each semester will be administered over 16 weeks using the most up-to-date pedagogical methods, combining lectures, student-led group discussions, seminars, term papers, etc. This MDE is a program fully funded by the government of Bangladesh, initiated for the first 03 years.



## BIDS Board Meeting Held

The BIDS Board convened its 110th meeting on 19 January 2022 and its 111th meeting on 12 June 2022, both were held via an online platform. Mr. M. A. Mannan, MP, Chairman, BIDS Board and the Honourable Minister for Planning, presided over the meetings. The Board emphasised the importance of conducting quality research on important issues facing the country and undertaking effective measures for disseminating research outcomes to the policymakers and other stakeholders.



## From the Editor's Desk

*It seems the world has been overthrown by the ruling grip of laissez-faire economics due to the continuation of the unprecedented challenges posed by the multi-crises globally. These phenomena got started with the cycles of the pandemic and were followed by the economic shocks of the Russia-Ukraine war, including sanctions that might end up with the biggest price shocks in 50 years in the global arena, as reported. As the premium public research institute, BIDS took up research initiatives in key areas of development dimensions, focusing on the current and future research needs aligning with the international and regional development agenda. Our current research projects thus prioritised the key areas of top development agendas: climate change, public health, and human capital development, with further reflections on numerous socio-economic and socio-demographic aspects of economic development and development studies. The first half of 2022 fulfills several of these issues by completing 7 studies with 5 ongoing ones.*

*This issue of the BIDS newsletter highlights two studies completed during the first half of the year 2022. The first one titled 'End-line Survey of Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO)-3rd Cycle.' The study observed higher yearly per capita income of the target beneficiaries with a substantial difference in terms of capital accumulation. The study concluded that escaping extreme poverty over a short period is not only possible but also desirable, given the alternative scenario of the largely spoon-feeding nature of the current social protection projects implemented over a long period. The second study titled 'Labor Market Study for Skills for Employment Investment Project', analysed labour supply and demand over the 10-year period (2020-2030) and explored sector priorities, assessed skills gap by sector, and examined the sector-wise occupational composition of employment (including gender) and occupation-wise training requirement by sector and trade in order to assist the government and the private industry to better plan the capacity and quality of skills training systems according to the evolving skills/trade/market demands from rapidly growing industry sectors.*

*BIDS continues to play its strong role in public outreach activities through several events. The leading think tank kicked off its external engagement with the Public Lecture delivered by Mr Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh, on the 'Schematic View of Bangladesh Constitution.'*

In collaboration with the Centre for Development and Employment Research (CDER) and University Press Limited (UPL), the Institute organised the launching event of the book “Bangladesher Orthanaitik Unnayaner Gatidhara: Subarnajayantite Firay Dekha” on the 6th June 2022. In addition, a total of nine seminars and one technical workshop have been organised during this time period covering a wide range of issues.

BIDS researchers showcased their research strength and academic endeavours through 26 publications throughout this period. Among them, 18 were published in peer-reviewed national and international journals, and edited

books. In particular, *Global Pandemic and Human Security: Technology and Development Perspective* (Springer), *Pandemic Risk, Response and Resilience* (Elsevier), *Caste, COVID-19 and Inequalities of Care* (Springer), *PLOS ONE*, *The Bangladesh Development Studies and Bangladesh Unnayan Samikkhya*. With the upsurge of the hybrid platform and gradual improvement in the post-pandemic networking and research environment, BIDS researchers further attended, participated and presented papers in an overwhelming number of 48 seminars, conferences, training and workshops at home and abroad.

## Publications in Peer-reviewed Journals by BIDS Researchers

- Sen, B.** (2022). Bangabandhu’s democratic socialism: Some reflections. In *Proceedings of the international conference on fifty years journey of Bangladesh genocide, nation-state and Bangabandhu’s cherished Bangladesh* (Edited by Muntasir Mamun). Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum Trust, Khulna.
- Hossain, M.** (with Chowdhury, T. T.). COVID-19, fintech and the recovery of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises: Evidence from Bangladesh. In *Fintech and COVID-19: Impacts, challenges and priorities for Asia* (co-edited by J. Beirne (ADB), J. Villafuerte (ADB), & Raghavendra Rau (CCAF), ADBI, Tokyo).
- Asian Bank Development Institute.** (2022). *COVID-19, fintech and the recovery of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises: Evidence from Bangladesh* (Working paper no. 1305) Tokyo: **Hossain, M.** (with Chowdhury, T. T.).
- Begum, A.** (2022). Inequality in access to healthcare for persons with disabilities during COVID-19: An illustration from Bangladesh. In *Caste, COVID-19, and Inequalities of Care* (pp. 195-214). Singapore: Springer.
- Iqbal, K.** (with Farook, S., Mustafa, S. & Haque, C.E.) (2022). Changes in consumption and demand for food in Bangladesh: Implications for health and NCD risks. In *Red alert! Non-communicable disease burden in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: The University Press Limited.
- Chowdhury, S. M. Z. I.** (with Sarker, A. R., Ali, S. M. Z., Ahmed, M., & Ali, N.) (2022). Out-of-pocket payment for healthcare among urban citizens in Dhaka, Bangladesh. *PLOS ONE*, 17(1).
- Bhuyan, M. H. R.** (Accepted 2021). Casualisation of labour as coping with cyclone Aila: Peasant’s perception in the Sundarbans Area of Bangladesh. *The Bangladesh Development Studies*, 44(1&2).
- Karim, A.** (with DeWit, A., Sugiyama, S., & Shaw, R.) (2022). COVID-19 and fiscal stimulus in South Asia: Implications for resilience and sustainable development. In I. Pal and R. Shaw (Eds), *Pandemic Risk, Response and Resilience* (pp. 13-28). Elsevier.
- Karim, A.** (with DeWit, A. and Shaw, R.) (2022). Fiscal policies and post COVID-19 development challenges: An overview. In R. Shaw and A. Gurtoo (Eds), *Global Pandemic and Human Security: Technology and Development Perspective* (pp. 61-82). Springer Nature.
- Sarker, A. R.** (with Hossain, Z.) (2022). The progress of severe, moderate and global acute malnutrition in Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Development Studies*, 44(1&2).
- Sarker, A. R.** (with Ali, S. Z., Ahmed, M., & Ali, N.) (2022). Out-of-pocket payment for healthcare among urban citizens in Dhaka, Bangladesh. *PLOS ONE*, 17(1):e0262900. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0262900
- Sarker, A. R.** (with শরীফ ইরফাত জেব্বীন, জাকির হোসেন ২০২২). বাংলাদেশে শিশু স্কুলতার ব্যাপকতা এবং এর প্রভাবকসমূহ: বাংলাদেশ জনমিতিক ও স্বাস্থ্যজরিপ ২০১৭-১৮ বিশ্লেষণ। বাংলাদেশ উন্নয়ন সমীক্ষা (Accepted)।
- Ahmed, B. N.** (2022). *Does income bring happiness? An empirical analysis using pseudo-panel data from Bangladesh*, (Research Report No. 191). Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.
- Mozumder, M. G. N.** (2022). Living-dead: The transformative power of educating the body. *Society*. <https://ink.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12115-022-0066>
- Khanam, T. S.** (2021). Agricultural information through mobile phone: Evidence on farm household welfare in Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Development Studies*, 44 (1&2). (Accepted)
- Parvin, M.** (2022). *An Impact Analysis of Vulnerable Group Feeding Program (VGF) in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies. (Forthcoming Research Report)
- Chowdhury, T. T.** (with Murshid, K.A.S.) (2020). Does fuel pricing affect males and females differently? Evidence from kerosene using households in rural Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Development Studies*, 43(3&4). (came into the issue during this period)
- Shashi, N. A.** (with Iqbal, K., Pabon, M.N.F., & Haque, R.) (2022). Local nonfarm opportunities and migration decisions: Evidence from Bangladesh. Forthcoming.

**Shashi, N. A.** (with Abdullah, S. M. & Haque, R.). Estimating the magnitude of illicit cigarette sold as retail in Bangladesh: Findings from retail pack survey. Forthcoming.

