

BRAC

Mandate: 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. These include initiatives in Ultra-Poor Graduation, education, healthcare, microfinance, women's and girls' empowerment, agriculture, human and legal rights, and more.

Graduation Lessons Learned:

We have many lessons from our global Graduation programs across Asia and Africa. We have chosen to highlight lessons from the PROFIT pilots to provide valuable insights into effective implementation of the approach in Kenya.

Context:

- Stronger coordination with county-level developments is needed to address the issue of poor infrastructure which continues to hamper effects in health, mobility, and WASH.

Targeting:

- Proper planning for a participatory targeting process is critical in ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable benefit from the Graduation program.
- The Graduation program provides an opportunity to link ultra-poor populations, who often lack national identity cards and proper documentation, with mainstream services.
- A participatory targeting method is important to secure community buy-in and acceptance.

Livelihoods:

- Cash transfers have proved to be more effective and less cumbersome than in-kind transfers that are subject to procurement delays.
- Clear guidance on the purpose, selection, and management of livelihoods can avert misunderstandings and misuse by participants.
- Strong linkages with existing value chains ensures sustainability of livelihoods post-Graduation.

Savings:

- Linking savings groups with formal financial institutions is critical in preventing exposure to predatory institutions and safekeeping of savings.

Life skills training:

- Gender sensitization training for frontline staff is needed to handle sensitive issues such as domestic conflict.
- Training the entire community on life skills will help sustain positive social change once frontline staff have exited the program.

Staffing:

- Additional support and staff facilitation is needed in areas where delayed mobile network expansion affect communication, mobile money transfer, and monitoring data transmission.
- Reinforcement of staff training is essential for high-quality implementation since mentors are expected to develop in-depth knowledge of a wide range of topics.

Monitoring:

- Regular monitoring and the ability to capture timely data is important in ensuring a rapid response to challenges in implementation.

Scale: While BRAC is an international organization, its projects generally start at the local scale, partnering with local organizations on the ground to implement programs at a particular site/location. In using our Ultra-Poor Graduation program as an example, BRAC has collaborated with the Government of Kenya and local organizations BOMA and CARE International via the PROFIT Financial Graduation program. BRAC is providing these two organizations with technical assistance on the effective implementation of two Graduation pilots in the ASAL regions of Samburu and Kitui. BRAC has also been at the forefront of the Rohingya crisis, providing immediate humanitarian disaster response in Cox’s Bazaar on the border with Myanmar. Coordinating with dozens of local, regional, national and international relief organizations, BRAC is providing life-saving assistance to the over 750,000 Rohingya currently seeking refuge at the three main camps in Bangladesh.

Beneficiaries: BRAC touches the lives of 130 million people in over 11 countries and employs over 75,000 staff around the globe.

Expenditure: Its total expenditure sits at just over \$1 billion USD and its total disbursement in 2017 was \$3.62 billion (a 14% increase from the previous year). More than 75 percent of its budget in Bangladesh is self-financed through its own activity, including social enterprises and microfinance. However, much of BRAC’s work—including its schools, healthcare, Ultra-Poor Graduation program, and most of its programs outside Bangladesh—remains reliant on outside donors. For more details and numbers, please review the 2017 [annual report](#).

Reach: BRAC is a global organization, currently implementing programs in 11 countries and providing technical assistance on Graduation in 4 countries. In Kenya, BRAC is providing technical assistance to BOMA and CARE International on the government-led PROFIT Financial Graduation program in Samburu and Kitui counties. Globally, BRAC’s Ultra-Poor Graduation team directly implements programs or has provided technical support in projects in the following countries: Bangladesh, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Uganda, Tanzania, Lesotho, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar, Philippines and Nepal, Egypt, among others.

