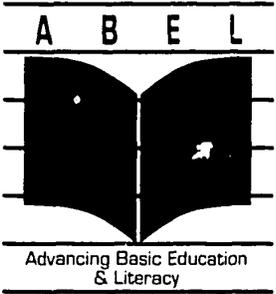


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**PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR ALL:
LEARNING FROM THE BRAC EXPERIENCE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 1993

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Manzoor Ahmed
Colette Chabbott
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**PROJECT ABEL:
ADVANCING BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY
Academy for Educational Development
1255 23rd Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037**

The findings and conclusions expressed in this report are the authors, and do not reflect the official view of the U.S. Agency for International Development, UNICEF, or the Rockefeller Foundation.

FOREWORD

The attached Executive Summary to "Primary Education for All: Learning from the BRAC Experience" presents the draft findings from a multi-donor, multi-disciplinary investigation of one of the more important implementations of a basic education philosophy and strategy in the developing world.

Initiated jointly by USAID and UNICEF, and conducted by the Academy for Educational Development under Project ABEL (Advancing Basic Education and Literacy), this case study attempts a fresh look at how the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) has improved educational access for the poorest of the poor, and provided a viable adjunct to an overextended public school system. The study also outlines implications for countries with similar educational challenges.

A number of people contributed to the effort. Dr. Manzoor Ahmed of UNICEF suggested the initial idea during meetings with Mr. James Hoxeng and Dr. Sam Rea of USAID's Research and Development/Education Office. Mr. F.H. Abed, Executive Director of BRAC, and Ms. Kaniz Fatema, Program Coordinator of BRAC's Non-Formal Education Program (NFPE), provided important information about BRAC and the NFPE program design, management, and implementation.

Others contributed more directly to project design and implementation. A four-person team conducted the study research. The team included: AED team leader and primary author, Ms. Colette Chabbott, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed of UNICEF, Ms. Rohini Pande of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Mr. Arun Joshi of Harvard University. Drs. Leon Clark of American University and Joanne Capper of AED provided important technical contributions to several chapters. Dr. William Cummings of the Harvard Institute for International Development provided early suggestions on a project approach. Finally, editorial and administrative support was provided by Ms. Cynthia Prather of Creative Associates International, and Ms. Linda Caswell and Ms. Lynette Johnson of AED. USAID, via Project ABEL, provided management oversight, funded project expenses, and supported two of the four team members. UNICEF and the Rockefeller Foundation donated the time of their staff members.

This Executive Summary provides some important "Lessons Learned" for those committed to the aims and objectives of Education for All. We are releasing it in advance of the full report in order to begin sharing the insights gained by BRAC, and to gauge the interest of the broader development community in the report's detailed findings.



Project ABEL and the several sponsors of this effort welcome comments on this document and solicit further inquiries. All such requests should be made to:

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Project ABEL

March 1993

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Introduction

1. Purpose

Primary Education for All: Learning from the BRAC Experience presents the results of a study of the Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) program, a relatively new educational delivery system developed and implemented by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC). The NFPE program, which represents a collaboration among a non-governmental organization (NGO), international donors, and some of the most disadvantaged communities in Bangladesh, has proven relatively successful in rapidly expanding access to primary education to those historically neglected by the formal primary education system: children, especially girls, from poor, rural, landless and near-landless families.

The scope of work for this case study included three key questions:

- What is BRAC's NFPE program? What are its strengths?
- What is the potential for rapidly expanding the NFPE program in Bangladesh? In particular, what might be the relationship between a large-scale NFPE program and the national system of primary education?
- What elements of BRAC's NFPE program might be relevant to other developing countries in their efforts to rapidly expand their primary education systems?

The study is expected to be useful to donors, NGOs, governments, and students of education interested in the following activities: using non-formal models to rapidly expand access to primary education, particularly for girls, in less-developed countries; developing donor-NGO-government-community partnerships to improve school quality; and establishing decentralized management systems to ensure low-cost, high-quality human services delivery.

2. Methodology

To conduct this study, representatives from the Rockefeller Foundation and UNICEF, together with a comparative child development specialist and a team leader from the Academy

for Educational Development supported by USAID, conducted two fact-finding visits to Bangladesh during the spring and summer of 1992. Information collected for this study included secondary data from several recent donor-funded evaluations (Lovell and Fatema, 1990; Shordt, 1991; Gajanarake, 1992) and from studies initiated by BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division; primary data from a cost and household survey commissioned expressly for this study and implemented by two independent Bangladeshi contractors. Information was also collected during field visits to government, BRAC, and other NGO offices and schools.