**Rahman, M. A.** (with Dhira, T. A., Sarker, A.R., & Mehareen, J.) (2022). Validity and reliability of the patient health questionnaire scale (PHQ-9) among university students of Bangladesh. *PLOS ONE* 17(6): e0269634. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0269634>

**Op-Eds:**

**Iqbal, K.** (17 April 2022). Current price hike: Syndicate, rationality and price expectation. *The Daily Star*.

**Iqbal, K.** (27 February 2022). Scale effect of the domestic market, tipping point and paths of industrialization. *The Daily Star*.

**Iqbal, K.** (9 January 2022). Beyond RMG: Paths to industrialization. *The Daily Star*.

**Chowdhury S. M. Z. I.** (15 February 2022). Creating New Opportunities. *ICE Business Times*.

**Rahman, M. A.** (17 January 2022). Is our generation ready for future challenges? *The Daily Star*.

**Rahman, M. A.** (22 March 2022). Morality in the age of social media. *The Daily Star*.

**Rahman, M. A.** (19 April 2022). Ramadan, consumers and just pricing. *The Daily Star*.

**Rahman, M. A.** (27 April 2022). Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka: A Comparative Anatomy. *The Daily Star*.

**Study Highlights**

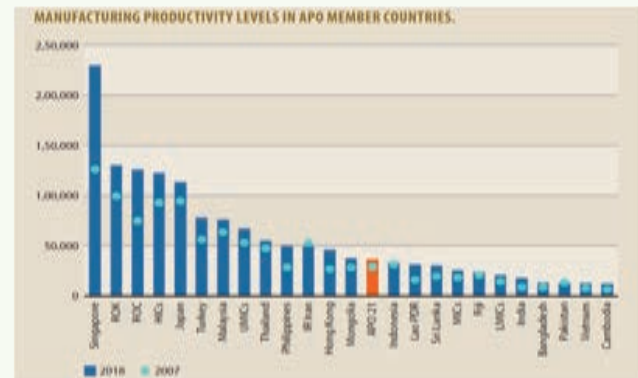
**Labour Market Studies for SEIP on Skill Demand, Supply and Mismatch**

**Study Director:** *Dr. Kazi Iqbal*

Bangladesh made a remarkable success in achieving a steady and persistent acceleration of growth over the last few decades, with about a one percentage point increase in every decade since the 1980s. Average real GDP growth in the last five years has been above 6.5 per cent, which is much higher than the average growth rate of all developing countries (4.7 per cent). Recently, at the beginning of FY2015-16, per capita income of Bangladesh crossed the threshold of US\$ 1,046 to become a lower-middle income country. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), per capita income stood at US\$ 1,751 in FY2017-18. The economy now aspires to attain a high middle-income status by 2030, and a developed country status by 2041. It is argued that the contribution of productivity in the production process has been very low in Bangladesh. Almost 99 per cent of the growth has been contributed by the accumulation of factors. To this end, in addition to factor accumulation (capital and labour), the economy requires upgrading the skill base of the labour force to enhance productivity.

Using data obtained from two standardised questionnaire surveys- one for enterprises and the other for employees and labour force surveys, this study analyses labour supply and demand over the next 10-year period (2020-2030) to assist the government and the private industry in better planning the capacity and quality of skills training systems in line with the evolving skills/trade/market demands from rapidly growing industries sector. Moreover, it determines sector priorities, assesses skills gap by sector, analyses the sector-wise occupational composition of employment (including gender composition of employment), and determines occupation-wise training requirements by sector and trade.

Skill mismatch, in all of its forms, is a major source of labour underutilisation. In developing countries, the first-order problem is a skill shortage and skill gap – there are not enough skilled workers available, and if available, they do not possess the required level of skill. Growth tends to slow down unless labour productivity is enhanced. The level of skills and productivity is low in Bangladesh. In Asia, Bangladesh ranks the lowest in terms of labour productivity..



The productivity of labour can be enhanced through education and skill development. Changes in the quality of the employed labour force in terms of educational attainment and skill endowments are important since Bangladesh aims to raise competitiveness through education and skill development. The share of the labour force without education has declined substantially.

Skill acquisition by workers in broad economic sectors is not satisfactory. Data on the share of workers with training by broad sectors reveal that the share of workers with training is much higher in education and health; electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; water supply; skilled service; and sewerage waste management and remediation. On the other hand, the share of workers with training is the lowest in mining and quarrying, followed by agriculture, forestry and fishing, accommodation and food service activities, construction, and transportation and storage.

**Table: Share of workers with training by broad sectors (received any training in last 12 months)**

Sectors	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.36	0.37	0.37
Mining and quarrying	0.26	0	0.25
Manufacturing	1.76	0.45	1.33
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	6.04	14.9	6.8
Water supply, sewerage waste management and remediation	4.52	6.49	5.21
Construction	0.48	0.19	0.45
Wholesale and retail trade, repair trade, Repair of motor vehicles	0.92	0.92	0.92
Transportation and storage	0.44	1.06	0.47
Accommodation and food service activities	0.49	0.15	0.43
Skilled Service	5.97	10.67	6.56
Education and Health	8.47	12.23	10.03
Other Sectors	4.53	2.64	3.65

Source: LFS 2016-17.

**Table: Share of workers with training in 10 subsectors (Received training in last 12 months)**

Subsector	Male	Female	Total
Agro-processing	2.17	0.39	1.76
Health Care	12.55	10.84	11.93
Hospitality and Tourism	4.42	0	2.5
RMG and Textile	1.47	0.39	0.99
Constructions	0.48	0.19	0.45
Leather	1.01	0.97	1
Light Engineering	1.73	2.36	1.78
IT	10.73	21.77	11.73
Shipbuilding	0.63	0	0.62
Electronics	5	6.15	5.17
Total	1.29	1.48	1.35

Source: LFS 2016-17.

The training need projections have been based on the labour market skill gap analysis of the ten selected sectors. Data on the share of trained workers show that the incidence of training in the ten sectors is lower than the national average. The share of trained workers is high in health care, IT, electronics, hospitality and tourism. The share of trained workers is the lowest in construction, followed by shipbuilding, RMG, textile, and leather. Shares of female workers with training are high in IT, health care, electronics, and light engineering, and the lowest in hospitality, and shipbuilding, followed by construction, RMG and textile, and agro-processing. Nonetheless, in the sectors where women's share of employment is high, namely RMG and textile, the share of trained workers is much lower among women than men. Therefore, a predominantly larger share of the projected training needed in these sectors is targeted at women. If such training could be conducted, female workers would experience upward mobility with higher productivity and higher wages, which, in turn, would encourage the growth of women's labour force participation rate.

The present analysis shows that the skill gap increases with the level of technological sophistication of sectors (e.g., construction, light engineering, electronics, agro-food processing, RMG, ICT, shipbuilding, and electronics (large)). The skill gap is high in construction, light engineering, and electronics for managers, professionals,

technicians, sales & clerks, and craftsmen. In the RMG sector, still a substantial skill gap exists. The skill gap is lower for managers (both male and female). The findings also show that female workers are more proficient than male workers in female-dominant industries (e.g., RMG). In the ICT sector, the skill gap is higher at the senior level than at the entry-level. Entry-level professionals are not upgrading to the desired level.

Findings of existing studies indicate the presence of a skill shortage in Bangladesh. In case of skill shortage, collar jobs (managers and professionals) are harder to fill occupations in the agro-processing, light engineering, and construction sectors. In these sectors, more than one month is needed to fill up current vacancies. The study found that in the light engineering, agro-food processing, and construction sector, the ratio of under-education/qualification is higher for low-level technical jobs. On the other hand, over-schooling/over-education is acute in large, technologically sophisticated industries, such as electrical and electronics (large firms) and low in small firms (electrical and electronics). Large firms generally get workers with more education than they want. In light engineering, leather and leather goods, and electronics (small) sectors, shares of no preferences for field of education are higher for blue collar jobs. According to study findings, professionals, general technicians, and specific machine operators are in high demand. Future labour and skill demand is massive in these sectors. The existing training set up is severely inadequate to meet the large demand. In general, the incidence of training is low, and this training is mostly not arranged by the employers. The share of workers who attended vocational training is only 8.28 per cent in the case of light engineering, but employers arrange only 6.7 per cent of training. The shipbuilding sector is characterised by a low incidence of training as well as a short duration of training (less than one week: 72.4 per cent, 4-6 months: 1.72 per cent). Only the construction sector is exceptional, where the share of workers with training is much higher.

