

MANIKGANJ PROJECT  
PROPOSAL FOR PHASE III  
(April, 1982 to March, 1985)

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BANGLADESH RURAL  
ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE  
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GENESIS

Bangladesh Rural advancement Committee(BRAC) is a Bangladeshi rural development agency with projects in several districts of Bangladesh. BRAC's first and largest project, Sulla(Sylhet district) was begun in early 1972 in an effort to rehabilitate the people of the area who had been uprooted during the 1971 War of Liberation. BRAC has, since 1972, developed systematically its programmes and staff. Its activities now include agriculture, health, family planning, nutrition, education, rural credit, income generation, fishery and poultry with organised groups of landless or marginal farmers and women. BRAC currently operates three projects - Sulla, Jamalpur, and Manikganj; a training centre; and other development programmes.

After its initial efforts in Sulla, BRAC decided to transfer field staff trained in and translate programmes tested in the Sulla project to other areas of Bangladesh. To this end BRAC sought out during the fall of 1975 an area more typical of Bangladesh in demographic composition, topography, and cropping pattern than Sulla. BRAC chose Manikganj Thana (Headquarter for Manikganj Sub-Division) of Dacca District.

INTRODUCTION

Manikganj Thana lies 40 miles by motorable road west of Dacca city. A population of 163,000 lives within an area of about 76 square miles; a density of over 2,300 persons per square mile.

Most of the Thana is low land which becomes inundated during the monsoon months when the main broadcast aus/aman rice crop is

grown. The sandy loam soil of the area is not particularly suited to rice cultivation; the yield per acre, therefore, is no more than 10 maunds (1/3 ton). During the dry winter months most of the land remains fallow. But where irrigated water is available some rice, wheat, sugarcane, and oil seeds are grown. Dependence on the extremely limited land and water resources makes the people of the area one of the poorest in Bangladesh.

#### PREPARATORY PHASE:

BRAC decided a food-for-work programme would be the best way to provide a practical introduction of BRAC to the Manikganj people. BRAC staff met with village community representatives who were encouraged to design and execute the rural works schemes. BRAC provided wheat on payment for these schemes. Ten food-for-work schemes were completed during this preparatory phase (November, 1975 to March, 1976).

The food-for-work programme demonstrated that if the people of the area cooperated to take decisions on their own behalf, BRAC is prepared to assist them. The programme also helped BRAC identify: 1) the poorest section of the community who were engaged in the manual labour of the schemes; 2) community leaders who assisted in planning and supervising the programme; and 3) community-minded youth who worked closely with BRAC staff. The activities during this preparatory phase established BRAC in Manikganj Thana and prepared the way for implementation of an innovative programme of integrated rural development designed to benefit the poorest section of the community.

#### MANIKGANJ PROGRAMME

The fundamental objective of BRAC is to assist the poorest half of the rural population to gain and exercise control over their own lives through concerted action. Through its various

rural based programmes, BRAC is testing methods of reaching this objective. The basic methodology of BRAC's Manikganj field project is to develop the capacity for concerted action by organizing groups of disadvantaged men and women through roughly the following sequence of activities:

1. functional education classes
2. group formation
3. joint economic activities
4. joint social action
5. group - based health and family planning services
6. group federation

BRAC's Manikganj project has just completed (as of March 31, 1982) the second phase of its activities and has just entered the third phase(which this proposal describes). Briefly, each phase covers the following time-period and represents the following stages:

Phase I: Development of Strategies, April'76 - March'79.

During this phase, BRAC tested innovative methods and strategies of development and evolved the methodology outlined above.

Phase II: Expansion, April'79 - March'82

During this phase, BRAC refined its strategies and expanded its coverage.

Phase III: Expansion and consolidation-April'82 - March'85

During this phase, BRAC plans to complete its coverage (poorest half of 180 villages) and to further strengthen the organized base of the poor. Initially, BRAC planned a two-year phase III and withdrawal of its support after Phase III. Now, BRAC proposes to extend phase III by one year(April'82 - March '85) and to further strengthen, not withdraw its support.

The reasons for the change in plans are partly due to factors beyond BRAC's control and partly due to BRAC's realization that



to strengthen the organizational base of the poor requires time. In 1979, the Manikganj area suffered a drought. In 1980, the Manikganj area was badly flooded (75% of the area was under water for 4 weeks). These climatic factors affected the productivity of the area plus the implementation of BRAC's programmes. Given these natural setbacks and the inherent "slowness" of development, BRAC has decided to extend its presence in Manikganj beyond the proposal Phase III.

