

# *Agriculture and Livestock* *Programme*

*Internship Report*

by

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## Acknowledgement

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## Abstract

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The report is a three month internship is part of the study of Masters in Development Management and Practice (MDMP).

There are mainly three reasons I picked up BRAC as my designated institution.

First, I wanted to see actual work on how NGOs operates in the international regions and also how social business helps to support development. As Muhammad Yunus raised the importance of social business, there has been growing number of private sectors embarked in this field. BRAC is functioning in both the sectors and has been able to develop an enterprise along with is development world as an NGO. I found it was a good opportunity for me doing internship at BRAC.

Secondly, I wanted to see the real scene of development. I have accumulated knowledge and learning about various theories of development study at MDMP program, but there was no chance to utilize theses knowledge in a workplace and field. Through the internship activity, I want to find out how development studies contribute to poverty alleviation, improvement of food security and the most current trend to climate change.

Last reason is that I wanted to understand the essence of how management in organization is run. It was my wish to know how organization works and the manager's role in helping to expand its organization as being a part of it. I also wanted to know the culture and structure of a Bangladeshi organizationoperating outside the country.

I expected that these values would add a new perspective to my awareness of the issues, and I believe this internship will have a huge positive impact on my life in the future.

## Structure of the report

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The aim of this report is to present what I have done and learn from my professional experience while working at BRAC International and in relation to my academic learning. Furthermore, I will express my experience of the three months internship activities which has helped me to elevate my professional skills such as technical, interpersonal and communication, analytical, strategic management, time management, organizational, innovative and critical thinking and teamwork skills.

I have worked in the Agriculture and Livestock department with a focus on the five African countries where BRAC operates, during which there were challenges I faced, my efforts to overcome the challenges, and learning from the experience. This will articulate the steps I took and the growth I was able to gain from the internship activities.

## **Introduction**

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BRAC is a Southern-led international development organization dedicated to alleviating poverty by empowering people, especially women, to realize their potential and bring about lasting change in their own lives. BRAC was established over four decades ago, now one of the largest and most successful international development organizations in the world, reaching over 138 million people across 13 countries in Africa, Asia including Bangladesh. BRAC pioneers in recognizing and tackling the many different realities of poverty. Using microfinance as a platform, it provides integrated services in education, agriculture, livestock and food security, health and nutrition, social and economic empowerment, human rights and legal aid.

It is registered under the laws of The Netherlands, with its seat in The Hague. All of BRAC International's development entities operate under this umbrella. Development programmes include health, education, agriculture, livelihoods, targeting the ultra-poor, human rights and legal services programmes.

BRAC International Holdings B.V. is a self-owned subsidiary of Stichting BRAC International and was incorporated in 2010. BRAC International's microfinance programmes, social enterprises, investment companies and regulated finance companies are consolidated under this wing. Social programme supporting the enterprises currently include seed production, feed mill, training centres, tissue culture lab etc.

Currently, BRAC International has programmes in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Myanmar, Philippines and Haiti.

### **BRAC's Policy Plan**

#### **Our Vision**

Stichting BRAC International's vision is of a just, enlightened, healthy, and democratic world free from hunger, poverty, environmental degradation, and all forms of exploitation based on age, sex, and ethnicity.

## **Our Mission**

Our mission is to work with people whose lives are dominated by extreme poverty, illiteracy, disease, and other disadvantages. With a holistic approach, we strive to bring about positive changes in the quality of life of the poor.

## **We achieve our mission by:**

- Working with the poor and disadvantaged members of the society especially women and children
- Mitigating the threat of poverty
- Engaging in multifaceted interventions for large scale poverty alleviation
- Working towards attaining socially, financially, and environmentally sustainable programs
- Promoting human rights, dignity, and gender equality
- Helping to shape national and global policies on poverty reduction and social progress
- Fostering the development of human potential
- Working towards the advancement of education
- The provision of general public health, education, and water
- Promoting arts and sciences
- Encouraging research in the fields of human well-being

## **Aim**

Stichting BRAC International aims to contribute to welfare activities to alleviate poverty and improve the lives of the poor.

In line with the Millennium Development Goals, Stichting BRAC International will work to:

- End poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Improve maternal health
- Control HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership to development



## **A Program Overview:**

### **Reducing poverty and improving livelihoods**

- Microfinance (capital support for generation of self-employment)
- Agriculture, Agriculture and Food Security Programme (provide services to small and marginal farmers to increase productivity)
- Challenging the frontier of poverty reduction -Targeting the ultra poor (graduating households from extreme poverty to moderate poverty)
- Breaking the cycle of poverty
- Education Programme, Scholarship Programme
- Health, Nutrition and Population Programme (HNPP), Food Security and Nutrition FSN), Essential Health Care (EHC), Malaria Programme, Nutrition Programme
- Poultry and Livestock, Small Enterprise Programme
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- Disaster Management, Environment and Climate Change
- Empowerment of marginalized and vulnerable people
- Community Empowerment Programme, Integrated Development Programme, Migration Programme
- Human Rights and Legal Aid Services (HRLS), Human Rights and Legal Empowerment (HRLE) , Capacity Development Programme (CDP)
- Gender Justice and Diversity
- Youth Lead Programme
- Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescent (ELA), Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI), Adolescent Reading Centres (ARCs)

### **How BRAC differs from other International NGOs**

In organizational terms, BRAC's international expansion resembles what happens when a Northern NGO (an Oxfam, HelpAge International, Plan International etc) expands into new countries, with two caveats. First, international NGOs increasingly work through local partners, rather than seeking to set up their own frontline service provision (Mawdsley *et al.* 2002). This has inevitably led to concerns that the relationship between local and Northern international NGOs has recreated the negative, power-laden dimensions of donor-recipient relations (Bebbington *et al.* 2008). BRAC's strategy was to create an entirely new frontline in the new countries, rather than to act as an agent for international aid. Such a strategy is hardly problem-free; the numbers of Bangladeshi staff in the international programmes are small, but it is proving hard to retain good local staff in the new countries.

