



BANGLADESH RURAL  
ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

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3, NEW CIRCULAR ROAD, MAGHBAZAR  
DACC-17 BANGLADESH

REPORT  
ON  
JAMALPUR WOMEN'S PROGRAMME  
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1976

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BANGLADESH RURAL ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE  
3 New Circular Road, Maghbazar  
Dacca-17 Bangladesh

## 1976 ANNUAL REPORT

### JAMALPUR WOMEN'S PROGRAMME

#### I. INTRODUCTION:

##### GENESIS:

Jamalpur Sub-Division was severely affected by the flood of July and August 1974. UNICEF's Nutrition Unit visited the area to see the condition. The situation called for some assistance to reduce the impact of famine. UNICEF decided to demonstrate the possibilities of cultivating sandy soil, attaching the work to wheat relief. UNICEF also decided to employ women as labour because large numbers of women were observed begging in Jamalpur town.

UNICEF, through the local Government Committees, initiated a food for work scheme in February, 1975. The number of women willing to participate in agricultural food-for-work was higher than expected. 100 had been expected; 840 participated.

By June harvesting was completed and the monsoon had begun. The UNICEF nutrition Unit approached BRAC with a request to provide Functional Education to the 840 women until the advent of the next agricultural season. BRAC agreed. BRAC selected and trained 15 local Jamalpur women as functional education teachers. A BRAC Programme Supervisor was assigned to the project. BRAC's Head Office in Dacca provided logistical support and financial management to the programme. As planned, BRAC's functional education component of the UNICEF schemes would end by December when agricultural food-for-work would resume. But the programme did not go as planned.

Upon hearing that the functional education programme would end, some learners requested that the teachers continue classes. The teachers held discussions with the learners, and found a general desire among the learners to continue attending classes even on a voluntary basis (earlier, wheat-payments were used as an incentive for class-attendance: i.e., food-for-study). The teachers and learners jointly decided to approach BRAC with a proposal for the continuation of the functional education programme.

After conducting several discussions with learners and two workshops with the teachers, BRAC reconsidered its position and

decided to seek financial support for a continuing programme, if the teacher team could design a concrete plan for the next phase. In late November, the teachers worked out a tentative plan of action to continue functional education classes and to expand into village-based women's development work in the learners' village. It was agreed <sup>that</sup> the teachers would spend an initial trial month (December, 1975) investigating the field area while continuing the functional education classes in Jamalpur town.

In early January 1976, the teachers came to Dacca for five days of intensive Programme Planning training. The central problems, objectives, and means (work plan, communication skills, etc.) were discussed. What evolved out of the training was a year's plan of action designed by, directed towards and to be implemented by women. Phase II of the Jamalpur Women's Programme was launched in January, 1976. A group of part-time functional education teachers now formed a team of full-time development workers.

#### OBJECTIVES:

The target population of the Jamalpur Women's Programme is poor, rural women of productive age (15-45) in 30 villages of Jamalpur Sub-Division. The overall aim of the programme is to raise the literacy, health, economic status and consciousness of poor rural women. The more specific objectives, as decided upon and rank-ordered by the Jamalpur staff, are:

1. To make village women conscious of the root causes of their problems and to help them seek solutions;
2. To control population growth through family planning motivation and delivery of services;
3. To encourage joint savings and cooperative economic activities by village women;
4. To educate village women in hygiene and nutrition;
5. To encourage horticulture and poultry raising by women;
6. To encourage village women to utilize fallow land surrounding their respective villages;
7. To initiate women's organization in the villages; and
8. To educate Village women.

### PROJECT AREA:

Jamalpur is a Sub-Division town in Mymensingh district, approximately 120 miles north of Dacca, to the east of the Brahmaputra River. The Jamalpur staff selected 30 villages within a radius of 1 - 5 miles of Jamalpur town in which large numbers of the destitute women learners lived. The population of these villages, according to the 1974, census is as follows:

Families	...	...	6,073
Males	...	...	17,635
Females	...	...	16,561
<hr/>			
TOTAL			34,196
			*****

The Jamalpur staff set up their headquarters and a dormitory facility (for those staff not residents of the town) in a rented house in Jamalpur town. Most of the staff come from Jamalpur and live at home;

### ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL:

The staff came to BRAC as candidates for the teachers' position in the UNICEF-sponsored functional education programme. They were chosen from a pool of 60 applicants on the basis of an interview by the BRAC functional education coordinator. None had any prior development work experience. Three of the staff have completed their Intermediate (H.S.C.); seven their Metric (S.S.C.) examinations. Two have completed Class IX, and three others Class VIII. All (with the exception of one woman in her forties) are in their twenties. Eight are married with children, one married without child, one widowed with child. At that time, one woman and both pairs of sisters (one pair from Jamalpur, one pair from nearby Sherpur) were single. By the end of 1976, the widow and one sister were married.

The staff work five days a week in two villages each: conducting or supervising functional education classes and Mother's Clubs; delivering family planning motivation and services; encouraging and supporting kitchen gardening, poultry raising, joint savings and cooperative activities. They meet as a team one day a week for programme reporting, planning, and review. The team has, in just a few months, matured from experienced functional education teachers into multi-purpose field motivators and organizers.

During Phase I, one member of the staff was chosen unanimously as Team Leader. She was neither the eldest nor a local Jamalpur woman, but her leadership seemed assured throughout 1976. Her job, as initially conceived:

- (a) To supervise the functional education classes (as long as they were Jamalpur-based);
- (b) To work alongside the other staff in their village development activities on a rotation basis;
- (c) To facilitate the weekly reporting and planning meetings; and
- (d) To initiate requests for materials and training to make contacts with government officials and other organizations.