Evidence of skill mismatch often discourages prospective labour force from joining skill training. The situation is expected to change with the dynamic changes in the economy: a) attainment of general education will rise and a larger share of young persons will have SSC and above level education, which will make them easily trainable; b) better job availability for the trained person, which will encourage young persons to enter training programs. Both direct and indirect evidence highlights skill shortage as a constraint to growth. The government and private sectors should take measures in this direction. The study suggests a broader definition of skill is required and a clear understanding of how skills form, adopting a sector-wide approach for secondary and TVET education, and ensuring social recognition for vocational education.

Moreover, measures like enhancing capacity utilisation of existing training capacity, making training relevant, exploring expansion of training for specific industries with tie-ups with the technical college and universities, and encouraging the private sector to come up with ambitious and relevant training programs are essential.

The list of the macro and micro level studies is given below:

**Study 1:** Labour Market and Skill Gap in Bangladesh: Macro Level Analysis;

**Study 2:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for Readymade Garments Sector in Bangladesh;

**Study 3:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for the Construction Sector of Bangladesh;

**Study 4:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for the Light Engineering Sector in Bangladesh;

**Study 5:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for the ICT Sector in Bangladesh;

**Study 6:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for the Shipbuilding Sector in Bangladesh;

**Study 7:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for the Leather Goods Sector in Bangladesh;

**Study 8:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis of Hospitality and Tourism Sector in Bangladesh;

**Study 9:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis: Health Care (Nursing and Health Technician);

**Study 10:** Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis: Agro-Food Processing Sector in Bangladesh

#### **End-line Survey of Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO) - 3rd Cycle**

**Study Team:** *Binayak Sen, Abdur Razzaque Sarker, Tanveer Mahmood, Sharif Irfat Zabeen, and Quazi Towfiqul Islam*

This study builds on the project “SWAPNO” based on UNDP’s experience with the Rural Employment Opportunities for Public Assets (REOPA) project intervention, which was implemented by the Local Government Division (LGD) of MoLGRD&C from 2007 to 2011. Strengthening Women’s Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO) is a transfer-based poverty graduation project aimed at rural ultra-poor women who are divorced, widowed, abandoned or left with disabled husbands. The main objective of the present study is to assess the impact of the project SWAPNO 3rd cycle on beneficiaries’ wellbeing, including income, expenditure and asset accumulation, through rigorous methods of project evaluation. The other likely effects of the project on employment, health status, nutrition, food security, education, aspiration (subjective well-being), women’s empowerment and COVID-19 coping strategies are also captured.

The study focuses on the beneficiaries of the SWAPNO 3rd cycle (2020-21), who just completed the 2020-21 cycle, to measure the effects of the project. The baseline study of SWAPNO 3rd cycle (2020-21) beneficiaries were conducted in February 2020 on 884 households, including 442 projects and 442 control households. The end-line survey was conducted in December 2021 on the same set of households, with a sample size of 447 beneficiary households and 437 control households due to attrition.

The design features of the SWAPNO project are as follows. The beneficiaries get sizable benefits compared with many other conventional social protection projects. During the 15-month duration of the SWAPNO project, beneficiaries get several kinds of benefits. They work from 8 am to 2 pm for 24 days per month; they have a 150 BDT daily wage income; the actual per day wage is 200 BDT; 50 BDT is the compulsory savings which they can return after completion of the project. After completion of the project, beneficiaries get back the compulsory savings as an aggregate amount, around 18,500 BDT. Altogether, each SWAPNO beneficiary has a transfer of BDT 72,000 over a cycle of 15 months. Along with the wage employment and compulsory savings schemes, the SWAPNO project enables its beneficiaries to participate in the Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA).

Five main conclusions emerged from this study. i) The evaluation study observed that SWAPNO beneficiaries have, on average, 131.13 per cent higher yearly per capita income than their control counterparts. ii) The difference in respect of per capita consumption expenditure is understandably less (because of the heightened emphasis on savings in beneficiary households) but still considerable. According to the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) methods, SWAPNO beneficiaries have, on average, 42.24 per cent higher per capita consumption expenditure than the control group. iii) The most striking difference is observed in terms of capital accumulation. The SWAPNO beneficiary group has 1.4 times higher non-land assets than the control group. The Difference-in-Difference (DID) in income, spending, and asset between SWAPNO beneficiary and control households show that, on average, current recipient households, respectively, had BDT 610 more per capita monthly income, BDT 614 more per capita monthly expenditure, and BDT 8,070 more per capita asset value than control households. Control households fared marginally better in two of the three variables during the baseline survey period. iv) Among the beneficiary households, 53 per cent have a median or above dietary diversity, compared around 31 per cent for the control households, indicating significantly higher dietary diversity for SWAPNO beneficiary households. Around 20 per cent of the beneficiary households reported food surplus, while only 4.82 per cent of the control households mentioned that they had surplus food in their house. They also tend to be more ambitious, marked with higher aspirations for themselves (20.22 per cent as against 6.03 per cent) and for their children (45.70 per cent vs. 31.87 per cent). v) The study found that the prevalence of underweight children is comparatively lower in the SWAPNO beneficiary group (2.23 per cent as against 5.15 per cent) than in the children from control households. The same trends emerge in the case of stunted children (3.57 per cent vs. 7.38 per cent), which has been found to keep aligned with the extremely lower malnutrition status in terms of stunting and wasting than national estimation according to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS). The evaluation

study documented those women having decision-making power in terms of income raising activity new earn rising activity (91.05 per cent vs. 75.69 per cent), and women's participation in meetings and committees (60 per cent vs. 21 per cent) are significantly higher for SWAPNO beneficiary households than that of the control households.

To summarise, women from the beneficiary households have more physical mobility and greater decision-making power than the control households. The project also significantly impacts its beneficiary during the COVID pandemic era. The study observed the SWAPNO

beneficiary households faced fewer crises than the control households (19 per cent vs. 29 per cent) during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, almost 77 per cent of the control groups reported they had eaten less food than they needed; it was only 45 per cent for the SWAPNO beneficiary, which indicates that SWAPNO intervention tackled the food security issues in some manner. The overarching message of the study is that escaping extreme poverty over a short period is not only possible but also desirable, given the alternative scenario of the largely spoon-feeding nature of the current social protection projects implemented over a longer period.

## Completed Studies

### **Covid-19 Vaccine Delivery Barriers in Lower-middle income Countries: National Stakeholder Views on Challenges, Barriers, and Potential Solutions**

**Study Director:** *Abdur Razzaque Sarker*

This study explores potential barriers that will arise during the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in lower-middle-income countries and how to overcome them. Sixteen semi-structure interviews were conducted with national-level stakeholders from Ghana and Bangladesh (eight in each country). Stakeholders included policymakers and immunization programme experts. Data were analysed using a Framework Analysis technique. Stakeholders believed their country could use existing EPI structures for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout despite existing challenges with the EPI and despite its focus on childhood immunisation rather than vaccinating the entire population over a short period of time. Stakeholders suggested increasing confidence in the vaccine through community influencers and by utilising local government-accredited institutions such as the Drug Authorities for vaccine approval. Additional strategies they discussed included training more health providers and recruiting volunteers to increase vaccination speed, expanding government budgets for COVID-19 vaccine purchase and delivery, and exploring other financing opportunities to address in-country vaccine shortages. Stakeholders also believed that LMICs may encounter challenges complying with priority lists. Our findings suggest that COVID-19 vaccination is different from previous vaccination programmes, and therefore, policymakers have to expand the EPI structure and also take a systematic and collaborative approach to plan and effectively rollout the vaccines.

### **Aspirational Momentum: The Development Story of Bangladesh**

**Study Team:** *Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury and Mahir A. Rahman*

This paper argues that the exemplary development path of Bangladesh can be explained by focusing on family at the core of decision-making. Families decide on future goals (aspirations) determined by their collective resources, tangible and intangible. Once family-level resource endowments increase, new opportunities open up that would enhance the life-cycle- intergenerational income and welfare of the family. Measures that reduce uncertainties (subjective or objective) and increase future payoffs will

reinforce the process of change. The payoffs are also enhanced by access to information on peer-level success, reducing information asymmetry and thus motivating the family towards the new set of goals and momentum in aspiration builds up recursively. The sequence of change is like an algorithmic process which is termed as Aspirational Momentum. A fixed-effect estimation of a dataset consisting of 26 countries (middle-income and low-income) for the years 1996 to 2020 has been conducted, along with Clemente-Montenes-Reyes double Additive Outlier test for unit roots to test for the presence of any structural breaks in the indicators. The coefficients show expected signs. A negative but not statistically significant impact of child mortality on GDP per capita has been found. Secondary enrolment rate for females and access to electricity have a positive and statistically significant impact on GDP per capita. Population density has a positive impact on GDP per capita, and the result is statistically significant in one specification. Finally, gross fixed capital formation has a statistically significant and positive impact on GDP per capita. Some preliminary indications of the presence of structural breaks across these indicators have been seen. The findings of the study affirm that simultaneous and reinforcing interplay of changes at family level in health, education, particularly of women, diffusion of technology and aggregate investment (at national level) together created a momentum that co-determined income and welfare outcomes over time in Bangladesh.

