

The AIBS Fellowship Final Report

During my tenure as an AIBS fellow, I collected interview data for the doctoral dissertation in Matlab, Chandpur, Bangladesh. After data collection, I spent time in Dhaka, Bangladesh. I was able to complete important research and networking activities in both Matlab and Dhaka with the help of my junior fellowship from AIBS.

First, with financial support from AIBS, I traveled to Matlab – a rural thana within the district of Chandpur. While there I completed data collection for my doctoral dissertation in Sociology at the University of Missouri. With the help of a Bangla-speaking research assistant, I conducted 30 in-depth interviews with women in Matlab. During interviews we discussed the education, job, health, and marriage prospects of sons and daughters, and compared across gender as well as over time to see how girls' lives are changing in the village. We also discussed male labor migration and the effects of male labor out-migration on the family from the perspective of the migrant's wife. After data collection was complete, I shifted to Dhaka where we began the transcription process.

During my time in Matlab and in Dhaka I had invaluable networking opportunities. I was able to network with people from a variety of institutions, including the AIBS Dhaka office, the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), and public health professionals from the U.S. at Johns Hopkins who were doing public health and intervention work in Bangladesh. In addition to networking, I made use of the following resources and facilities: the Dhaka University Central Library, the ICDDR,B Matlab field site, and the Bangla Language Institute (BLI) at Independent University Bangladesh in Dhaka.

The AIBS Dhaka office staff members were very helpful and proved to be a great resource for anything from needing advice on transportation to setting up a presentation for me to discuss my work with scholars from Dhaka University and elsewhere. The AIBS Dhaka office proved to be a great venue for my research presentation. In collaboration with ICDDR,B, we invited students and faculty from Dhaka University; elective fellows, medical students, and researchers from ICDDR,B; and other fellows and members of AIBS to meet for the research presentation. I was overwhelmed by the response and the number of people who came to hear me share my work. The feedback I received was both enthusiastic and critical; it has proven quite helpful now that I am ready for analysis of my dissertation data.

I was able to complete the data collection as intended during my stay in Matlab and to begin transcription and preliminary analysis during my time in Dhaka. The feedback I received during the research presentation was tremendously insightful. I am extremely thankful for the support from the staff at the AIBS Dhaka office as well as from the relationships I built with other AIBS fellows who were in Dhaka during the tenure of my fellowship.