Bangladeshis are still being recruited to work in other country programmes; this includes some freshly-recruited staff from Bangladesh, who therefore cannot be presumed to bring the experience which could arguably be claimed as a core component of their advantage in the service delivery market.

A second difference between BRAC and other international NGOs is that many of the other NGOs have moved away from direct service delivery towards 'strategic' high-end policy or rights-based advocacy work since the 1990s. While the rationale, particularly the pursuit of rights-based and pro-poor policy agendas through 'civil society' type pressure activities, may have been sound, the withdrawal from frontline services – from 'doing development' – arguably comes at an end but BRAC is more focused on providing the service at first end it can be stated that BRAC in current time is the only organization which focuses on implementation of the strategies set during the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and now is focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). BRAC in current world can be considered to be the best implementers of any strategies in the community level for development and in any field.

## **Country Operations**

As I was working on the Agriculture and Livestock Programme my work focused in the following five countries of Africa (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Tanzania and South Sudan).

### **LIBERIA**

BRAC began its operations in Liberia in 2008 and now provides services to Liberians with programmes in microfinance, small enterprise development, agriculture, poultry and livestock, health and Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescent (ELA)

### **Agriculture and Livestock**

In 2013, 5.46 metric tonnes of high quality NERICA L 19 rice and 140 kg of Satubaka and WariOP maize varieties were produced by BRAC's adaptive research and seed multiplication farm in Kingsville. The farm experimented Vitamin A-enriched cassava, CARICAS 1 for cross checking with the local variety. The yield performance was very good and helped plantation areas to get more stem cuttings as seeds for dissemination among farmers.

A total of 2,500 kitchen gardeners and 200 community agriculture promoters were trained with support from Global Poverty Action Fund. The training on kitchen gardening will help increase their families' food intake and improve children's nutritional status and general health. It also provides regular refresher training. As part of the nutrition awareness, 95 nutrition awareness campaigns were held and 80 village nutrition committees were formed.

### **Poultry and Livestock**

This year under GPAF project, have conducted 100 nutrition awareness campaign and reached 15,000 people by providing information on nutrition to reduce hunger in rural communities. 960 village nutrition committee (VNC) meetings were conducted at various BRAC working communities to tackle the nutritional status of Liberia. These VNC members also carried out community nutrition meetings to create awareness.

So far our community volunteers have vaccinated 507,859 poultry birds in BRAC's working areas. Brac has trained and supported 120 backyard poultry rearers and 200 community poultry and livestock promoters in six counties.

Chevron and EU provided fund for setting- up of poultry parent stock farm and feed mill to produce day old chick and feed.

## **SIERRA LEONE**

BRAC opened its offices in Sierra Leone in 2008 reaching over 1.1 million Sierra Leoneans with activities in microfinance, agriculture, livestock and poultry, empowering adolescents, education health programmes and legal aid services.

### **Agriculture**

BRAC launched its agriculture, poultry and livestock programme with an aim to reduce hunger and improve the livelihood of the rural poor. Brac Sierra Leone is training farmers, establishing demonstration farms and kitchen gardens, producing and distributing quality seeds, organising nutrition awareness campaigns, introducing modern livestock management techniques, building viable services for local businesses and providing capacity building training for local staff.

In 2013, under the GPAF project, we provided basic and refresher training to 3,000 kitchen gardeners and 200 CAPs. We organised 80 nutrition awareness campaigns and conducted 960 village nutrition committee meetings. Under seed production project, rice, maize, pineapple, plantain, groundnut, cassava and sweet potato were cultivated in 30 acres of land.

With support from the WFP, we developed 100 acres of swamp land for the production of rice in Port Loko, which will provide employment opportunities for community people.

### **Poultry and Livestock**

This year, 200 community livestock and poultry promoters (CLPPs), 400 backyard poultry rearers, 123 model poultry rearers and 176 model livestock rearers were trained on poultry rearing, management, prevention and control of poultry diseases. They also received training on poultry shed designing, poultry unit construction, vaccination and production technology of poultry farming. We distributed 400 poultry sheds, 8,800 chickens, 69 metric tonnes of poultry feed and vaccination to poultry rearers.

In order to emphasise the importance of nutrition, the programme undertook 80 nutrition campaigns at the community level with assistance from 160 village nutrition committees. The campaign had tremendous impact in raising awareness in the communities, leading to a shift in behaviour, particularly on cooking methodologies, knowledge on food processing and the nutrition value of different farm products.

## **SOUTH SUDAN**

BRAC has been operating in South Sudan since 2007 supporting communities through agricultural development, health, education, targeting the ultra-poor, and livelihood development.

### **Youth Lead Project (YLP)**

Over 150 learning centres have been established through each area office, with 6,540 learners aiming to improve access to basic education, knowledge and skills in numeracy and literacy, peace building, gender equity and environment for out-of-school and vulnerable young girls and boys.

In 2013, 850 participants received the first phase of agriculture training, which includes basic technical skills in agriculture, timely and proper land preparation, planting, spacing, measuring depth, seed processing and sowing, crop management, weed and pest control, harvesting, post-harvest handling and marketing, and record keeping.

### **Agriculture And Food Security**

This year we have established two collective demonstration farms (CDF), each on 10 acres of land in Central Equatoria state and Western Equatoria state. 20 local farmers were selected from the community to work on each CDF. Through the collective demonstration farms, farmers are able to increase their yields, preserve seeds and practice modern farming techniques.

