



BIDS NEWSLETTER

Vol. 6 Issue 1 June 2018

BIDS Improves Think Tank Ranking in 2017



The position of BIDS has improved in two categories in the 2017 edition of the Global Go To Think Tank Survey conducted by the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania. In the rankings released on February 2018, BIDS was ranked 28th in the category of Best Government Affiliated Think Tanks in the world and 102th (which was 104th in 2016) among the 7,815 think tank institutes in the “Top Think Tanks Worldwide (US and Non-US)” category. The Institute also strongly held the 16th position in the category of “Top Think Tanks in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.”

The purpose of these rankings is to help improve the performance of think tanks while highlighting the important work they do for governments and civil societies around the world. Every year the rankings are prepared based on policy-oriented research, analysis, and advice on domestic and international issues. BIDS received similar recognition in the last few years. ■

Editorial

The first half of 2018 saw four completed studies and eleven on-going ones, on a wide range of issues. These ranged from an impact evaluation of safety programmes to designing a project for UNDP on SDG monitoring and implementation, and to workplace injuries. In this issue, we highlight the study on impact evaluation of the project titled “Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (EGPP)” considering its importance and rigour. This study assesses the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the interventions implemented under EGPP and examines whether EGPP benefits the poor people. The study finds that EGPP has positive impacts on income, food consumption and social status of the poor. A high profile BIDS team was involved in designing a project which is expected to spearhead the activities of the government for SDG monitoring and implementation. While this is a first of its kind experience for BIDS, the endeavour offered useful insights into how a public project is conceived, prepared and planned for implementation.

Among the ongoing works, the studies on livestock return, climate change, demographic dividend, onion market, satisfaction survey of HEQEP on higher education quality, impact assessment of the solar projects of IDCOL and the impact study of forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals are worth mentioning. The last study titled “Assessing the Economic Impact of the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals on the Local Economy of Bangladesh” will be a pioneering work in this field which will provide important policy directions for the government.

Five academic seminars were also held on important socioeconomic issues at BIDS. In essence, BIDS had a very productive time in the first half of 2018. ■

Study Highlights

Implication of Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (EGPP) to Reduce Disaster and Gender Vulnerability

[Study Team: S. M. Zahedul Islam Chowdhury (Study Director), Md. Mainul Hoque, Golam Nabi Mozumder and M. A. Mannan (External Consultant)]

Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (EGPP), which is one of the important safety-net programmes, being implemented by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) with the support of the World Bank through the IDA, aims to provide short-term employment to the hardcore poor in lean seasons over two cycles (March to April and October to December) and to develop rural infrastructures through various construction projects, mainly earthworks.

This study assesses the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the activities implemented under EGPP, as well as examines whether EGPP benefits the livelihood of the poor people and facilitates better coping mechanism during disasters.

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative instruments (KIIs, FGDs) to collect information from randomly selected households. A total of 20 upazillas were randomly selected from the 20 sample districts and from each upazilla two unions were randomly drawn. A total of 2,800 households (2,000 beneficiary households and 800 non-beneficiary households) were selected from 40 unions with a view to conducting a rigorous impact analysis.

The study reveals that the general record of EGPP targeting is quite good. However, the selection process is not transparent rather depended on the relationship with members of selection committee to some extent.

Results show that the programme is an effective means for ensuring economic solvency, increasing health awareness, ensuring alternative source of income and increasing self-reliance.

In terms of increasing employment opportunity for the vulnerable and poor segments of the rural population, the beneficiary households have more employed people compared to their non-beneficiary counterparts during the EGPP seasons.

The EGPP programme is designed to reduce the extent of persistent underemployment problem. The study found that although underemployment for EGPP-beneficiary households is higher compared to non EGPP beneficiaries in the non-EGPP seasons, it is lower during the EGPP season.

In the case of existing belief regarding low productivity of public work programmes, this study reveals that the EGPP workers may earn higher wage from non-EGPP

employment than that of earned by non-EGPP workers from similar employment, even during the EGPP season. The beneficiary households may work at a lower wage in the EGPP related work. In fact, faced with lack of full-time work opportunities, especially during slack period, workers may look for additional works. By providing short-term job opportunities, the EGPP programme may offer a remedy to such short-term underemployment.

