

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 11 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 pressing health challenges affecting disadvantaged communities. The School builds capacity and contributes to Public Health by preparing individuals to become public health leaders, practitioners, critical thinkers, researchers, advocates, and stewards in order to enable concrete changes to improve the lives of disadvantaged populations locally, regionally and internationally. 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) programme that attracts a student body of health and development professionals from around the world. At BRAC JPGSPH, 562+ students across 34 countries have graduated with the MPH degree. The School was featured in 2007 by World Health Organisation (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/>). In 2019 the School was

featured by Johns Hopkins University as a Top School in the region (<https://www.globalhealthnow.org/2019-08/10-fixes-global-health-consulting-malpractice>).

Since its inception, BRAC JPGSPH has gradually built up its research capacity within different spheres of public health, with a 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 pressing and emerging developing country health needs to identify evidence based solutions and inform programmes and 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) and a *Humanitarian Research Hub* (established in 2018)

The School is involved in a wide range of studies of national, regional and global importance, including factors that influence and impact on health, poverty alleviation, urban and rural health, socioeconomic development, marginalised communities (Rohingya refugees, informal settlements etc.), climate change and environmental health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, nutrition, gender analysis, gender equity and rights, maternal and child health, urban equity, sexual and reproductive health and rights, sexuality, violence against women and children, human rights and health, health workforce, health equity and health financing, financial inclusion, education, skills development,

migration, human rights, programme evaluations, surveillance and implementation science research. BRAC JPGSPH research provides evidence, translates knowledge into action and ensures advocacy to influence programmes and policies on emerging and pressing issues in Public Health. The School focuses mainly on vulnerable populations, in urban and rural areas, including hidden and marginalised 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 a rapid quantitative and qualitative research assessments that evaluate the impact on the lives of poor in urban and rural populations in the country. These assessments draw samples from several nationally representative surveys as well as assessments carried out by the School, 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 assessments are 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 assessments are dynamic in approach, as 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 715 peer-reviewed publications (including journal articles, international book chapters, etc.). The School has 119 local and global partners and networks. Since inception, the School has undertaken over 195 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. organisations (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 (CPSD) on Public Health. Since 2005, the School has over 220 active engagements with government, key stakeholders (i.e., non-governmental organisations, international agencies), civil society and donor to impact on programme design and policies.

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.

TO BE THE LEADING GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE FOR THE WORLD'S CRITICAL
HEALTH CHALLENGES AFFECTING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

The School serves as the secretariat for 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.