

# **A comparative approach to validating the measurement of social capital in Bangladesh**

William T. Story<sup>1</sup>, Nabeel A. Ali<sup>2</sup>, Fahmida Taleb<sup>2</sup>, S.M. Monirul Ahasan<sup>2</sup>, D.M. Emdadul Hoque<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Health Management and Policy, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 48109-2029, USA*

<sup>2</sup>*International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research in Bangladesh, GPO Box 128, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh*

## **ABSTRACT**

Social capital has the potential to impact health and development in resource-poor countries as a substitute for other kinds of capital that are lacking. Given that the same question about social capital may be interpreted differently in different cultural settings, there is a need to validate social capital survey instruments in each new cultural setting. This study examines the content validity of a social capital survey instrument and compares the operationalization of social capital in an urban and rural setting in Bangladesh. Using focus group discussions and cognitive interviews, we explore how people interpret social capital items, such as group membership, social support, community participation, and social cohesion. I will present a detailed comparison of the measurement issues encountered in rural and urban areas of Bangladesh and a newly adapted social capital survey instrument that can be used by future health and development organizations.