It is found that EGPP has positive impacts on income, food consumption and social status. The migration incidence of the beneficiary households is lower during the EGPP season compared to their non-beneficiary counterparts. Similarly, the exposure to disaster of beneficiary households seems lower during the EGPP season. The female beneficiaries enjoy higher mobility, are more conscious about their own healthcare, and more knowledgeable on child marriage compared to their non-beneficiary counterparts.

The formation of selection committee is sometimes politically biased, which results in miss-targeting of beneficiaries. The time given for beneficiary selection is too short to prepare a comprehensive list of eligible candidates. Moreover, due to manpower and budget constraints of the upazila level EGPP officials (i.e. the PIO and the Sub-Assistant Engineer in charge of EGPP), they cannot verify all the candidates mentioned in the list.

There were complaints of bribery in the process of selection of EGPP beneficiaries. Not everyone has been successful in getting an EGPP card even after paying money as demanded, according to the opinion of FGD participants. From FGDs and field observation it is revealed that bribery is common in Barisal, Chittagong and Khulna division. It is also found that some economically better-off households having diversified sources of income have been given EGPP cards, while some of the actually deserving and eligible poor households have been left out. In preparing the list of potential beneficiaries, especially in areas where the local government representatives, e.g. chairman/members, are supporters of opposition political parties, the selection committee has to face tremendous political pressure.

This study suggests that there is an immediate need to revise the beneficiary list. Before finalisation of the beneficiary list, names included in the preliminary list should be discussed in an open meeting to avoid/minimise inclusion or exclusion error. Work week needs to be of 6 days instead of 5. This will finish phase 2 earlier and avoid overlapping with Boro harvesting time. It will also save days for beneficiaries to be used elsewhere. Moreover, wage rate needs to be revised to address inflation. In response to the regional variation in unemployment and underemployment, EGPP allocation needs to be spatially redistributed in a regular interval. ■

Completed Studies

Preparation of Formulation Assignment for the New Project on 'SDG Implementation and Monitoring'

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation and monitoring requires an efficient roll-out plan involving several key sequential steps irrespective of a country's context. The Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) project of UNDP played an instrumental role in helping General Economics Division (GED) of Planning Commission undertake these initiatives towards creating an enabling environment within government for implementing SDGs.

The Government of Bangladesh requires technical assistance for upgrading its current capacity for both implementation and monitoring. In this backdrop, UNDP has contracted BIDS to design a follow-up project of SSIP project which "will foster the partnership between the Government and the UNDP and take forward the efforts made so far by the GED for achieving the goals of SDGs."

The methodology for designing the new project largely relies on stakeholder consultation and reviewing of documents, particularly the ProDoc, Midterm Review and other outputs of SSIP project. The BIDS team primarily consults with GED, PMO and BBS, the three potential stakeholders of this project. The team also meet the representatives from private sector (e.g., FBCCI, BGMEA, etc.) to learn about their views on potential role of the private sector in SDG implementation.

An information collection tool is prepared for the stakeholder's consultation. The specific questions of the information collection tool has been discussed and finalized with GED. The information collection tool is also sent to the relevant stakeholders before the consultation meeting, allowing them adequate time for effective responses.

Key informant interviews were conducted with the relevant officials and representatives from research, academics, business enterprise, and prominent practitioners from development sector. The interviews follow a certain set of queries/questions as a frame of reference. The idea was to capture the relevant focal persons' concerns, opinion and recommendations in planning a comprehensive capacity building approach of the action plan. An aggregate finding from these KIIs provides a certain road map, which will eventually help design the project.

Workplace Injuries in Manufacturing and Service Sectors in Bangladesh

Workplace injury in Bangladesh is perceived to be high, but the issue has received inadequate attention. Despite provisions in the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006(2013) and constant pressures from international organisations and buyers (RMG only) for improving working conditions and making factory buildings more worker-friendly, death tolls of workers have not receded in recent years. It is thus necessary to create a broad consensus among the government, employers and workers' organisations about the need for, and the feasibility of, a National Employment Injury Protection and Rehabilitation (NEIPR) scheme. An

effective design of NEIPR requires clear idea on the type and extent of workplace injury in key manufacturing and service sectors of Bangladesh. Thus, a comprehensive survey was conducted that reflects on nature and extent of workplace injuries in key manufacturing and service sectors of Bangladesh. Accordingly, quantitative data on accidents, injuries, compensation mechanism and related issues were collected from the registered establishments of the following sectors: RMG, textiles, cement, ship building, ship breaking, leather (both finished and tannery), pharmaceuticals, construction, real estate, and transport.