### **Labour Market Study for Skills for Employment Investment Project (SEIP): IT Sector**

**Study Team:** *Monzur Hossain, Tahreen Tahrira Chowdhury, and Nahian Azad Shashi*

The development of human capital is an important prerequisite for the development of the ICT sector. With a demographic dividend in place, Bangladesh is in an advantageous position to exploit the potential of the IT industry. The sector employs roughly about 0.22 million IT professionals in 2020, which is expected to be doubled by 2025. To understand the IT labour market, existing skills and skills gap, this study makes an in-depth analysis of the skills gap in the sector to understand the dynamics of the labour market and future demand for skills in this sector that would be key for the growth and development of the ICT sector.

The increased market demand for skilled labours in the ICT sector raises the demand for a skilled workforce with more advanced training rather than semi-skilled labours with

basic training. To mitigate the problem, industry stakeholders propose to combine elementary and advanced courses in one particular discipline. It is also proposed to provide training on both elementary and advanced courses of only one particular discipline/subject rather than providing the scope of receiving training on only one course. High importance is placed on an effective industry-academia linkage. It is also recommended that only short-term courses may not be sufficient, instead, SEIP may invest in creating a centre of excellence in the University's respective departments to ensure a sustainable supply of IT human capital. A few specific recommendations are also made to make the existing training programs more effective.

### **Labour Market and Skills Gap Analyses, Healthcare: Nursing and Care**

**Study Team:** *Anwara Begum and Raisul Awal Mahmood*

This study analyses the projected demand for and supply of nursing professionals in Bangladesh in the next 10-year period, 2020 to 2030, to help the country better plan the capacity and quality of nursing training systems. Its major focus is on two major areas of the nursing profession in Bangladesh: demand for and supply of nurses in the country, and policy conclusions towards harnessing supply-demand imbalances.

Major conclusions of the study include: (i) the nursing profession in Bangladesh experiences severe skills shortage with far-reaching consequences; (ii) supply side factors constitute a major contributor to the perceived skills shortage; (iii) quality of nurse training demands much improvement and upgradation; (iv) lack of specialised nurses is an important aspect of nurses shortages in the country; (v) inadequate infrastructure is a serious stumbling block to increasing supply of quality nurses; (vi) concentration of nursing training facilities in major metropolis may negatively impact interest in nursing education; (vii) inadequate compensation packages are important reasons for fewer nurses in this profession, and (viii) recognition of the role played by nursing profession should be the cornerstone of mitigating skills shortage.

### **National Information Platform for Nutrition: An Introduction**

**Study Director:** *Md. Asaduzzaman*

National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) is a project supported by the European Union and implemented

by Helen Keller International in partnership with the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), with the active collaboration of the Statistics and Informatics Division (SID)/BBS, Food Planning and Monitoring Unit (FPMU), Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC), Institute of Public Health and Nutrition (IPHN), and General Economic Division (GED) of Planning Commission. NIPN Bangladesh officially started its activities at the beginning of 2018 and is expected to run through the end of 2021. Now in its 4th year, the fundamental mandate of NIPN is to influence policy-making and policy implementation through capacity-building and policy studies related to nutrition and communicate the study results effectively to policymakers.

Some of the achievements of NIPN over the last four years or so are the following:

- Five GoB officials (two from BBS, two from BNNC and one from BIRTAN) have been awarded a one-year Fellowship for Master Programme in European universities.
- Nine short pieces of training have been conducted by NIPN for Govt. Ministries, agency officials. Four policy briefs have been published on the BBS website.
- Following completed reports have been shared with all NIPN stakeholders. Report on Regional Dietary Diversity; Policy Mapping report.
- Other reports which have just been completed or at different stages of progress include Systematic Review of Impact of Nutritional Interventions; Household Food Production and Nutrition; Impact of VGD/ICVGD on Nutrition; Role of Family Farming on Nutrition; Analysis of Nutritional Issues in Urban Bangladesh.
- One one-pager and four issues of a web-based Newsletter have also been published.

BBS is a major partner in the daily activities of NIPN. For this, a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Helen Keller Intl. and BBS in January 2019 which set the working modalities for BBS in collaboration with NIPN. Another MoU is for a data repository between Helen Keller International with BBS on 21 June 2021.

## **Ongoing Studies**

### **Economic Burden of Cancer in Bangladesh**

**Study Director:** *Abdur Razzaque Sarker*

Cancer is an overwhelming public health problem in Bangladesh. It has a negative impact on people's health and life and economies. The ever-increasing number of patients and the complications of the disease have imposed significant direct medical and indirect costs on patients, the health system, and the government. Indeed, cancer and its treatment result in the loss of economic resources and opportunities for patients, families, employers, and society as a whole.

However, data regarding the economic burden of cancer among the Bangladeshi population are scarce. Therefore, it

is important to estimate and calculate the economic burden of cancer not only for patients and their families but also for the healthcare system. The main objective of this study is to estimate the economic burden of cancer patients in Bangladesh. The specific objectives are to find out the direct and indirect cost of treating cancer from households' perspective, assess the financing strategies during cancer treatment from households' perspective, and estimate the annual cost of illness due to cancer from a societal perspective. Examining the economic dimensions of the disease through this research will provide important evidence for making socioeconomic policies related to cancer and similar devastating NCDs.

## Mid-term Satisfaction Survey of College Education Development Project (CEDP)

**Study Team:** *Badrin Nessa Ahmed, S. M. Zulfiqar Ali, Rizwana Islam, and Nahid Ferdous Pabon*

Improving skills and productivity are critical for Bangladesh to accelerate economic growth and become a middle-income country. However, the current skill level of the existing labour force is unlikely to meet future market demands. Although there are plenty of low-skilled workers, there is a strong demand for graduates with higher cognitive and noncognitive skills, and job-specific technical skills. It would necessitate increasing the quality and relevance of tertiary education so that educational institutions can produce graduates with more market-relevant skills. Given the above, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) introduces the "College Education Development Project (CEDP)", through the Ministry of Education with support from the World Bank, as part of its commitment to improving the quality and governance mechanisms of the college subsector, as articulated in the 6th Five Year Plan (2011-2015) and the Strategic Plan for Higher Education.

This mid-term survey will assess the satisfaction level of students and teachers, who are considered direct beneficiaries, in terms of quality of education and teaching, skills, and other relevant facilities, and the employers in terms of the quality of graduates. The survey will also focus on the impact of COVID-19 on education, a safe learning environment, the job market, and earnings.

This survey will use a mixed-method approach with quantitative and qualitative aspects. Structured questionnaires, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) will encompass this widely used approach.

## Impacts of Rural Roads and Waterways under Second Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP-II)

**Study Team:** *Mohammad Yunus, Md. Abdur Rahman Forhad, Md. Nazmul Hoque, Taznoore Samina Khanam, Kashfi Rayan, and Rizwana Islam*

The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), with credit from the International Development Association of the World Bank, implemented the Second Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP-II). The aim was to reduce rural poverty and stimulate the economic development of rural communities through rural accessibility in project areas. About 494 km of upazila roads, 434 km of union roads, 4078 km of road rehabilitation and 46.90 km of rural waterways, along with 37 ghats and 10 river jetties, were completed in the 26 project districts, of which two located in the west and the rest 24 in the east of the Jamuna River.

The primary objectives of the Second RTIP-II study are to collect the endline data and assess the impacts of rural roads and waterways improved under the Second Rural Transport Improvement Project to assess the contributions of rural roads towards poverty reduction, employment, income, health and education, and to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

The study will follow a mixed-method approach in the case of data collection and analysis. Different levels of quantitative and qualitative data will be collected during the endline survey. The endline data will help triangulate/verify the findings of the baseline survey as well as produce its own results.

