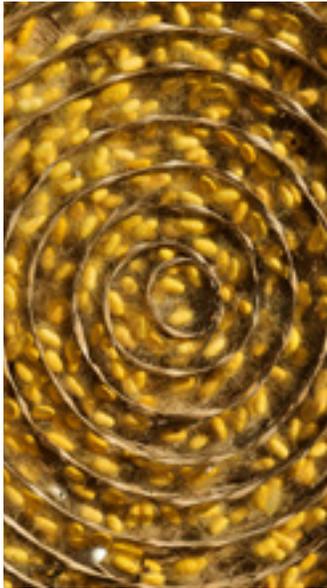


# BRAC Sericulture

A BRAC Social Enterprise

Weaving sustainable future for landless women through silk-farming



*Silk cocoon in a cocooning net, called chand raki locally, in a rural silk production house*

*Women drying and sorting fine silk cocoon at a BRAC reeling centre*

BRAC played a pioneering role in the development of sericulture in the country and the Sericulture enterprise was established to engage the rural women in income-generating activities through mulberry cultivation, silkworm and seed production, reeling and spinning of silk yarn, and weaving and marketing silk.

Silkworm rearing is a labour intensive activity that is usually done at home, and silk is a high-value, low-volume commodity that is in demands both nationally and internationally. Sericulture has a large potential of being integrated with other agrarian systems based on household operation. Presently there is a demand for 360 tons of silk in Bangladesh. However, only 60 tons of silk are produced each year out of which BRAC produces 45,000 yards of fabric. There is a tremendous scope for growth in silk production.

## BRAC Sericulture today

In 1978, BRAC began its sericulture programme as part of the Manikganj Integrated Project. In 1996 the Environment Group at BRAC conducted an initial investigation of BRAC's sericulture programme and found the sericulture programme and the activities of Ayesha Abed Foundation related to silk production to be socially and environmentally sustainable. The Sericulture program, now established as an enterprise, has since then been involved in aiding rural women with income generation and employment, tree plantation, soil conservation and silk production. The Sericulture enterprise engages the rural women in a range of activities including, nursery, Mulberry plantation, silk worm egg supply, silk worm rearing for silk thread, reeling, weaving,

printing and dyeing silk. BRAC Sericulture Enterprise is currently involved in introducing high yielding varieties of mulberry trees to areas in the north and south.

## Quick Stats

BRAC Sericulture enterprise cultivated mulberry trees on 100 acres of land, engaged 1,000 women in rearing silk worms and spinning, and produced 25 metric tons of raw silk. The enterprise had a transaction of BDT 9.6 million in 2013.