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## **BRAC exceeds CGI commitment to educate millions of children and youth**

*BRAC made a commitment at the Clinton Global Initiative to mobilize \$271 million to provide 7.5 million children and youth with educational opportunities. With a year to go, BRAC has already raised more than \$288 million and has provided education to more than 5.5 million children and youth.*

September 19, 2011 – In 2007, BRAC, the largest development organization in the world, made a commitment at the Clinton Global Initiative to mobilize \$271 million to empower the next generation with educational opportunities for 7.5 million children and youth in five countries of Asia and Africa by 2012. With a year to go, BRAC has already raised more than \$288 million and has provided 5.5 million children and youth with educational opportunities in Bangladesh, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

BRAC Founder and Chairperson Sir Fazle Abed said, “Through the Clinton Global Initiative, we have been able to form partnerships with the MasterCard Foundation, Nike Foundation, and NoVo Foundation as well as several bilateral organizations that have enabled us to realize this commitment ahead of schedule.”

BRAC’s innovative approach to “piloting, perfecting and scaling up” has enabled it to provide quality educational opportunities to millions of children and youth at an average cost of about \$52 per student.

With more than 25,000 second-chance primary schools, BRAC provides an accelerated primary education to older students – 75% of whom are girls – who dropped out of school or never had the chance to attend. Students graduate and are mainstreamed into government schools, and studies have shown that BRAC school graduates often perform better in school than other students.

In Bangladesh, BRAC has created programs to support poor students all the way through college. Dipti’s story is an example of the transformative effect of providing a girl with an education:

At 11 years old, Dipti lost her father, and her future looked similar to those of her two older sisters: One was married off at age 13, and the other was married off at age 12 and subsequently murdered by her husband. Despite this hopeless outlook, Dipti became the first person in her community to go to college.

Dipti’s father was a blacksmith and couldn’t afford to send all of his children to school, so Dipti’s two brothers were enrolled while she stayed home with her two sisters. A neighbor took Dipti to one of BRAC’s “second chance” primary schools, where she received and accelerated primary education.

As Dipti was about to graduate from primary school, her father died. Her mother had to make the painful decision to marry off her two oldest daughters (aged 12 and 13) to prevent the family from starving to death. Dipti’s brothers worked and went to school to support the family.

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"My family was unbelievably poor. We struggled every day. If BRAC had not helped me then, I think my education would have ended, full stop," said Dipti.

BRAC provided Dipti with a scholarship to continue on to secondary school, and she earned extra money tutoring children in her community. When she passed her exams, she qualified for a full scholarship from BRAC to study at a university in India, making her the first in her community to go to college.

Dipti said, "And when I finish my studies, I want to help our village and our country."

In addition to its school programs, BRAC has provided educational opportunities to more than 260,000 girls, making it the largest implementer of [The Girl Effect](#). BRAC's adolescent programs provide safe spaces for girls to meet and teaches them life skills like prevention of sexually transmitted infections like HIV/AIDS, leadership, and their legal rights. Girls are also given financial education, livelihood training, and access to microfinance so they can start their own businesses and earn income.

### **About BRAC**

BRAC is a global development organization dedicated to alleviating poverty by empowering the poor to bring about change in their own lives. BRAC's holistic approach aims to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programs that enable women and men to realize their potential. BRAC was launched in Bangladesh in 1972 and today reaches more than 138 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.

In 2007, BRAC's Founder and Chairperson, Sir Fazle Abed, was given the inaugural Clinton Global Citizen Award. Learn more at [www.bracusa.org](http://www.bracusa.org).

### **About the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)**

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Since 2005, CGI Annual Meetings have brought together nearly 150 current and former heads of state, 18 Nobel Prize laureates, hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations, major philanthropists, directors of the most effective nongovernmental organizations, and prominent members of the media. These CGI members have made nearly 2,000 commitments, which have already improved the lives of 300 million people in more than 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued in excess of \$63 billion. The 2011 Annual Meeting will take place Sept. 20-22 in New York City.