After about six months of Phase II, the Team Leader herself decided to assume the development activities for one village. She felt that she was missing out on the direct village contact.

A Programme Supervisor has been assigned to the programme by BRAC since its inception in June, 1975. The first Supervisor, a woman, stayed with the staff during Phase I (the functional education phase with UNICEF). The second Supervisor, an experienced male BRAC staff seconded from BRAC's Sulla Project, was the supervisor for the first eight months of Phase II (the community development phase). The current Supervisor, a woman, joined the project in September, 1976. The role of the Supervisor is to provide guidance, logistical and administrative support, as requested or required by the Jamalpur staff. She lives in the office of the Jamalpur Women's Programme. She files monthly reports to the BRAC H.O., processes materials and training requests, and keeps the accounts of the programme. (cf. Appendix I for short case-histories of some Jamalpur Women's Programme staff).

Programme Administrator, at BRAC's Head Office in Dacca, assists in programme planning, preparing of budgets and proposals, arranging specialized trainings, procuring supplies, and overall monitoring of the programme.

A core of volunteer women, one from each village, have been identified and motivated to carry out specialized tasks with and for the Jamalpur staff. The volunteers are given brief training related to those tasks: e.g., family planning, poultry vaccination, functional education. They work closely each day with the Jamalpur staff in the motivational and organizational work in their respective villages.



The weekly meeting of the Jamalpur staff with the Supervisor provides a forum for programme evaluation, with modifications made as necessary. Each month the Programme Administrator visits Jamalpur to discuss the programme (in terms of targets, performance, and necessary strategies and inputs).

#### REPORTING AND MONITORING:

The Jamalpur staff have designed a feed-back and monitoring system for their activities. They maintain an individual Weekly Activity Plan and Performance Report which includes:

- (a) Name of Workers;
- (b) Name of Village;
- (c) Planned Activities in Performance Terms;
- (d) Actual Achievement;
- (e) Performance Discrepancy;
- (f) Reasons for Performance Discrepancy; and
- (g) Personal Observations and Notes.

At the weekly reporting and planning sessions each staff member plans a, b, and c for the next week and records, d, e, f and g for the previous week. These weekly reports are submitted to the Programme Supervisor who in turn forwards a consolidated, yet detailed, monthly report to the Programme Administrator in Dacca.

The data collected in these reports are analyzed by the staff, the programme Supervisor, and the Programme Administrator to see how the data can be incorporated into the routine administration and planning of the programme, how the data can be used in monitoring the progress of the programme; and whether any of the data is translatable into project implications for other women's programmes.

#### STAFF TRAINING:

When initially recruited, the women staff received a five-day training in functional education methodology. This training, continuing inservice supervision and training, plus two short evaluation and planning workshops, organized by the BRAC Supervisor, were the main training and professional development exposures for the staff before they embarked on Phase II. They received, in addition, two short trainings (one by the Thana Family Planning Officer, and one from a BRAC doctor) in family planning (medical check-ups, side effects, motivation, methods).

In order to design and launch Phase II of the programme, the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff were called to Dacca for a one-week training in programme planning, communication skills and consciousness-raising. The training module, as designed, helped the staff to analyze

the situation of rural women that they had observed during December, 1975. Together, the staff formulated and assessed alternative approaches to solving the rural problems. All the staff members were involved in defining the goals, objectives, and action plan for the project year 1976. (cf. Appendix - II for the staff's 1976 Work Plan listed by sectoral activities).

Training became one of the major inputs for staff and programme development during 1976. Many of the trainings were conducted by BRAC's training team. Some of the trainings offered were skills training. Other trainings focussed on leadership, group dynamics, communication, and consciousness-raising: issues crucial to maintaining the motivation and morale of the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff. By mid-1976, the staff began training village volunteers in specialized tasks. (cf. Appendix-III for the 1976 Training Schedule of the Jamalpur Women's Programme).

#### FINANCING:

Phase II (Jan to December, 1976) was budgetted at Tk.150,400. (cf. Appendix IV for the proposed budget). OXFAM, America, financed this initial year of Phase II. A total of Tk.147,325.12 was spent. (Cf. Appendix V for the 1976 financial statement).



## II. 1976 PROGRAMME:

### FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION:

BRAC's functional education, with its problems and solution-posing methodology, is basic to all BRAC development activities. Briefly put, the methodology is based on learner's participation through dialogue facilitated by the teacher. The curriculum centres on real life problems and possible solutions. The aim of functional education is not only to make each learner critically conscious of her/his environment, but also to motivate the learners to take action to beneficially affect this environment. Functional education provides an excellent initial forum for village-level interaction and motivation.

The Jamalpur Women's Programme staff members were initially hired and trained as functional education teachers. They came to share with the learners a consciousness of rural problems. The teachers built their current programme of community development upon this awareness. From the membership of functional education classes various village-level women's activities and institutions have emerged in Jamalpur; kitchen gardening, poultry raising, Mother's Club membership, jointly savings and cooperative societies.

The Jamalpur Women's Programme staff planned to complete the first cycle of functional education classes (begun in Phase I and conducted three days a week in Jamalpur town) by early April, 1976. The next cycle of classes would be village-based. The Jamalpur staff planned to set up functional education centres in fourteen villages (one centre by each staff member less the Team Leader). An average of 20-25 learners was expected in each centre.