With support from Oxfam Novib and in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) we established adaptive research in CDF farms. 15 varieties of rice, 12 types of vegetables, one breed of hybrid maize and five types of pulse were transferred from Bangladesh to South Sudan for testing in CDF farms. Forty farmers were involved in this research and development process.

### **Targeting The Ultra Poor**

This year most of our TUP members received assets which are their main income-generating sources. The programme has introduced functional literacy training in the group meeting and is helping the members to learn the basic literacy and numeric knowledge which will ensure sustainable economic progress at micro level.

## **TANZANIA**

BRAC started its operations in Tanzania in 2006 with microfinance and livelihood development programmes, which have created opportunities for the poor in agriculture, livestock and poultry. The healthcare programme aims to prevent illness and treat thousands of Tanzanians, and empower adolescent girls through life skills and livelihood training.

### **Agriculture And Food Security**

In 2014, 21 collective and 264 individual crop-demonstration blocks were established by group and individual farmers. Each demonstration block is composed of 5-10 acres of land, where each farmer holds 0.5-1 acre of land on average. The farmers are given resources including seeds, fertiliser and operating cost. The objective of these crop demonstration blocks is to show the high-yield, disease tolerance, improved crop management that farmers used through improved technologies and inputs.

We have disbursed agriculture loan of USD 2,800 to the farmers for irrigation support and extending crop production. BRAC provided 36 irrigation pumps to the farmers for better water supply in the field. Pumps are easy to transport, install and operate. This has facilitated farmers to irrigate properly and grow crops such as maize and vegetables all year-round with higher yields.

### **Livelihood Enhancement Through Agricultural Development**

The project facilitated to organise producer groups of general farmers for maize and poultry. It also promoted the sub-sectors to strengthen improved access to quality inputs and extension services as well as market linkages. So far, 180 maize and 23 poultry producer groups have been formed.

During the six month-long inception phase, the project organised four regional workshops with government, private sector, market actors and other stakeholders to orient them about the project and to identify possible areas for collaboration.

The project conducted value chain studies on maize and poultry and organised capacity building training on the Making markets work for the poor (M4P) approach for all project staff. Local market assessment was initiated in the project working areas and the opportunities and market potentials were analysed for both maize and poultry sub-sectors.

BRAC collaborated with the government and potential private sectors for their support in implementing the LEAD project. As a formal collaboration, YARA Fertilizer Company and Seed Co Tanzania Limited have provided fertilizer and seeds with their agro-dealer network to establish maize demonstration plots for 104 farmers.

The project identified at least one potential agro dealer per branch from 40 branches to supply quality inputs and contributed single time a partial support among LEAD farmers in using good seeds and fertilizers. We have linked 45 community poultry promoters with agrovet shops to receive vaccine, medicine, feeder and drinker.

### **Poultry and Livestock**

This year, on NaneNane Day (Farmers Day), we have been awarded a certificate for effectively demonstrating our approach on broiler and layer farming to the rural women. The approach we have demonstrated was an effectual method in disseminating knowledge on modern technology amongst the poultry farmers.

In Tanzania, Newcastle Disease (NCD) is the most devastating disease affecting poultry, which causes high mortality of poultry, to address the issue, we have provided 14 days of intensive training to community livestock promoters. Under the GPAF project, we have 400 community livestock promoters working door to door providing around 27 million doses of poultry vaccines to farmers.

During the period, meeting were held and distributed artificial insemination (AI) posters. Through the GPAF project, we have trained and developed 100 AI service providers and more than 53,000 livestock were inseminated.

### **Empowerment and Livelihood For Adolescents**

This year, we provided USD 262,330 as microloans to 2,040 borrowers in 168 ELA groups for expanding their existing businesses. We provided livelihood training for 200 girls in different trades.

As part of participatory approach, we have developed booklets based on 10 themes and a guidebook for mentors on life skills-based education. ELA provided life skills based education (LSBE) course for adolescent girls during peer-to-peer sessions. There, girls acquire training

skills ranging from critical thinking, problem-solving, interpersonal relationship and negotiation.

## **UGANDA**

Starting from the year 2006, Uganda is the site of BRAC's largest and fastest scale-up in Africa. There are currently programmes operating in microfinance, small enterprise, agriculture, poultry and livestock, health, MasterCard foundation scholars programme, youth empowerment and adolescent livelihood, and the Karamoja Initiative.

### **Agriculture**

Through our agriculture, poultry and livestock programmes we aim to improve the livelihood and food consumption of rural populations by improving productivity. We are providing training and credit services, and supplying high-quality inputs, including disease-resistant seeds, fertilisers and pesticides at affordable costs.

Under the MasterCard Foundation agriculture promoters (CAPs) 1,500 model farmers and 1,000 community trained. The agriculture extension programme were social enterprise distributed 126.3 project, and the tonnes of maize, rice, beans and vegetables seeds

### **Poultry And Livestock**

84 livestock artificial insemination promoters, 1,890 community livestock promoters and 4,000 model poultry and livestock rearers received training. Community livestock promoters used 23,515,768 vaccine doses against various poultry diseases and 7,501 cows were inseminated by artificial insemination promoters.