Safety measures at workplace are quite visible in most of the sectors. The availability of medical attendants (doctor/nurse) at the establishments is also high across various sectors except leather industries. Though most of the factories have safety committee, two-third factories in leather and ship building sectors do not have such committees

Sectors vary across exposure to hazards. Establishments in all the sectors are heavily exposed to handling/lifting of heavy (more than 10 kg) materials/objects. The most common source of accidents in the manufacturing sector is hit by objects. Falling from heights and fall of objects are two other notable sources of accidents. In the services sectors like construction, real estate and transport, temporary workers are more vulnerable to health consequences of injuries.

The study suggests that though it may not be possible to stop accidents in the manufacturing and service sectors, appropriate preventive and curative measures could be taken to lessen the numbers of incidence as well as mitigate the severity of injuries.

Fuel Wood Consumption in Four Districts of Bangladesh

Most of the available literature on fuel wood in Bangladesh is mainly focused on extent of use of fuel wood by households rather than estimation of actual amount of fuel wood consumption. This study quantifies the consumption of fuel wood by households in the rural and urban areas of four districts of Bangladesh (Barisal, Barguna, Satkhira and Bagerhat) in a statistically representative fashion; and investigates the relationship of a series of common socioeconomic characteristics of these households with fuel wood consumption. A survey was carried out on 652 households in urban as well as rural areas. All these households were surveyed in the dry as well as in the monsoon season. Moreover, a multi-stage sampling method was used to select the households.

Findings reveal that fuel wood consumption does not vary much for all districts except for Satkhira in the dry season and Bagerhat in the wet season. Fuel wood consumption also does not vary much by location in both seasons. However, fuel wood consumption is higher in the wet season as compared to the dry in all districts and in both rural and urban areas. Household size and education of the head of the households significantly determine fuel wood consumption. ■

Completed Studies

Preparation of Formulation Assignment for the New Project on 'SDG Implementation and Monitoring'

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation and monitoring requires an efficient roll-out plan involving several key sequential steps irrespective of a country's context. The Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) project of UNDP played an instrumental role in helping General Economics Division (GED) of Planning Commission undertake these initiatives towards creating an enabling environment within government for implementing SDGs.

The Government of Bangladesh requires technical assistance for upgrading its current capacity for both implementation and monitoring. In this backdrop, UNDP has contracted BIDS to design a follow-up project of SSIP project which "will foster the partnership between the Government and the UNDP and take forward the efforts made so far by the GED for achieving the goals of SDGs."

The methodology for designing the new project largely relies on stakeholder consultation and reviewing of documents, particularly the ProDoc, Midterm Review and other outputs of SSIP project. The BIDS team primarily consults with GED, PMO and BBS, the three potential stakeholders of this project. The team also meet the representatives from private sector (e.g., FBCCI, BGMEA, etc.) to learn about their views on potential role of the private sector in SDG implementation.

An information collection tool is prepared for the stakeholder's consultation. The specific questions of the information collection tool has been discussed and finalized with GED. The information collection tool is also sent to the relevant stakeholders before the consultation meeting, allowing them adequate time for effective responses.

Key informant interviews were conducted with the relevant officials and representatives from research, academics, business enterprise, and prominent practitioners from development sector. The interviews follow a certain set of queries/questions as a frame of reference. The idea was to capture the relevant focal persons' concerns, opinion and recommendations in planning a comprehensive capacity building approach of the action plan. An aggregate finding from these KIIs provides a certain road map, which will eventually help design the project.

Workplace Injuries in Manufacturing and Service Sectors in Bangladesh

Workplace injury in Bangladesh is perceived to be high, but the issue has received inadequate attention. Despite provisions in the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006(2013) and constant pressures from international organisations and buyers (RMG only) for improving working conditions and making factory buildings more worker-friendly, death tolls of workers have not receded in recent years. It is thus necessary to create a broad consensus among the government, employers and workers' organisations about the need for, and the feasibility of, a National Employment Injury Protection and Rehabilitation (NEIPR) scheme. An

effective design of NEIPR requires clear idea on the type and extent of workplace injury in key manufacturing and service sectors of Bangladesh. Thus, a comprehensive survey was conducted that reflects on nature and extent of workplace injuries in key manufacturing and service sectors of Bangladesh. Accordingly, quantitative data on accidents, injuries, compensation mechanism and related issues were collected from the registered establishments of the following sectors: RMG, textiles, cement, ship building, ship breaking, leather (both finished and tannery), pharmaceuticals, construction, real estate, and transport.

