

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

TO : William H. Foege, M.D.
Director, Center for Disease Control (CDC)
Through: Philip S. Brachman, M.D.
Director, Bureau of Epidemiology (BE)

DATE: June 4, 1980

PHS/BE

FROM : Julian Gold, M.D.
Family Planning Evaluation Division (FPED), BE, CDC

SUBJECT: Resource Support Services Report: Dacca, Bangladesh, March 21-April 13;
Bangkok, Thailand, April 13-18, Honolulu, Hawaii, April 22-April 28;
Atlanta, Georgia, April 30-May 2, 1980

SUMMARY

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SUMMARY

Between March 21 and April 13, 1980, I visited Bangladesh to prepare a protocol for a survey on the attitudes of rural religious leaders (Imams) to family planning and abortion. During the consultation the Islamic Foundation in Dacca requested that the study include questions on attitudes about agricultural and rural development. To date there have been no scientifically based studies to evaluate attitudes of religious leaders to social and population issues. The results of this study will enable the Bangladeshi government to more effectively direct education initiatives at Imams as well as addressing religious concerns in public education programs, especially those related to family planning.

This project will involve in-depth interviews with 450 Imams in 3 districts in Bangladesh. These districts were selected, in part, because of alleged differences in the liberality or conservatism of their Islamic practices. It will be conducted over a 2-month period and the data tabulated and analyzed at Dacca University's Institute for Statistical Research and Training (ISRT). Topics other than family planning will be first aid, farming, poultry and animal raising, irrigation, and attitudes about

participation of Imams in development programs in Bangladesh. The protocol was written, reviewed, and approved in Bangladesh by the Technical Committee of the Bangladesh Fertility Research Program (BRFP) and ISRT (see letters at end of protocol).

In Bangkok I discussed the Imam attitude survey with Dr. Samaad of ESCAP. Dr. Samaad was formerly director of ISRT and had some valuable suggestions as to selection of districts and topics for the questionnaire. I also presented the Imam study protocol to the Program Officer of the International Committee on Applied Research on Population (ICARP). The next Technical Committee meeting of ICARP will be held in September 1980 at which time the protocol can be considered for funding. Although the protocol was received by the Program Officer with some enthusiasm, he said that no decision could be made until the Technical Committee met.

At the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, I gave a seminar on influence of religion on attitudes to family planning and had discussions with demographic and social science staff members on future research projects in Bangladesh as well as design modifications of the Imam attitude survey.

I. DATES AND PLACES OF TRAVEL

Dacca, Bangladesh, March 21-April 13
Bangkok, Thailand, April 13-18
Honolulu, Hawaii, April 22-28
Atlanta, Georgia, April 30-May 2

II. PURPOSE OF TRAVEL

Dacca, Bangladesh - To assist the Bangladeshi government design a survey of the attitudes and practices of religious leaders to family planning and abortion. To provide technical assistance in evaluating the menstrual regulation training program conducted by 4 Bangladesh medical colleges.

Bangkok, Thailand - To consult with Achari Yuktanandana, Program Officer, ICARP, Asia, on possible funding resources for the proposed Imam attitude survey project.

Honolulu, Hawaii - To present a seminar at the East-West Center on religious attitudes and family planning in Bangladesh. To provide consultation on future East-West population projects in Bangladesh.

III. CHIEF CONTACTS

Bangladesh

USAID/Dacca

Charles Gurney, Director, Population Section
John Dumm, Program Officer, Population Section

Ford Foundation

Anthony Measham, Program Officer
Robert Terry, Management Consultant

Population Control and Family Planning (PCFP)

A.M. Haider Hossain, Secretary, PCFP
Atiqur R. Khan, Director, Services and Training
Syed Waliullah, Director, National Institute of Population Research
and Training
Laurie Lewis, Consultant

Information, Education, and Motivation Division (IEM/PCFP)

Jahangur Haider, Director
S.R. Chowdhury, Assistant Director

Institute for Statistical Research and Training (ISRT), Dacca University

M. Obaidullah, Chairman
Shahid Ullah, Lecturer
Pk. Md. Motiur Rahman, Senior Lecturer

Pathfinder Fund

Asubhan Chowdhury, Director
M. Habib, Program Officer

Save the Children Fund (UK)

Nicholas Cohen, Medical Officer
Theresa Blanchet-Cohen, Anthropologist

UNICEF

Jack Boone, Evaluation Officer attached to IEM

Madrasha-i-Aliyah, Dacca

Moulana Y. Sharif, Principal

Islamic Foundation

Moulana Nuruzzaman, Director
Akim Feroze, Assistant Director

Bangladesh Madrashah Association

Moulana Abdul Mannan, Director

Australian High Commission

Richard W.D. Harman, First Secretary

Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Kotbari, Comilla

M.A. Choudhury, Population and Training Coordinator
D. Hossain, Education Officer
A. Aziz Kahn, Acting Director, BARD