Headquarters: BRAC currently does not have an office in Kenya, but the team supporting the PROFIT Graduation program in the country is based out of the BRAC USA office in New York, United States as well BRAC headquarters in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Initiation: BRAC has been providing technical support on a government-led Graduation program since 2014. In 2014, BRAC conducted an assessment of the viability of the Graduation approach in Kenya and designed contextualized interventions for Samburu and Kitui counties in collaboration with BOMA and CARE. In 2016, the two Graduation pilots were launched. BRAC continues to provide technical support, which includes oversight of implementation, staff training, supporting the monitoring and evaluation framework, and disseminating lessons to national stakeholders.

Graduation work

BRAC's Graduation Approach and Direct Implementation Programs

BRAC's Graduation approach is a comprehensive, time-bound, integrated and sequenced set of services that enable extreme and ultra-poor households to achieve sustainable livelihoods and socioeconomic resilience, in order to progress along a pathway out of extreme poverty. The Graduation approach was pioneered by BRAC's Targeting the Ultra Poor (TUP) program in Bangladesh which has served 1.8 million ultra-poor households in Bangladesh since 2002. BRAC implements Graduation programs across the globe as part of its broader goal to end poverty globally. At the core of BRAC's Graduation approach are four foundational pillars: social protection, livelihoods promotion, financial inclusion, and social empowerment.

BRAC Technical Assistance

For more than a decade, BRAC has served as a leading provider of global technical assistance and advisory services for the Graduation Approach to UN agencies, NGOs and government clients implementing Graduation programs worldwide. Spanning assessment, design, implementation, and learning phases, these services consist of a suite of offerings ranging from design workshops to technical trainings, webinars, and seminars as well as long-term implementation support to train and raise awareness on how to design, adapt and implement Graduation for diverse global stakeholders and actors.

BRAC's Ultra-Poor Graduation team is currently supporting the design and implementation of Graduation programming for the Government of Kenya, the Government of the Philippines, the Government of Lesotho, World Vision, and Sawiris Foundation and provides direct implementation support internally to BRAC country offices in Uganda and Liberia. Please see the table below for more information about our ongoing and past engagements.

BRAC's Graduation Support to the Government of Kenya

In 2016, the Government of Kenya (GoK) with the support from International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) launched two Graduation pilots in rural Kenya to enable ultra-poor women and youth to build resilience and sustainable livelihoods in 18-21 months. The pilots are part of the Programme for Rural Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT), an initiative that promotes economic development among smallholder farmers, pastoralists, fisherman, landless laborers, women, and youth in the arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya (ASALs). With the technical guidance of BRAC, The BOMA Project and CARE International Kenya are implementing the Graduation pilots in Samburu and

Kitui counties. The pilots target 2,600 women and youth and integrate elements of livelihoods promotion, social protection, financial inclusion, and social empowerment. The pilots are designed to inform GoK's national social protection programs aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability in Kenya.

The Graduation interventions include a livelihood-generating asset such as livestock or seed capital for petty trade, technical and life skills training, monthly consumption stipend, savings support, subsidized health insurance, and psychosocial support through mentorship. All participants receive a mobile phone, which they use to access their stipends transferred via M-Pesa. These interventions will be sequenced from July 2017 to March 2019.

In Samburu, BOMA identified 1,600 female ultra-poor participants using a participatory rural appraisal in which community members identify the poorest households in their village. The participants received seed capital to start a viable livelihood; 85 percent of women in the pilot are in a group livelihood model, which consists of three participants.

The livelihoods include grocery shops, butcher shops, bead-making, livestock trade, poultry farming, and others. In Kitui, CARE identified 1,000 participants, with more than 30 percent youth. Livelihood options for this group include grain marketing, livestock trade, bee-keeping, water vending, hairdressing services, carpentry, and petty trade.

The success rate of participants will be measured against a set of Graduation criteria that examine food security, livelihood diversification, health, and resilience. The pilot will be independently evaluated through a quasi-experimental study by Expanding Opportunities.