The independent evaluations and cost and household survey funded under this study established that BRAC's primary schools indeed operate much as the BRAC literature describes them. As a result, the research team for this study spent more than 70 percent of its time in-country determining the role that BRAC schools currently play--and have the potential to play--in the national primary education system and less than 10 percent of its time observing BRAC classrooms.

3. Background

a. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), which is the largest NGO in Bangladesh, is recognized throughout the world for its rural development, credit, and health programs. In 1985, in response to requests from participants in its rural development programs, BRAC initiated the NFPE program for eight to ten-year-olds in 22 villages. The objective of the program at its inception was to develop a national primary education model that could provide, in a three-year period, basic literacy and numeracy to the poorest rural children--the children who remain unreached by the formal school system. Girls were given special emphasis. By late 1991, the program had expanded to 6,003 schools, serving eleven to fourteen year-olds as well as eight to ten-year-olds. Over 8,000 schools were operating in 1992. BRAC targeted and achieved 70 percent enrollment of girls in these schools.

In recent years, BRAC's NFPE program has received considerable attention from the Education for All (EFA) community. Several studies and evaluations of the NFPE program have demonstrated that BRAC's approaches to teacher selection, training, and supervision, and parent and community involvement can be effective.

Based on these findings and its track record in development programs, BRAC is considering a rapid expansion of the NFPE program that could result in 50,000 BRAC schools nationwide by 1995. This expansion requires ongoing support from BRAC's existing international donor consortium, as well as new support from other international donors. In light of this proposed expansion, international organizations, particularly UNICEF and

USAID, have begun examining the NFPE program's role in achieving universal primary education in Bangladesh and its potential contribution to the achievement of universal primary education in other less developed countries with similar "gaps" in their education systems. Although BRAC officials developed the NFPE program to be a model education program for other communities in Bangladesh, they do not consider this model "replicable" in or "exportable" to other countries. Nevertheless, they recognize that some of the lessons they have learned may be useful to others interested in rapidly expanding primary education to previously under-served areas.

In late 1991, BRAC readily agreed to a UNICEF/USAID recommendation to conduct an independent case study of the NFPE program. This report represents the results of that study.

b. Bangladesh: The Context

Bangladesh is a densely populated, low-income country in Asia. Although situated on one of the largest, most fertile deltas in the world, the country is characterized by pervasive poverty, a rural-based economy, high levels of under- and unemployment, rapid population growth, frequently occurring natural disasters, and widespread discrimination against girls and women. Bangladesh is also characterized by a relatively stable political environment in recent years; a fairly well-developed, although not well-funded or service-oriented, system of public administration; and extensive involvement by national and international voluntary social welfare and development agencies in developmental and poverty alleviation work.

Apart from its land, water, and natural gas, Bangladesh's greatest potential for economic development lies in its human resources. Low investments to date in primary education, however, have resulted in limited access to schools for the majority of the rural population, literacy rates among the lowest in the world, and low levels of productivity in all sectors of the economy.

In 1990, the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) passed compulsory primary education legislation and began implementing that legislation in sixty-eight of the country's thanas (sub-districts) in 1992. The government strategy is to enroll all six-year-old children in first grade, increase their retention significantly up to fifth grade, and do the same for successive cohorts of six-year-olds. Other efforts, including the establishment of a National Committee on Basic Education for All, a social mobilization program, and a five-year General Education Project have also been initiated. In addition, the GOB has recognized the important role NGOs can play in supplementing government efforts to increase "the capability of the poor and the disadvantaged to save and invest over time so that the NGO(s)...can gradually withdraw...and shift its activities to another area not yet covered by such a program of

graduation to self reliance" [GOB, Fourth Five Year Plan, I-13]. Collectively, NGOs already play a national role in Bangladesh in health and family planning service delivery and in the expansion of rural credit. Although NGO work in the education sector has been less extensive to date, the potential for NGOs to make a major contribution appears promising.

B. Findings

1. NFPE Program

a. Program Elements

BRAC's NFPE program is by far the largest single non-government primary education program in Bangladesh. Although less than ten years old, it is one of the most promising programs. More than 90 percent of the children who start BRAC schools graduate, and a large proportion of the NFPE program graduates are admitted into Class IV or higher in the government system.

