What is the Centre for Health and Population Research (ICDDR,B)?

ICDDR,B, or "The Centre", was established in 1978 as the successor to the Cholera Research Laboratory, which was created in 1960 to study the epidemiology, treatment, and prevention of cholera. The Centre is an independent, international, non-profit organization for research, education, training, and clinical services. Located in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, the Centre is the only truly international health research institution based in a developing country. The results of research conducted over the years at the Centre provide, today, guidelines for policy-makers, implementing agencies, and health professionals in Bangladesh and around the globe. Researchers at the Centre have made major scientific achievements in diarrhoeal disease control, maternal and child health, nutrition, and population sciences. These significant contributions have been recognized worldwide.

How is the Centre Organized?

The Centre is governed by a distinguished multinational Board of Trustees comprising researchers, educators, public health administrators, and representatives of the Government of Bangladesh. The Board appoints a Director and Division Directors who head the four scientific divisions and the support service divisions of Finance, and Administration and Personnel.

The Clinical Sciences Division has three major functions in addition to providing care and treatment to the patients with diarrhoeal disease at the Clinical Research and Service Centre in Dhaka: (1) implementation of clinical research in diarrhoeal diseases and related areas of nutrition, and operations research; (2) training of health care providers (both Bangladeshi and international) in the case management of diarrhoeal diseases and associated complications as well as in clinical and operational research methodology; and (3) preventive health activities directed toward children and their mothers.

The Public Health Sciences Division, staffed with public health professionals, epidemiologists, social scientists, and economists, focuses on the evaluation of population-based interventions to improve reproductive and child health. The Division is responsible for the primary health care services in rural Matlab where there is a population of about 210,000 under demographic surveillance. The Division also has programmes in: Reproductive and Sexual Health; Child Health; Health and Demographic Surveillance; Social and Behavioural Sciences; and Health Economics.

The Laboratory Sciences Division has a research programme with branches in enteric bacteriology, molecular genetics, environmental microbiology, immunology, virology, parasitology, reproductive tract infections, and nutritional biochemistry; and a laboratory service programme with branches in clinical pathology, histopathology, biochemistry, and microbiology.

The Health and Population Extension Division undertakes operations research in family planning, reproductive and child health, epidemic control, and environmental health, and provides technical assistance to the Government of Bangladesh and non-governmental organizations in the application of the Centre's research findings. The Division comprises the two MCH-FP Extension Projects (Rural and Urban), the Epidemic Control Preparedness Programme, and the Environmental Health Programme.

The Training and Education Department coordinates efforts to provide a broad-based training programme that aims at contributing toward the development of global human resources in child survival and population programme research, planning, and implementation.

(See inside of the back cover ...)
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NUTRITION RESEARCH AT ICDDR,B 1960-1996

International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh
Preface

The global health and social costs of nutritional disorders are apparent and have been amply documented. In Bangladesh, an array of nutritional deficiencies are widely prevalent. Deficiencies of macronutrients (protein-energy malnutrition) as well as micronutrients (vitamin A, zinc, iodine, iron, etc.) have an enormous impact on health and productivity due to primary effects as well as their effects as critical co-factors in a variety of conditions including gastrointestinal and other infections, low birth-weight, psychomotor and cognitive development, among others.

Nutrition research is therefore one of the priorities of the ICDDR,B. Areas of investigation include the nutritional impact and management of diarrhoeal diseases, maternal nutrition, reproductive health and child nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, nutrient metabolism, body composition, in addition to other aspects of clinical and community nutrition. Without doubt, issues of nutrition cut across the Centre’s divisional lines and are relevant to nearly all of the priority areas of research of ICDDR,B as described in the Centre’s Strategic Plan.