Things worked out more or less as planned. The learners demanded, in March 1976, that the classes be shifted to village centres. With UNICEF Food-for-Work in the morning, afternoon classes in one's own village (rather than back in town) made far more sense. The first cycle was completed in April. A basic test (letter-writing) and certificates were administered. Of the enrolled membership of 320 - 220 learners on the average had attended classes and 143 were judged literate.

The staff marked certain changes in the habits and attitudes of the graduates. The graduates shared many of their day-to-day questions with the staff: "Should I marry my daughter to so-and-so at this age?" Programme receptivity seemed higher in the new graduates than in other women. The staff decided to engage the new graduates in small income-generating schemes (poultry raising, goat rearing, paddy husking,

sweet potato cultivation, etc.). By December 1976, 116 graduates were engaged in such schemes on an individual basis. 108 graduates subscribed to BRAC's monthly development journal, Conokendra.

Cycle two of functional education was started in 14 village centres by early May. After one month, the Team Leader decided to open a centre (she recognized a loss to her own development by functioning only in a supervisory capacity and not directly as a village motivator and organizer). Into the second cycle, the staff's interest began to wane. They became lax. For them, the message of functional education had become monotonous. Upon request, the Programme Administrator scheduled a refresher, motivational training for the staff in mid-October. By the end of December 1976, there were 313 enrolled learners with an average attendance of 15%. In most centres, 60 of the 80 lessons of cycle two had been completed.

One problem remained outstanding: functional education centres had opened in only half of the villages. What about the demand for functional education in the other 15 villages? Could the staff assume the load? Or should village volunteers be trained as teachers? An answer was not reached until November. The staff then decided 15 volunteers should be trained in functional education from the remaining villages which shared a latent, unmet demand for functional education. 15 volunteers were trained and began teaching in the third cycle (early 1977).

#### FAMILY PLANNING:

The Jamalpur Women's Programme staff faced a demand for Family Planning services from the learners during Phase I. At that time, the staff received an initial two-day training in family planning from the Sub-Divisional Family Planning Officer and an additional five-day training in Family Planning from one of BRAC's doctors. These trainings prepared the staff to provide family planning motivation and non-clinical contraceptive services to rural women.

At the time of Phase II programme design, the staff decided to motivate 1,500 couples to adopt one or another methods of family planning during 1976. They planned to inform women of contraceptive alternatives, provide the necessary medical check-up (blood pressure and history) on potential clients, regularly distribute supplies and monitor usage, and maintain records of acceptors. In addition, the staff planned to identify a volunteer core of interested women (2 from each village) to support family planning and other activities in their respective villages.

But things did not go as planned. The staff substantially changed their family planning goals and approach during 1976. The first setback to family planning motivation was the government's week long Family Planning drive in late January, 1976. Pills were delivered to all households nation-wide. Many who took the pills faced complications. Suspicion of Family Planning workers grew and motivation became more difficult. But with continued door-to-door contact and reassurance the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff efforts mounted.

A more fundamental aspect on the family planning approach was the concern by child-bearing mothers for their living children. All mothers worried about scabies, worms, etc., in their living children; especially, those mothers who underwent ligations. The health care of living children was of more immediate concern than planning for future children. The staff increasingly shared the mothers' concerns. The staff requested some medical assistance and training.

In March, 1976, a paramedic from BRAC's Sulla Project was seconded to Jamalpur to train and work with the staff advising them on side-effects, mother and child health, etc. Mother's Clubs (basically health and nutrition education forums) had been initiated in the 30 villages. The staff recognized that the Mothers' Clubs provided an important concomitant to the family planning effort. The staff decided to strengthen the Mothers' Clubs' function <sup>with</sup> under-five clinics (in which children's weights, immunizations, health symptoms, etc., should be recorded on "road-to-health" cards). The paramedic trained the staff in these services and helped them develop a central registrar of family planning clients.

In spite of these efforts, the staff decided their family planning target was unrealistic. At the Programme Review Workshop held in Dacca, mid-June, the staff cut their family planning target for the year by half: 750 acceptors clients by the end of 1976. During July and August, one volunteer from each village was chosen and trained in family planning by the staff. However, the volunteers shared the staff's motivational-slump of September-October. Moreover, some volunteers demanded a salary. Long discussions ensued about the self-help philosophy of the Jamalpur Women's Programme. Most of the demands from the volunteers died down. The utilization of local woman-power increased the access of rural women to family planning motivation and services.

The communication skills training in October helped revive the staff's motivation and morale. A programme review in November showed a deficit of 131 accepting clients. Each staff member decided, if possible, to motivate 9 clients during December. By the end of the year, the results of the family planning programme were as follows:

Pills, Current Users ...	480	(A total of 525 ever-acceptors: 91.4% continuation rate).
Ligation Clients ...	190	
Vasectomy Clients ...	32	
Injection Clients ...	9	
TOTAL ...	711	

This represents roughly 10% of the fertile couples of a population of 34,200. Clinical services were received at the Gonoshytha Kendra Clinic in Jamalpur town. The Jamalpur Women's Programme staff provides the follow-up on clinic clients and their children under-five.

#### MOTHERS' CLUBS:

Mothers' Clubs (fortnightly discussion groups with pregnant and lactating mothers) were initiated in all 30 village. The clubs met in a village home or courtyard. Mother and child health care, food value, sanitation, hygiene, etc., were discussed. Certain services (blood pressure checks and iron supplements for pregnant mothers, recording of child weights on "road-to-health" cards) were also offered. The discussions were led and services provided by the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff.