Technical Assistance	
<i>Extended client engagements to support the design and implementation of Graduation programming.</i>	
1	<p>Government of Kenya Client: The National Treasury Organization Type: Government Dates: 2014-present Partners: IFAD, BOMA, CARE, Expanding Opportunities</p> <p>Description: Feasibility assessment followed by design, implementation, and evaluation support to a pilot in the arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya targeting a total of 2,600 women and youth in Samburu and Kitui counties in the Programme for Rural Outreach of Financial Innovations and Technologies (PROFIT).</p>
2	<p>Government of the Philippines Client: Department of Labor and Employment Organization Type: Government Dates: 2018-present Partners: Department of Social Welfare and Development, ADB, IPA</p> <p>Description: Supporting the incorporation of Graduation interventions into Philippines social protection programming. Overseeing design, planning, implementation, and evaluation support to integrate Graduation interventions into their existing Kabuhayan (Livelihoods) Program targeting cash transfer beneficiary households, particularly those prone to engaging in child labor. 1,200-1,800 households in Negros Occidental; evaluation testing group and individual livelihoods and coaching.</p>
3	<p>Government of Lesotho</p>

	<p>Client: Ministry of Social Development Organization Type: Government Dates: 2017-present Partners: UNICEF, World Bank, FAO, Partners in Health, Catholic Relief Services</p> <p>Description: Design, implementation and learning support to develop a Graduation pilot integrated into the national social protection framework. Coordinating across multiple ministries (Social Development, Food and Agriculture, and Forestry) and existing programs, including the Child Grants Programme (CGP) and Public Works, to design a holistic graduation model for 1,000 households in the Mokhotlong district, with plans for subsequent national scale-up.</p>
4	<p>World Vision Country: Global Organization Type: NGO Dates: 2018-present</p> <p>Description: Promote the uptake of a standardized Graduation approach in 40 countries with the help of a BRAC-developed field guide and training of WV staff.</p>
5	<p>Sawiris Foundation Country: Egypt Organization Type: Foundation/NGO Dates: 2018-present</p> <p>Partners: J-PAL, Giving Without Limits Association, Egyptian Association for Human Development Description: Design, implementation, and learning support to develop a pilot in the upper Egypt governorates of Sohag and Assiut targeting 1,000 participants.</p>
6	<p>Social Welfare Fund and Social Fund for Development Country: Yemen Organization Type: Government Dates: 2009-2013</p> <p>Description: Design and monitoring support on a Graduation pilot for 450 households in Aden, Lahj and Taiz. BRAC also provided recommendations to refine targeting whereby pilot participants were drawn from an existing pool of unconditional cash transfer recipients.</p>
7	<p>Fonkoze Microfinance Institution Country: Haiti Organization Type: MFI Dates: 2005-2011</p> <p>Description: Provided two immersion visit trainings in Bangladesh, a design workshop, content development, staff training, and dedicated in-country BRAC staff for a 9-month assignment to support the development of the Chemin Levi Miyo Program (Pathway to a Better Life).</p>
8	<p>Trickle Up Country: India Organization Type: NGO Dates: 2005-2011</p> <p>Description: Provided an immersion visit training in Bangladesh with subsequent in-country staff capacitation and training to design a Graduation pilot for 300 participants in West Bengal from India's nationalized self-help group model. Graduation programming expanded in partnership with Odisha and Jharkhand state governments.</p>
9	<p>Bandhan Country: India Organization Type: MFI Dates: 2005-2011</p> <p>Description: Extended training and staff capacitation to design an asset-based Graduation pilot for 300 households to allow extreme poor to effectively graduate into microfinance; nearly 30,000 households graduated to date through scaled programming to Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha states, and through piloting Graduation with the state government of Rajasthan.</p>
<p>BRAC Direct Implementation Support <i>Internal technical assistance to launch and enhance BRAC Targeting the Ultra-Poor programs globally.</i></p>	