The Nutrition Working Group (NWG) is one of a few ICDDR,B Scientific Working Groups formed to bring a thematic focus to the Centre’s activities and to complement the current perspectives by Division i.e. Clinical Sciences (CSD), Laboratory Sciences (LSD), Health and Population Extension (HPED), and Public Health Sciences (PHSD). The objectives of the NWG are to facilitate interdivisional collaborative nutrition research, assist in capacity building of the Centre in the field of nutrition, and to help identify priority areas for future nutrition work. Upon informal review by the NWG of the history of nutrition research at ICDDR,B, it was readily apparent that previous Centre researchers have made several observations of fundamental importance and impact. One of the results of this review was the recognition of the value and need for an annotated bibliography of nutrition research of ICDDR,B. This task was therefore undertaken as an activity of the NWG. We gratefully acknowledge the support received from Mr. MSI Khan (DISC) and his staff for putting this document together and Loretta Saldanha (CSD) for coordinating this effort. It is anticipated and hoped that this bibliography will facilitate access to the results of the Centre’s previous nutrition research and ultimately assist future researchers, policy makers, and programme planners in their important goal to ease the burden of malnutrition.

George Fuchs, MD
Director, Clinical Sciences Division
and Head, Nutrition Working Group
Acknowledgements

The International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) is supported by countries and agencies which share its concern for the health problems of developing countries. Current donors include: the aid agencies of the governments of Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States; international organizations, including Arab Gulf Fund, Asian Development Bank, European Union, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Health Organization (WHO); private foundations, including Aga Khan Foundation, Child Health Foundation, Ford Foundation, Population Council, Rockefeller Foundation, and the Sasakawa Foundation; and private organizations, including American Express Bank, Bayer AG, CARE, Family Health International, the Johns Hopkins University, Macro International, New England Medical Center, Procter Gamble, RAND Corporation, SANDOZ, Swiss Red Cross, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Iowa, and others.
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Edited by Vincent Fauveau

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Dissemination and Information Services Centre: The Dissemination and Information Services Centre (DISC) provides access to the scientific literature on diarrhoeal diseases, nutrition, population studies, health, environmental, and behavioural studies in general by means of Current Contents (Life Sciences and Clinical Medicine), MEDLINE, AIDS and POPLINE databases, books, bound journals, reprints of articles, documents, some four hundred current periodicals, etc. DISC publishes the quarterly Journal of Diarrhoeal Diseases Research (and bibliography on diarrhoeal diseases within the Journal), two quarterly newsletters Glimpse (in English) and Shasthya Sanglap (in Bangla), a bimonthly bilingual staff news bulletin--the ICDDR,B News, working papers, scientific reports, special publications, monographs, etc.

Staff: The Centre currently has over 200 researchers and medical staff from more than ten countries doing research and providing expertise in many disciplines related to the Centre’s areas of research. One thousand two hundred personnel are working in the Centre.

What is the Centre’s Plan for the Future?

In the 37 years of its existence, ICDDR,B has evolved into a busy cosmopolitan research centre whose scientists have wide-ranging expertise. Future research will be directed toward finding cost-effective solutions to the health and population problems of the most disadvantaged people in the world. The Centre’s Strategic Plan: “To The Year 2000” outlines work in the following key areas:

Child Survival: Diarrhoeal diseases are responsible for deaths of 3 million children every year. Acute and persistent diarrhoea and dysentery will remain priority areas for research on strategies for prevention, including modifications in personal and domestic hygiene behaviours, provision of appropriate water supply and sanitation for the households, and the development of effective vaccines. The Centre’s scientists will contribute to the improvement of the case management of diarrhoea based on better understanding of basic mechanisms, and national and international responses to epidemics. Risk factors for low birth rate and potential interventions, acute respiratory infections, nutritional deficiency states (including micronutrients), and immunization-preventable infectious diseases will also be examined, particularly as they interact with diarrhoea.

Population and Reproductive Health: The Centre has a long history of conducting pioneering research in the areas of population and family planning. The Centre played a key role in raising the contraceptive use rate among women of reproductive age in Bangladesh to almost 45% through technical assistance and operations research. So much so that the 1994 Cairo Conference hailed Bangladesh as a family planning success story. Matlab is now the model for MCH-FP programmes throughout the world, and the Centre is poised to make important contributions to maternal health and safe motherhood. In addition to continuing work in these areas, the Centre has initiated community-based research on reproductive health and STD/RTI/HIV infections.

Application and Policy: The Centre will continue to play a major part in improving both supply of and demand for existing health technologies, and in replicating the successful interventions piloted in its projects through health systems research. The Centre will increase its communication, dissemination and training efforts to influence international and national health policies in the areas of its expertise. ICDDR,B recognizes, and has given a high priority to, the need to transform research findings into actions.