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ICDDR,B Receives $100,000 Grand Challenges Explorations Grant for Innovative Global Health Research

ICDDR,B announced today that it has received a US$100,000 Grand Challenges Explorations grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The grant will support an innovative global health research project conducted by Dr Md Abdul Quaiyum, an associate scientist in ICDDR,B's Reproductive Health Unit, entitled "Use of a simple and low cost delivery mat to measure postpartum blood loss for early referral and management in a low cost setting".

Dr Quaiyum's project is one of 65 grants announced by the Gates Foundation in the fifth funding round of Grand Challenges Explorations, an initiative to help scientists around the world explore bold and largely unproven ways to improve health in developing countries. The grants were provided to scientists in 16 countries on 5 continents.

To receive funding, Dr Quaiyum, submitted a two-page application explaining how his idea falls outside current scientific paradigms and might lead to significant advances in global health. The initiative is highly competitive, receiving more than 2,400 proposals in this round.

Dr Quaiyum's idea is to develop and test a biodegradable birth mat that can only absorb 500ml of fluid. Placed under the mother immediately after birth, if the mat stops absorbing blood, it indicates that the mother is hemorrhaging, and she should be immediately referred to a hospital or health complex. If successful, the mat could be widely used during home deliveries and could contribute to a significant reduction of maternal death from postpartum blood loss.

"These are bold ideas from innovative thinkers, which is exactly what we need in global health research right now," said Dr. Tachi Yamada, president of the Gates Foundation's Global Health Program. "I'm excited to see some of these daring projects develop into life-saving breakthroughs for those who need them the most."

Editor's Notes:

About Grand Challenges Explorations: Grand Challenges Explorations is a five-year, $100 million initiative of the Gates Foundation to promote innovation in global health. The program uses an agile, streamlined grant process – applications are limited to two pages, and preliminary data are not required. Proposals are reviewed and selected by a committee of foundation staff and external experts, and grant decisions are made within approximately three months of the close of the funding round. The next round of Grand Challenges Explorations will open in March 2011. More information, including grant application instructions and a list of topics for which proposals will be accepted, will be available at www.grandchallenges.org/explorations.

About ICDDR,B: ICDDR,B (International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh) is a leading health research institution located in Dhaka. In collaboration with academic and research institutions throughout the world, ICDDR,B conducts research and training to develop and share knowledge which address some of the most critical health concerns facing the world today.

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