## **AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK PROGRAMME'S ACTIVITIES:**

BRAC has been training and developing village service providers for technical advice and input supply-

1. **Community Livestock Promoters-** BRAC has trained and developed Community Livestock Promoters or CLPs who were trained on disease prevention as well as skills on providing primary treatment to ailing livestock. These CLPs who are mobile and are strongly linked with small holder farmers which ensure that service is being provided at the rural level. CLPs are primarily female who receive intensive training, startup kits, microfinance loans (for buying their livestock and inputs) and supplies that are used to inform and assist other farmers. CLPs buy their vaccines from the private sector while feed is supplied by BRAC's feed mill. The promoters benefit from improved livestock as well as new income from providing services and inputs (poultry vaccine and medicine, feeder, drinkers etc.) and also benefit from sharing knowledge amongst other interested farmers. BRAC Liberia due to lack of proper storage facilities the vaccines are stored at the county health department, which are later distributed to farmers. These vaccines are then distributed in cool boxes to CLPs. This ensures that BRAC maintains a sustainable service and input supply model in the process.
2. **Community Agriculture Promoters-** Using BRAC's established CLP model, Community Agriculture Promoters or CAPs can also be trained and developed within the project beneficiary communities. These CAPs are pre-selected based on prior experience and will receive intensive training on modern crop cultivation also they will receive startup kits and microfinance loans to buy inputs pesticides and fertilizers from the private sector, while seeds are provided by BRAC. CAPs benefit from increased yields at farm level and from selling inputs from household to hold.
3. **Agro vets-** BRAC has trained 80 agro-vets on the process of operating a business and also developed their skills on creating and maintaining linkages in all branches of African countries, back in 2013. Agro vets buy their feed from BRAC's feed mill. They also sell feeders and drinkers. There are also plans to have agro vets to start selling seeds to farmers. CLPs and CAPs as community input suppliers and service providers will also be linked with agro vets and the private sector ensuring that after a BRAC programme ends, the farmers can continue without being dependent on a particular project.
4. **Seed farm-** BRAC has a seed farm (30 acres of land) in Kingsville that began in 2010. This is the only seed farm in Liberia. The testing and multiplication farm produces high

quality maize and rice seeds and are multiplying yellow cassava cuttings. Rice and maize seeds are sold directly to small holder farmers while cassava cuttings are sold to farmers who in turn are linked directly to Cassava mills so that their cassava can be sold. Recently, this farm also started producing vegetable seeds at a small quantity.

5. **Created a value chain market for producer** - Rice is the primary staple food in Liberia. However, due to the distance of milling facilities & post harvest losses, rice farmers end up suffering. BRAC provides rice farmers support by establishing milling facilities at the rice farm and linking the seed farm to engage in a two ways value chain process.
6. **Feed mill & poultry hatchery**- Amongst BRAC's other achievements in Liberia are also its own feed mill and a warehouse in the county of Grand Bassa, which produces quality poultry feed. These feeds are sold to agro vets and also to CLPs and farmers. However this feed mill also has the resources and capacity to produce goat, pig, sheep and cattle feed. BRAC Liberia has also set up a poultry hatchery in the same county where quality Day Old Chicks (DOC) is being sold to farmers. Small-scale commercial feed production began on April 2014 and commercial layers feed are being sold to model poultry farmers belonging to BRAC's project beneficiaries. Beginning from this year, maize seeds produced at BRAC's seed farm will be also linked with farmers who will sell their grown maize back to BRAC's feed mill. This ensures that the poultry farm gets the best of poultry feed available in the market and reduces cost since it is being sourced and produced locally.
7. **Supply Chain process**- BRAC Liberia is providing input to farmers from their own supplies. This includes rice seeds, maize seeds, cassava cuttings, day old chicks (DOC), poultry feed, piglets etc. They also source supplies from outside resources (farms and private sector) which include medicine, vegetable seed, fertilizer, pesticides etc.
8. **Training and support provided to farmers**- Developing farmer's capacity has been one of the key activities that BRAC is involved in. BRAC Liberia, over the years has been giving capacity development training and support to model and general crop farmers (rice, maize, cassava), vegetable farmers (kitchen gardeners), livestock rearers (backyard poultry rearers [BYP], model poultry rearers, model pig rearer, model cattle rearer as well as sheep and goat rearer). BRAC has also been developing pig breeders ensuring that quality piglets are being supplied to the less fortunate farmers in Liberia. BRAC Liberia has trained and supported 6 pig breeders and re-stocked farms in six counties in 2013. In December 2014, they have also facilitated the supply and sale to model pig rearers.

9. **Training provided to traders** – 150 traders have also received training at different levels (country and central level) from BRAC Liberia guaranteeing established backward and forward linkages.
10. **Involvement with private sector**- Workshops were held with stakeholders (e.g. suppliers) where current work done by BRAC Liberia was discussed and their input and feedback was noted. These workshops have also ensured that BRAC Liberia continues to maintain proper networking channels. BRAC plans to have more workshops with millers as a continuation of the process of private sector linkage development.
11. **Processing market**- As a part of strengthening the livestock value chain, BRAC Liberia is also heavily involved in developing slaughterhouses for pig, goats and sheep. Currently they are developing 3 slaughter houses.
12. **Marketing of produce**- Produce such as rice, maize, cassava, vegetable, poultry etc. are sold by farmers at both local and diversified markets. Maize produce are sold to poultry farmers while rice produce are sold to millers. Apart from this, BRAC plans to link goat rearers and pig rearers to slaughter houses.
13. **Developed the National Livestock Policy** - The National Livestock Policy of was also developed and submitted to the MOA of where BRAC played an integral part.
14. The FFD project where BRAC has worked in the PPR vaccination of sheep & goat in 2013
15. Is currently working on US Aid's Psychosocial project for post Ebola survivors
16. **PPR Vaccination throughout** - BRAC carried out a country wide PPR vaccination in 4 countries; the vaccine is supplied by MOA. The service was provided by the 300 Community Livestock and Poultry promoter (CLPP).

## Competencies Acquired during Internship

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### Responsibility in the Organization

The responsibilities which were assigned to were;

- i. Review MIS reports
- ii. To write and review narrative reports
- iii. Develop materials like leaflets, brochures , Project Exit Plan,
- iv. Development of Project proposal for different Donor groups.
- v. Prepare international country project summery and review impact study.