The staff, however, did not feel equipped to provide these services and answer the mothers' concern for the health care of their children. As mentioned above, a paramedic from BRAC's Sulla Project was seconded to Jamalpur for four months in early 1976 by the staff's request. The paramedic's mandate was to train the staff:

- (a) To conduct the fortnightly discussions of health and related topics;
- (b) To use the Salter scale to weigh children and to record in the 'road-to-health' cards;
- (c) To vaccinate children;
- (d) To treat oral pill side-effects; and
- (e) To take medical check-ups (blood pressure and histories) on potential family planning clients.

The paramedic's time in Jamalpur was well used and extended by the staff.

A series of posters and a discussion manual keyed to the posters, designed by BRAC Head Office staff, were introduced in May. The multi-colored poster series contains 16 posters on nutrition, care for pregnant and lactating mothers, child care, family planning, common diseases, and vaccination. Each poster is a useful visual aid for Mothers' Club discussions. The discussion manual outlines the basic principles to be followed in effective group discussion (essentially the functional education methodology), the objectives of each session, the main information to be conveyed, leading questions to facilitate



discussion, and suggested follow-up actions (e.g., planting of vegetables). The poster series helped the staff plan and structure the fortnightly Mothers' Club discussions.

One of the most common child care problems is scabies. In May 1976, the paramedic and staff launched a scabies-eradication campaign (by way of demonstration) in one village. Soap and ascabiol ointment were distributed to 114 families (a total of 674 people). All the staff pitched<sup>in</sup>/helping to wash children. Within three days, 80% of the scabies had disappeared. The staff testify that scabies has not returned to that village.

Not all efforts in health were so successful. Mothers often proved fearful of weighing their children. Many village mothers share a belief that weighing a child attracts the evil eye and causes harm to the child's health. One or two of the Jamalpur staff decided to counteract this belief by taking their own infants to the discussion sessions and weighing them in front of the village mothers.

By September-October a marked slump in the staff's morale began to effect their communication with the villagers. Some of the staff felt they had too few measureable incentives to offer the villagers. "Couldn't BRAC supply medicines on a regular basis?" they asked. BRAC Head Office staff held discussions with the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff on BRAC's philosophy: one of motivating the rural poor to self-help, not of doling out incentives. The staff then requested a refresher training in communication skills: their messages in family planning and health care were becoming monotonous to themselves and even more so to village women. A training was conducted in October and seemed to have the necessary rejuvenating effect. During 1976 the enrolled membership at the 30 fortnightly Mothers' Clubs was 580. 103 of these women began kitchen gardening, 97 poultry raising.

#### POULTRY AND HORTICULTURE:

The Jamalpur staff planned to support extension of horticulture activities through discussion with functional education learners and Mothers' Club members and distribution, at cost price, of high-quality seeds. They also planned to engage 50 poor village women in improved house-centered poultry raising. They also planned to start cooperative farming by poor women on fallow land surrounding the 30 individual villages. These activities were taken up to a greater or lesser degree during 1976. Some of these activities overlapped with continued UNICEF agricultural food-for-work activities in the area (with free seeds and wheat payment for cultivation of kitchen gardens).

Horticulture support activities began in the spring of 1976 with the supply of papaya and summer vegetable seeds to interested women at cost price. Some of the staff also grew and then distributed seedlings, at cost price, from a small plot near the Jamalpur Women's Programme Office. However, a large proportion of the seeds distributed did not germinate (a not uncommon problem with seeds acquired through voluntary agencies: i.e., which come in as surplus from abroad). In April, nine of the staff and six village volunteers received training in composting. The followup to this training was not good. Only one staff member maintained a compost pit. However, the interest in kitchen gardening grew, especially among learners and graduates of functional education. When it came time to distribute winter vegetable seeds the demand was high for potato, pumpkin, tomato, and onion seeds. The village women said they would pay the cost price ONLY after germination. The staff discussed the free distribution of seeds but decided that hand-outs were not part of their philosophy. Some initiative was taken in the cooperative farming of potato and vegetables on fallow land.

In one village a pilot poultry project was introduced. The villagers were engaged in discussion on improved varieties and persuaded to castrate all local varieties of cocks. Twenty white leghorn cocks were supplied to the village. Thirty poor women of the village, who did not possess poultry, were provided local-variety hens on a loan basis. Within a few weeks the whole village was buzzing with the news of newly hatched "White Babies". The new cross-breed poultry should yield more eggs. Village volunteers were trained in vaccination and a mass vaccination of the village poultry was completed. Improved feed and housing techniques were also discussed. The interest in this pilot venture was high.

Two village women from Jamalpur were sent to Sylhet town (200 miles away) for a six-week training course in duck farming conducted by the International Voluntary Services (IVS). On return, these women started demonstration duck farms with 100 ducklings each in their own homes. Many valuable lessons were learned: cost-effectiveness of raising and feeding/female versus male duck, natural feeding areas, disease control, and the need for meticulous care of the flock. Jamalpur as it turned out, was not highly suited for natural feeding of ducks. Artificial feeding is far too expensive (in a land where everyone must compete for grain). One woman's flock dwindled in half due to disease and neglect. The other woman maintained a healthy flock of 92 ducks due to her remarkable self-perseverance and dedication to her flock. She was dubbed the "duck mother". Given her obvious dedication and skill in duck raising and the unsuitability of the Jamalpur area for ducks,



this woman was hired and transferred (with her ducks) to become a duck raising extension agent in BRAC's Salla Project (an area of impounded water more suited to duck raising).

#### WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES:

The Jamalpur Women's Programme staff planned to initiate women's cooperative societies in half the villages during 1976. They actually started savings societies in all 30 villages: a total of 380 members. Most of these women were either destitute or members of the poorest families. They were not able to accumulate much savings. Their total savings after 12 months neared Tk.900. Only towards the end of 1976 were these savings societies emerging into cooperatives with production plans for joint activities. The staff meanwhile had lowered the minimal amount of savings (from Tk.200 to Tk.100) for anyone cooperative to receive loan money from BRAC for its planned cooperative activities.

The staff realized that viable cooperative societies are those which form along class and interest lines with a membership of 15-20. The staff restricted their activities to work with the poorest women of the village. With the assistance of the staff and the promise of small loans from BRAC, several groups had launched or were planning projects in weaving, silkworm culture, poultry, fisheries, and farming by the end of 1976. These groups in the coming years should provide valuable insight into viable rural institutions and income-generating schemes for poor rural woman.

The Jamalpur staff received rudimentary training in cooperative organization and management during 1976. Village women cooperators by the end of 1976 had received none, except indirectly from the staff. This sectoral activity proved the most critical and the most difficult.

The Jamalpur staff realize the need to generate more information on the membership, capital accumulation, credit operation, joint action, etc. by village cooperators. But more importantly and immediately, the staff recognize the need for training of the cooperators in cooperative management, cost-analysis, etc. Viable procedures for producer and credit cooperative must be tested and documented.

To identify and design viable economic projects (which would ensure a reasonable return to each member of a cooperative) is extremely difficult. But this identification and design is crucial to all else. Much can be done to involve women in health, family planning, education, and other social development efforts both as beneficiaries and as staff. However, it is economic development activities which urge most strongly for and to the rural poor woman.

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES SUMMARY - 1976

Functional Education:

Cycle I Graduates	...	...	...	320
Centres	...	...	...	15
Literates	...	...	...	143
Engaged in Productive activities				116
Gonokendra Subscribers	...	...		108

Cycle II

Centres	...	...	...	15
Enrolled	...	...	...	313
Average Attendance	...	...		151
Average Lessons Completed	...			50 (Out of 80)

Teachers:

Staff	...	...	...	15 (1½ years experience)
Volunteers	...	...	...	15 (Newly Trained)

Family Planning:

Fertile Couples,	...	Approximately 6,800 (20% of the Population)
Pills, Current Users	...	480 (Out of 525 ever acceptors; 91.4% continuation rate)
Ligation Clients	...	190
Vasectomy Clients	...	32
Injection Clients	...	9
TOTAL	...	711 (Roughly 10% of fertile couples)

Mothers' Clubs:

Membership	...	580
Clubs	...	30
Engaged in productive activities		200
Poultry	...	97
Kitchen Gardening	...	103

Women's Cooperative Societies:

Membership	...	380
Savings Groups	...	30
Savings Accumulated.	...	Tk. 852.17
Production Plans	...	5

## CONCLUSIONS:

It is too early in the Jamalpur Women's Programme to speak of success or failures. But it is never too soon to discuss problems faced and potentialities envisioned by the staff in their effort to serve poor rural women. In conclusion, a few problems and a few potentialities (some organizational, others programmatic) are outlined.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS:

Any programme or organization faces its "ups and downs". The Jamalpur Women's Programme is no exception. The motivational slump of September-October, 1976, has been discussed above. This type of slump and the communication skills training requested exemplify the problems and potential solutions to sustaining staff motivation and morale. The staff of the Jamalpur Women's Programme do not share the communal living environment shared by staff in BRAC's Manikganj and Sulla projects. Most live at home, go to their respective village each day from their homes, and, except when they drop by at the office or to each other's homes, meet regularly only once a week. During Phase I, they all worked together at the Jamalpur Stadium. The communal work site greatly enhanced the team spirit. The weekly, monthly, and special workshops scheduled for the staff during Phase II are attempts to compensate for this lack of a communal work or living site.

The various tiers of staff in the Jamalpur Women's Programme (Supervisor, Team Leader, Staff, and Volunteers) have necessarily adjusted one to another and established work relations. This process is not without pain. As the current Programme Supervisor stated during her orientation: "A supervisor must sometimes be a friend (for group spirit and dynamics), sometimes a master (for discipline and responsibility), and sometimes a teacher (for exchange of programme ideas) to the staff". This is no easy job-description, particularly considering BRAC's philosophy of supervisors and teachers as facilitators (i.e., one who facilitates exchange of ideas rather than imparting knowledge). Moreover, the relation of the BRAC Programme Supervisor to the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff and Team Leader hinges on the identity of that programme vis-a-vis BRAC.

The Jamalpur Women's Programme can be identified as mid-way between a BRAC project and a so-called (by BRAC) "Self-starter" project. In Phase I, the staff were hired by BRAC to carry out certain services. Their identity at the time was quite simple: functional education teachers hired and trained by BRAC in a UNICEF-sponsored project. Suddenly, with the launching of Phase II, they were being asked by BRAC to think of themselves as a "self-starter" group responsible eventually for self-financing and self-management. As long as they remained under the BRAC umbrella spending BRAC-raised resources, the request seemed

artificial. The staff recognized that a structure for a self-sustaining self-managed, and self-financed programme must be designed. Their question now is: "How much, how soon?"