Companiganj Health Project: Noakhali
Golam Mustafa, Medical Director
C.W. McCord, Founder
A.T. Shafiq A. Chowdhury, Medical Consultant
B. Mustafa, Medical Officer

International Center for Diarrheal Diseases Research Lab/Bangladesh (ICDDR/B)
Roger Glass, CDC Assignee
Barbara Stoll, Pediatric and Research Consultant

Thailand

International Committee for Applied Research on Population (ICARP)
Achari Yuktananda, Program Officer

ESCAP
Dr. Samaad

Hawaii

East-West Center
Fred Arnold, Assistant Director, Population Division
Jay Palmore, Research Fellow
Siew-Ean Khoo, Research Fellow
Linda Martin, Research Fellow

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Background

This project was initially conceived by Dr. Roger Rochat (CDC) in April 1979. He proposed to conduct a probability survey of individual rural Imams to ask demographic and family planning attitude and practice questions. He presumed the interviewer could use a printed questionnaire. The questionnaire would include attitudinal questions on abortion similar to those used in the physician attitude survey conducted by ISRT and CDC in 1979, the World Bank general population surveys, and the 1976 World Fertility Survey. All of these surveys showed substantial approval for abortion under selected circumstances which seem illegal under current Bangladesh law. Dr. Rochat felt the Bangladeshi government should consider specifically the attitudes of rural Imams in considering whether to change the law on abortion.

As part of background research to this project, I interviewed government leaders in population, local representatives of international agencies, and religious leaders (see Chief Contacts, Section III), as well as several groups of and several individual rural Imams. In my interviews family planning was a very sensitive issue. We considered including other topics in order to establish rapport with each Imam interviewed. Moreover, the Islamic Foundation had requested assistance in evaluating their training program in the areas of attitudes to social development besides family planning.

Thus, the protocol was designed to reflect this wider objective, to evaluate the attitudes of rural Imams to social development with an emphasis on family planning and, to a much lesser extent, abortion.

How much is already known of the attitudes of Imams?

To our knowledge no scientifically based surveys of Imams have been conducted in Bangladesh nor in any other Muslim country. Most information regarding religious opinions of economic, rural, and family planning programs has been derived from literate, educated Muslim leaders, not from rural Imams who have direct contact with village people. Thus, the influence of rural religious leaders has been poorly known. Some Muslim leaders who are able to interpret Koranic and Hadith teachings seem to have no objection to family planning or social development and encourage it. However, rural Imams are less often able to translate the Koran from original Arabic and, therefore, are less able to interpret its teachings. These Imams hold to basic Islamic tenets of predetermination and fate, but it is not known how this affects their perception of their role in changing Bangladesh society, nor how this might influence the villagers.

How will the interviews be conducted?

Each interviewer will have to memorize the questionnaire on the demographic characteristics of each Imam; they will know selected quotations from the Koran, that is, those relating to social development and family planning (for examples see footnotes to protocol); have backgrounds in agriculture and animal raising. This will require intensive training and will enable the interviewer to have in-depth open discussions with the Imam and fill in the questionnaire after the interview. Coding demographic information will be fairly straight-forward; this may not be so with attitudinal questions. Whereas demographic questions may be coded on sight, attitudinal questions will be coded at ISRT. This will allow some standardization of interpretation. The classification of open-ended questions on attitudes may have to be revised periodically throughout the analysis of the pilot and actual surveys.

How will this study be used?

1. This study will be a resource to all governments and agencies planning attitudinal surveys of religious groups in all Muslim countries.
2. This study will enable the Bangladeshi government to plan educational programs in all areas of rural development currently directed at Imams. Moreover, public education programs may be modified to address any potential religious opposition, and would, therefore, be more acceptable.

3. This study will enable comparison of religious attitudes of Imams of Bangladesh with Imams in other Muslim countries.

B. Islam

Islam originated in the A.D. 600's and is based on the life and teachings of Mohammad, an Arab born in Mecca. The chief religious writings are the Quran (Koran) and the Hadith (sayings of the prophet). It is the principle religion of the Middle East and is widespread across North Africa and Southeast Asia. Islam requires prayer 5 times each day at the mosque and refers to the Koran and Hadith to provide rules of conduct for every day-to-day event in a person's life. The basis tenet of Islam is the belief in fate and predestination, in the sense that both good and evil are predetermined and help is in store for believers. "God guaranteeing sustenance to all creatures." "There is no moving thing on earth whose nourishment dependeth not on God" (Sura 11-6). Thus, Islam teaches that man should not try to direct his own destiny because the outcome is already determined.

In Bangladesh there are an estimated 98,000 mosques and 130,000 Imams (source: Islamic Foundation). Religious leaders can be divided into several categories:

Imams: Men trained in reading the Koran in original Arabic. They are in charge of a mosque and lead the daily prayers and usually present a "sermon" to the village prior to the noon prayer meeting on Fridays (the most important religious day in the Muslim week). Imams receive training at Madrashes--religious schools. Imams are the "priests" of Islam and provide spiritual, ethical, and social leadership to the village.