### Detail of the Responsibilities

#### ① Review and MIS Report Writing

Through engaging in the project, I have reviewed and written various reports on each activity. These reports include; Report on country summary, Concept note, Article review, Presentation preparation and other survey reviews on the different aspects of project outcome in relation to agriculture and livestock.

#### ② Creating Proposal

I have been engaged in creating social business proposal; the project focus was on scaling up small business in poultry sector as well as for a seed production firm. Also other proposals review summary for prospecting funds from different Donor groups.

#### ③ Engage in Networking Activities

Unlike the deskwork of the above two activities, I had opportunities to be involved in various meetings as one of the members of BRAC International. I had a discussion with people from NGOs, private sectors, social enterprise, and government agencies. I also have joined some events and exhibitions on growing industries in Bangladesh as well social innovation seminars organized by BRAC. Also I helped in the development of materials like leaflets, brochures to be distributed to the donor group.

#### ④ Management of the Office Space.

In addition to the above three activities, I had a duty to manage the environment around my office space. The aim of this activity is to cultivate a positive office environment and keep the organization running smoothly. I was working on building basic management knowledge to run the office properly along with human resource development to motivate and empower the staffs of BRAC International.

## Objectives of Internship

The Learning objectives of the internship:

- Understand social business that contributes to development and how it helps to food security.
- Acquire competencies enough to overcome the challenges in workplace.
- Contribute to livelihood security model the countries BRAC is operating through the Agriculture and Livelihood activity.
- Apply the theoretical knowledge acquired from the University into the practical field and find out the difference and intersection points.

## **Internship Activity**

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### **Summary of the Activity**

During the internship activity, I have submitted various types of reports in accordance with the organization needs. I have conducted desk research and studied different studies conducted in the African countries, written several reviews and other support materials for the Agricultural and Livestock department. I will describe how I worked on the report writing in the initial stage and what the challenges were. I will then mention how I worked on the improvement to overcome the challenges.

### **Process of Report Writing in the Initial Stage**

At the start we all are at a look out for upcoming Grants and Funds which will be focused on specific two criteria 1) food security and technological introduction and 2) on for countries where BRAC is currently operating, in relations to Agriculture and Livestock. Once a certain call for proposal is identified and approved by the adviser of the department. A concept note is prepared with all the preliminary description of the ideas behind a project.

This will help test and refine concepts and to communicate about the project with potential readers, including partners and donors, supervisors, or review boards or the committees. My concept note is review by the Adviser of Agriculture and Livestock who is also my supervisor. After his approval the note will be more refined and transformed to the proposal that is to be submitted to the specific Donor groups.

Figure 1 describes my writing methodology. This includes four steps; preliminary research, conducting meetings, improving the reports through repeating writing, getting feedback, and modification. After this improvement process, I submit the final versions of reports. The more detailed contents on each step is as follows.

### Step1: Preliminary Research

This was the beginning of the writing process. Once particular organization or project to be researched was decided, I started to collect the related information based on what the donor wants through research.

### Step2: Conduct research and Attend Meeting

After finishing the preliminary research, I prepare a concept note or attend a meeting to investigate the real activities. In this stage, I tried to collect as much first hand information as possible that was not available on the desktop research. I collected information through observing projects, asking questions during discussion and conversation.

### Stage3: Writing, Get Feedback, and Modify and Revise

After the first two steps I analyze and assembled the collected information and started to write the proposal. In this stage, after writing the first draft, I discussed with my supervisors to get feedback, and then modified the draft based on the instruction. After rewriting the reports, I discussed with the supervisors and repeated this cycle till I got an approval from the supervisors.

Step 2 in this stage it is important to observe and read the call for proposal thoroughly to understand the thoughts of the writer and to find the missing gaps. Then, in the step3, I will depict them by my own expression. The last step is scheduling to complete the writing. Even though the final result could be great, if it was not on time, then I could not receive a good assessment. The detail efforts are as follows.

This poor preliminary research often caused me overlooking information during work and meeting. This means I should have worked more on designing the framework and strategy and conducting the research based on the elaborated framework. Elaborating the preliminary research design provides me with an overview of the report writing methodology and could solve the challenges. The three steps of the preliminary research are described below.

Figure1. process of report writing



## **Analyze the Situation**

In the stage of analyzing the situation, I first have to get clear understanding about the meaning of the fieldwork or meeting by doing the following analysis.

- ✓ Set the Clear Objective and Goal

In the first place, it is significantly important to understand the reason of conducting the research and the main theme of the investigation.

- ✓ Identify the Beneficiaries and Expected Readers of Report

As the demands of beneficiaries differ, identification of the beneficiaries and their required information is significant.

- ✓ Analyze Available Resources

As part of the preliminary research, it is important to conduct a desktop research to find out available resources.

## **Step4: Complete and Submit the Final Version of Reports**

After repeating the cycle of modification, I submitted the final version of the proposal to my supervisor, and thus finished the entire report writing process.

## **Challenges Faced**

Within the above writing steps, I faced quite a few challenges that kept me stuck in the step 3 of the modification process. Some of the these challenges are as follows;

### **(i) Overlook Important Information that Cannot be Regained.**

I sometimes faced the problems that I could not write a report because of lack of necessary first hand information. Most of time, I found this problem during working on step3 because I did not realize the required information until I started the writing.

This is critical and serious problem because the first hand information missed to collect during a fieldwork or meetings is almost impossible to regain. Especially detail data of projects is significant information but easy to overlook.

### **(ii) Mismatch between My Writing Contents and Readers Expectation**

This can be called disparity of supply and demand. Even though I completed a splendid report, if it did not meet the readers demand, the efforts were in vain. As Table 1 describes, each of the three report types has the different objectives and characteristics, and it was challenge to differentiate and adjust my writing style and expressions in accordance with them. For example, the readers of Facebook are not interested in detail data. They would rather know briefly about the project uniqueness and interesting point, so it is important to consider more catchy title and exciting contents.



