

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University

Organisation Capacity Statement

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (BRAC JPGSPH), BRAC University was established in 2004 to address the unmet public health challenges particular to Asia, Africa and South America. It was founded by BRAC, the world's largest NGO, reaching over 100 million people in Bangladesh and working in 9 countries in Africa and Asia (www.brac.net). The School has institutional partnership with icddr,b, a leading international health research institute, which fosters innovation in the development and delivery of global lifesaving solutions (www.icddr.org). BRAC JPGSPH envisions being the leading global public health institute for the world's critical health challenges affecting disadvantaged communities. It's mission is to create innovative public health leaders and provide solutions through cutting-edge, experiential learning. The School primarily focuses on four core areas: (1) Education (2) Training (3) Research and (4) Advocacy.

It runs the flagship Master of Public Health (MPH) program that attracts a student body of health and development professionals from around the world. At BRAC JPGSPH, 521+ students across 30 countries have graduated with MPH degree. The School was featured in 2007 by World Health Organization (WHO), as one of the top 6 Schools of public Health in the region. (<https://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/85/12/07-011207/en/>)

Since its inception, BRAC JPGSPH has gradually built up its research capacity within different spheres of public health, with a 210 team of multidisciplinary researchers comprising of epidemiologists, medical anthropologists, anthropologists, biostatisticians, development economists, health economists, statisticians, health policy and health system experts, implementation researchers, nutritionists, doctors and social scientists. The research methods are diverse in its approaches and methods (i.e. rapid assessments, national level surveys, implementation research, surveillance, evaluations, RCTs, focused ethnographies and other qualitative methods (i.e. photo narratives, etc) BRAC JPGSPH's research practice investigates critical and emerging developing country health needs to identify evidence based solutions and inform policies, under the five Centres of Excellence: (1) Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (established in 2008), (2) Health Systems and Universal Health Coverage (established in 2012), (3) Urban Equity and Health (established in 2013), (4) Science of Implementation & Scale-up (established in 2016) and (5) Non-communicable Diseases and Nutrition (established in 2017).

The School is involved in a wide range of studies of national, regional and global importance, including factors that influence and impact on poverty, socioeconomic development of marginalized groups, , urban health, climate change and environmental health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, nutrition, gender analysis, gender equity and rights, maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, sexuality, human rights and health, health workforce, health equity and health financing, program evaluations and implementation science research. The School focuses mainly on vulnerable populations, in urban and rural areas, including hidden and marginalized populations (i.e. LGBTQI, transgender, remote populations in the rural north, ethnic minorities, etc). As of 2018, the School is taking forward evaluation surveys, qualitative case studies in the Rohingya camps.

COVID-19 Research:

The School is currently undertaking a series of rapid surveys and qualitative case studies assessing the impact on the lives of poor in urban and rural populations in the country. The survey will draw samples from several nationally representative surveys as well as surveys carried out by the School over the past year and a half addressing specific population groups such as RMG workers, informal settlement residents, rural poor, adolescents and adult men and women. Rapid case studies are being carried out with front line workers, people living with disabilities, transgender populations, LGBTQI, refugees, among others. The survey is being conducted via phone interviews, with follow up, towards understanding the possible effects of the pandemic on several domains of a household or family such as consumption, income, health, coping strategies, psychological well-being, and gender issues. The survey will have a dynamic approach in the sense that the questions and approaches will be modified based on current understandings and relevant emerging issues related to the crisis.

Outputs:

The School has had more than **612+ articles** published in journals, books and chapters. The School has **109+ local and global partners**. Since inception, the School has undertaken around **158+ research projects**; many of which are multi-country consortia in collaboration with leading academic and research institutions. There were also national projects in partnership with local Non-Govt. organizations (NGO), local representatives of International NGOs, UN bodies and with relevant Ministries in the Government, including projects in partnership with leading public and private academic and research institutions.

For a full list of our research projects, visit our website <http://covid-bracjpgsph.org/>

The School has conducted over **6200+ health and development professionals'** training under the centre for professional skills development on public health (CPSD). Since 2005, it has organized over **214+ advocacy based events** through multi-stakeholder engagements to date. The School has national and international partners for advocacy to create pathway for public health to improve on a governmental or regulatory front including identifying policy barriers and solutions with tailored advocacy strategy.

The School's Centre for Gender is the focal lead partner for the Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Regional Platform, working with Nepal and India. The Dean is the focal lead for the Regional Platform, which is located at the Centre for Gender, at the School, in Bangladesh. The School also hosts Bangladesh Health Watch, an influential national civil society initiative established in 2006 (citizen's watch dog), with the objective of monitoring Bangladesh's progress towards achievement of the goal of good health for all its citizens. The Dean and the Director of Centre for Health Systems research at the School are both working group members. It provides the platform for citizens group to take an active interest in understanding and sharing the challenges and choices, policy and programme options of the country's health sector.