Although no demographic information is available about Imams, anecdotally they seem to derive a subsistence income from the villages and may have small land holdings. However, most Imams shun the material world and live as ascetics. They have been usually regarded by health workers as fairly unapproachable on issues of social change or development of Bangladesh society. The chief religious organization for Imams in Bangladesh is the Islamic Foundation in Dacca.

Moulana
(Mullah):

These are religious teachers who train Imams and conduct classes for children at the madrashes. Before the introduction of the Bengali educational system, madrashes were the only schools in the country. All children are supposed, according to Islamic law, to attend madrashes in preference to regular Bengali schools; this practice seems to be broken down in many parts of the country, especially near towns or cities.

Moulana play a vital role in laying basic religious foundation for the populace. Imams may have the role of Moulana, i.e., they teach as well as conduct prayers. The central organization in the country is the Madrasha Teacher's Association in Dacca. Almost all madrashas are independent of government financial support.

Tobliqus: These are particularly learned and revered religious men. There are very few in the country and they are considered to be prophets or sages by the people. They follow all Islamic teachings and travel around Bangladesh holding meetings which are attended by people from many villages. They have no worldly possessions and are very influential in directing religious thought of the people. Tobliqus are independent and not part of any organized religious association.

1. Islamic Foundation (Dacca)--Training Programs

The Islamic Foundation, Dacca, is the central religious organization for Imams. In 1979 the Foundation established an Imam training program whereby each 2 months about 120 Imams were selected and brought from rural areas to Dacca for an intensive 10-week training course. The general areas of the training program were basic principles of first aid, farming and fertilizer use, irrigation, poultry and animal raising, and veterinary science.

When the syllabus was originally proposed the topic of family planning was considered but rejected because the curriculum committee felt the Imams would regard it as too controversial. However, according to the Foundation some Imams have raised the family planning question during discussions. The Islamic Foundation asked me to provide technical assistance in evaluating the attitudes of Imams to all subjects of the training program including some attitudinal questions on family planning and population growth in Bangladesh. Moreover, the Foundation is prepared to conduct questionnaire surveys during class time in order to evaluate the training program. This will be a valuable source of information on the attitudes of Imams, especially for a pilot or ongoing survey. However, these Imams are probably a select group because they are literate enough to have been selected to travel to Dacca for the training program. Although no objective information is available, my discussions with Islamic leaders suggest that, in general, rural Imams are illiterate and, therefore, would not be selected for the Islamic Foundation program. Thus, any survey at the Islamic Foundation may not be representative of all rural Imams.

2. Imam Study Protocol

The Bangladesh government is concerned about religious opposition to the practice of family planning (contraception and abortion). The views and attitudes of religious leaders regarding family planning and abortion vary significantly between Islamic countries. The consensus

of Middle Eastern Islamic scholars is that Islam does not oppose family planning (1). This viewpoint is supported by various sayings of the Holy Koran (2-5). These interpretations have resulted in a shared belief in many countries that Islam is generally supportive of family planning and of abortion up to the time of quickening (90-120 days) (6). On this basis actional family planning programs have been undertaken in Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. In the case of Tunisia, a liberal abortion law has been in effect since 1973.

Although some feel that religious opposition to family planning is substantial in Bangladesh, little objective evidence exists to support this belief. Moreover, religious persons in rural Bangladesh have never been surveyed to determine which parts of the Holy Koran, if any, they see as being opposed to family planning. Religious persons in urban areas, especially those who are able to interpret the Koran and Hadith, seem to be in favor of limiting population growth in order to improve the living standard of the people. The main opposition to family planning in Bangladesh seems to stem from the predominately rural population where religious persons openly say that although they do not have the educational background to understand the Holy Koran, intrinsically they believe the Koran is against any method of limiting family size. Conservative estimates indicate that there are more than 98,000 mosques and 130,000 practicing Imams in rural Bangladesh. These Imams may also serve as Moulanas (religious teachers) in isolated villages. They provide the villagers with their only source of ethical and spiritual guidance. Thus, their opinion on population growth may be a critical factor in an individual's acceptance or rejection of family planning. It is, therefore, essential that the government be aware of the opinion of these religious leaders regarding its population programs.

Performance of legal abortion is regulated according to the Penal Code of 1860 (7) to circumstances which directly endanger the life of the pregnant woman. The result of restrictive abortion legislation in combination with some recognized Islamic prescription of abortion contributed to an estimated 5,000-10,000 abortion-related deaths in 1978 (11).

In a recent study of 498 induced abortion-related deaths which were investigated, 17% were induced by village doctors; the rest were induced by dais (49%) and a variety of non-surgically trained personnel (34%).