The Jamalpur Women's Programme, Phase II, began with an identified group of women, not with a mapped-out territorial area. There has been from the launching of Phase II substantial emphasis from BRAC Head Office on the women as field workers and as a team. There has been more emphasis on staff development than on village institutional development. This has led to a definite "top-down" bias. This happened in part because the staff were women. There was a tendency from BRAC Head Office staff to test the women's capacity for full-time work, certain responsibilities, etc. They were not simply oriented to BRAC philosophy and assigned roles as with male recruits to BRAC projects. But more importantly this happened because the Jamalpur Women's Programme, Phase II, started with a team and not an area. Although initially hired for a project in Phase I, they were retained on the BRAC payroll because of their potential as a team.

This is not to minimize the 'top-down' bias. Village women can as easily become passive beneficiaries with female development staff as male. The goals for 1976 were all stated and predetermined by the staff (albeit after six month's exposure to village women's problems). But increasingly, definition of the direction of the programme must come from the bottom up.

The volunteers from each village can help define this direction. Village cooperators, functional education learners, Mothers Club members must also help. The volunteer core has not been without its share of problems. Initially, and continually, the staff have had to decide how best to train and utilize the volunteer women. These questions will continue to arise and deserve continuing codification by the volunteers. Moreover, the volunteers have demanded material incentives: salaries and/or transport costs (for coming to meetings, etc.) Such incentives are not in keeping with the BRAC philosophy. The Jamalpur Women's Programme staff have had to decide whether its in keeping with their's. Their answer has been "no". Now they and the volunteers are trying to decide on alternatives for the volunteers (often the poorer of the poor). Perhaps they can be given honorary shares in viable cooperative or form their own association through which they could receive credit.

#### PROGRAMMATIC PROBLEMS:

Of immediate concern to the staff and the village women, is the lack of a true health component to the Jamalpur Women's Programme. This gap will be addressed in various ways during 1977 and 1978; through further mobilization of local government health workers and facilities, through additional paramedical services by the staff. Various skills training (appropriate technologies for rice processing,



conducted in Jamalpur. Other skills training (composting) etc. although provided were not well followed-up.

The area of most critical problems is cooperative formation and management. Poor rural women have little capacity to save. For cooperative income-generating schemes, they require substantial capital. If such funds are disbursed by BRAC, problems of managing and monitoring the funds will arise. Identifying and designing viable economic projects is also very difficult. The obstacles to effective cooperatives are at once conceptual, technical, and institutional.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL POTENTIALITIES:

Most of the programme revisions have come from the programme and beneficiaries themselves. For instance, the staff decided to meet the demand for functional education in the 15 uncovered villages by recruiting village volunteer teachers. Soon all functional education classes will be taught by village volunteers; the staff will retain a supervisory role. Midwives from the 30 villages demanded training in pre-and-postnatal care and delivery. After this training, they can be utilized for family planning motivation. Various government officials have been contacted and befriended during the various trainings (poultry, family planning) of 1976. These links with government staff and facilities will be strengthened. Through their expressed interests, the volunteers women are becoming increasingly multipurpose village workers.

Out of programmatic problems have come the most challenging programmatic demands. The demand for cooperative management training is very high. The staff now demand cooperative management training for women cooperators for cooperative managing committee members, and for themselves. Production planning during the last months of 1976 brought the staff to a fuller realization of the need to generate information on (cooperative membership) credit operation (loan disbursement and purpose) etc.

Given their experience in 1976, the Jamalpur Women's Programme staff are in a better position to formulate their skills training needs, programme areas to be investigated, tested, etc., and to forestall motivational and organizational problems. During 1977-78, they plan to increasingly share these processes with the poor rural women whom they serve.

APPENDIX - I

JAMALPUR WOMEN'S PROGRAMME

\*STAFF CASE HISTORIES

1. From Bogra, Ira Chaki took her B.A. in Bengali Literature at Rangpur Carmichael College; and her M.A. from Rajshahi University. For three months she did voluntary work in the Rangpur Agriculture Department. There she motivated villagers to get needlework skills. After a stay at home, Ira said, "I did not want to depend on my father," and became a lecturer at the Islamic University in Sontosh, Tangail. Ira liked it, but had "an interest to go to the village and work with poor people". After seven months, she resigned, partly due to the minimal wages (room board, medicine, and Taka 40.00 monthly).

On September 1, 1976, Ira was appointed Programme Supervisor for Jamalpur Women's Programme. She finds her work there "motivating and exciting". "When I go to the village, when I go and see, they will be able to understand what I present," Ira said of the villagers. "When they agree, then I am excited, because I have some capacity to motivate." She values Functional Education (F.E.) highly, "because the women involved have focused their minds, and realized their position in society, they are going to do something for themselves and for their family. They are made to realize their responsibility to help their children, finances, and husbands."

Ira has a dream to organize all the destitute women of Bangladesh. She wants "cooperative of all the destitute women, through a BRAC women's section." A small membership fee would be charged. Small groups would be organized, and they would receive F.E. training. The membership money would be allotted to co-ops organized by the women for their chosen occupations. Ira had this idea, and when Ela Bhatt came from India for the South and Southeast Asian Women's Conference in March of 1977, she helped Ira see how it could actually work.

"If BRAC is expanded, I want to be heavily active in a special Women's Section, which I think they need," Ira said, and enthusiastically added, "I want, in my last breathe, to give service to BRAC."