Safety measures at workplace are quite visible in most of the sectors. The availability of medical attendants (doctor/nurse) at the establishments is also high across various sectors except leather industries. Though most of the factories have safety committee, two-third factories in leather and ship building sectors do not have such committees

Sectors vary across exposure to hazards. Establishments in all the sectors are heavily exposed to handling/lifting of heavy (more than 10 kg) materials/objects. The most common source of accidents in the manufacturing sector is hit by objects. Falling from heights and fall of objects are two other notable sources of accidents. In the services sectors like construction, real estate and transport, temporary workers are more vulnerable to health consequences of injuries.

The study suggests that though it may not be possible to stop accidents in the manufacturing and service sectors, appropriate preventive and curative measures could be taken to lessen the numbers of incidence as well as mitigate the severity of injuries.

Fuel Wood Consumption in Four Districts of Bangladesh

Most of the available literature on fuel wood in Bangladesh is mainly focused on extent of use of fuel wood by households rather than estimation of actual amount of fuel wood consumption. This study quantifies the consumption of fuel wood by households in the rural and urban areas of four districts of Bangladesh (Barisal, Barguna, Satkhira and Bagerhat) in a statistically representative fashion; and investigates the relationship of a series of common socioeconomic characteristics of these households with fuel wood consumption. A survey was carried out on 652 households in urban as well as rural areas. All these households were surveyed in the dry as well as in the monsoon season. Moreover, a multi-stage sampling method was used to select the households.

Findings reveal that fuel wood consumption does not vary much for all districts except for Satkhira in the dry season and Bagerhat in the wet season. Fuel wood consumption also does not vary much by location in both seasons. However, fuel wood consumption is higher in the wet season as compared to the dry in all districts and in both rural and urban areas. Household size and education of the head of the households significantly determine fuel wood consumption. ■

Through conducting some Follow-up Satisfaction Surveys (FSS), this research will evaluate the perception of stakeholders regarding changes occurred in terms of teaching-learning quality and research environment in the university level institutions. This research will also unveil the impacts of the project, i.e. HEQEP, using the survey data. Data collection method will include administering of questionnaires, conducting interviews and FGD sessions, and preparation of case studies. The study groups include the students, faculty Members, departmental heads and employers of the graduates of the tertiary level educational institutions.

An Evaluation of the Activities of Housing Fund

The housing fund project was introduced in 1997-1998. This large intervention by the government of Bangladesh targeting the homeless people has the potential to impact significantly. To what extent such potentials have been realised is an empirical question. From this perspective, the programme requires a stock taking along with an evaluation to understand its pros and cons to identify the way roads to make it even better. In particular, it is important to know what actually worked and what did not, so that the government can take necessary measures to increase its administrative and economic efficiency.

The study will use both primary and secondary data. To complement the available secondary information, primary data will be collected through a structured questionnaire from the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. In addition, FGDs, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and case studies will be conducted to get more in-depth information about the process and impact of the project.

Onion Market of Bangladesh: Role of Different Players and Assessing Competitiveness

Volatility in the price of a range of essential food items aggravates the food security situation. In particular, sudden rise in essential products like onion fuels dissatisfaction not only among the poor but also middle-income households. If price volatility is associated with sub-optimal level of competition in the market, then correction to price volatility could be managed by bringing more competition in the markets of these commodities. Often it has been difficult to understand the reasons behind price volatility because of lacking of correct insights regarding various actors associated with the value chain of those commodities and their roles in the market.

Effective policy and market intervention to stabilise price of essential agricultural products depend on proper understanding of the value chain of a product and the actors involved in the value chain and their power to distort competition in the market.

The study will provide a clear understanding on the respective value chain of onion, role of various actors associated with production, marketing and importing of onion and power of the actors in different segments of the value chain. The study will also identify possible sources of market distortion, which would lead to imperfect behaviour in the market, as well as discuss the potential roles of institutions like the Competition Commission to bring competitiveness in the market of onion.