BRAC schools include two types of schools: three-year NFPE schools for eight- to ten-year-olds who have never attended primary school; and two-year Kishar-Kishari (KK) schools for eleven- to sixteen-year-olds who have dropped out of primary school and are unlikely ever to return. BRAC targets girls for both types of primary schools. As a result, approximately 70 percent of the students in BRAC schools are girls.

The NFPE program has the same elements as more traditional educational programs: students, teachers, parents, schedules, an instructional site, an instructional approach, and a specified curriculum. It is BRAC's approach to addressing these elements, however, that makes the NFPE program distinctive. The NFPE program consists of the following:

- *Students:* A school consists of 30 children, 60-70 percent of whom are girls, who live in rural areas, within a one kilometer radius of the school. For the most part, students in KK schools come from relatively disadvantaged homes. Their families generally are landless or own only their homesteads, and the family members have a combined annual income of less than US \$600 from all sources.
- *Teachers:* Teachers are generally married adults, 60-70 percent of whom are women, who have completed nine or more years of education and live within easy walking distance of the school. These teachers are hired on a temporary,

part-time basis and are paid modest wages. There is one teacher for each 30 students. Teacher training includes 15 days of initial training at a residential BRAC training center, one-to two-day refresher training sessions each month conducted by BRAC staff at a BRAC office near the teachers school, and weekly visits from BRAC field workers.

- *Parents:* The parents of most BRAC school students are illiterate and are usually the most socio-economically disadvantaged in their villages. Parents make no monetary contribution to the school, apart from replacing broken slateboards and worn mats; BRAC provides all student and teacher supplies--pencils, notebooks, textbooks, teacher manuals, slateboards, chalk, etc. Parents are expected to support the program in other ways, however. Prior to a new school opening, parents and BRAC staff meet several times. Parents also must pledge to attend monthly parent meetings and to send their children to school each day.
- *Schedule:* The school is in session for two and one-half to three hours a day, six days per week, 268 days per year at a time selected by the parents. Students are enrolled once every three years and advance together through the program. At the end of the program, the school begins another three-year cycle if there are enough target children in the community.
- *Instructional Site:* Instruction is provided in one-room houses and storerooms rented for just three hours per day. These rooms generally have bamboo and mud walls, a packed earth floor, a tin roof, and a blackboard. The children sit on the floor, on bamboo mats, holding slateboards on their knees. The teacher has a stool and a metal trunk that doubles as a desk and a supply cabinet.
- *Instructional Approach:* Although the pedagogical approach in BRAC schools is intended to be student-centered and the curriculum approach activity-based, more traditional methods tend to dominate. Group lectures are generally followed by individual assignments that require little analysis for students. There is little opportunity for discussion.
- *Curriculum:* The curriculum for both NFPE and KK schools, consisting of Bangla, social science, and mathematics, has been developed and revised several times by BRAC. The material covered is roughly equivalent to Class I-III in the formal school system. Since the formal school system requires English, the NFPE schools include English in their curriculum during the third year so that children who want to matriculate to formal schools after three

years are well prepared. A system of continuous assessment is used, and the students progress through the curriculum as a single group.

b. BRAC's Approach to Development Management

BRAC's ability to implement all the necessary elements of a targeted basic education program derives not so much from its knowledge of education as from its expertise in development management. In terms of development, since its creation 20 years ago, BRAC has developed surveys that help it develop and target its programs for the most disadvantaged rural families. BRAC also has developed ways to encourage these families to participate in the decisions that most affect program implementation. BRAC's "sectoral integrated" approach allows the NFPE program to operate relatively independently of BRAC's other development efforts yet still remain under the general oversight of the larger, more seasoned organization. Finally, BRAC managers, based on their experience in the health sector, are accustomed to thinking nationally. BRAC's plans to rapidly expand the NFPE program are based on a combination of perceived need and proven competence.

The stated success of BRAC's management is related to at least six characteristics:

- **Field-oriented:** Less than 10 percent of BRAC's staff are based at headquarters.
- **Learning-oriented:** BRAC uses a variety of formal and informal reporting and monitoring systems to shape program strategies, management procedures, instructional materials, and teacher training. Regular meetings are held to ensure that opinions from all levels of the organization are heard.
- **Strategic:** BRAC identifies the sectors or areas of greatest need, uses its own funds to try out new ideas, encourages its donors to form consortia to minimize duplicate reporting, regularly assesses its organizational capacity, adjusts its program targets accordingly, and publishes the results of its major studies and evaluations in English and Bangla to ensure maximum dissemination.
- **Support-oriented:** BRAC's own plans for expanding the NFPE program include the planning and costing of schools as well as of training centers, printers, a motor pool, and other support activities needed to ensure that the schools operate smoothly.