### **Effectiveness and Efficiency of writing**

Because of tight deadline imposed by the organization, it was required to enhance my writing effectiveness and efficiency to make it done on time. The limited time and resources of fieldwork and meeting made it even harder to complete a great report.

### **Lack of Writing Skills and Expression.**

This type of writing style was totally different from University and new for me, so developing the basic writing skill, know-how, and efficient writing skill were challenge.

### **Efforts to Overcome the Challenges**

To overcome the above challenges, I have developed the four steps; Preliminary Research, Continuous meetings for more refined information, Output skills, and Scheduling. The first step is the preliminary research. This is to know what 'donors group are looking forward to before writing the proposal, what are the features of them, what goods we need to bring into. Without knowing the entire picture, we do not understand where we are and why we are here.

In this stage it is important to observe and read the call for proposal thoroughly to understand the thoughts of the writer and to find the missing gaps. Then, in the step3, I will depict them by my own expression. The last step is scheduling to complete the writing. Even though the final result could be great, if it was not on time, then I could not receive a good assessment. The detail efforts are as follows.

This poor preliminary research often caused me overlooking information during work and meeting. This means I should have worked more on designing the framework and strategy and conducting the research based on the elaborated framework. Elaborating the preliminary research design provides me with an overview of the report writing methodology and could solve the challenges. The three steps of the preliminary research are described below.

### **Develop Plan and Strategy**

Based on the analysis, I develop the plan and strategy of fieldwork or meeting. This is to answer how to achieve the goal and maximize the result set by myself during the fieldwork or meeting. I have to clarify what the points to be focused and how to collect the information. If necessity, I prepare a questionnaire on this stage.

### **Implementation**

In the last stage of the preliminary research, I go to fieldwork or meeting. By completing these processes, I could finally make the fieldwork or meeting successful. But there are always a way for betterment and keeping a tab on those issues is important for me. Thus at every implementation stage I evaluate myself and try other ways to outperform my previous skills.

## Project Proposal

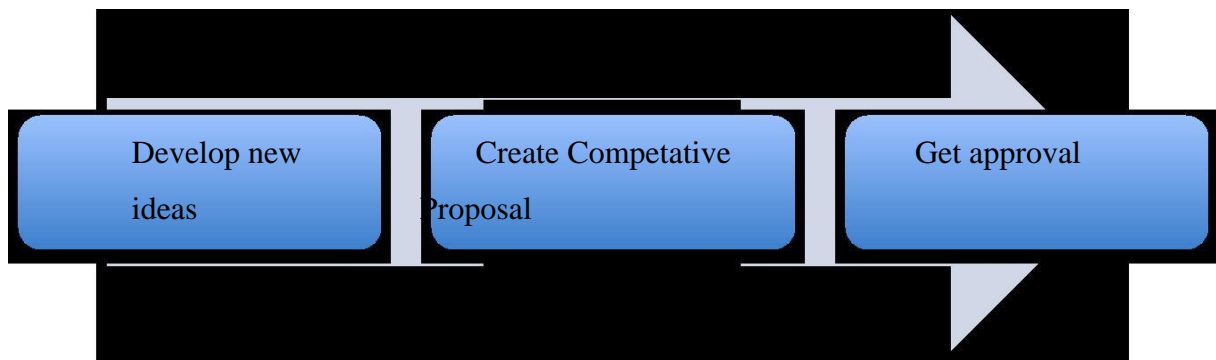
### Summary of Project Proposal

One of my internship activities is to create a project proposal. Although the activity of Report Writing is to find, know, investigate, and deliver information of 'existing projects', this activity is to construct a new from scratch and expand it to the 'original format'. I have worked on writing two project proposals; Social Business development in Tanzania and in Liberia, but it would not have without the help of my fellow subordinates.

### Challenges

It was quite challenging for me to write a powerful proposal from scratch. There are three stages, as described in figure3, to make the proposal successful including developing a new idea, transferring the idea into a professional proposal, and get approval from others. Details of the challenges I faced in each step are described below.

**Figure3. Three stages to make the successful proposal.**



#### **(i)Develop New Ideas**

Developing idea is the most important element to make the proposal successful because the idea of the proposal will not be ever changed even though the strategy or structure of the proposal will be changed after starting the operation. Some of the challenges are;

#### **Original and Innovative Idea.**

'What is the special feature of your idea? What is the difference between your idea and others?' I was repeatedly asked this kind of questions, and I could not answer particularly because there were some similarities with other projects and not unique.

## **Create Competitive Proposals**

In this stage, I needed to transfer the project idea into a competitive proposal and develop the powerful proposal. Some of the challenges are;

### **Customer Oriented Mind**

Most of the time my proposal was just to spread out my idea without considering the customers' needs. The objective should not be differentiation but it has to be based on customers' needs. This mind is new way of thinking for me, and it took time to understand this new perspective.

### **Feasibility of the Project**

'I understand your proposal, but is this really feasible. How do you think your proposed project benefit to BRAC? Did you consider our organizations' capacity? Is your innovation profitable enough to compensate for the expenses to sustained?'. I was asked these questions many times. This was also challenge to create a new project under the organization umbrella. The proposal is not for expressing my fantasy but is for making it real within the organization capacity.

### **Obtain Approval from Others**

Once I developed an idea and made a feasible proposal, then next step was to convince the organization members to get the approval to initiate the project. To get approval, there was the big challenge for me.

