Youth hold tremendous potential, but in the countries where BRAC works they often face unique barriers that create challenging transitions into adulthood. Since 1993, BRAC’s emphasis on iteration and adaptation has propelled its youth programs to achieve lasting progress in empowering young women and men to reach their fullest potential. This ambitious work would not be possible without you.

Thank you.
EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

In the Global South, adolescent girls often face high levels of teenage pregnancy, early marriage, and gender-based violence. While access to education is expanding, youth still face limited job prospects. Without clear economic opportunities, there is less incentive for young people to invest in education and training, creating a negative economic and social cycle that BRAC's youth empowerment programs work to reverse. When young people have equitable access to quality education, dignified employment opportunities, and social empowerment, including life skills and decision making in sexual and reproductive health, they can become strong, resilient, and economically sovereign adults. This report details BRAC's critical work with youth that is made possible by your support.

SUPPORTING ADOLESCENTS AFTER SCHOOL

BRAC is known for its history of iterating and scaling programs to ensure success. The first Adolescent Development Program (ADP) club was established in Bangladesh in 1993, when BRAC recognized the need for holistic support for adolescent youth. After testing and measuring ADP’s impact in Bangladesh, BRAC adapted the model and launched Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) to uplift adolescent girls across Africa via culturally relevant programming focused on social and economic empowerment. This work has now reached hundreds of thousands of young people across South Asia and Africa. Operating after school and meeting three times a week, ELA clubs feature a female community member who serves as a mentor for a group of 20-30 girls. These safe spaces offer girls a welcoming setting, within walking distance from home, where they can access important information, form social networks, and engage in reading, arts, games, and sports in an environment outside of family pressures. For senior girls (ages 15-22), BRAC also provides livelihood training, such as technical and vocational education courses, to support employment or self-employment. By investing in human capital, BRAC’s ADP and ELA clubs empower adolescents and youth across Asia and Africa to build the autonomy and self-confidence needed to pursue a successful pathway to adulthood by addressing the complex needs at these critical life stages.

SERVING YOUTH IN COX’S BAZAR, BANGLADESH

BRAC has served communities in the Cox’s Bazar region of Bangladesh for nearly four decades and is the largest civil society responder to the Rohingya refugee crisis. Currently, over 65,000 young people, with more than half being girls, are enrolled in BRAC’s learning facilities inside the Rohingya camps. When the COVID-19 crisis struck, BRAC quickly engaged young women in sewing and tailoring training so they could begin producing and selling masks in their communities. Additionally, through BRAC’s Education Program, 21 multi-purpose centers and eight adolescent centers have been established to provide more than 2,000 young women and men with pre-vocational courses, including life skills training, literacy, and numeracy lessons.
Randomized control trials conducted across Uganda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Tanzania have shown the tremendous impact of BRAC’s youth empowerment work. The studies demonstrate that young people who participate in ELA are more resilient in times of crisis, exhibit lower teen pregnancy rates, and display increased likelihood to engage in income-generating activities. In recent years, it became clear that ELA had the potential to expand beyond BRAC and touch the lives of millions more around the world. To rise to this challenge, BRAC developed a technical advisory model, which allows the organization to provide expert guidance and direction to governments and nonprofits who wish to use the rigorously tested ELA approach. In 2020, BRAC was selected by the United States Agency for International Development, the US Government’s international aid agency, as one of four models to support its partners in strengthening the economic empowerment component of their youth programs. To date, BRAC has worked with partners in Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zambia and plans to continue deepening its impact.

Beyond its dedicated youth work, BRAC offers a host of opportunities to young people through its other program areas. These include early childhood, primary, secondary, and tertiary education, with a special focus on ensuring girls are in school; scholarships; apprenticeships; community youth leadership opportunities; English courses; information and communication technology training; and activities like karate, cricket, volleyball, and theater. Supportive environments outside of dedicated safe spaces are crucial to enabling young women to succeed. To reinforce this, BRAC also engages boys, parents, and community members to raise awareness of the issues that prevent adolescent girls from achieving their full potential, such as restrictive gender norms, child marriage, and domestic violence.
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 education, health care, financial inclusion, youth empowerment, agriculture, humanitarian response, and more. BRAC’s vision is a world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination where everyone has the opportunity to realize their potential. In 2021, BRAC was named the number one NGO in the world by NGO Advisor for the sixth time. Founded in Bangladesh in 1972, BRAC currently operates in 11 countries in Asia and Africa, touching the lives of over 100 million people.

About BRAC USA

Based in New York, BRAC USA is the North American affiliate of BRAC. BRAC USA provides comprehensive support to BRAC around the world by raising awareness about its work to empower people in poverty in 11 countries and mobilizing resources to support programs. BRAC USA works closely with its international counterparts to design and implement cost-effective and evidence-based poverty innovations. BRAC USA is an independent 501(c)(3) organization.

GET INVOLVED

Your gift can make a difference.

Visit: bracusa.org/donate
Email: info@bracusa.org
Call: +1 (212) 808-5615
Mail: BRAC USA
110 William Street, 18th FL
New York, NY 10038

Email: legacy@bracusa.org
to consider including BRAC USA in your estate plans.

Inspire your community: bracusa.org/fundraise