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# Catch Up

The official newsletter of BRAC Philippines

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## AT A GLANCE: School Year 2015-2016

<b>TOTAL BRAC Learning Centers</b>	<b>845</b>
Kindergarten	115
Grade 2	201
Grade 3	411
Grade 4	118

**Total Numer of Learners**  
**25,771**

**Number of Partner NGOs**      **16**

<b>TOTAL STAFF</b>	<b>890</b> (including teachers)
Filipinos	884
Bangladeshi	6

**Catch Up is the official newsletter of BRAC Philippines implementing the ADM project of the BEAM Program. BEAM is a program of the Department of Education in ARMM in partnership with the Australian Government and implemented by BRAC Philippines, GIZ, UNICEF and CARDNO.**

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### COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE'S NOTE

We are proud that we are part of the change DepEd-ARMM is creating for the children of ARMM. In just three years since inception in 2012, BRAC have produced almost 30,000 kindergarten learners, who are now in DepEd schools. BRAC complements DepEd in remote communities where it has limited facilities and provides education opportunity for preschool-aged children.

This School Year 2015-2016, we will deliver extra focus to our Grade 4 learners to become skilled in the English language. We are preparing these learners to participate the Region-wide Assessment for Math, Science and English (RAMSE), evaluate how far they have gone and better their learning. We will also increase our efforts to equip our learners in all grades to be sharp on Math subject. This is one of the brands of BRAC learners and we are sharing the knowledge with the ARMM children.

Moreover, continually, BRAC has always a big concern for children with special needs (CSN) in promoting their right to education. Since the start of the project, we integrate poor children with mild to moderate degree of disabilities to BRAC schools hopeful that they could also go through the mainstream education. We want our teachers to be sufficiently trained and motivated to handle children with special needs in BRAC schools; a special training will be organized before the school year ends.

As we enter our 4th year, we are optimistic that BRAC can impact positively, not only in the net enrolment rate in ARMM, but in the century-old aspiration of each Bangsamoro of achieving just peace through providing education access to marginalized children in the region.

**M NAZRUL ISLAM**  
ADM Project Director



Top students of Liangan Grade 4 BRAC Learning Center read lessons together on a noon break at the threshold of their BLC in Picong, Lanao Del Sur.

## ADM Project finishes year three



Celebrating the three years of implementation of ADM Project, BRAC Philippines conducted a small gathering in Cotabato City simultaneously with its provincial offices in Iligan City and Zamboanga City.

The ADM team recalled during the gathering their best experiences working for the project. Most shared their gratitude for having the opportunity to work with BRAC and for the children of Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

In three years (starting in 2012), BRAC Philippines has established 1,220 schools in ARMM providing almost 40,000 children access to education. The ADM Project has also produced employment to over 1,400 people across the five provinces it covers.

Running on its fourth year, ADM Project has opened schools for Grade 4 learners in June for the children who have completed Grade 3 in the School Year 2014-2015.

## DepEd Sec. Luistro visits BFLC

DepEd Secretary Bro. Armin Luistro, FSC, once again visited BRAC school on 23 February 2015. The Secretary, together with his Undersecretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Regional Directors visited Lamion BRAC Floating Learning Center at Bongao, Tawi-Tawi province. Former DepEd-ARMM Regional Secretary Jamar Kulayan also graced the visit.

Province of Tawi-Tawi Governor Hon. Nurbert Sahali

also visited the Lamion BRAC Floating Learning prior to the visit of DepEd Secretary Luistro on the same date.

Lamion BRAC Floating Learning Center is one of the seven floating schools BRAC Philippines established in the island provinces of ARMM - Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi to offer education to Badjao and Sama children closer to their homes.



## Grade 3 learners take LAPG

3,333 Grade 3 BRAC learners took the Learning Assessment for Primary Grades (LAPG) at the DepEd schools on 11 March 2015.

LAPG is a national assessment test to evaluate the effectiveness of the Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) instruction and establish mother tongue language development across Philippine languages in the context of the MTB-MLE program implementation.

