STUDY TEAM

- **Niaz Asadullah**, Professor of Economics, University of Malaya
- **Anindita Bhattacharjee**, Senior Research Associate, BIGD
- **Montajima Tasnim**, Research Associate, BIGD
- **Farzin Mumtahena**, Research Intern, BIGD
DISCLAIMER

Please note, all results presented in this slide presentation are based on preliminary data, and are to be treated as such.

For additional information please contact:

- Prof. Niaz Asadullah, mniaz.asadullah@gmail.com
- Anindita Bhattacharjee, anindita.bhattacharjee@bracu.ac.bd
MONTHS OF SCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO COVID-19 can have serious negative impact on children’s education, learning and future earning potential.
EVIDENCE FROM EBOLA PANDEMIC

- Strong negative impact of Ebola on children’s education (Bandiera et al 2018)
- High rate of post-Ebola school dropout
- Larger negative impact on poor, vulnerable and girls
Research suggests significant impact of disruption to instructional time on learning and future income of children.
BANGLADESH: FROM LEARNING CRISIS TO A PANDEMIC

Research also confirms a shallow *schooling-learning-profile* across primary and secondary grades (Asadullah and Chaudhury 2015) and school types in rural Bangladesh (Asadullah 2016)

**Instructional time at school**
- Low contact hours
- Teacher absence
- School closure
- Double shift
- Poor quality

**Parents respond in a variety of ways**
(Asadullah et al 2020)
- Shadow education (private tuition and coaching)
- Home schooling
- Ed-tech

**Govt response – remote learning**
- Ghore Boshe Shikhi
- Amar Ghorey Amar School
WHY THE STUDY

TO LEARN

- How severe is the shock to learning time?
- How are children coping with school closure?
- Are remedial measures working?

TO ASSESS

- Remedial needs: how should government respond?
PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Scope
- Descriptive analysis
- Main presentation focuses on RURAL Bangladesh

KEY FINDINGS

Effect of the Shock
1. Learning time use: loss or gain?
2. Non-learning time
3. Changes in mental health: loss of joy?

Response
1. Parental activism & inequality
2. Remedial response by households
3. Ed-tech: Digital divide vs provide

CONCLUSION
1. Implication
2. Next steps
DESIGN: THE STUDY

- 4,672 households - 5,193 students
- Both children and mother interviewed
- Sample is pro-poor
  - Across rural Bangladesh
  - Urban slums (all divisions except Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Sylhet)
- Data collection method: Phone interview
- Measurements:
  - Time-use module (activity-prompt)
  - Before-after comparison (change)
- Data collection period: 5-28 May
QUANTIFYING THE SHOCK
1.1 LEARNING TIME: BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CLOSURE

Study time per day per minute (RURAL)

- School time: 360 minutes
- Coaching time: 55 minutes
- Self-study: 185 minutes (Before), 115 minutes (After)
- Home tutor: 25 minutes (Before), 5 minutes (After)

Legend:
- Blue: Before
- Green: After
1.2 NON-LEARNING TIME USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Activity in minutes (RURAL)</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household chores</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working for family’s economic need</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports, creative activities and leisure</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping younger siblings in studies</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious activities</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do the children spend their waking hours in minutes (Rural)

Before
- Education: 625 minutes
- Work: 51 minutes
- Recreation & Religion: 93 minutes
- Unaccounted: 0 minutes

After
- Education: 124 minutes
- Work: 94 minutes
- Recreation & Religion: 169 minutes
- Unaccounted: 381 minutes

6 hours or 50% of waking hours after school closure is “unaccounted for” (by our 11 activity categories)
HAS CHILD LABOR (PARTICIPATION RATE) GONE UP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Children (RURAL)</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household chores</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working for family’s economic need</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of CHILDREN WORKING MORE THAN TWO HOURS A DAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>AFTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLD CHORES</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKING FOR FAMILY’S ECONOMIC NEEDS</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 CHANGES IN MENTAL HEALTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Children feeling (RURAL)</th>
<th>Happy</th>
<th>Tension free</th>
<th>Sad</th>
<th>Afraid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>After</td>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension free</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESPONSE, COPING PATTERN AND STRATEGIES
PARENTAL BACKGROUND MATTERS

- Children with both parents with education SSC and above
  - **148 minutes** of study time on average (rural)
- Children with both parents **without education**
  - **113 minutes** of study time on average (rural)

But not explained by any single SES dimension:
1) Poor vs non-poor, 2) disinterested vs educationally active parents, 3) 1st vs 2nd generation learner family, 4) Happy vs grumpy mothers, 5) Landlessness vs landed
REMEDIAL MEASURES TO SCHOOL CLOSURE

- TV class: 16%
- Online education programs: 1%
- Help by Mother: 24%
- Help by Father: 12%
- Help by Sibling/relative: 35%
- Self-study: 96%
- Coaching/private tuition: 5%
- Don't study at home: 1%
ED-TECH? AGAIN, PARENTAL BACKGROUND MATTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Children (RURAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watch TV class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither parents have education</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents have education SSC and above</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch educational program on internet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither parents have education</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents have education SSC and above</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACCESS & USE: TV AND INTERNET FOR EDUCATION

Access to TV (Rural)
- 62% YES
- 38% NO

Watch TV class?
- 25% YES
- 75% NO

Access to Internet (Rural)
- 30% YES
- 70% NO

Watch Educational Program online?
- 2% YES
- 98% NO
ARE TV PROGRAMS EASY TO FOLLOW?

**Ghore Boshe Shikhi** – Primary – (Rural)

- 58% YES
- 42% NO

**Amar ghorey Amar School** – Secondary – (Rural)

- 64% YES
- 36% NO

Of those (16%) who watch the TV programs
WHAT ABOUT RESILIENT CHILDREN? ARE THEY COPING WITH ED-TECH?

For 9% children, self-study time did not change. For 13% it increased marginally (by an hour on average). We are calling them RESILIENT.
CONCLUSION
IMPLICATIONS

- School time and self-study time are *not substitutes*
- Getting children back in schools -- a huge recovery challenge
- More than *digital divide* and *parental capability*
  - Ed-tech (TV-based learning) promising but not yet an advantage
- Pandemic is not necessarily an equalizer
  - R-U gap is likely to have widened
NEXT STEP

- **Follow up survey**
  - Tracking children’s activities and parental investment (e.g. ed-tech)

- **Deeper analysis**
  - Survey (telephone) response pattern; cognitive process; response/measurement bias (24-hour recall method; “unaccounted time”)
  - Understanding parental “inaction” (Well-being—Poverty—Learning nexus)
  - Heterogeneity (e.g. gender) & causal analysis

- **Longer-term objectives**
  - Assessing learning loss
  - Improving school readiness
  - Targeted ed-tech interventions
THANK YOU