Previous studies have been conducted regarding the attitudes of other groups toward abortion. In 1975 married men and women were interviewed (12) and 80% approved of abortion for women who had been raped. Sixty two percent (62%) were in favor of abortion in a life-threatening situation and 20% approved for general medical indications. In 1978 (13) a survey of 376 physicians (70% working in health thana complexes) revealed that 95% approved of abortion to save the woman's life; 79% following rape; 61% for a woman with many children; and 65% for a woman who became pregnant after her husband's death. These studies indicated that most

people of Bangladesh approved of abortion in specific circumstances. A survey of the attitudes of Imams to family planning will provide the government with a more complete picture of the attitudes of its population. Included in this study will be questions on agricultural, rural, and social development focusing on topics such as first aid, farming, irrigation, poultry and animal raising, and animal husbandry.

The Bangladesh government has introduced 2 training programs (the Islamic Foundation training program and the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development training program at Comilla) to teach Imams the basic principles of the above topics. These projects, however, have never been evaluated as to the knowledge and attitudes of Imams either attending the programs or intending to participate. By including these topics in the survey, it will be possible to assess the overall attitudes and practices of rural Imams to all aspects of economic and social development in Bangladesh.

Footnotes:

1. Sheikh Adbullah al-Quliqli, Grand Mufti of Jordan, Ftawa: Family Planning in Islam; in Islam and Family Planning, Directorate of Population Control and Family Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Dacca, 1977.
2. Khan, A.H.: Islamic Opinions on Contraception. Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla, December, 1977.
3. "God wishes you ease but wishes not your discomfort" (Sura 2/185).
4. "God desired not to lay a burden on you" (Sura 5/6).
5. Mothers when delivered shall suckle their young for at least 24 months (Sura/233).
6. A.K.M. Serajul Islam, Bangladesh Family Planning Association, Dacca, 1976, in Islam and Family Planning (see Ref. 1) writes that before the 7 stages are reached there is no life in the child and abortion can be performed.
7. Clause 312, Penal Code of 1860.
8. "Lost are they who in their ignorance have foolishly stayed their children" (Sura 6/140).
9. "And when the female child that has been buried alive shall be asked; for what crime has she been put to death" (Sura 81/8-9).
10. "That you shall not stay your children because of poverty" (Sura 6/152).
11. Rosenberg M: Memorandum to William H. Foege, M.D., Director, Center for Disease Control, July 1979.
12. Samaad. A Demographic Survey for Collection of Baseline Data at Four Concentrated Thanas, University of Dacca, Bangladesh, 1976.
13. Anthony Measham, M.D., Dr.P.H., Ford Foundation, Dacca, and Michael Rosenberg, M.D., M.P.H., Center for Disease Control: Personal communication. Survey report to be published.

3. Study Content

We propose to determine the following information about a probability sample of rural Imams.

1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondent: Age, marital status, number and outcome of all spouses' pregnancies. Religious training, Imam practices, number of people attending mosque on Fridays (as an indication of religious practice of the village), socioeconomic status.
2. Knowledge: Imams' knowledge about the government's programs to involve Imams in rural development, agriculture, first aid, poultry and animal raising; knowledge of government population programs in Bangladesh; knowledge about selected aspects of the above subjects including contraceptives, maternal and child health, and abortion-related morbidity and mortality.
3. Attitudes: These questions will be of 2 types: a) origins of religious thought. Who the Imam feels has molded his religious and social thinking, e.g., madrasha, family teaching, tobligus, public media, etc. b) attitudes on religion, social, rural, and population issues. Attitudes on family planning for certain groups within the village (child spacing, young, old, and multiparous women). Attitudes on abortion and under what circumstances, if any, it may be approved of. What role each Imam sees himself playing in future Bangladesh society.

Each Imam will be asked questions to determine knowledge of Koranic and Hadith passages; selected passages will be related to each Imam who will be asked to give his interpretation as to whether the passage is for or against aspects of family planning and abortion. If the Imams general attitude is against family planning he will be asked "those passages from the Koran and Hadith he regards as opposed to these population issues."

These questions will be part of discussions with the Imam. Although most questions will not be asked directly, all will be covered during the interview unless the Imam expresses obvious rejection to a particular topic. If so, this will be recorded and probe questions will be asked to define reasons for concern.

4. Selection of Survey Districts

I selected 3 districts based on 2 criteria:

1. Each district should represent different religious practices. Thus, I selected a very conservative Muslim district (Noakhali), a liberal district (Rajshahi), and one in the middle (Comilla). The conservative-liberal labels were based on impressions of Bangladeshi leaders.

2. Each district had to have a central coordinating office and a district coordinator (D.C.). (See Appendix 4, D.C. Selection Criteria.) Each of the above districts have well organized health and research centers and have persons of unique ability to coordinate and run a survey project.

Noakhali District

This district contains 150 square miles with a population in 1977 of 130,000, divided into 7 unions. The most populous union has 35,000 while the least populous has about 13,000 people. The literacy rate is 20% (Census 1974). There are 67 primary and high schools, 99 madrasahs, and 1 college. The agriculture of the area is 1 crop of rice per year. Comparatively, it is deficient in food supply.

