



Fact Sheet: BRAC

BRAC, the largest non-profit in the developing world, was launched in Bangladesh in 1972 and today reaches more than 110 million people in Africa and Asia through its programs that address poverty by providing micro-loans, self-employment opportunities, health services, education and legal and human rights services. BRAC offers preventive, curative, and reproductive health services to more than 92 million people. BRAC USA, founded in 2007, raises funds, provides BRAC programs with strategic and program services, cultivates partnerships and promotes awareness of BRAC's successful community development model to support BRAC's global expansion and influence the work of development organizations around the world.

BRAC's vision is to improve the health, wealth and well being of millions of the poorest families primarily in Asia and Africa. BRAC's work gives people a chance to transform their lives. BRAC invests in training and building human capacity in each country where we work. We organize the most vulnerable, particularly poor women, for their own self-empowerment, rights, protection, work and collective voice, enabling them to fully develop themselves and contribute to their communities.

Building sustainable programs in Africa & Asia: With its years of experience in post-war and post-disaster development and poverty alleviation in Bangladesh, BRAC has responded to the call of countries in Asia and Africa and is implementing development programs in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda and Southern Sudan. In 2002 in solidarity with the refugees in Afghanistan, BRAC worked with Afghans to launch microfinance and related programs. BRAC is now the largest microfinance provider in Afghanistan disbursing over \$96 million in small loans. BRAC began its programs in Tanzania and Uganda in 2006 and in Southern Sudan in 2007 and already has more than 160,000 members in East Africa. BRAC has recently started programs in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Microfinance: BRAC delivers its microfinance and other programs through organizing women into Village Organizations (VOs). These women are then able to apply for small, unsecured loans to create livelihoods for themselves, mostly in poultry, fishery, livestock, sericulture, agriculture and agro forestry. BRAC has proven that investment in women and girls—often the poorest and most vulnerable—has a disproportionately large return for communities. BRAC offers distinct microfinance programs for people at different levels of the poverty spectrum and provides them with a ladder of opportunity. BRAC also reaches out to members of the community who are too poor to benefit from micro-credit through its Targeting the Ultra Poor program. Women in this program are provided with assets and regular training and support to enable them to generate income. Upon graduation, these women are integrated into BRAC's microfinance program.

Economic Development: BRAC provides training and technical assistance to its microfinance members and others in the community, empowering them to become self-employed farmers, or agriculture, livestock or poultry extension workers. BRAC helps to increase income for these farmers and extension workers by creating access to productivity enhancing inputs and access to markets, and developing agriculture research stations to improve seeds and output. Additionally, BRAC has several social enterprises, such as BRAC Dairy and the Aarong retail chain, in Bangladesh that employ some of its members and generate profits that are in turn used to fund BRAC's programs.

Health: BRAC offers preventive, curative and reproductive health services to more than 92 million people. A cadre of 73,000 community health promoters (CHPs), make door-to-door visits to spread awareness about basic health and hygiene issues and treat common diseases. CHPs also sell health-related products such as soap and de-worming medication to supplement their income. BRAC also runs several programs in partnership with the Government of Bangladesh, including a community-based Tuberculosis Control Program covering 86 million people, a Malaria Control Program in 13 districts of Bangladesh and a HIV/AIDS Prevention Program in three districts.

Quick BRAC Facts

- Founded in 1972
- Founder and Chairperson: Fazle Hasan Abed
- \$5 billion in micro-loans to nearly seven million borrowers
- Created 8.5 million self-employment opportunities
- 73,000 community health promoters, have provided basic health services to more than 92 million
- Graduated 3.8 million students from its primary schools and 2.3 million from its pre-primary schools, with nearly 1.6 million children currently enrolled in its 53,210 schools
- 125,000 staff and teachers
- Total Expenditure: nearly \$500 M (2007)
- Microfinance Loan Fund: \$534 M

BRAC USA

- Founded in 2007
- President and CEO: Susan Davis

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): BRAC leverages its strength in the execution and delivery of programmatic services, through its already existing microfinance, education and community health promoter (CHP) platform, to teach and implement safe water and sanitation practices throughout its areas of operations. Lessons in hygiene, taught by the CHPs, are incorporated into the regular meetings of the microfinance groups, and CHPs sell soap and other basic products to promote hygiene. Teachers incorporate sanitation and hygiene lessons into the school curriculum, and WASH workers build household and school latrines and hand washing facilities, wells and water collection and treatment facilities to provide their communities with access to safe water.

Education: BRAC has been a pioneer in the education arena and currently operates programs from pre-primary through graduate school. BRAC's highly reputed informal primary education program was widely promoted by UNICEF and others as a high impact, low cost model for children who had never enrolled or who had dropped out of primary school. BRAC's track record of success in graduating students and continuing their education in government schools led BRAC to create programs to improve government schools through teacher training and the formation of school management committees and parent teacher associations. BRAC's adolescent programs empower youth, particularly females, through innovative livelihood and life skills training combined with microfinance. BRAC University was established in 2001.

Social Development, Human Rights and Legal Services: BRAC knows that women must be aware of their legal rights to protect themselves from discrimination and exploitation, and be encouraged to take action when their rights are breached. BRAC provides all of the women in its Village Organizations in Bangladesh with basic legal rights training, helps women report cases to the police and offers assistance through legal aid clinics. BRAC intends to roll out this program in other countries.

Emergency Relief: BRAC was initially started as a relief and rehabilitation organization and has built up experience in how to help survivors of natural disasters such as cyclones, floods and drought. Following the devastating Cyclone Sidr, which hit Bangladesh in November 2007, BRAC distributed emergency relief materials, including food and clothing, to over 180,000 families, provided medical care to over 60,000 victims and secured safe supplies of drinking water. Today BRAC is focusing on long-term rehabilitation of affected areas.

Research: BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division provides analytical support to the various development programs of BRAC. It partners with a range of national and international research institutions and is involved in research on several key development issues, such as education, health and governance.

BRAC USA and BRAC UK were launched in 2007 to raise public awareness about the BRAC approach to sustainable human development and mobilize resources to enable BRAC to rapidly scale up its programs. BRAC USA & UK demonstrate that Northern solidarity in support of Southern leadership and South-South collaboration can generate lower cost and higher impact solutions for poverty and its related problems.

Select Awards & Memberships:

- Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize, 2008
- David Rockefeller Bridging Leadership Award, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 2008
- Henry R. Kravis Prize in Leadership, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 2007
- Inaugural Clinton Global Citizenship Award, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 2007
- CGAP Financial Transparency Award, 2005 & 2006
- Gates Award for Global Health, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 2004
- Schwab Foundation Social Entrepreneur, Fazle Hasan Abed, 2002
- Ashoka Global Academy for Social Entrepreneurship, founding Member, Fazle Hasan Abed
- UNICEF Maurice Pate Award, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 1992
- UNESCO Noma Prize for Literacy, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 1985
- The Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership, awarded to Fazle Hasan Abed, 1980

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