## Creating A Political and Social Climate for Climate Change Adaptation – Amendment #3 (CPSCCA3)

**Study Director:** *Azreen Karim*

As climate change increases the frequency and severity of floods, drought, and extreme weather events in the coming decades, there can be little doubt that those hardest hits will be populations of developing countries. Therefore, Bangladesh and Ethiopia are focal cases in this study as populous nations with high climatic risks.

An important part of addressing these challenges is mapping the resources and opportunities communities have for receiving displaced and identifying areas that can more easily sustain inflows of migrants and increase in population. Using the CCRC approach, resettlement capacity indices were constructed for Ethiopia and Bangladesh, using 75 indicators for Ethiopia and 100 for Bangladesh. The impact of the aggregate information provided by the indices ultimately depends on their use by experts in resettlement decisions.

This study will assess and analyse the extent to which the indices will be used in policy decisions by conducting a randomised controlled experiment using 400 university students in Bangladesh as subjects. Through a discrete choice experimental design, students will be asked to allocate 1,000 migrants between two otherwise anonymized destination locations in Bangladesh. A control group will do so based on a set of individual indicators for the destination locations, while a treatment group will have access to the resettlement capacity index. The study's objective is to determine whether the treatment group uses the resettlement capacity index and relies less on individual indicators. In addition to the publication of the results in a peer-reviewed journal, an expected outcome of the project will be further refinement of the presentational elements of the resettlement capacity index to optimise its use for resettlement policy.



## An Assessment of Needs and Impacts of Women Entrepreneurs' Access to E-commerce Platforms through Smartphones

**Study Team:** *Mohammad Yunus, Md. Abdur Rahman Forhad, and Rizwana Islam*

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bangladesh has taken several initiatives to achieve gender parity on several socioeconomic fronts through various income-generating programmes. One of the avenues is nurturing targeted women entrepreneurs in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). To that end, UNDP Bangladesh set up an online e-commerce platform, popularly known as 'Anondomela', to support the women entrepreneurs in SMEs as an initial response to the ravaging pandemic in 2020. The platform targets women entrepreneurs in SMEs to

help them conduct business during the pandemic. As smartphones are relatively expensive for many women entrepreneurs, UNDP Bangladesh has planned to provide smartphones to a randomly chosen group of them so that they can participate in e-commerce activities. Second, UNDP Bangladesh plans to facilitate training programmes on relevant skills to address entrepreneurs' e-commerce-related knowledge constraints.

The primary objectives of the study are to analyse and explore the challenges, needs, and priorities of women entrepreneurs in the CMSMEs who are members of the 'Anondomela' and other targeted women entrepreneurs during their online business operations and to assess the impact of the transfer of smartphones and associated training on business practices and empowerment among women entrepreneurs.

## Seminars/Conferences/Webinars

### Bangladesher Orthanaitik Unnayaner Gatidhara: Subarnajayantite Firay Dekha

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), in collaboration with the Centre for Development and Employment Research (CDER) and University Press Limited (UPL), organised the launching event of the book "Bangladesher Orthanaitik Unnayaner Gatidhara: Subarnajayantite Firay Dekha" on 6th June 2022 in the BIDS Conference Room. The authors of this book are Dr. Rizwanul Islam, Former Special Adviser for the Employment Sector, International Labour Office (ILO); Dr. Rushidan I. Rahman, Executive Chairperson of CDER, and Dr. Quazi Shahabuddin, Former Director General of BIDS.



Mr. M. A. Mannan MP, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was present as the Chief Guest. Dr. Mashiur Rahman, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Economic Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, graced the event as the Special Guest. Professor Mustafizur Rahman, Distinguished Fellow, Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), and Dr. Kazi Iqbal, Senior Research Fellow, BIDS were the designated panellists of this event.

During the presentation, Dr. Islam identified three heroes of Bangladesh's economic development journey, agriculture, export-oriented garments and remittance, in which labour played a significant role. Dr. Shahabuddin mentioned that the rise in rice production and improvement in distribution has helped Bangladesh achieve substantial success in food security. However, the government needs to take multiple

steps to sustain food security. Dr. Rahman pointed out that despite higher GDP growth, job creation has been increasing slowly, with female labour force participation being considerably lower.

Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Executive Chairman of Power and Participation Research Center (PPRC); Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, Distinguished Fellow of CPD; Dr. Badiul Alam Majumdar, Secretary, SHUJAN; Prof. Ahsan H. Mansur, Executive Director of PRI; Mr. M. Syeduzzaman, Former Finance Minister, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; and Dr. Mustafa K. Mujeri, Executive Director of InM spoke during this event, among others. BIDS researchers, development practitioners, policymakers, and journalists attended this event. Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General of BIDS, chaired the event.

### Exports and Gender Gap in Manufacturing Employment

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar titled "Exports and Gender Gap in Manufacturing Employment" on May 25, 2022 in the BIDS Conference room. Md. Moniruzzaman, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, presented his research on this topic. The seminar was held in a hybrid format.



In this seminar, Mr. Moniruzzaman presented his research findings where he examined the effects of export-based employment opportunities on gender gap in export and non-export manufacturing employment. He showed that women near the export factories, compared to those living

away, are significantly more likely to be in manufacturing employment. Md. Moniruzzaman also added that work opportunities in export factories raise manufacturing wages and enhance the decision-making power of women within their households.

BIDS researchers, academicians, development practitioners, and journalists attended the seminar. The seminar was chaired by Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General of BIDS.

### **Economic Preferences across Generations and Family Clusters: A Large-scale Experiment in Developing Country**



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar titled “Economic Preferences across Generations and Family Clusters: A Large-Scale Experiment in Developing Country” on May 18, 2022 in the BIDS Conference room. Professor Shyamal Chowdhury, School of Economics, University of Sydney, presented his research on this topic in a hybrid format.

This paper looked at the intergenerational persistence of economic preferences in Bangladesh and presented the result from an experiment with 542 families drawn from four districts in Bangladesh, where economic preferences were elicited by 542 pairs of husbands and wives and their 907 children, yielding a total of 1,991 individual participants. Three dimensions of economic preferences were measured in this experiment- time, risk, and social preferences- in a unified and incentivised context to examine the participants at the individual but also at family levels.

In their empirical analysis, the authors of this paper found that husbands' and wives' preferences are significantly and positively correlated to each other most of the time, i.e., for risk and time preferences and partly for social preferences. Professor Chowdhury noted that, in terms of social preferences, 10 per cent of parents and children are selfless; less than 10 per cent of mothers and more than 20 per cent of fathers are egalitarian, and approximately 17 per cent of the children are egalitarian. Besides the experimental elicitation of economic preferences, this paper has a rich set of additional controls, such as personality traits and socio-demographic background data.

The seminar was attended by BIDS researchers, academics, and the media. Dr. Monzur Hossain, Research Director, BIDS, chaired the seminar.

### **The New Determinants of Household Disaster Preparedness Behaviour and Policy Efficacy in Bangladeshi Households**



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar on May 21, 2022 titled “The New Determinants of Household Disaster Preparedness Behaviour and Policy Efficacy on Bangladeshi Households.” Dr. Azreen Karim, Research Fellow, BIDS, presented her research at this seminar. The seminar was held in a hybrid mode.

In her research, Dr. Azreen showed the overwhelming importance of enhanced disaster education (formal and non-formal) for women in climate and disaster risk reduction policies in Bangladesh. She argues that mainstreaming disaster education across education, climate change and disaster risk reduction policies could significantly enhance responsiveness to our disaster preparedness behaviour, thereby increasing household resilience.

Her findings further show that social capital is a robust determinant of the adoption of preparedness measures, and disaster displacement is an important determinant of the disaster preparedness behaviour of households. Displaced people are better prepared due to their disaster experience and actively respond to government interventions and policies; wealth and salaried income are positively and significantly associated with disaster preparedness compared to net per capita income and daily wages. Per capita income (net) has a negative insignificant relationship along with daily wages, which is also not strongly correlated with disaster preparedness behaviour.

She also strongly argues that the integration of development and preparedness policies could further reduce the number of climate losses implying integrated impacts across SDG targets. She, therefore, recommends short-term and disaster-specific “72-hour early warning-based preparedness education programme” or “3-5-day flood forecasting model-based preparedness education programme” as potential solutions that require further research.

