

Week-long National Workshop on **Capacity Development for Young Health Researchers in Social Sciences** organised by *the Institute of Development Studies Kolkata*

A Report

A week-long capacity building workshop for health researchers was organised by the Institute of Development Studies Kolkata during February 4-8, 2013. The workshop was designed with the objective to include those young health researchers in social sciences who showed keen interest in research capacity development in order to have better understanding on various health issues by drawing on knowledge from relevant disciplines related to health, quantitative and qualitative tools for health research and perspectives of different stake holders in the health sector. The workshop was designed for providing the participants a broad conceptual understanding of health related issues by equipping themselves with evidence and tools from multiple disciplines and by making them familiar with the perspectives of multiple stake holders of the health sector. The intended target group of this workshop was MPhil and PhD students, young faculty members in colleges, universities and research institutions working or interested in health issues, persons working in NGOs, in governments and in Media.

The workshop began by providing the participants an overview of important health issues which were crucial in India's current socio-economic and demographic context. This was followed by sessions covering concepts and measurement of different health variables, philosophical issues in the measurement of health inequality, quantitative tools and qualitative methods health research, ethical issues in health research, development of survey instruments for health research, health financing, evaluations of health interventions, interaction of medical and social perspectives in health research in the subsequent days. Apart from the introductory session, workshop included 15 sessions by the resource persons and 2 interactive sessions organised by the participants themselves.

The workshop relied on both internal (IDSK faculty members) as well as external resource persons (outside IDSK). The external resource persons were Professor T K Roy (former director of International Institute for Population Sciences), Mr Dilip Ghosh (former IAS, Secretary, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Mission Director, NRHM, West Bengal), Dr Abhijit Chowdhury (Professor, Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research, Kolkata), Dr N Devadasan (Director, Institute of Public Health Bangalore), Professor Barun Kanjilal (Institute of Health Management and Research, Jaipur) and Dr Arijita Dutta (Calcutta University). The IDSK faculty

members who participated in the workshop were Professor Amiya Kumar Bagachi, Professor Achin Chakraborty, Dr Krishna Soman, Dr Nandini Ghosh, Dr Saswata Ghosh and Dr Subrata Mukherjee. Dr Subrata Mukherjee, an IDSK faculty member with specialization in Health Economics coordinated the workshop. The overall advisory infrastructural and logistic support to carry out the workshop right from the stage of conceiving the idea was provided by Dr Ramkrishna Chatterjee, honorary joint director of IDSK and a highly skilled team of IDSK staff consisting of Ms Kakali De, Mr Kaustav Tarafdar, Mr Bijoy Das, Mr Ashok Patra and others.

The workshop received overwhelming appreciation, supports and praises from the participants as well as from the resource persons, especially the external resource persons. Many of them found the workshop as a unique platform to share ideas and research findings with experts and fellow researchers coming from such diverse backgrounds and fields of expertise. Most of the resource persons felt that IDSK should continue this workshop at least on an annual basis and there was a suggestion to approach national and international funding agencies and health ministries for financially supporting this type of workshop in future as they felt there was a great demand for this type of workshop given the fact that very few institutes could organize it so successfully in India as IDSK did it.