### **Professional Writing Skill and Strong Presentation Competency**

Without convincing others with both strong documents and presentation, it is difficult to get approval even though the idea seems great. It was a challenge to acquire writing skill enough to appeal my proposal. However, my draft proposals failed many times because they were not well thought through, convincing, well structured, and logical.

### **Findings and Efforts to Overcome the Challenges**

Because of these above challenges, I often failed to create a powerful proposal. I have had an effort to overcome these challenges described below.

### **Enhance Social Entrepreneur Mind.**

In the first place, what makes a project more successful? Is that the amount of profits they earned from the proposed project? Or is that the social impact with the cost of organization's finance? What are the Donors view to this approach? Probably it depends on the organizations' vision, so it was essential for me firstly to define what was good or bad and what was benefit or loss for the organization. As the organization is a Social Enterprise, I started to learn Social Entrepreneur. This helped me enhance social entrepreneur mind and make a decision; which way I should go.

### **Identify the Key Elements Required for Powerful Proposal and Develop Them**

I failed to develop a powerful proposal, so I analyzed the problems and identified the three significant elements from the learning of the internship activity; resources, logical thinking and strategy building, and originality and uniqueness. I have worked on improving and developing the three elements. The characteristics of the elements and application in the two projects are as follows.

- **Resources**

Resources are required to start project and carry out the tasks. They can be people, capital, materials, body of knowledge, stakeholders, time, and channel to disseminate information or anything else capable of definition required for operating project activity. The lack of a resource will therefore be a constraint on the operating the project activity.

- **Logical Thinking/Strategy Building**

Logical thinking is very important to build a powerful proposal and persuade the persons concerned about the appropriateness of the projects. There were quite a few details that I could not think such as; determining all the resources I had, proper utilization of these resources, the capability of an integrated set of resources to perform the tasks, and the analyzing competitive advantage and disadvantage of the plan constructed. Lack of logical thinking will lead to failure of constructing a powerful proposal even though there are plenty of resources.

- **Originality and Uniqueness**

To differentiate the own project with others, the originality and uniqueness of idea is important. Even though a company has both a plenty of resources and person with a strong logical thinking, if the project does not have originality or uniqueness, it might fail, and vice versa.

### **Practice Professional Writing and Presentation**

As I mentioned above, writing professional proposal and presentation is significant to get approval of a project by the related members. However, it is not improved in a day, and I will need to do continuous efforts to acquire the professional writing and presentation. I will continue to write a proposal based on the consideration of the key elements above to develop the professional writing and presentation skill during the remaining internship period.

## Engage in Networking Activities

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### **Summary of the Networking Activities**

During the internship period, I have engaged in BRAC International Networking Activities including; attending various meetings with people from NGOs, Private Sectors, Government Agencies, and Social Enterprises. In addition to the meeting, I also attended a couple of events and exhibitions and seminars organized by BRAC Innovation.

### **Challenges**

Unlike the report writing and business proposal that was conducted within the organization, this activity required more relationship development with people from outside and within the organization. I therefore, worked as per to a support this networking activity as one of its members. The unique feature that makes this activity challenging is that reputations of BRAC are built or demolished based on how well I conduct myself during a meeting or other communication process. There were a lot of challenges that I had to overcome, some of which are described below.

### **Change Myself from Student to a Professional.**

Although my status was student intern in the organization, it was required to behave as a businessman as the member of the organization. In the initial period of the internship, I did not totally understand the difference between student and businessman and had a difficulty to behave properly at a meeting.

### **Difficulty of Communication in a Professional Occasion**

Communication was also important at BRAC University lecture, but the communication in professional occasion is little bit different because the conversation passes faster and there is limited time, and things sometimes are not going on as planned. Therefore I had to be more flexible to respond to unexpected situations. Because of this, there were a lot of times that I could not keep up with a discussion at a meeting. Furthermore, meeting is not just having fun of discussion. Both sides have its objectives and goals. Within the limited time of meeting, I had to maximize my goal, and this required more upper level communication skill. It was one of the biggest challenges for me.

## **Efforts to Get over the Challenges**

To overcome these challenges mentioned above, I implemented some actions described below.

### **Acquiring Basic Business Manner Etiquette**

To break out of my shell to be a businessman, I started to change small things on myself such as changing my appearance through wearing business suit and changing my hairstyle. There are other business manner such as the way to exchange name cards, writing emails politely after a meeting, and the way to communicate. This seems very small things, but working on changing myself helped me enhance a sense of professionalism.

### **Be Prepared Myself, Pay Attention, and Participate Effectively**

As long as time allows I started to do any background research to make sure I am up-to-speed on the subject of the meeting. At least, I tried to set the agenda and goal of the meeting, and conduct a basic preliminary research of the organization. It was not enough just preparing, I also tried to participate both physically and mentally through hearing and exciting a conversation while taking notes.

### **Transform Acquired Information into My Original Knowledge**

It is important to prepare a meeting in advance, and I found it would be difficult to communicate with professional person without daily training. To improve my communication skill and acquire more diversified knowledge that is useful for interaction with people outside the organization, I have imposed myself to conduct the following trainings.

### **Be More Curious about the Development world**

First of all, I try to be more open to learn a wide variety of the issues happening especially in Bangladesh and Japan. I should not shut down information just because I think it is useless.

#### ➤ Be Curious about Organizations that I Have Engaged

Conducting following up research is important. As for example, the meeting with Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center(BYLC) provides me with the importance of increasing home-grown leaders in Bangladesh. Even though the meeting is short time,



there are plenty of learning opportunities if I have a curiosity. Following up research such as leadership situation in Bangladesh would be an asset useful for next meeting and also for other occasions.

➤ Be Curious about Daily News

It is also important check daily news and hot trend to promote the good communication.

- **Input and Build up Information**

Not only having curious, it is also important to accumulate information in my mind. I make it a rule to try to get as much information as possible.