BIDS researchers, development practitioners, and journalists attended the seminar. BIDS Director General Dr. Binayak Sen chaired the event.

### When am I Richer than You? A Methodological Perspective on the Constant Dollar Per-Capita Income Comparison



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar titled “When am I Richer than You? A Methodological Perspective on the Constant Dollar Per-Capita Income Comparison” on March 30, 2022 in the BIDS Conference Room. Dr. Syed Mainul Ahsan, Professor Emeritus, Concordia University, Canada and Visiting Professor of Health Economics, Dhaka University, presented his research at this seminar held in hybrid mode.

In his research, Professor Ahsan mentioned that the current method of measuring the gross domestic product (GDP) is not 100 per cent accurate. The same information is being published differently due to the base effect, that is, change of the base year. The same thing is happening with the per capita income. As a result, the measurement process needs to be reconsidered to get an accurate and realistic picture of GDP and per capita income. Therefore, Professor Ahsan suggested adopting the PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) method instead of the existing method to identify the country's GDP for a better comparison with other economies.

BIDS researchers, academics and media attended the seminar. Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General, BIDS, chaired the event.

### Innovations to Address Seasonal Poverty



A public lecture titled “Innovations to Address Seasonal Poverty” was held on March 28, 2022 in the BIDS Conference Room. Dr. Ahmed Mushfiq Mobarak, Professor of Economics, Yale University, USA delivered the lecture in a Hybrid mode.

Professor Mobarak highlighted that in Bangladesh and many countries of the world, millions of people are still suffering from seasonal poverty, and it is more prevalent from September to November in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts in North Bengal. Professor Mobarak mentioned that during this time, the poor do not even have

enough money to migrate to another district in search of work. To address seasonal poverty, he suggested facilitating internal migration when the people are out of work and giving financial support, for example, a migration loan system might help them immensely.

BIDS Director General Dr. Binayak Sen, chaired the public lecture. BIDS researchers, academics and the media attended the event.

### Skills that Empower Adolescent Girls: Some Evidence from an Intervention Research Study



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar on March 23, 2022, titled “Skills that Empower Adolescent Girls: Some Evidence from an Intervention Research Study.” Dr. Sajeda Amin, Senior Associate, Population Council, New York, presented her research at this seminar in a hybrid mode.

This study aimed to evaluate the impact of three community-based skills-building programmes on delaying child marriage among adolescent girls in rural Bangladesh. Dr. Amin said that her research explored whether expanding alternatives and choices for girls can change the choices families make about their marriage. This study demonstrated that it is possible to reduce the frequency of child marriage in a comparatively shorter time by working with communities to implement holistic programmes to build skills among girls.

BIDS researchers, development practitioners, and journalists attended the seminar. Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General, BIDS chaired the event.

### Tackling Calcium Deficiency in the Diet: Learning from the People



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a talk in a hybrid mode on nutrition titled “Tackling Calcium Deficiency in the Diet: Learning from

the People” on March 13, 2022, at the BIDS conference room. Dr. Tahmeed Ahmed, Executive Director, icddr,b delivered the talk.

Dr. Ahmed talked about the calcium deficiency of people in Bangladesh, especially women, and also about the experiment that his team did to provide people with different sources of calcium. Oyster shell powder is a good source of calcium, Dr. Ahmed said that their research discovered that cooking 500 grams of rice with 7.5 grams of oyster shell lime can provide 200 grams of calcium for our body, which people of Chakaria and Anwara Upazilas are consuming to recover from various diseases. Dr. Ahmed added that, so far, no side effects of this supplement have been recorded.

BIDS researchers, along with Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury, founder of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, addressed the seminar, among others. BIDS Director General Dr. Binayak Sen, chaired the event.

#### Water Development in Bangladesh: Past, Present and Future



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar on “Water Development in Bangladesh: Past, Present and Future” on March 10, 2022, in the BIDS Conference Room. Dr. S. Nazrul Islam, Chief of Development Research, UNDESA discussed the themes of his recently published book in this seminar. Mr. M. A. Mannan, MP, Planning Minister, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was the chief guest of this seminar. Dr. Shamsul Alam, State Minister of Planning of Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh attended this seminar as the special guest. Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala, Professor of the Institute of Water and Flood Management, BUET was the designated discussant in this seminar. The seminar was held in a hybrid mode.

In this seminar, Dr. Islam shed light on the conceptual framework necessary to discuss water policies and the way to use this framework to conduct a comprehensive review of the water development projects that were implemented in the past. He also highlighted the merit of water projects such as the Cordon Approach, Open Approach and the Delta Plan that are either currently under implementation or planned to be implemented, along with offering directions in which water development should proceed in the future. Moreover, Dr. Islam presented the devastating situation due to Cordon Approach and underlined the need for an open approach. This seminar was attended by BIDS researchers, eminent economists of the country, policymakers, civil society, media, and the wider community. Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General BIDS presided over this event.

#### Getting Urbanisation Right in Bangladesh

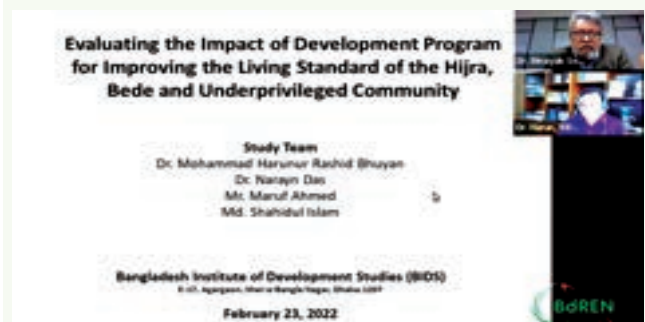


Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a technical workshop on urbanisation titled “Getting Urbanization Right in Bangladesh” in collaboration with the World Bank on March 3, 2022 in the BIDS conference room. Dr. Forhad Shilpi, Senior Economist, the World Bank and Dr. Alejandro Molnar, Economist, the World Bank presented their key findings on this topic in the workshop. Dr. Mohammad Yunus, Senior Research Fellow, BIDS was the designated discussant in the workshop. The workshop was held in a hybrid mode.

In this workshop, Dr. Shilpi and Dr. Molnar showed how the congestion in Dhaka city has increased over the years and how climate change could have impacted the future with this existing state of urbanization. It has been discussed that a proper urbanisation policy is needed to help deal with the challenges of urbanisation by ensuring a uniform distribution of economic and social opportunities.

This workshop was attended by BIDS researchers, eminent economists of the country, policymakers, civil society, media and the wider community. Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General of BIDS, chaired this event.

#### Evaluating the Impact of Development Programme for Improving the Living Standard of the Hijra, Bede, and Underprivileged Community



Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar as part of the BIDS Fortnightly Seminar 2021-2022 on February 23, 2022, at 2:30 pm. Dr. Mohammad Harunur Rashid Bhuyan, Research Fellow of BIDS presented his research titled “Evaluating the Impact of Development Program for Improving the Living Standard of the Hijra, Bede, and Underprivileged Community.” Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General of BIDS chaired the event. The seminar was conducted in a hybrid format in the BIDS Seminar Room.

This study found that DSS training has failed to significantly improve the respondents' income, the number of days in employment, and working hours for the Hijra community. However, the DSS stipend program has a positive impact on increasing the attendance of students from the Bede community. Overall, the DSS allowance programme has a significant and positive impact on health conditions regarding activity for the underprivileged community. The seminar was attended by BIDS researchers, civil society, journalists, and the wider community.

### Schematic View of Bangladesh Constitution



The Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised BIDS Public Lecture 2022 on January 5, 2022 Wednesday in the BIDS Conference Room. Mr. Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of Bangladesh delivered his lecture on "Schematic View of Bangladesh Constitution". The lecture was held in a hybrid mode.

In this lecture, Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury gave schemes and functionality of the constitution and described the purpose and role of legislative, executive and judiciary, and parliamentary standing committees, public service commission, and election commission. While describing the parts and functions of the constitution, the CAG added that no one should be blind to the rights and economic

views of the constitution. The event was attended by BIDS researchers, civil society and the wider community. The lecture was presided over by Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General of BIDS.

### BIDS R&P Committee Meeting Held

The BIDS Research and Publication (R&P) Committee met in April 2022 to review the status of research activities and the progress of publications of BIDS. The meeting was attended by all BIDS researchers and several decisions were taken to further streamline the research and publication activities of the Institute. Dr Binayak Sen, Director General, BIDS, presided over the meeting.