A Comparative Study on Clusters and Non-Clusters-Based SME Development in Bangladesh

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are considered as an important strategic sector for promoting growth and development in Bangladesh. Over the years, SMEs have gained recognition as a major source of employment, income generation, poverty alleviation and rural development. But the SMEs do not have enough financial capacity and are not in a position to compete successfully in the national as well as in the international markets. For the development of the SMEs, it is necessary to identify the problems and potentials of SME clusters and design appropriate interventions for their development. The objectives of the study are to examine cluster-based SME development and compare the findings with those of non-cluster-based SMEs, select the best approach and propose interventions plan for developing SMEs located in SME clusters in Bangladesh.

Following World Bank-Bangladesh Enterprise Survey 2013, the study will estimate the sample size and conduct the survey. Sample firms for SME clusters will be selected from the list of cluster firms provided by the SME Foundation. Non-cluster firms will be selected based on the secondary information available in Survey of Manufacturing Industries, BBS database, and business associations. Non-cluster sample will be drawn from the same sub-districts from where the cluster samples are selected.

Impact Assessment of Solar Irrigation, Solar Mini-grid and ICS Projects of IDCOL

The purpose of this study is to carry out household surveys to estimate the socioeconomic benefits of Renewable Energy Technologies, such as solar irrigation, solar mini-grid and improved cook stove (ICS) projects of IDCOL under the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development (RERED) programme of the World Bank. For each survey, 1,000 households will be surveyed – roughly about 500 will be surveyed from treatment group (user of the interventions) and 500 households from control group (non-user of the intervention). BIDS will develop the modules for questionnaires and analyse the data to assess the socio-economic impacts of RET interventions made by IDCOL.

Electrification in Rural Bangladesh: An Assessment of Socio-economic Impacts of Subsidized Tariff on Life-line Consumers

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) is responsible for ensuring universal access to electricity and protecting and preserving the interest of consumers, especially rural line-line consumers. Moreover, it is primarily responsible for the setting up of gas and electricity prices in Bangladesh, which is most likely to affect the living standard of the electricity consumers. BERC has been determining lower tariff rate for the life-line consumers since March 2014. Due to this lower tariff rate, the numbers of electricity consumers are increasing day by day, i.e. more people are coming under the umbrella of rural electrification and enjoying the benefits of the expansion of rural electrification. Thus, the

purpose of this study is to assess to what extent the lower tariff rate determined by BERC affects the proportion of life-line consumers of electricity as well as assess the socio-economic impact of this increase of rural electrification on life-line consumers.

Assessing the Economic Impact of the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals on the Local Economy of Bangladesh

Since 25 August 2017, Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh has experienced a large influx of Rohingya refugees fleeing violence that erupted in Rakhine State in Myanmar. Consequently, about a million of them took shelter in 30 camps (registered camps, makeshift camps, newly built camps). The study jointly conducted with IFPRI would contribute to assessing the economic consequence of this large influx.

Two areas where evidence-based analysis could make a significant contribution to planning and programme implementation are in understanding the dynamics of refugee welfare and the impacts of the refugees on the local economy. To that end four waves of migrants were identified. The identified four groups of migrants are distinguished because they face different environmental, legal and economic conditions, and may also differ in terms of where they came from or what triggered their migration.

In pursuit of these objectives, BIDS along with IFPRI would conduct analysis of household, community, and enterprise surveys, and secondary data and a Local Economy-wide Impact Evaluation (LEWIE) model for the southern Chittagong region as part of the study. Besides, a qualitative (mixed-methods) survey will also be conducted, including "life-histories" of refugees. ■

BIDS Seminars

What Motivates Politicians? Evidence from a Lab-in-the-Field Experiment in India



Prof. Kunal Sen presenting his findings at the BIDS seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar titled "What Motivates Politicians? Evidence from a Lab-in-the-Field Experiment in India" on 18 February 2018 at the BIDS Conference Room. Professor Kunal Sen, University of Manchester, UK presented the paper. Using data from field experiments conducted in rural India, professor Sen argued that in modified dictator games, politicians do not differ from ordinary citizens with respect to their intrinsic motivation when actions are concealed. However, when the visibility of actions increases, politicians keep more and distribute less generously than ordinary citizens, implying that politicians feel entitled to keep more of the spoils for themselves.

