

Community Empowerment Programme

BRAC's community empowerment programme (CEP) focuses on empowering the rural poor, especially women to build, secure and use their human, social and political capital. Through this programme, they can be aware of and exercise their rights, claim their entitlements, resist exploitation, and play a more active role in public life as a pathway to achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs) and sustainable development.

CEP is one of the core programmes of BRAC, reaching more than five million people through its development interventions across Bangladesh.

Highlights

Community institution building

- 12,350 polli shomaj (ward level institution), consisting of 663,810 members, were formed
- 1,215 union shomaj (federation of polli shomaj) were formed
- 2,715,002 local government resources (ie VGD/VGF/ government allowances, IGA training) were mobilised for poor by polli shomaj
- 165,034 cases of social injustice/ human rights violations (dowry, child marriage, hilla marriage, VAW, etc) were addressed by polli shomaj and necessary actions were taken



A group of women attend a polli shomaj meeting with BRAC staff

- 855,643 social welfare activities (birth/marriage registrations, rural infrastructure development, etc) took place in which polli shomaj was engaged
- 78,827 polli shomaj leaders' participation in the local power structure (membership in school/ market committees, etc and union *parishad*)

Strengthening local governance

- 30,022 union *parishad* members trained
- 306 *upazila* forums formed with participation of women union *parishad* members
- 206 *upazila* advocacy workshops held

Access to information

- An award winning community radio station airing for 12 hours a day
- 430 popular theatre groups formed
- 4,300 performers in popular theatre groups
- 199,426 drama performed by popular theatre groups
- 743 listeners' club with 7,641 members
- 451 RTI infomediaries

Addressing violence against women

- 23,878 incidents of violence were reported
- 14,517 survivors received support
- 847 survivors were rehabilitated