2. Single, with two brothers and five sisters, Jahanara Begum is on the Jamalpur BRAC staff. First, she joined the UNICEF Food for Work Programme "to teach the distressed women Functional Education." If she was not employed with BRAC, Jahanara "would be doing something, of course, because I have a responsibility to help my family". Her motto

\*These case histories were compiled by Elaine Grauder, a Fourth Year student of Antioch College, Ohio, U.S.A. She is on a work term in Bangladesh. She spent 11 days with the Jamalpur Women's Programme.



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as motivator is "practice what you preach." "The women in the village," she says, "I think, they don't have constructive ideas because they are thinking only about food. So, I feel the need to motivate them because I am a human being. I have a duty and responsibility to think about my society!"

Asked if she believes in marriage based on the equality of husband and wife, Jahanara said she had not thought about it, though she did believe in it. But, she thought it "often impossible for the cause of man." She is sure that her career will not be affected if and when she marries. Jahanara wants to be a social worker for distressed women; she also wants "to be a good organizer."

3. Married at fifteen, and a widow to the 1971 Liberation War, Sajeda Begum has both a son and a daughter. Her daughter is with her husband's family; her son went to live with her in her father's house. In 1976, Sajeda married an Army man. She is now twenty-four.

Sajeda would be doing "nothing, except household work, because my education is not enough to get service" if she were not working with BRAC. Even so, the only reason she came to BRAC was "to save my children." As to equality in the marriage relationship, she had strong words. "I do believe in this", she said, "But, our society does not believe -- they think equality humiliates their (the man's) mastership!"

4. Shipra Rani Ghosh is married and has one daughter. She believes "definitely" in a marriage based on the equality of both partners. "We have equal rights," Shipra said of her marriage, "When I do anything, I speak with my husband, and he does the same with me. I think that if a man can do it, I can also do it, because I am not inferior to my husband." He doesn't like the fact that Shipra must walk from village to village, "But, I prefer it," Shipra added, "so he does not give me any objection."

Instead of being a possible hindrance, "My mother-in-law gives me inspiration to work -- to do something for society. She manages my daughter. If I could not get help from her, it would be impossible for me!" Shipra wants to be a good wife and mother. "Also", she said, in earnest, "I want a better life."

Shipra joined BRAC for the purpose of service, and said she would be in the education field even if not with BRAC. "First", Shipra said, "when I joined BRAC, I was just an employee, but BRAC's training has made me a worker. I have taken a programme in my village with a co-op group. This group is now going on a self-help basis, through paddy-husking. So, I have the responsibility to supervise them. When they are completely self-help, then I will organize another group. I want Jamalpur women's project workers to be self-starters one time, but I don't know when. It takes time, five or ten years, I don't know. I

have a request: until our success, BRAC will help us."

5. Newly married at nineteen, Taru (Manjuara Begum) has not taken Family Planning steps, though she has plans to. Originally, "necessity forced me to take this job to maintain my livelihood -- that is the main reason I came to BRAC." Taru feels her career is not affected by marriage, since her husband believes in equality. Asked if she believes in a marriage based on the equality of husband and wife, Taru said, "Exactly, but it depends on both husband and wife; it's based completely on the mentality of the husband".

Taru says, "I want to be a good Sebika (social worker)". She hopes she will be, but says, "I don't know what I will be, because it depends on the future."

6. Aklima Begum, at twenty-five, has two sons; she would like them to receive a higher education. She started work with UNICEF, recruiting women for their feeding programme and as Functional Education teachers. She has had training as a sewing teacher under the Social Welfare Department, so could find work elsewhere if she had to. Aklima is glad to work in Jamalpur, since her father-in-law's house is "far from town", and she wanted to stay in town because "I was brought up in town".

Aklima believes that a husband and wife can be equal. "If they understand each other," she says, "there don't have to be any problems. My husband also prefers this (equality), but many men tease my husband." She doesn't think she has an influence on her husband, but "we respect each other." Although she was taking birth-control pills, she hasn't for the last eight months due to side-effects.

Aklima works partially because she thinks she has a responsibility to help her husband. She also wants "to be independent" and "to be an organizer for women's organisations."

The future of BRAC, as Aklima sees it in relationship to Jamalpur, is as follows. "BRAC helps Jamalpur women to be self starters, so, I think, we have a need for self-help first. BRAC has a wide programme for rural women. If it engages in a place, it will be difficult to increase their programmes elsewhere. I think, we will keep a correspondent with BRAC, because we have the need for training and help. If we could not do the (any) programme on a self-starter basis, then we will do it through BRAC's Programme."

1976 WORK PLANA. FAMILY PLANNING

1. To discuss family planning with 4,000 couples.
2. To motivate 1,500 couples to adopt one or another technique of family planning.
  - a. 1,200 couples will use oral contraceptives or condoms.
  - b. Remaining 300 will adopt coil, vasectomy, tubectomy etc.
3. To provide necessary medical check-up (blood pressure, etc. for each client before family planning technique is adopted.)
4. To carefully and regularly monitor the follow-up of accepting couples.
5. To maintain adequate records of family planning.
6. To establish local women's societies in each village wherein discussion can generate further support for and adoption of family planning.
7. To create a volunteer core of interested and motivated women/girls who will create motivation and support for family planning.
8. To select 60 volunteers (two from each village) to be provided with brief training.

B. FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION

1. To set-up fourteen functional education centers in different villages:
 

Number of Centers	...	...	...	...	14
Number of student in each center	...	25	-	30	
Total Number in 14 Centers	...	@	300		
2. To teach 300 students functional education.
3. To hold discussions using functional education materials with various women's groups.
4. To get 75 subscribers to ERAC's monthly development journal "Gonokendra".
5. To arrange cultural functions from time to time for the women.

C. HORTICULTURE, UTILIZATION OF FALLOW LAND, POULTRY FARMING:

1. To support general extension of horticulture activities through discussion with students and teachers in local schools, women's societies, etc.
2. To provide high-quality seed to 3,000 families at cost-price:
  - (a) To instruct recipients on the proper mode of cultivation,
  - (b) To contact the local agriculture officer to supply fertilizer, pesticides as required at cost price.

APPENDIX - II (continued)

3. To start cooperative farming by poor women of at least 50% of the fallow land surrounding the 28 villages.
  - (a) To teach the growers the nutritive value of vegetables like lettuce, brocolli etc.
  - (b) To help the growers market their fruits and vegetables.
4. To start cooperative poultry farming with 50 poor women and to demonstrate improved methods of home-centered poultry raising:
  - (a) To arrange to supply twice-yearly inoculations for the poultry with the help of the local veterinary hospital or poultry farm.
  - (b) To encourage:
    - (i) improved poultry housing-provisions for ventilation and a perch for roosting;
    - (ii) improved strains - cock replacement.

D. MOTHER'S CLUBS:

1. To initiate Mother's Clubs in all the villages:

Mother's Clubs	...	...	...	28
Members in each club	...	...	...	15-20
Total Membership	...	...	...	500

2. To attend and consult with the mothers regarding mother and child health, hygiene, etc., in fortnightly meetings.
3. To provide training for twenty untrained local midwives.

1976 TRAINING SCHEDULE

<u>D a t e:</u>	<u>Type of Training:</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Trainees:</u>	<u>Trainers:</u>
January 5 - 10	Project Planning Workshop	Dacca	All Staff	BRAC's Chief Trainer; Ex- Programme Supervisor; Programme Administrator.
March - June	Paramedical Training Preventive Health Family Planning Mother's Clubs	Jamalpur	All Staff	Sulla Paramedic
April	Functional Education Refresher Training Experimental Lessons	Jamalpur	All Staff	BRAC's Material Development Unit
April 28-30	Compost Training	Jamalpur	9 Staff 6 Village Volunteers	CUSO-recommended Trainer
May - 1, June - 15	Duck Raising	Sylhet	2 Volunteers	IVS
May 3, - 12 Jun	Poultry	Jamalpur	All Staff 6 Volunteers	CUSO recommended Trainer (later Hired as BRAC's Poultry Specialist).
May	Cooperative Organization Q <sup>na</sup> q.		All Staff by rotation	Jalchatra Development Project.
June 16-19	Project Review Workshop	Dacca	All Staff	BRAC's Trainers; Programme Administrator
July	Family Planning	Jamalpur	13 Village Volunteers	Jamalpur Women's Programme Staff
July - September	Poultry	Jamalpur	All Staff 12 Vill. Volunteers.	BRAC's Poultry Specialist
August 16-20	Project Orientation	Dacca	New Program Supervisor	Executive Director; Programme Administrator
August	Family Planning	Jamalpur	5-Village Volunteers	3 Jamalpur Staff
October 18-20	Communication Skills Consciousness Raising Group Dynamics	Jamalpur	All Staff	BRAC Trainer
November 25 - 29	Functional Education	Jamalpur	15 Village Volunteers	BRAC Trainer

PROPOSED BUDGET

(In Taka)

STAFF AND OFFICE SUPPORT:

Teachers' Salaries 14 x Tk.300 x 12 Months	50,400
Teacher Supervisor 1 x Tk.350 x 12 Months	4,200
Programme Supervisor Salary and Expenses 1 x Tk.1,200 x 12 months	14,400
Rent and Utilities Tk. 450 x 12 Months	5,400
Travel and Transportation	12,000
Stationery and Miscellaneous Expenses: Tk. 500 x 12 Months	6,000
Head Office Support Tk.2,000 x 12 Months	24,000

FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION

Education Materials 300 Learners x Tk.40 each	12,000
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FAMILY PLANNING:

Medicines	5,000
Equipment	1,000

MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH

Parapedics' Salaries and Expenses 2 x Tk.700 x 6	9,000
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HORTICULTURE, POULTRY RAISING, ETC:

Transport cost for supplies	2,000
Training costs	5,000

TOTAL YEARLY COST OF PROGRAMME	Tk. 150,400 *****
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PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE - 1976SALARIES:

Teacher's Salary	Tk. 46,770.00	
Teacher's Supervisor's Salary	3,200.00	
Programme Supervisor's Salary	11,498.10	
Salary of Paramedics	<u>2,739.00</u>	Tk. 64,207.10

HORTICULTURE, POULTRY ETC:

Training Cost	9,247.06	
Transportation Cost for Supplies	1,688.55	
Horticulture Seeds and Seedling	<u>2,287.75</u>	13,223.36

FAMILY PLANNING:

Medicine	1,286.57	
Equipments	<u>1,360.00</u>	2,646.57

FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION:

Education Materials	18,059.99	18,059.99
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RENT AND UTILITIES

	6,731.96	
Travelling and Transport	8,179.62	
Stationery Supplies	3,932.16	
Miscellaneous Expenses	3,672.70	
Head Office Support	<u>26,671.66</u>	<u>49,188.10</u>

Total Expenditure Tk. 147,325.12  
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