

Water, Development, and Education

Ashley Toombs & Devon McLorg
BRAC USA
June 7, 2021





Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. BRAC Overview
- III. Water & Our Work
- IV. BRAC Boat Schools

The BRAC Story

In 1972, in the wake of a brutal cyclone and devastating war for independence that ravaged his home country of Bangladesh, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, an executive working at a multinational oil company, **was compelled to do something to help.**

**Small is beautiful.
Scale is necessary.**



Where we work: 100 million people, 100,000 staff, 11 countries





Get on the good side

Water & Our Work

Cyclone Resilient Housing

Most vulnerable households in Bangladesh are exposed to climate change induced extreme events like intense and frequent cyclones.

We build cyclone-resilient structures that can withstand the 100-year tidal surge height and 250 km per hour winds, and include inbuilt rainwater harvesting systems and sanitation facilities.



Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)



Safe water facilities



Sanitation facilities



Waste management



Water quality testing



WASH in schools



WASH in emergencies



Climate resilient WASH

Spotlight: School WASH in South Sudan

- The youngest country in the world, and the **second poorest**.
- Challenged by climate change, food insecurity and intercommunal violence
- 40% of the population have access to safe water; 10% have access to improved sanitation.
- Inadequate WASH facilities is a **major barrier for children, especially girls to attend school**.





Spotlight: School WASH in South Sudan

- **Unmet need** - inadequate resources to fund improved WASH facilities for BRAC schools in South Sudan
- **Girls report skipping school** multiple days a month
- **One third of BRAC's learning sites have latrines**, most need renovation.
- We are **working with communities** to address the challenge but we are under-resourced.



Bringing learning to children:

If kids cannot access their school, then the school should go to them

The Haor Region

Bangladesh's *haors* are wetlands in the northeast of the country, where majority of the land is submerged for 6-7 months of the year.

The closest government school is often very far away, requiring travel by boat and long journeys by foot for many students. As a result, the dropout rate in the *haor* region is significantly higher than the country's average.



BRAC's Boat Schools

Our boat schools were launched in 2011 to connect children in the haor region with accessible, quality education, ensuring all children have the opportunity to learn.

Traveling boats pick up teachers and students, provide a safe and child-friendly learning environment during the day, and drop off students after class.

500 Boat Schools. 500 Teachers. 14,000 Learners.




BRAC's Non-formal Approach: Nearly 40 years of experience

One teacher teaches 30 students for four years, a condensed primary school cycle. At the end, students sit for national exams that allow them to mainstream into government secondary schools.

BRAC's curriculum focuses not only on literacy and numeracy, but also health, nutrition, the environment, swimming, and other key life skills.

Recognizing the gendered barriers that compound access issues in education, all of our boat school teachers are women and over half of our students are girls.





Disruptions like these push families further into poverty, resulting in a higher number of child marriages.



Beyond the classroom

Community engagement is key to making the boat schools successful. We work with communities to:

- Establish school hours that work around family needs and harvest schedules
- Identify children who have never been to school or dropped out of school
- Recruit local teachers
- Establish School Management Committees to oversee and support the schools, teachers, and students

Questions?



Thank you!

Contact us to learn more:

ashley@bracusa.org

devon@bracusa.org

BRAC


bracusa.org

info@bracusa.org





[Video | Get on the Good Side with BRAC](#)



How is BRAC prioritising the Earth?

Climate Smart Agriculture

Many farmers in the Global South live in climate hotspots exposed to the worst impacts of climate change. We work to increase the adaptive capacity and agricultural production of these farmers, supporting their livelihoods and their food security.



Promote climate-adaptive techniques



Support women in agriculture



Link farmers to markets



Integrate public and private providers



BRAC

Ashley Toombs, BRAC USA



What does BRAC stand for?

Formerly the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee and later the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, we are now just known as “BRAC.”

Today, BRAC stands for a belief: a belief that people are not defined by their circumstances, **and with the right tools, they can rise above poverty.**

Today, we reach 100 million people in 11 countries.

BRAC is a global leader in developing and implementing cost-effective, evidence-based programs to assist the most marginalized people in extremely poor, conflict-prone, and post-disaster settings.



BRAC Boat Schools

Devon McLorg, BRAC USA

Anchoring a Dream in a Floating Reality

“For me, daydreaming about going to school was a luxury on its own — but I don't spend my days dreaming anymore. Now I am enriching my mind so I can go on and do the same for others.”



What makes BRAC unique?

- The only international NGO of its scale to be founded and led from the **Global South**
- Reaching the poorest and most excluded, with a particular focus on **women and girls**
- Providing holistic, multi-faceted solutions to poverty
- Designed to operate at **scale**
- Iterative program development based on high-quality research and M&E
- Business-minded, **combining social enterprises, social development programs, and microfinance**