1	BRAC Uganda Country: Uganda	Program Type: Youth Pilot	Dates: 2014-present
	Description: Ongoing support through design, implementation, and monitoring of first Graduation pilot exploring youth-focused livelihoods, youth life skills coaching, HIV and family planning services, and wage employment, among other features, in Luwero district.		
2	BRAC Liberia Country: Liberia	Program Type: Health shocks (Ebola)	Dates: 2017 -present
	Description: Ongoing support through design, implementation, and monitoring of Graduation pilot for 750 women-headed households with a focus on Ebola survivors in Bong and Margibi counties.		
2	BRAC Country: Bangladesh	Program Type: Phase IV TUP	Dates: 2015-present
	Description: Technical assistance mission and follow-up support to review the effectiveness of the flagship TUP program; facilitate evolution of interventions and relevant metrics; and propose recommendations for strategic direction forward.		
3	BRAC South Sudan Country: South Sudan	Program Type: Conflict-affected	Dates: 2013-2015
	Description: Support to post-conflict livelihood recovery in South Sudan. Designed and implemented a Graduation pilot between April 2013 and September 2015 to provide targeted support to 250 ultra-poor women and their households in Yei County.		
4	Government of Pakistan Country: Pakistan	Partner: BRAC Pakistan	Dates: 2013-2015
	Description: BRAC Pakistan implemented a TUP program in the Lasbela district of Balochistan to improve the economic condition of 200 marginalized households, including TA to the government of Pakistan on implementing Graduation. The government's Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) have since adopted Graduation in their core programming that targets the extreme poor.		
5	Government of Afghanistan Country: Afghanistan	Partner: BRAC Afghanistan, MIFSA	Dates: 2013-2015
	Description: BRAC Afghanistan supported a TUP pilot in three districts (Bamyan, Panjshir, and Yakawlang) of Bamyan province. Pilot results have encouraged the government's Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MIFSA) to expand the program to additional remote poor communities across Afghanistan.		

What do your future plans look like? What is your strategic direction?

BRAC is always looking for new opportunities to help uplift the most marginalized out of poverty. In line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal #1, our organization sees the Graduation approach as a lead development practice to end poverty by 2030, and to this end, we are working with many national governments and international organizations to scale up these efforts. BRAC's Ultra-Poor Graduation team's mission is to equip governments, international NGOs, and multilaterals to achieve large scale, positive change in the conditions of ultra-poor populations through Graduation-related advocacy and technical advisory.

Through our advisory services and technical assistance, we believe BRAC can play a strategic role in increasing Graduation's reach in a way that is sustainable. BRAC supports implementers to successfully roll out Graduation programming, innovate the approach, create knowledge products and generate additional impact evidence. BRAC is currently in the process of beginning new Graduation pilots in Africa and Asia, and is working with organizations like World Vision to reach the final 400 million ultra-poor.

BRAC aims to promote and support uptake of the Graduation approach as an advocate and a thought leader, educating governments and other global implementers and influencers about the tremendous benefits and potential impact of graduation programming.

Where, as an organisation, would you like to be in 5 or 10 years?

- **Advocacy and thought leadership:** The Ultra-Poor Graduation team hopes that its strategic advocacy efforts will lead to increased adoption of the Graduation approach in order to achieve progress on SDG1. The team would like to be recognized as a thought leader in the Graduation space, specializing in how to adapt Graduation to new and changing contexts and sharing these findings and evidence-based impacts with policymakers and other key stakeholders.
- **Technical assistance:** As a technical assistance provider, BRAC will continue to address the growing demand for Graduation models within governments, multilaterals, NGOs, and MFIs to achieve SDG1. For example, in Kenya, it is BRAC's hope that upon the successful completion of the PROFIT pilots, Graduation will be scaled up by the Government of Kenya, supported by BRAC and other stakeholders. As a results-based organization, these pilot results will inform the planning and design of BRAC's future programs.
- **Building evidence:** Drawing on BRAC's evidence-based model in Bangladesh as well as its global experiences supporting Graduation implementation in a range of contexts, the Ultra-Poor Graduation team aims to build upon the body of evidence and research around the Graduation approach, including testing new models and innovative interventions. By building evidence, the team plans to improve knowledge of how to design and implement the model in different contexts in a way that is both scalable and delivers sustained transformation for participants.