- **Construct and Organize My Idea into Intelligence**

Transform accumulated knowledge into my original opinion is significant.

‘What do you think about this issue’? This type of question was often asked and it was required to express my own opinion on a particular issue. So I practice to transfer the accumulated information into my original opinion. I ask myself what I think about this issue. So that these accumulated knowledge will be transformed into my opinion.

- **Convey My Opinion Logically during Conversation**

Meeting is not the place only to spread out my opinion. It is not always my turn to speak, but there is interaction between me and the opponent person.

Therefore, I keep in mind trying to communicate under an interactive communication environment.

## **MANAGEMENT OF THE OFFICE SPACE.**

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### **Office management**

In addition to the above three internship activities, I also had a responsible for management of the office space. This activity was basically divided into two components; managing office space and human resource development. The goal of the activity was to cultivate a positive office environment, ensure the efficient operation of the office, and keep the organization running smoothly. This work includes a wide variety of tasks such as creating cleaning schedule, monitoring staff work, detecting a problem and creating a solution, and improving their work performance. I worked hard especially in human development resources to foster a pleasant work atmosphere so that employees can enjoy coming to work every day.

### **Challenges**

#### **Basic knowledge and information about the office.**

The basic knowledge and information of the office was important to understand the framework on which the organization works. I had to understand everything regarding to the office issues such as who was the contact person in case water stopped and what kind of bills this organization was supposed to pay, how much, and what date.

#### **Lack of mindset required for manager.**

I failed to manage a lot of issues because of lack of the basic knowledge of management. For example, one of my tasks in this activity is to decide lunch menu, give servant money to buy foods, and get receipt. I did not realize that the servant bought relatively expensive foods every day in the market. What I had to do is not only to give him money and receive receipt as a flow operation but also, as a good manager, should have grasped the market situation to avoid a problem. It was most important to consider the organization success and avoid any loss, but a lot of cases, my failure of management were directly linked to the loss of the organization.

#### **Challenge for human resource development**

In addition to understanding the office environment, engaging in Human Resource Development of BRAC was also important because improved management of the human resources will lead to improved performance of the organization. There are many challenges I faced associated with the employee empowerment as described

below.

➤ **Achieve Employee's Satisfaction**

The challenge was to motivate the local staffs non-financially in the organization and to create better environment for them that brings high mental satisfaction. It was challenging to identify their satisfaction away from money and motivate them for their satisfaction that will lead to the organization's high performance.

➤ **Culture Difference between operating countries and Bangladesh**

There is language barrier between Bangladeshi employees and the local staff who cannot speak English properly. The communication styles in both countries also vary. This culture difference made it much harder to manage.

## **FUTURE PLAN FOR USING THE COMPETENCIES**

I will continue to do internship at BRAC International until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. I acquired a lot of important competencies but the level of the improvement is not still enough on each activity. There will be a lot of similar challenges described in this report, so I am planning to use this internship report as a guidebook for further improvement in the second half of the internship activities. I will try to minimize the errors that I made during my previous assignment.

### **Evaluation of the organization and challenges.**

The internship program provided by BRAC International focuses on growth of an intern with the intensive four activities. I faced so many challenges, but, thanks to the deep support from my supervisor and other colleagues, I could find a way to improve by myself and learned better. I believe the competencies acquired in the internship could be applied in all the fields, also the constant urge to develop has pushed me to think out of the box and I am full of confidence.

The challenges of the organization would be human resources to expand its business in the first of all. It would be tough to find a experienced person because of various risks for him or her such as geographical distance from Japan. Another challenge would be accompanied risks caused by legislation system, investment regulations, and bribe for foreign people and organization.

As BRAC is Bangladesh based NGO and is still operating outside the country help other companies to advance in those countries, it would face less challenges and more support if they can work together. However, as BRAC International is expanding and is winning distinction gradually, I believe it will remain and be the number one NGO in the world and there will be more interactive harmonization between Bangladesh and the rest of the BRAC operating countries.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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1. BRAC is a Non-Government Organization. For which the sum of value addition is equal to the sum of value distribution. In other words the income and expenses are equal.
2. As a NGO BRAC International have most of her expenses as operational. These expenses are mainly made out of programme expenses.
3. BRAC has many programmes running in different regions in different countries. It's a large organization which has its wings flowing rapidly and growing with each day pass by.
4. To maintain this large organization there are more than 12000 staff members working for a better future.
5. Select the right person for the right job and provide better financial benefits.
6. As the existing growth of population increases different new opportunities come out to help people in need.
7. To ensure this new future BRAC International should embrace all and move forward with a healthy working environment and hire effective people to accomplish its goals.

## CONCLUSION

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The three months internship at BRAC International provided me with quite a few challenges that I had to overcome and at the same time opportunities to grow myself. Through the challenges and improvements, I acquired splendid competencies that can be applied in all the fields especially in development field.

The initial expectation by myself for this organization was to understand the application of social business into the development field, experiencing different ethnicities and engaging in development field away from classroom, and management issue of organization. By engaging in management issue at BRAC International, I acquired the basic knowledge of management. I faced the difficult challenges especially in human resource development, but it was good experience to learn the essence of empowering people. Furthermore, through the intensive writing report, business proposal, and networking activity, I learned the real workplace in development field. As for understanding the application of social business into development field, I need much more time and I am planning to use the remaining internship period to get the solid understand on this area.

In conclusion, I got confidence that I could contribute to poverty alleviation in Bangladesh through the activities at Japanese company, though it was small contribution and short period. Moreover, the learning from BRAC International became the asset for me that can be applied in my life forward. I would also like to mention that knowledge acquired from MDMP Program is also my asset. I would like to grow more through applying the combination of the knowledge from MDMP program and the practical experience from BRAC International.

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