- **Accountable:** BRAC includes regular independent evaluations and external audits in all of its program plans.

c. Cost Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness

Cost efficiency and cost effectiveness were assessed by comparing costs and student performance in BRAC schools and formal primary schools.

BRAC's costs are, by any standard in the world, low. BRAC estimates that its current annual cost per student in the NFPE program is about \$18 per year. The independent cost study conducted for this report confirmed this figure. These costs are approximately equal to the costs of government schools. As indicated by the figures below, however, the structure of BRAC's expenditures reflects a focus on management that is absent in government schools.

Teacher salaries and benefits	29.1
Direct management and supervision	27.0
Students' books and supplies	20.2
School rent	12.1
Training	6.1
Teaching aids and equipment	4.0
Staff offices and housing	<u>1.5</u>

100.0%

Because poverty is identified by Bangladeshi parents as a major reason for having their children drop out of school, the NFPE program is designed so that parents incur practically no direct costs for sending their children to BRAC schools. Books, supplies, and school rooms are supplied by BRAC. No uniforms are required. The opportunity cost of the child's time is minimized by allowing the parents to pick the school hours and to vary them during the year according to the agricultural cycle, if necessary. Because schools are located so close to the students, little time is lost in travel to and from school. For parents, then, their children's attendance in BRAC schools results in less income loss than attendance in formal schools.

In comparing student performance, BRAC students achieve as much as or more than formal school students. During a three-year period, BRAC students completed Class III and entered Class IV at a significantly higher rate than formal school students. In addition, preliminary data available on the achievement of BRAC students in Class IV show that BRAC graduates who persist to the end of Class IV in the formal schools perform as well on

standard final examinations as students who have studied in formal schools since Class I. Results from a rapid Basic Education Assessment recently conducted by an inter-agency advisory committee in Bangladesh found that 38 percent of the proportion of eleven- to twelve-year-old BRAC students had attained basic literacy (as indicated by the completion of certain performance criteria), while only 20 percent of the government students performed at that same level. In this same assessment, 53 percent of the BRAC graduates satisfied the basic education criteria.

As stated previously, the annual cost per enrolled student, in BRAC and government schools, is approximately equal. However, because of the relatively higher attendance rates, lower repetition rates, Class III completion rates, and Class IV continuation rates for BRAC school students, BRAC schools are substantially more cost efficient per graduate than government schools.

Some issues related to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing NFPE program are as follows:

- ***Classroom Environment:*** While BRAC classrooms are much more child-centered than those of traditional formal schools, limited classroom space restricts the use of additional child-centered activities. Higher rental fees associated with larger rooms, however, might affect the cost of the program.
- ***Curriculum:*** Most NFPE program graduates who enter Class IV in the formal system drop out before they complete Class V. It is difficult to develop a two- or three-year curriculum that prepares some children to enter the government educational system and others to function effectively in rural Bangladesh. A more diverse curriculum would affect a variety of program elements, including the instructional schedule and teacher training.
- ***The Pedagogic Approach:*** The need to rely on teachers with limited formal education and no professional training, the limited hours in a school day, and the bare-bones provisions for physical facilities and learning materials have led to a simplified curricular content and a structured and well-defined sequence of classroom activities. While this approach has been successful, there may be room to improve the classroom practices, use of instructional time, and the creativity and spontaneity of teachers and students. Master teachers, more supportive materials, and innovative training strategies might increase instructional effectiveness.

- **Parental Attitudes:** In Bangladesh, higher education can negatively affect girls' marriage prospects. The parents of NFPE program students often prefer BRAC schools because they feel that these schools are not as good as the formal primary schools and therefore will not jeopardize their daughters' future. The extent to which parents will support "improvements" in the NFPE program's learning approach will probably depend somewhat on the extent to which the improvements will also result in improvements in girls' marriage prospects.
- **School Supervision:** BRAC's decentralized management model provides effective administrative and logistical support for the NFPE program but very little technical expertise in education. Strategies for providing additional teacher training and feedback could improve student performance.
- **Women's Program vs. a Men's Organization:** Although the NFPE program targets female students, recruits female teachers, and is supported primarily by mothers, most management and coordinating positions are held by men. To a large extent, this lack of women in management and decision-making positions reflects hiring practices that have inadvertently excluded women. Initial steps have been taken to address this issue.