The assessment was conducted by Department of Education through National Education Testing and Research Center (NETRC).

Grade 3 learners in BaSulTa, Maguindanao and Lanao Del Sur took the LAPG test under the supervision of DepEd personnel with the help of the learning facilitators of BRAC.

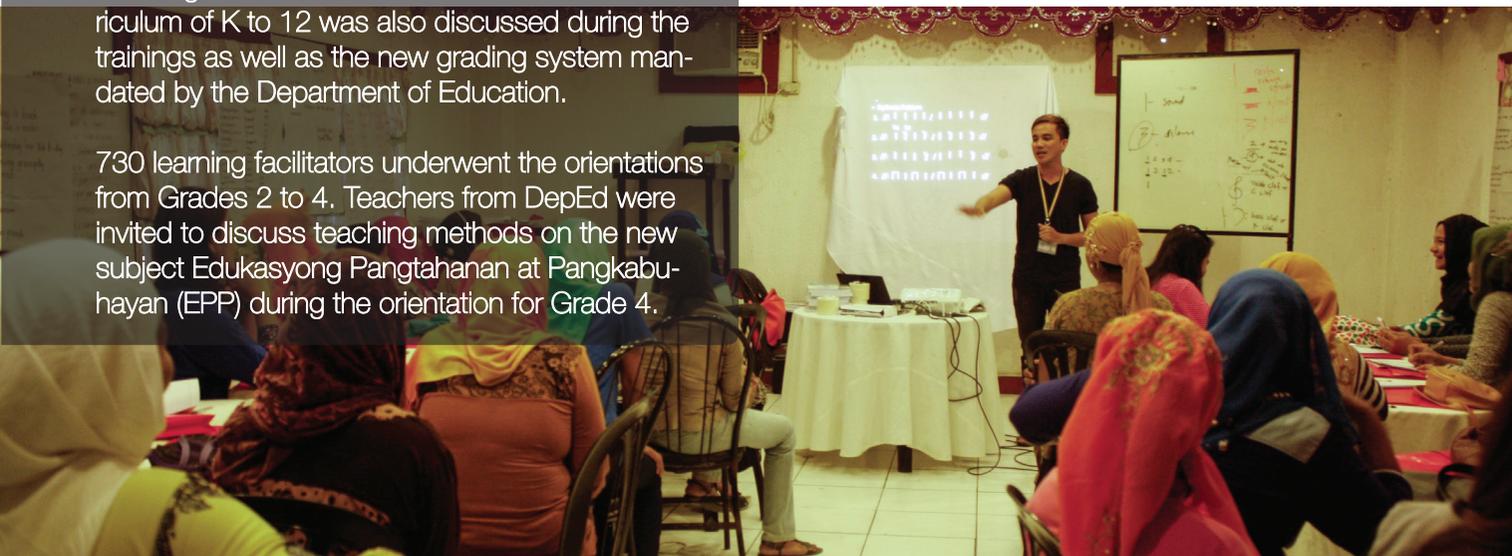


## LFs undergo Grade Change Orientation

As another school year starts, learning facilitators of BRAC-ADM are yet to proceed to teaching in higher grades. Thus, a series of Grade Change Orientation were organized and conducted in Cotabato City, Iligan City, Zamboanga City and Bongao, Tawi-Tawi by the Curriculum and Training Unit of BRAC.

The orientations were primarily for the LFs whose learners are proceeding to the next grade. Participants were oriented on the subject contents of the next grade—including the contents of books and learning materials—and the methodologies of teaching calendared lessons in the BLOs. The curriculum of K to 12 was also discussed during the trainings as well as the new grading system mandated by the Department of Education.

730 learning facilitators underwent the orientations from Grades 2 to 4. Teachers from DepEd were invited to discuss teaching methods on the new subject Edukasyong Pangtahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP) during the orientation for Grade 4.



## Pedagogy, Language Assessment training conducted



Grade 3 Learning Facilitators in provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and Tawi-Tawi participated in the Pedagogy and Language Assessment Training-Workshop conducted successively by the Curriculum and Training Unit of BRAC Philippines.