This year, CGI also convened CGI America, a meeting focused on developing ideas for driving economic growth in the United States. The CGI community also includes CGI U, which hosts an annual meeting for undergraduate and graduate students, and CGI Lead, which engages a select group of young CGI members for leadership development and collective commitment-making. For more information, visit [www.clintonglobalinitiative.org](http://www.clintonglobalinitiative.org).

## Available Materials

- Video interview of Dipti and B-roll of BRAC's Education Program in Bangladesh available at: <http://youtu.be/9aEjWT38R-k>
- Video interviews and B-roll from BRAC's Education Program in Uganda available at: <http://youtu.be/GKT5oewGC9A>
- Video interview and B-roll of Sanchita, a member of BRAC's program for adolescent girls featured as part of The Girl Effect: <http://youtu.be/WILhgeHN8o8>
  - Photos of Sanchita are also available by contacting Michelle Chaplin at +1 917 647 3578 or [michelle@bracusa.org](mailto:michelle@bracusa.org)
  - Sanchita's story is on the following page
- Photos of BRAC's Education Programs in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda are available by contacting Michelle Chaplin at +1 917 647 3578 or [michelle@bracusa.org](mailto:michelle@bracusa.org)
- Interviews can be arranged with:
  - Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, Founder & Chairperson, BRAC
  - Susan Davis, President & CEO, BRAC USA
  - Directors and staff from BRAC's education programs and programs for adolescent girls

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# Sanchita:

\$60 ➡ a cow ➡ an income ➡ an education ➡ change

*“My name is Sanchita. I come from a small village called Ishwarpur in Bangladesh. When a baby is born in Ishwarpur, families desperately hope it will be a boy. It is believed that boys will contribute to the family income in a place where people are very poor.”*

Sanchita joined BRAC’s adolescent girls program, where we provided her with a safe space to meet other girls, life skills education, a microfinance loan of \$60 and training on how to start a business by raising a cow and growing vegetables. Now, Sanchita is generating income for herself and her family. She uses some to help with family expenses and to pay for her school fees and those of her little brother.

*“I know that today’s children are tomorrow’s future. If my brother doesn’t study, his life will be ruined.*

*“The rest of the money, I put into savings.*

*“I am actually saving for my future.”*



Brent Stirton / Getty Images

## Why invest in a girl?

- When a girl gets seven or more years of education, she will marry four years later and have 2.2 fewer children.
- When she starts work, she’ll earn up to 25% more income, and will invest 90% of her income into her home.
- When she has children, she will be more likely to raise healthy children who go to school ... and the positive cycle will continue.

**Invest in a girl,  
and she will do the rest.  
This is the Girl Effect.**



## Fact Sheet: BRAC

**BRAC**, the largest non-profit in the developing world, was launched in Bangladesh in 1972 and today reaches more than 138 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 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 a world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination where everyone has the opportunity to realize their potential. Our mission is to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice. Our interventions aim to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programs that enable men and women to realize their potential.

**Building sustainable programs:** 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 around the world and is implementing development programs in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda and South 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 \$180 million in small loans. BRAC began its programs in Tanzania and Uganda in 2006 and in South Sudan in 2007 and already has almost 290,000 members in East Africa. BRAC has also started programs in Haiti for earthquake recovery and development.

**Microfinance:** BRAC delivers its microfinance and other programs by 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. 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.

### Quick BRAC Facts

- \$6.7 billion in micro-loans to over six million borrowers
- Created 8.5 million self-employment opportunities
- 87,000 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 1.8 million children currently enrolled in its 66,000 schools
- 127,000 staff and teachers

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**Health:** BRAC offers preventive, curative and reproductive health services to more than 92 million people. A cadre of 88,000 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 an HIV/AIDS Prevention Program in three districts.

**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 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 South leadership and South-South collaboration can generate lower cost and higher impact solutions for poverty and its related problems.

#### **Select Awards & Memberships:**

- Knighted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Fazle Hasan Abed, 2009
- 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