2. Expanding the NFPE Program in Bangladesh

a. BRAC's Potential Roles

Within Bangladesh, BRAC can make several major contributions to universal primary education:

- expand its own educational program, thereby reaching more of the hardest-to-reach children and providing a testing ground for increased parent and community participation in primary schools, a simplified/modified curriculum for children from nonliterate households, and a shorter school day;
- support, through the sharing of BRAC's methodology and materials, other NGOs involved in primary education;
- improve community participation in local compulsory primary education planning and management by creating a mechanism for local input, mobilizing resources at the local level, making effective use of government

resources, and acting as the intermediary for community participation in local planning and management;

- build institutional involvement in primary education, planning, and management by developing plans that involve government schools, non-formal centers, and other institutions; and
- help, through the services of its Research and Evaluation Division, to assess and monitor national progress in basic education.

The first potential contribution, expanding its own educational program, is currently BRAC's primary focus.

b. Issues

BRAC's expansion plan calls for increasing the current number of schools from over 8,000 to 15,000 by the end of 1993 in areas where BRAC already works, creating 35,000 between 1993 and 1995 in areas where BRAC has not worked previously, and operating a total of 50,000 schools by the end of 1995. The BRAC model is a viable one, and the proposed three-year expansion plan is feasible. Questions to be answered in expanding BRAC as specified in this three-year plan, however, include the following:

- How big can the NFPE program become without sacrificing efficiency and instructional effectiveness?
- Should BRAC broaden its NFPE program goals and objectives to provide higher levels of basic education, prepare students for formal school, and/or prepare students for work?
- As expansion progresses, should the NFPE program continue to serve only the more disadvantaged youth or all children of a certain age in a particular community?
- If the NFPE program becomes an important aspect of the national universal primary education effort, should it continue to be funded by external sources?
- What should be BRAC's relationship with the formal education system?

C. Implications for the Global EFA Community

Internationally, BRAC serves as an object lesson on the potential of the non-government sector. It also illustrates how a combination of targeting, school design, modifications, and follow through can increase girls' primary school participation rates dramatically. Several of the specific factors that have shaped BRAC's approach to the NFPE program in Bangladesh--such as high rural population density and high levels of rural, educated people who are under or unemployed--are not found in many developing countries. Nonetheless, the institutional environment in which BRAC operates is common in many less-developed countries. This institutional environment, which includes organizations that implement development activities in Bangladesh, and comprises international donors, Bangladesh government agencies, and international and national non-government organizations, plus all their norms, rules, regulations, and conventions, is characterized by:

- heavy reliance on foreign donor funds, which are provided in the form of short-term "projects" targeted at long-term problems, such as establishing universal primary education;
- national Ministries of Education and formal primary education systems that have the formal mandate to develop the primary education system but lack the human, financial, administrative resources and/or the bureaucratic flexibility to do so; and
- NGOs that have greater flexibility than the government bureaucracies and often are able to reach specific target groups more effectively.

Following are selected implications of BRAC's works, not only in the conditions particular to Bangladesh, but also in the institutional environment common in many parts of the world.

1. Selected Implications for BRAC's Primary School Model

- **Part-time paraprofessionals can make good teachers for the lower grades of primary school, providing they are adequately trained, supplied with a very structured curriculum, and, most importantly, adequately supervised.** BRAC's model for teachers is not part-time paraprofessionals, but part-time paraprofessionals *plus* continuous training *plus* intense supervision. Government satellite schools that use paraprofessional teachers without the intensive, higher cost supervision offered by BRAC are not having the same

results as BRAC schools. "Low-cost" paraprofessional teachers need more "high-cost" supervision and guidance than "high-cost" professionals.