This district is considered conservative, in part, because of the effect of Islam on the women's role. Women in the area keep to strict "purda" (use of the veil). They do not move in the villages during daytime; they usually visit relatives only after dark. Even at night women cover themselves with 2 black umbrellas.

Companiganj Thana Health Project is situated 6 miles from the Bay of Bengal. The health project was established in 1973 with foreign agency funding and expatriot leadership to develop integrated curative and preventive health services with an emphasis on family planning. By 1979 there were 2 main health centers and 5 subcenters providing maternal and child health, family planning, and ambulatory medical care. There is a well-equipped 20-bed hospital in the administrative center. All 7 centers provide sterilization and IUD services on a 3-day rotating basis (twice per week). Nutritional information and a protein food supplement is distributed by the centers to local village children. In 1978, an evaluation of the project revealed that 100 women attend family planning clinics daily. Family planning service statistics are attached (Appendix B). The medical director of the project and his staff are young, dedicated physicians with a keen interest in provision and assessment of health care within their thana. The medical director has a post-graduate master's degree in public health and is experienced in interviewer training, data collection, and analysis.

Rajshahi District

This district, on the western side of Bangladesh, is considered to be the most liberal area in religious attitudes and practices. In the major city of Rajshahi, the University of Rajshahi has a well-established anthropology department that conducts research into the attitudes and practices of Bangladesh's population. The principal investigator of the department will be approached to coordinate the study in this area. Baseline attitudinal information may be available from a recent study on the "world view" of a sample of Rajshahi district for at least 5 years and, although no scientific information is available on contraceptive acceptance, the local impression is that services are well utilized.

Comilla District

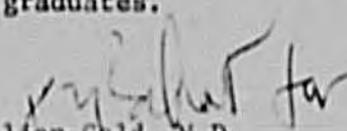
Situated on the eastern side of Bangladesh, this district is considered to be in the middle between liberal and conservative as regards religious attitudes. Near the main town of Comilla, the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), established in the early 1960's, provides training and implementation strategy for a wide range of social and rural development initiatives. It is an innovative center which began the first family planning services for rural Bangladesh. The Academy has done many surveys and epidemiologic studies on all aspects of family planning attitudes, acceptance, and use. The Academy has qualified researchers well able to coordinate and conduct a survey involving rural imams.

Pathfinder Fund Consultation

While in Bangladesh, I conducted a brief consultation for the Pathfinder Fund to establish evaluation criteria for their menstrual regulation training program. This training program was started in November 1979 in 4 medical colleges in Bangladesh, with the objective of training physicians and paramedics to perform menstrual regulation. To date, 56 physicians and paramedics have been trained and slightly over 4,500 menstrual regulation procedures have been performed by these trainees and instructors in the 4 medical colleges. It is proposed that by the end of 1980 10 colleges will have menstrual regulation training programs to train about 350 physicians and paramedics per year to perform menstrual regulation in rural areas throughout Bangladesh. The object of the consultation was to prepare evaluation criteria in 3 areas:

1. Technical ability to perform the procedure,
2. Attitude of the physician or paramedic to the training program and implementation in the field, and
3. Attitude to unacceptability of the menstrual regulation procedure by rural Bangladesh women.

Included in this will be an assessment of availability of technical supplies, abortion-related complications, and effect on the incidence of hospitalized, illegal abortion-related complications and deaths in the area served by the menstrual regulation program. This evaluation will take place in late 1980 or early 1981 and be directed at the 4 initial training centers and their graduates.


Julian Gold, M.D.

Imam Study Protocol (Draft)

SURVEY OF THE ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE, AND PRACTICES OF RURAL IMAMS
TO AGRICULTURAL, RURAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
INCLUDING FAMILY PLANNING AND ABORTION

Principal Investigator: Mr. M. Obaidullah, Director,
Institute of Statistical Research and
Training, University of Dacca

Duration : 12 months

Date : May 1980

Budget : \$15,000

Project Consultant : Dr. Julian Gold

Grantee: Institute of Statistical Research and Training (ISRT), University of Dacca, Bangladesh

Objective: (1) To assess the knowledge and attitudes of rural Imams toward currently available family planning methods, abortion, farming, irrigation, first aid, animal and poultry raising, and social development. (2) To identify Imams' concerns about the government's family planning programs and proposed Imam training projects.