A total of 212 participants composed of Project Coordinators, Project Organizers and Learning Facilitators were trained with the focus on the subjects in Languages as well as Mathematics and Science in a series of trainings.

DepEd personnel also took part in the trainings as observers on the training of subject content and methodologies.

The trainings were part of the preparations for the Language Assessment for Primary Grades (LAPG).

## USEP leads ABC Test of BRAC learners

The University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP) is currently conducting an evaluation study to assess the basic competencies of learners in the BRAC Learning Centers established in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Inked on 23 March 2015 between USEP President Perfecto Alibin and BRAC Philippines Country Representative M Nazrul Islam, the project is entitled "Assessment of Basic Competencies (ABC) of Pupils in the BRAC Learning Centers in ARMM" and will conclude on December 2015. Undertaken for Grade 3 learners in the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and Tawi-Tawi,

the study will assess and determine the level of readiness of BRAC learners against the key competencies of Department of Education's K-12 curriculum as well as the application of life skills.

"Aside from assessing competency levels in the core subject areas of the government curriculum, the assessment is a valuable tool in improving the education model in the future national implementation in the Philippines as well as in other BRAC countries," Islam said.





## Learners grace BRAC Day 2015

19 March 2015 marked BRAC's 43rd anniversary, a special celebration by BRAC teams worldwide including Philippines.

At BRAC Philippines Country Office, then Grade 2 learners of Pinguaman BRAC Learning Center in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao graced their special numbers with colorful wings as a support to the anniversary.

Country Representative M Nazrul Islam read BRAC Founder and Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed to all BRAC staff worldwide.

Began as a small relief and rehabilitation project in a remote corner of Bangladesh, BRAC in over four decades has grown to become the largest and one of the most successful development organizations in the world.

BRAC now operates in 10 countries including Philippines and Nepal.

In May this year, BRAC started a two-year rehabilitation work in Nepal with over \$15-million worth of support to help the earthquake victims.

## BRAC celebrates World Diversity Day

21 May 2015 marked BRAC Philippines' first World Diversity Day. Officially known as "The World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development", the event aimed to acknowledge the diverse cultures in the entire team and celebrating inclusiveness regardless.



Coming from different cultural groups, BRAC Philippines' staff presented their respective authentic cultural dishes to introduce to the other cultures in a feast-like lunch together. The celebration included a small sharing session where local and expatriate staff have shared their most liked ways of the opposite cultures.

Declared to be an international holiday by UN General Assembly in 2002, the event provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to learn to live better together.

## March marks Women's Month



The 2015 National Women's Month was opened in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao with a walk campaign on 9 March 2015. Organized by Regional Commission on Bangsamoro Women ARMM, the opening ceremonies were participated by various government and private organizations that support the call for women's importance in the society.

BRAC Philippines joined and supported this year's celebration of the International Women's day and the National Women's Month with the international theme "Make It Happen" to call for gender equality and to celebrate women's achievements.

International Women's Day is an annual activity to celebrate women's economic, political and social achievements celebrated around the world.

In the Philippines, March is declared Women's Role in History Month by the National Commission on Women.

## BRAC welcomes new DepEd-ARMM Secretary



A week before the opening of the school year, former DepEd-ARMM Secretary Atty. Jamar Kulayan resigned from his office where he rendered his service for over three years.

DepEd-ARMM Assistant Secretary for operations Dr. John Magno took over the post shortly after the effectivity of the resignation on 22 May 2015.

On 1 June 2015 ADM Project Director M Nazrul Islam, together with Project Advisor Ramon Bobier, Project Manager Md. Ibrahim Khalil and other members of the ADM Project Management, paid a courtesy visit at the DepEd-ARMM for the newly appointed secretary.

### **‘ADM sa Himpapawid’ launches on the radio**

BRAC launched a radio program about the ADM Project at the start of June. The program entitled ‘ADM Sa Himpapawid’ (ADM On Air) airs at 10AM every Wednesdays at 99.7 DXAE FM, a radio station managed by the Department of Education-ARMM.