### BIDS Book Stall at the Amar Ekushey Boi-Mela 2022



As in the past, BIDS set up a bookstall in the Bangla Academy premises as part of the yearly "Boi-Mela" held in commemoration of the Martyrs of the language movement of 1952. Many book lovers, poets, scholars, authors, students, and individuals attend the Boi-Mela. It is an opportunity for BIDS to strengthen relationships with the larger community by making our publications available to everyone.

## BIDS Researchers at International Conference/Meetings

### Dr. Binayak Sen, Director General

- Chief Guest at a seminar on "জাতীয় বাজেট ২০২২-২৩, সামষ্টিক অর্থনীতির চ্যালেঞ্জ" at Southeast University on 23rd June 2022.
- Conducted an International online training workshop titled "Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: Financial Inclusion and Rural Transformation" at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Cumilla, 20th June 2022.
- Discussant at an online Zoom Meeting on "50 Years of Bangladesh", organised by Amra Ekattor Foundation, 17th June 2022.
- Discussant at a "Consultation Meeting on Monetary Policy", organised by Bangladesh Bank, Hotel Lakeshore, 16th June 2022.
- Discussant at "জনশুমারি ও গৃহগণনা ২০২২ বিষয়ক মতবিনিময় সভা", organised by BBS, Surma Hall, Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon on 13th June 2022.
- Distinguished Panelist at "Pre-budget discussion before

the Covid-19 Pandemic," organised by PRI and Ekattor TV, Amari Dhaka Hotel, Gulshan-2 on 4 June 2022.

- Attended a Round Table Conference titled "কোন পথে আগামী অর্থনীতি ও আগামী বাজেট" as Distinguished Panelist, organised by The Daily Prothom Alo, Pragati Insurance Building, Karwan Bazar, 28th May 2022.
- Discussant at a discussion titled "বঙ্গবন্ধু অর্থনৈতিক দর্শন: সাম্প্রতিক বিতর্ক", গণহত্যা-নির্যাতন আর্কাইভ ও যাদুঘর, ডব্লিউডিএ মিলনায়তন, 21st May 2022.
- Discussant at an online discussion meeting titled "২০২২-২৩ অর্থবছরের বাজেট বিষয়ে মতবিনিময় সভা," Ministry of Finance, 17th May 2022.
- Faced an Exclusive Interview with Munni Saha @News Hour Extra named "Interview on Padma Bridge" aired on ATN News Television, 15th June 2022.
- Discussant to an online dialogue naming "স্বাস্থ্য বাজেট বিষয়ক অনলাইন জাতীয় সংলাপ", organised by Bangladesh Health watch and Unnayan Sumonnay on 26th April 2022.

- Participated in the Seventh Annual Conference of History Alumni,” organised by Bangla Academy on 1st April 2022.
- Participant at Author’s Discussion of an online book launching ceremony titled “Women in Work in South Asia,” organised by Department of International Relations and Fridrich Eber Stiftung (FES), 1st April 2022.
- Keynote Speaker at “International Conference on Fifty Years Journey of Bangladesh Genocide, Nation-State and Bangabandhu’s Cherished Bangladesh, 1970: Genocide-Torture Archive & Museum Trust, Bangla Academy, 31st March 2022.
- Distinguished Panellist at an online event “Celebrating Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh-Italy Diplomatic Relations” arranged by Bangladesh Lecture Series, Consulate General of Bangladesh in Milan, Italy, 29th March 2022.
- Workshop Moderator at Virtual Research Consultation Workshop for World Bank Report “Improving Outcomes for Displaced Rohingya People and Hosts in Cox’s Bazar,” World Bank and BIDS, 28th March 2022.
- Discussant to a meeting on “মহান স্বাধীনতা ও জাতীয় দিবস ২০২২”, organised by Bangla Academy, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
- Panel Speaker on “Livelihood Creation and Enhancing Incomes in the Post-Pandemic World,” Asia Economic Dialogue 2022 (held online), Pune International Center, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
- Discussant, “মহান শহিদ দিবস ও আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস-২০২২ উপলক্ষে আলোচনা সভা”, NEC Conference Room, Planning Ministry, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.

**Dr. Monzur Hossain, Research Director**

- Attended as a Panellist at Covid-19 Global Evaluation Coalition, Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI), France, on 21<sup>th</sup> June 2022 (Virtual).

**Dr. Anwara Begum, Senior Research Fellow**

- Presented a study titled “Labor Market and Skills Gap Analysis, Healthcare: Nursing and Care”, in BIDS Conference Room, at the Validation Workshop held on 15 June 2022.

**Dr. S M Zulfiqar Ali, Senior Research Fellow**

- Attended as one of the Designated Discussants in the “Second National Conference on SDG Implementation Review” organised by GED, Planning Commission and GIU, Prime Minister’s Office on 16-18 May 2022.
- Delivered a lecture in the training workshop on Poverty Chapter of the 8th Five Year Plan organised by GED, Planning Commission held on April 2022.
- Attended as one of the panellists in the webinar on “Urban-Rural Poverty Situation and Rising Food Prices” organised by Right to Food Bangladesh held on 10 April 2022.

**Dr. S M Zahedul Islam Chowdhury, Research Fellow**

- Talked in a Webinar on “Mobilizing Action for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Bangladesh” on 26 May 2022, organised by Economic Development Research Organization (EDRO).

- Attended a workshop on “Action Plan for Bangladesh National Productivity Master Plan FY 2020-2030” held on 28 February 2022, organised by the Ministry of Industries.
- Presented a paper on “Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis for Shipbuilding Sector in Bangladesh” in the Validation Workshop of the Labour Market Study for SEIP on June 15, 2022, at BIDS Conference Room

**Dr. Mohammad Harunur Rashid Bhuyan, Research Fellow**

- Presented a paper on “Climate Change and Global Value Chains (GVC) in the Garment and Textile Industries of Bangladesh: Mapping the Actors” at Copenhagen Business School (CBS) workshop on Global Value Chains and Climate Change on 9 June 2022, organised by CBS, Denmark.
  - Participated in the “Global Fashion Summit” at Royal Opera House, Copenhagen, Denmark on 7th and 8th June 2022, organised by Global Fashion Agenda.
  - Presented a study on “Labour Market Study for Skills for Employment Investment Project (SEIP): Leather and Footwear Sector” at BIDS Validation Workshop on 15 June 2022, held at the BIDS Conference Room.
  - Presented a study on “Labour Market Study for Skills for Employment Investment Project (SEIP): Agro-Food Processing Sector” at BIDS Validation Workshop on 15 June 2022, held at the BIDS Conference Room.
  - Participated as a discussant at a workshop on “Earning the Goals and Objectives of the Development Project of the Living Standard of the Marginal People of Bangladesh and Future Steps Needed to Develop Marginalised Occupations” at the Department of Social Services (DSS) on 20 June 2022 organised by DSS.
  - Presented a paper on “Climate Change Acts and Policies in Bangladesh related to RMG” at Climate Change and Global Value Chains in the Garment and Textile Industries of Europe and Bangladesh on 21 March 2022, organised by the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED), BRAC University.
  - Presented a study on “Evaluating the Impact of Development Programme for Improving the Living Standard of the Hijra, Bede and Underprivileged Community” at the BIDS Fortnightly Seminar on 23 February 2022 in the BIDS Conference Room.
- Dr. Azreen Karim, Research Fellow**
- Participated as a Guest Lecturer in the “Training Programme in Policy Analysis” course at BIGM, Dhaka [Imparted].
  - Presented a paper titled “The New Determinants of Household Disaster Preparedness Behaviour and Policy efficacy on Bangladeshi Households” at the Fortnightly Seminar Series held on 21 May 2022 at BIDS Conference Room.
  - Presented an “Opinion” paper at the Third International Conference on “Entrepreneurship Development, International Economics under COVID-19 in Bangladesh: Aftermath of LDC Graduation” held on 15 January 2022, organised by the Entrepreneurial Economist Club of the Dhaka School of Economics.