Implementation: The proposed project would be carried out by Dacca University's ISRT in Bangladesh through the Bangladesh Fertility Research Program (BRFP). The ISRT is under the direction of Mr. M. Obaidullah and BRFP under the direction of Dr. Atiqur Rahman Khan. Financial support will be sought either from the International Committee on Applied Research and Population or the International Fertility Research Program (IFRP) through the BRFP to ISRT for local personnel costs, supplies and equipment, data processing, training of field staff, publication of results, and other expenses. The USAID Mission will, as requested by ISRT, ask AID/W to request the American Public Health Association (APHA) or IFRP to provide international travel, per diem, and support salary of a consultant, Dr. Julian Gold, to travel to Dacca during the period of the study to collaborate in 1) pilot testing, refining the questionnaire, and training the interviewers, and 2) data processing, analysis, and publication of the results. Dr. Roger Rochat, Deputy Director, and Pat Gould, M.S., Statistician, will provide consultant support as needed. Dr. Anthony Measham, Ford Foundation/Dacca, will provide consultant support as needed.

Expected Outcome of the Study:

A more precise indication of the attitudes, practices, and knowledge of the influential religious persons of the country toward family planning, abortion, agricultural, rural, and economic development will enable the government to; a) develop appropriate educational initiatives for these groups, b) enlist their aid in implementing population and rural development programs, and c) reduce opposition to proposed public education programs in the area of population control and rural development.

Sample Frame:

There are 19 districts in Bangladesh divided into 59 sub-districts and over 350 thanas (police administrative districts). Within the 3 districts selected, 10 thanas will be chosen at random and 45 villages randomly chosen within each thana. The survey will be conducted in 2 parts: a) a pilot study and b) data collection phase.

(a)--The pilot study will consist of 10 interviews in each of the 3 selected districts for a total of 30. A second list of 10 villages will be chosen as substitutes, to be used if the original Imams are not available or refuse to be interviewed. (b)--The main data collection phase will consist of 150 interviews in each of 3 selected districts. Villages of the districts will be randomly selected; 4 interviewers will be assigned

to each district. This number of interviewers will enable the study to be completed in about 8-10 weeks, allowing for more than 1 callback to 20% of respondents and inevitable problems with transportation. The interviewer should identify the chief Imam in the village (this will be done after consultation with the head of the local union council) and will attempt to interview this main Imam. The respondent should be the Imam who is recognized by the village people as the chief Imam, in general the person who leads the prayers on Fridays and who delivers the pre-service address to the congregation. Each interviewer should be able to conduct 1 interview per day, 4 days a week. The fifth day will be used for callbacks on those respondents not available on the first visit. On the sixth day the interviewer should return to the district survey headquarters to report the findings of the previous week, discuss any problems encountered and receive his assignment for the next 4 days. Using 4 interviewers should allow meaningful discussions between the interviewers on the sixth day as well as individual attention by the district coordinator. (See next section for definition of district coordinator.) The project consultant will visit each study area at least once during this phase to answer logistic and technical problems. The district coordinator will be independent in deciding the advisability of repeated callbacks on those Imams who were unavailable during the first visit. The district coordinator will select alternate villages from a predrawn list so that 150 interviews may be conducted in each district.

District Coordinator (D.C.)

There will be 1 D.C. for each district to be surveyed. The coordinator will have direct responsibility for the interviewers in his district. The coordinator will be knowledgeable in all aspects of the study design and will have made positive contributions to the final interview format. A pilot study will be done in each district to evaluate logistic problems to be faced by the D.C. and the interviewers. The D.C. will be involved in 1) the interviewer training sessions, 2) day-to-day logistics of the data collection (pilot and main phases), 3) ongoing refining of the coding manual and coding procedure according to results obtained in the attitudinal part of the questionnaire, 4) data completion and tabulation, 5) preparing the final analysis and report writing for his district, and 6) direct involvement with the national study report. It is proposed that the D.C.'s will be brought to Dacca before the pilot study for extensive roundtable discussions with the principle investigator and project consultant. At this time the questionnaire will be prepared. On their return, the D.C.'s will hire and train the 4 interviewers in their district and all participants will be brought to Dacca for several sessions before the initial field testing. After this, the D.C.'s will again come to Dacca to discuss their findings and prepare the final interview format. Once completed, the D.C.'s will update the interviewers on any changes for the data collection phase. Each interviewer should meet the D.C. at least once a week to return complete forms, discuss any problems, code the questionnaires already completed, and receive his assignment for the following week. The D.C. will be visited by the project consultant at least once during this phase.

Data Analysis and Dissemination

After all the interviews are completed, the D.C. will, with assistance from ISRT, tabulate the coded part of the questionnaire and submit a final report from his district. This report will be collected with the others by the project consultant into a national study report. Each D.C. will be able to use the study results from his district for any planning or academic purposes he sees as necessary. Thus, in effect, each district will have conducted an independent study.

After all district reports are submitted, the D.C.'s will be brought to Dacca to discuss the final report format, conclusions, and interpretation. The principle investigator will be responsible for preparing and publishing the final report. The publication will give appropriate recognition to all organizations and persons who have contributed to the development and implementation of this project.