The one-hour program showcases news and feature stories about the ADM Project and interviews from the Management Unit, discussing issues and concerns about the project. The objective for putting up the program is to reach a larger public for awareness of the ADM project. The program can be heard across the entire Maguindanao and most parts of Lanao del Sur.

Aside from the news and stories, learners, learning facilitators, parents and BRAC staff also take part in the program. This initiative was pursued by the DepEd-ARMM and BRAC Philippines.

## PCs, POs train on K to 12



Project Coordinators and selected Project Organizers underwent a training of trainers on the K to 12 Curriculum on May 9 to 13, 2015 in Iligan City.

The five-day training was participated by a total of 35 participants from the five provinces covered by BRAC-ADM. The training focused on the K to 12 curriculum for Grades 2 to 4 to which BRAC is gearing up for in the opening of Grade 4 BLCs in the School Year 2015-2016.

Resource speakers from DepEd-Marawi and Lanao del Sur Division conducted the training and discussed the core and different learning area standards of Edukasyong Pangtahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP), Araling Panlipunan (AP) and Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao (ESP).

The new grading system was also introduced during the training. The training for the LFs were also planned and cascaded.



## Jamera: All it needs is a heart

“Competent akong teacher,” (I am a competent teacher), said Jamera Ali confidently when she was asked to describe herself.

At 20, Jamera, not just graduated from college, she became a mother. Her marriage was parentally-arranged when she was 18, a practice among Maranaos.

Passed the qualifications to become a Learning Facilitator, she started teaching Grade 1 in Liangan BRAC Learning Center in rido-affected Picong town, Lanao del Sur in 2012. She was one of the pioneers in BRAC schools when it came in the Philippines.

Now 24, she has nothing to convey, but the joys she experience and the changes she continually sees of her Grade 4 learners.

“Walang mahirap kung kakayanin. Hindi mahirap magturo sa mga bata, kailangan lang ng puso,” said Jamera. (Hardship is nothing if one has the will. Teaching children is not difficult, all it needs is a heart.)

When children are inattentive in class or there’s a slow learner or a non-reader, she has an effective strategy. Kung ayaw making, pinapalaro ko sila na related pa rin sa subject, halimbawa, ang larong ‘the boat is sinking’. ‘Yong mga slow learner or non-reader, pinupuntahan ko talaga sa mga bahay nila at tinuturuan,’ Jamera added. (If they will not listen, I let them play, but still related to their subject like ‘the boat is sinking’. Those slow learners or non-readers, I do house visits and continue to teach them.)

She directly understands the strengths and weaknesses of her learners having been taught them since Grade 1. “Alam ko na kung saan sila magaling, saan sila mahina at kung saang aspeto pa sila pwede i-develop,” says Jamera. (I know what aspect they are good, poor and needs to be developed.)

Jamera feels proud how her learners have gone so far. “Ang laki ng development nila. Karamihan sa

kanilang mga magulang ay illiterate. Ngayon sila na ang nagtuturo sa mga nanay at tatay nila. Marunong na silang gumalang sa mga matatanda. They are now communicating with other people, socialize. At tumutulong na rin sa kanilang mga magulang sa gawaing bahay,” she said. (Their development is immense.

Most of their parents are illiterate. Now, they are the ones teaching their mothers or fathers. They are now communicating with other people, socializing. And they are helping their parents in the household chores as well).

Four years in teaching, Jamera has one aspiration – to see her learners graduate in BRAC Learning Center. “Dito ako nagsimula sa BRAC. At kahit makapasa ako sa LET, hindi ko iiwanan ang mga estudyante ko. Gusto kong makita silang makapag-tapos ng elementary. Gusto kong makita ang bunga ng lahat ng paghihirap ko. Ang saya ko na bahagi ako sa learning nila,” she ended. (I started in BRAC. And even if I passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers, I will not leave my students. I want to see them finished their elementary class. I want to see the fruit of my hardships. I feel so happy that I am a part of their learning.)



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