**Dr. Abdur Razzaque Sarkar, Research Fellow**

- Attended as a Resource Person (Trainer) in the Training Course on Policy Planning of Sector Programme titled “Monitoring and Evaluation of Health Sector Plans,” on April 21-22, 2022, organised by Health Service Division, MOHFW.
- Participated in the World Bank’s table discussion on “Health Service Delivery System Reorientation” on May 23, 2022, at Hotel Amari Dhaka, Gulshan, Bangladesh.
- Presented “Labour Market Study for SEIP: RMG Sectors” on 15 June 2022 at the BIDS Conference Room.

**Dr. Mohammad Golam Nabi Mazumder, Research Fellow**

- Made a presentation on “Mobile Lives: The Quotidian Use of Mobile Phones” at BIDS on 15 March 2022.

**Tanzore Samina Khanam, Post-Doctoral Fellow**

- Attended a workshop on “Thematic Working Groups- Dhaka Food Agenda 2041” on 23 - 24 March 2022, organised by FAO and Wageningen University and Research (WUR), Australia.

**Tahreen Tahrima Chowdhury, Research Fellow**

- Attended a meeting on the “Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF)” with the WTO team and the Ministry of Commerce on 02 June 2022.
- Presented key findings of the study “Labour Market and Skill Gap Analysis in Hospitality and Tourism Sector of Bangladesh” at SEIP Validation Workshop on 15 June 2022 at BIDS.
- Presented key findings of the study “Labour Market and Skill Gap Analyses in IT Sector of Bangladesh” at the SEIP Validation Workshop held on 15 June 2022 at BIDS.

**Rizwana Islam, Research Associate**

- Attended a training programme on “Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Modelling for Policy Analysis,” held in two phases: Phase-I from April 4 to April 11, 2022, and Phase-II from May 9 to May 18, 2022, in New Delhi, India.
- Made a presentation on the “Skills and Employment Investment Project on the RMG Sector of Bangladesh” at the SEIP validation workshop.

**Nahian Azan Shashi, Research Associate**

- Participated in a workshop on “Capacity Building Training on Non-Tariff Measures & Barriers” on 24-26 May 2022, organised by Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1, Ministry of Commerce.

**BIDS Publications**

**Does Income Bring Happiness? An Empirical Analysis Using Pseudo Panel Data from Bangladesh**

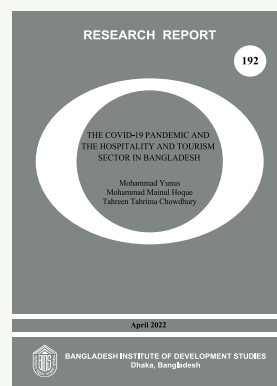
**Author:** *Badrun Nessa Ahmed*

Recent research identifies that people in Bangladesh enjoy a higher level of happiness, despite their low income, compared to many other countries in the world with high

per-capita income. This study explores this dilemma by identifying the correlates of happiness through analysing quantitative data from the World Value Survey (WVS). The results from the empirical model suggest that income is one of the core determinants of happiness. People do care about their social class and relative social position in the area they live. Besides, the effects of variables such as freedom of choice and an individual’s health status are strong variables that influence an individual’s happiness at a point in time and over time. The ability to meet basic needs significantly improves individual’s level of happiness. This conclusion answers the paradox of rising happiness in Bangladesh in the era of economic growth and prosperity.

**The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Hospitality and Tourism Sector in Bangladesh**

**Authors:** *Mohammad Yunus, Mohammad Mainul Hoque and Tahreen Tahrima Chowdhury*



This study rigorously assesses the impact of the pandemic on the hospitality and tourism sector (HTS) in terms of changes in operations, sales, revenues, costs of operation, operating surpluses, adaptation strategies including retrenchment of workers as well as adjustment of workers’ salary and benefits based on a comparison between the pre-COVID-19 and the-COVID-19-pandemic periods. In doing so, the study attempted to assess the micro, meso, and macroeconomic impacts, albeit differential, of COVID-19 on the sector. The analysis provides policy suggestions for the recovery of the sector in the post-pandemic environment.

**Impact of Migration on Nutrition Condition of Children Under Five Years of Age in the Rural Households of Bangladesh**

**Authors:** *Kashfi Rayan and Maruf Ahmed*



This study examines the role of migration (both internal and international migration) on the nutritional status of children under five years of age in rural households in

Bangladesh. Using both OLS and IV regression methods on BIHS Dataset (2015), this study provides empirical evidence on the relationship between migration and nutrition in rural areas of Bangladesh. Five methods were employed to check for the robustness of the findings and examine the variations in the magnitude of nutritional indicators across these different models. Also, two different instruments ('District wise sex ratio in 2011' and 'Percentage of international migrant households in districts in 2011) were used to deal with endogeneity problems with migration and international migration. Findings reveal that living in a migrant household increases the children's Weight-for-age z score (indicator of underweight) by 0.9 to 2.5 standard deviations and Height-for-age z score (indicator of stunting) by 1.4 to 2.2 standard deviations, compared to children living in non- migrant households. However, the magnitude of the findings changes and increases when the focus is riveted on 'international migration' exclusively. Living in an international migrant household increases the child z score by 1.7 to 4.5 standard deviations for Weight-for-age and 2.8 to 3.8 standard deviations for Height-for-age z-scores compared to children living in non- migrant households. This study significantly contributes to the prevailing literature on the migration-nutrition nexus in Bangladesh from a nationally representative dataset. It establishes a direct and positive relationship between children under five years of age living in international migrant households and their higher Weight-for-age and Height-for-age z scores compared to non-migrant. Unlike this study, few studies on nutrition and migration in Bangladesh either deal with particular regions or lack rigorous quantitative exercise.

#### **Skill Gap and Skill Shortage: Evidence from the Hospitality and Tourism Sector of Bangladesh**

**Authors:** *Mohammad Yunus, Mohammad Mainul Hoque, and Tahreen Tahrima Chowdhury*



This study analyses the hospitality and tourism sector (HTS) of Bangladesh from the following perspectives: (i) the structure and contribution of HTS under the current levels and nature of skills composition, (ii) skill gaps, and skill shortages, and the mismatch between the actual and desired levels of education and experience, and recruitment difficulties in the HTS together with the proximate causes and consequences, (iii) the future levels of demand for each of the major occupations disaggregated by skill levels.

The study notes that the areas of high potential for skilled workers are food and beverage production, food and beverage services, and housekeeping in hotels and resorts.

All the stakeholders, viz., the policymakers, the enterprises, the (potential) employees, and the training institutions must play their proper roles to revamp the sector from the current malaise.

#### **The Bangladesh Development Studies (March-June 2021)**

This issue includes the following articles and notes.



**Articles:** Public Procurement of Paddy in Bangladesh: Implications for Policy by Akhter U. Ahmed, M. Mehrab Bakhtiar, Sadat Anowar, Mohammad Moshir Rahman; Progress of Severe, Moderate and Global Acute Malnutrition among children in Bangladesh by Abdur Razzaque Sarker and Zakir Hossain; Agricultural Information through Mobile Phone: Evidence on Farm Household Welfare in Bangladesh by Taznoore Samina Khanam; Casualisation of Labour as Coping with Cyclone Aila: Peasant's Perception in the Sundarbans Area of Bangladesh by Mohammad Harunur Rashid Bhuyan. Note: Impacts of Financial Access of Urban Informal Enterprises: Evidence from Assam of Northeast India by Prasenjit Bujar Baruah.

#### **Call for Journal Articles**

Articles are invited for the 'Bangladesh Development Studies' (a peer-reviewed quarterly journal published in English) and the 'Bangladesh Unnayan Samikkhya' (annual journal published in Bangla) from researchers and academics who are interested in the development issues of Bangladesh and other developing countries. The topics could cover a wide range of socio-economic development issues such as agriculture, rural development, industry, population, energy, environment, education, international relations, gender and macroeconomic issues. For details on the submission procedure and authors' guidelines, please visit the BIDS website ([www.bids.org.bd/publications](http://www.bids.org.bd/publications)).

#### ■ **Editor**

Azreen Karim

#### ■ **Editorial Team**

Md. Meftaur Rahman

Md. Mohin Uddin Mizan

#### ■ **Published by**

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)

E-17 Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar

G.P.O. Box No: 3854, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

Phone: 880-02-58160430-37, Fax: 880-2-58160410

Email: [publication@bids.org.bd](mailto:publication@bids.org.bd)

Website: [www.bids.org.bd](http://www.bids.org.bd)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bids.bd](http://www.facebook.com/bids.bd)

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/bids74455379>