Survey Design

Introduction

The most important part of this study will be the selection, training and motivation of the interviewers. Each interview will have to allow for open-ended answers regarding the attitudes and practices of Imams to fertility control. Thus, each interviewer should be prepared to have discussions with the respondents, approach the subject of fertility control at just the right moment within the context of other questions on rural and economic development, and be prepared to interpret the answer of the respondent in an objective manner after the interview. In most, if not all, cases it may not be possible to record (on the interview form) any information other than basic demographic data during the actual interview. This means that each interviewer will have to memorize all sections of the questionnaire and be prepared to recall answers immediately after the interview and transcribe them onto the prepared questionnaire. Each interview may take more than 1 hour and may be the sum of several sessions with the Imam. Thus, each completed interview form should represent the objective impressions of the interviewer gained after lengthy, in-depth personal discussions with the respondent. This format closely parallels the methods used by medical anthropologists to collect data.

Selection of Interviewers

Interviewers should be selected by the D.C. after discussions with the project consultant. Each interviewer should be a male educated in the social sciences at a Bangladesh college/university, have come from a rural area, and have some educational knowledge of the Koran. The most important criteria for selection of the interviewers would be their ability to have a discussion with an Imam and then record the results objectively in Bengali. Some previous experience in doing open-ended surveys would be every helpful. The interviewer should have an interest in the outcome of the study and may even derive some academic benefit from it, e.g., part of a thesis, dissertation, or social science project.

5

Each interviewer should ideally come from the area where he will conduct the interviews. He must be prepared to devote 2-3 months full-time to the project and actively participate in designing the final interview format for his area.

Training of Interviewers

In line with other epidemiologic studies, this aspect will be most important. Each group of interviewers will be trained by their D.C. and the project consultant during roundtable discussions. The interviewer will be required to memorize most of the questionnaire and participate in a number of simulated interview settings. During the pilot study the D.C. will accompany the interviewer on at least 1 interview in order to ascertain his ability in conversing with Imams. The interviewer must have a working knowledge of the Koran and Hadith and must know the sayings related to family planning and abortion.

Ascertainment of the training program will be through a questionnaire for the interviewers to be answered during the last sessions as well as a simulated interview with an Imam or the D.C.

Timetable

The ideal time to conduct field surveys in Bangladesh is between October and March. At this time both the weather and the road conditions permit relative accessibility to remote rural villages. The schedule below reflects this optimal timing:

October 1980: Pretesting of questionnaire, training of D.C.'s, finalizing and printing questionnaire, training of interviewers.

November-December 1980: Field work and beginning of tabulations.

January 1981: Data analysis and discussions with D.C.s.

February 1981: Submission of final district report and central analysis.

March 1981: Analysis and publication of final report.

Budget

i)	Personnel	Tk. 1,00,000
ii)	Travel & Per Diem	60,000
iii)	Supplies & Printing	45,000
iv)	Administrative Cost	<u>20,000</u>
		Tk. 2,25,000
		(U.S. \$15,000)

পরিসংখ্যান গবেষণা ও শিক্ষণ ইন্সটিটিউট
INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING
(I. S. R. T.)

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
সায়েন্স এন্ড
ঢাকা—২



UNIVERSITY OF DAKKA
SCIENCE ANNEX
DAKKA-2, BANGLADESH

April 12, 1980

To Whom It May Concern

This Institute will be glad to conduct a Study on Attitudes
of Imams to-wards Family Planning if Financial Support is
available through normal procedures..

M. Obaidullah
Director

Minutes of the meeting of the Technical Sub-Committee of Bangladesh Fertility Research Programme.

A meeting of the Technical Sub-Committee of Bangladesh Fertility Research Programme (BFRP) was held on 11 April 1980 at 2:00 P.M. in the chamber of the Director, BFRP.

The following members were present:

1. Prof. Syeda Firoza Begum
2. Prof. Suraiya Jabeen
3. Dr. Atiqur Rahman Khan
4. Dr. Julian Gold
5. Fern Gold

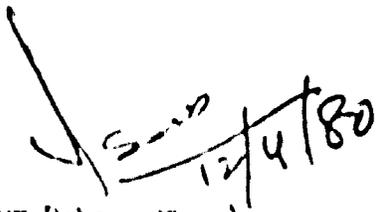
The Committee discussed the project proposal on "Imman Study" and endorsed the basic objectives of the proposed study. It was recommended for requesting IFRP to provide necessary support initially, and if necessary, IFARP may be requested after due approval of the Chairman.

Sd/-
(Prof. Syeda Firoza Begum)
Chairman
Technical Sub-Committee

No.