The seminar was attended by BIDS researchers, academics and representatives from print media. Dr. K. A. S. Murshid, Director General, BIDS chaired the seminar.

Labour Market Monopsony Power in Africa's Manufacturing Sector



Presentation of Dr. Samiul Haque at the BIDS seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar titled "Labour Market Monopsony Power in Africa's Manufacturing Sector" on 30 January

2018 at the BIDS Conference Room. Dr. Samiul Haque, Assistant Professor of Economics, North South University made the presentation. The study estimated a firm level measure of labour market monopsony power among manufacturing firms from four African countries: Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, and Zimbabwe and found evidence of imperfect competition in the labour market in these countries.

The seminar was attended by BIDS researchers and academics. Dr. Kazi Ali Toufique, Research Director, BIDS chaired the seminar.

Bangladesh Poverty Trends 2010/11 – 2016/17



Dr. Ruth Hill presenting her paper at the BIDS seminar

A seminar titled "Bangladesh Poverty Trends 2010/11 – 2016/17" was held on 22 January 2018 at the BIDS Conference Room. Dr. Ruth Hill, Senior Economist, World Bank, presented the paper. Reflecting on preliminary analysis of the recently released HIES data from BBS, Dr Hill suggests that though Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in poverty reduction, further progress is needed as almost 1 in 4 people still live in poverty. Though economic growth has encouraged welfare gains, increased economic growth in recent years has delivered less poverty reduction. New insights were discussed covering spatial poverty, the growth-poverty relationship, and sources of growth, inequality and poverty reduction.

The seminar was attended by BIDS researchers and selected academics. Dr. K.A.S. Murshid, Director General, BIDS chaired the seminar.

Development Partnerships in Middle-income Countries



Dr. Syed Sajjadur Rahman's presentation at the BIDS seminar

A seminar on "Development Partnerships in Middle income Countries" was held on 10 January 2018 at the BIDS Seminar Room. The paper was presented by Dr. Syed Sajjadur Rahman, Senior Fellow, International Development and Global Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa, Canada. Dr. Rahman emphasized that traditional donors need to engage with MICs in new ways – and that MICs will play key roles in shaping such partnerships. It concludes by providing a brief case study of Bangladesh - a country in the process of transition from a low-income country to a middle income country.

Natural Shocks and Marriage Markets



Dr. Shyamal Chowdhury delivering his lecture at the BIDS seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) organised a seminar titled "Natural Shocks and Marriage Markets" on 3 January 2018 at the BIDS Conference Room. The paper was presented by Dr. Shyamal Chowdhury, Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics, University of Sydney. Dr. Chowdhury (and the co-authors, Debdulal Mallick and Prabal Roy Chowdhury) examined how Mehr, a conditional payment from husbands to wives, and dowry, a transfer from brides' families to grooms at the time of marriage, have evolved through natural or exogenous shocks. ■

BIDS Senior Fellows' Meeting

A meeting of BIDS Senior Fellows was held on 14 January 2018 at the BIDS Conference Room. It was attended by Dr. Mohammad Farashuddin, Dr. M. A. Sattar Mandal, Mr. A.H.M. Moazzem Hussain, Professor M. M. Akash, Mrs.



BIDS Senior Fellows' meeting

Rasheda K. Chowdhury, Dr. Abbas Bhuiyan, Dr. Ahsan H. Mansur, Professor S. M. Nurul Alam, Dr. K. A. S. Murshid, Director General, BIDS and senior BIDS researchers attended the meeting.

The meeting began by observing a minute's silence to honour the premature demise of two of its eminent senior fellows, Dr. Mahabub Hossain and Mr. Anisul Haque. A lively conversation then took place around research needs and gaps, and what further role BIDS could play. The Senior Fellows emphasized the need for undertaking research on educational reforms, health, diversification of manufacturing, employment and agriculture, and taking stock of emerging dynamics with respect to land and production conditions, technology and increasing influence of agro-processing firms in the face of rising rural wages. The senior fellows also suggested BIDS to take on a data validation role, especially for data generated by bodies like the BBS, and to consider holding an annual BIDS Conference where non-BIDS research could also participate. ■

R&P Meeting Held

The BIDS Research and Publication Committee (R&P) met on 28 February 2018 at the BIDS Conference Room to review the status of research activities and progress of publications of BIDS. The meeting was attended by all