- **Primary school participation can be improved, even with traditionally hard-to-reach populations.** Primary school enrollment is strongly affected by cost and safety, persistence is strongly affected by school quality and follow-up, and timely completion is strongly affected by continuous assessment and follow-up.
- **A basic, no-frills curriculum that is fully implemented is better than a more progressive one that is not.** BRAC school students with a simpler curriculum are achieving as much as government students who complete a more elaborate curriculum.
- **The features needed to increase girls' access to and persistence in primary school need not make schools more expensive.** Some features incorporated into the BRAC model for their low-cost properties--small schools with small catchment areas and female paraprofessional teachers hired from within those catchment areas--also attract girls. It is usually easier, however, to plan these features into a new school system than to introduce them into an old one.
- **NFPE schools do not appear to be handicapped for lack of a permanent school building.** Rented rooms provide adequate space, at minimal cost, for the small group format and basic instruction that BRAC schools provide. Renting school rooms, part-time enables BRAC schools to start up quickly. When one three-year cycle is finished, the second cycle can either stay in the same location or move to one closer to the new students.
- **Securing significant participation by illiterate parents requires not just appropriate participation structures but ongoing individual follow-up.** In addition to convening monthly parent meetings, BRAC field staff follow up absentee students with home visits, and the staff are encouraged to develop contacts and rapport with individual parents and parents' groups. This individual contact is a significant contributing factor to high attendance rates for both the school and parent meetings.
- **Development projects require both technical and administrative monitoring.** One type of monitoring does not ensure the other. Adequate staff, training, and funding should be budgeted for both.

- **National NGOs have the potential not only to pilot innovative new technologies and new dissemination techniques but also to implement national social service delivery projects. National NGOs that have developed sound management practices, field experience, and adequate field support services should not be limited necessarily to small pilot projects.**

2. Implications from BRAC's Development Management Model

- **Technical expertise may be less important than managerial expertise in ensuring the rapid expansion of a basic education program of adequate quality. The NFPE program's success to date is related less to the rigor of BRAC's original technical design and more to its willingness to "learn as it goes" and its determination to fully implement its no-frills approach.**
- **A key element of managerial expertise is the ability to recognize the type of support services that may be necessary to support a particular program and to plan and budget for those services. BRAC's previous experience in setting up field offices, ensuring timely delivery of project materials to remote sites, developing staff training materials, and providing other support services played a critical role in developing and expanding the NFPE program.**
- **Donors interested in funding large-scale NGO projects should be prepared to cover the full cost of the support services that each project requires—i.e., motor pool, printing, staff training, etc. The NFPE program budget includes adequate allocations for staff, training, and logistical support for both technical and managerial functions.**
- **For NGOs planning large-scale programs, investments in internal management information systems, external evaluations, and translations of important reports into key international languages may be necessary pre-conditions to mobilizing large-scale funding. BRAC's internal and external reporting systems have played a critical role in mobilizing donor support for its NFPE program.**
- **NGOs that provide basic education programs do not have to be restricted to limited funding sources. In the process of seeking large-scale funding, national NGOs may be able to retain some independence—including the opportunity to experiment with alternative models—in at least two ways: by**

developing profit-making enterprises that can provide pilot funding for new activities and "bridge funding" during periods of rapid expansion; and by increasing the number of donors that fund their projects. BRAC has used both of these methods successfully.

- **National NGOs can reduce the amount of administrative and coordination time required for multiple donors by forming donor consortia, the members of which accept a single set of standardized reports and evaluations. BRAC already has a donor consortium for its seven-year-old rural development program and is currently of forming a new one for its NFPE.**

3. BRAC's Potential Role in Bangladesh: Lessons for Others

- **Non-formal primary education delivery provided by an NGO like BRAC will initially have a better chance than the government to meet short-term Education for All (EFA) goals. Because of a lack of prior constraints present in the government; teachers unions, facilities, and the apparent need for nation-wide coverage, an NGO can respond more quickly to new mandates. BRAC has shown that this flexibility is an important component of educational delivery.**
- **A focus on medium-term goals, which are shared by the government, has allowed BRAC to serve a stop-gap function better. From its experience in the health sector, BRAC has understood that NGO cooperation with the government works well in sectors with a high priority and shared national goals. BRACs consistency in delivery provides an institutional memory in excess of that provided by frequently changing governmental ministers and secretaries.**
- **National NGOs need not, necessarily, be limited to small pilot projects. BRAC has proven that in both health and education, with proper management and an appropriate program, NGOs can carry a substantial responsibility for large scale delivery. At the same time, considerable commitment and training are necessary to create a cadre of real managers capable of large scale implementation.**
- **Respected efforts like those offered by BRAC can inhibit other innovations, as smaller programs are asked to conform to its successes. A**

program like BRAC's, which has grown considerably larger and is deemed successful, can inhibit other programs. Its size and approach may reduce the encouragement of innovation still so necessary to pilot new delivery systems, promote greater grassroots participation in education, and increase services to disadvantaged groups. BRAC has made special efforts to encourage and support other NGOs in part to alleviate this very feature of success.