12 April 1980

Copy forwarded for favour of information and necessary action to:


(Atiqur Rahman Khan)
Director
Bangladesh Fertility Research Programme
Dacca

NEW FAMILY PLANNING ACCEPTORS IN COMPANIGONJ

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PILL</u>	<u>I U D</u>	<u>VASECTOMY</u>	<u>TUBECTOMY</u>	<u>CONDOM/ EMKO</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1974	604	259	24	4	142	1,033
1975	2,173	397	100	187	233	3,090
1976	3,107	147	65	149	389	3,857
1977	1,015	64	17	213	175	1,484
TOTAL:-	6,899	867	206	553	939	9,464

FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICE AT COMPANIGONJ-1977

		<u>Comparison with '76</u>
ORAL PILL: More than one year	1,152	45% increase
6 - 11 months	229	73% decrease
Less than 6 months	189	75% decrease
	<u>1,570</u>	
Tubectomy	553	
Vasectomy	206	
Condom/Emko	190	
I U D	158	
	<u>2,677</u>	

% Percentage practice $\frac{2,677 \times 100}{20,000} = 13.39\%$

Background and Importance of Imam Training Project

M. Nurul Islam
 Planning Officer and Motivation Instructor
 Imam Training
 Islamic Foundation

Due to the mercy of Allah we are at the door of Islamic Renaissance. It is high time that we evaluate the reasons for the downfall of the Moslim society.

1. At the primary stage of investigation it is found that we are divided into 2 groups--one group religious but without any work and the other group with work but without religion. As a result, many manmade "isms" have been created; there have been conflicts of opinions and always common people are the victims of these conflicts.

Religious people without any work should realize that they cannot live aloof from the earthly affairs being physically present in the earth and for survival they have to work. We know that Prophet Mohammed and his disciples worked hard for their survival but we are still forgetful about our work.

To do away with idleness, we have to utilize God gifted brain, manpower, land and water, and we must live an honest life through work. It does not matter whether you call this self-reliance, social welfare, or integrated development. The important thing is that it has been repeatedly mentioned in the Koran about this. Respected Alems (religious pundits) are aware of this.

Religionless materialists should realize that the sovereignty of a country cannot be kept intact without a trained disciplined army; similarly, without knowledge about religion the value of a person or a nation becomes meaningless. Without proper evaluation of human values, personal and national life becomes undisciplined, dangerous, and cursed. We do not have to go far to see this.

To minimize the misunderstanding between the religious group and the materialist group we have to evaluate our every activity according to the Koran, and the Sunnah. This way we shall be able to find out our own mistakes.

For an example, thousands of religious meetings are not making any significant effect because the means as prescribed by the holy Koran are not practiced or told sincerely. Belief and practice are not coordinated. Practice is not right without belief and belief is useless without practice.

2. A mosque is the place of Allah and a root of power of the Muslim society. There are about 100,000 mosques in rural areas of Bangladesh and most of them are neglected. The Imam of every mosque spends on an average only 2 hours a day for leading the prayers. He gets a small amount remuneration. Religious ceremonies are held in the houses instead of being held in the mosque. A mosque usually remains unutilized for most of the time. In most cases it remains dirty. In some mosques the Koran is taught in the morning but Bengali and arithmetic are not taught. The whole Muslim society is weak and leaderless because of the inactivity of the mosque and the negligence towards the Imam. Reluctance towards religion is increasingly day by day among the children. But we know that, and are also told by the Alemn that, mosques are not only for prayers. Education and social welfare activities were also held there. Under these circumstances the Islamic Foundation has undertaken the project for training the Imams as a first attempt in the modern Muslim world. Under this project the Imams are trained for the reconstruction of the Muslim society according to the Koran and the Sunnah. Along with this practical agriculture science, vegetables production, tree planting, fishing, mass education, health and environment, first aids, food and food habit, nutrition, etc. are also taught.

Suitable persons from various departments act as instructors for this project. A trained Imam will not only lead the prayer but also teach his followers about worldly affairs. This way he will give a new leadership and they will help the Bangladesh government in their integrated development project.

3. Education--The first Ayat of the Koran which came from God mentions about education. Prophet Mohammed said that education is compulsory for every man and woman. He also instructed to go to China if necessary for knowledge. We say that education is the backbone of a nation. About 78% of the population of Bangladesh are illiterate which means they are deprived of a precious religious duty. It is really a pity for a country where thousands religious meetings are held for less important things.

The Imams can work for mosque-based mass education. It will also be less expensive. Some training and instruments are only needed. The Bangladesh mosque society has recently published a book on religious thinking for children. If the Imams come forward for a mass education class one may be shifted to the mosques or other prayer houses in the future.

Objectives:

To make the mosques as models of different disciplines.

Trained Imams will work with their followers for:

- a. Keeping the mosque and its surroundings clean and to request the followers to keep their houses clean on Fridays (Congregation Day);
- b. Planting trees near the mosques, to look after them, and to request the followers to plant trees in their own houses;
- c. Opening first aid centre at mosque;
- d. Advising the farmers in every cropping season about their duties, informing about poultry, veterinary, fishing, etc.;
- e. Opening kindergartens in the mosque and teaching children Bengali along with Arabic;
- f. Requiring people to hold religious functions in the mosque along with their children;
- g. Preparing a register for the followers and solving their problems through discussion;
- h. Preparing a report about the above activities and send a copy of it to the Islamic Foundation; and
- i. Report about special achievement on emergency basis so that it can be circulated through mass media.