BIDS researchers and several decisions were taken to further streamline research and publication activities of the Institute. Dr. K.A.S. Murshid, Director General, BIDS presided over the meeting. ■

BIDS Mourns

BIDS deeply mourns the death of two esteemed colleagues -Dr. Chowdhury Anwaruzzaman and Ms. Simeen Mahmud. Dr. Chowdhury Anwaruzzaman died on 2 March 2018 and Ms Simmen Mahmud breathed her last on 19 March 2018. Dr. Anwaruzzaman joined the Institute in 1970 and retired in 2011 as a Senior Research Fellow. He received his PhD from Cornell University, USA in 1994 in Economics. On

the other hand, Ms. Mahmud joined the Institute in 1974 and retired in 2008 as a Research Director. She was a demographer by training but also wrote extensively on microcredit, health, employment and gender issues.

They will always be remembered for their contribution in their respective fields. Moreover, they will be sorely missed. ■

BIDS Book Stall at the “Bangla Academy Amar Ekushey Grontho Mela 2018”



BIDS team at “Bangla Academy”

BIDS set up a bookstall in the Bangla Academy premises this year too as part of the annual “Boi-mela” held in commemoration of the martyrs of the language movement of 1952. The mela draws a large number of book lovers, academics, poets, novelists and writers along with students and members of the general public. This is an occasion for BIDS to build stronger links with the broader community by making our publications accessible to all. Dr. K. A. S. Murshid, Director General, BIDS officially inaugurated the BIDS stall in the afternoon of 6 February 2018, where the researchers and staff of the institute participated. ■

Bangla New Year 1425 Celebrated

“Bangla New Year 1425” was celebrated on 15 April 2018 at the BIDS premises. The staff of BIDS organised a joyous and colorful cultural programme. Traditional dishes like muri-murki, sweets, green mango juice, pitha-puli, jilapi, chotpoti, etc were served in the event. Dr. K. A. S. Murshid, Director General of BIDS, congratulated the staff for arranging this New Year celebration event successfully and wished them good health and success for the upcoming days. ■



Celebrating “Bangla New Year 1425” at BIDS

BIDS Researchers at International Meetings

Dr. Kazi Ali Toufique, Research Director

- Attended the “15th Annual SANEI Conference” held in Kathmundu, Nepal during 10-11 May 2018, sponsored by SANEI Secretariat, Nepal..

Dr. Nazneen Ahmed, Senior Research Fellow

- Attended the “South Asia Investor Conference (SAIC 2018)” held in Colombo, Sri Lanka during 7-8 May 2018, sponsored by LankaBangla Securities Ltd.

Dr. Kazi Iqbal, Senior Research Fellow

- Participated in the 6th seminar on “Asia and Pacific Economies” held in China from 11 May 2018 to 12 May 2018, sponsored by Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China and Asian Development Bank Institute.

Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Senior Research Fellow

- Visited Chr. Michelsen Institute to participate in a workshop on Climate Change held in Norway on 23-25 June 2018, sponsored by Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway.
- Participated in the “World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists 2018” held at the University of Gothenburg on 26-29 June, sponsored by University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Dr. Mahmud presented a paper titled “National Disaster and Risk Sharing Behaviour.”
- Attended the seminar on “Transitions between Informal and Formal Employment: Results from a Worker Survey in Bangladesh and Behavioural Economics for Development Policy” held in Tokyo, Japan from 28 March 2018 to 30 March 2018, sponsored by University of Tokyo, Japan.

Mr. Maruf Ahmed, Research Associate

- Attended the “17th World Conference on Tobacco or Health” held in in Cape Town, South Africa during 7-9 March 2018. ■

Call for Journal Articles

Articles are invited for the ‘Bangladesh Development Studies’ (quarterly journal published in English) and the ‘Bangladesh Ummayan Samiksha’ (annual journal published in Bangla) from researchers and academics who are interested in 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 submission procedure and authors’ guidelines, please visit the BIDS website (www.bids.org.bd/publications). ■

■ Editor

Kazi Iqbal

■ Editorial Team

Md Meftaur Rahman

Nahin Rahman

■ 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: 880-2-9143441-8, Fax: 880-2-8141722

E-mail: publication@bids.org.bd

Website: www.bids.org.bd

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bids/bids

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/bids391989>