During phase III, BRAC-Manikganj proposes to intensify its support to the economic activities of individual groups and to consolidate and strengthen the federation of individual groups. The aim is to ensure the resource base of individual groups and the power base of the federation.

The proposed Phase III activities are presented below (with the progress of each activity during phases I and II)

#### 1. FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION

Functional education, as developed by BRAC, provides rural adults the opportunity to analyse their environment, deepen their self-awareness in relation to that environment, and build confidence in their own creativity and capabilities. Skills in numeracy and literacy are also developed. But what is most emphasized is a whole new way of looking at things.

BRAC built its Manikganj project around functional education. Functional education classes provide the initial forum for village level interaction. Through the classes BRAC staff are able to locate groups of poor people with like interests. BRAC staff work closely with those village level groups which grow out of functional education.

Volunteers from the area are trained and supervised by the BRAC field staff to conduct the functional education classes in their respective villages. These volunteers are called shikkha

sheboks/shebikas (education helpers): roughly 200 male shikkah sheboks and 200 female shikkha shebikas have been trained.

Phase I:

	<u>Centres</u>	<u>Graduates</u>
Male	116	1652
Female	101	1005

Phase II:

	<u>Centres</u>	<u>Graduates</u>
Male	63	1081
Female	50	771

Phase III: During the first year of Phase III, BRAC proposes, through 100 functional education centres, to cover all potential group members. Approximately, 750 more men and 900 more women will be organised into groups during phase III and require functional education. After the first year of Phase III, no new functional education centres will be opened.

2. GROUP FORMATION

BRAC's aim is to assist the most disadvantaged and poorest half of the rural population in its areas of operation. BRAC's basic criteria for its target group are:

- those who sell their manual labour to others for survival irrespective of occupation;
- provided they do not have political patrons among the non-target people;
- provided they cannot still exercise status considerations.

Specifically, these criteria include men and women from landless or marginal farm households with no assets; fishing households with no implements; rural artisan households with no working capital or raw materials; households whose members sell their manual labour.

BRAC attempts to organise as many of the poor who fit these criteria into functional education classes and, subsequently, into BRAC-supported groups. All BRAC programmes centre around these organized groups. Selected group members are trained as the primary village-level health and family planning workers. All groups are engaged in one-or-more joint economic activities and undertake joint social actions. Gradually, individual groups are linked and strengthened to undertake mass social action.

Phase I: 35 female and 47 male groups.

Phase II: another 117 female and 130 male groups were organized: a total of 177 male and 152 female groups from 169 villages.

Phase III: BRAC proposes to organize another 28 female and 11 male groups to cover the target population of 180 target villages.

### 3. GROUP FEDERATION

BRAC aims to link all individual groups into a central federation. The central federation will be strengthened in order to provide a base from which the poor can demand: 1) their legal, economic and political rights and 2) access to services and inputs allocated by the public sector. BRAC plans to link individual groups at:

- first, the village - level: all members of both male and female groups in each village to meet monthly to discuss social problems( e.g. dowry, divorce, lack of tube well) and to decide on joint social action.

- next, the union-level: two representatives(1 male, 1 female) from each village-level association to meet quarterly to discuss larger social problems (e.g. wages, political representation) and to decide on mass social action

- finally, at the project or thana level as part of its



strategy to federate and strengthen the groups, BRAC-Manikganj organises the groups to demand and utilize local government services, such as:

- public health (e.g. tubewell for drinking water)
- agriculture (e.g. pumps and tubewells for irrigation)
- crop insurance (from government insurance company)
- periodically, at an inter-project level:  
selected representatives to workshops designed to build capacities and mass representation at conventions organized to voice demands

Phase I: only group-level organization plus periodic inter-group workshops and training.

Phase II: 18 village - level associations and 1 union-level committee plus 1 mass project-level convention

Phase III: during Phase III, BRAC propose to complete group formation and to link all groups at both village and union level: a total of 180 village-level and 5 union-level organisations.

#### 4: ECONOMIC SUPPORT

Economic support is seen by the Manikganj field staff as the basic means to form, develop, and strengthen individual groups. The degree of participation/interaction required of group members in the design and implementation of joint economic activities develops group cohesion and reinforces the importance of joint action. Each potential group (i.e., which have successfully completed atleast 1/3 of BRAC's functional education course) are encouraged to undertake joint economic activities of the group's own choosing. BRAC field staff help prepare and review individual group schemes. Those schemes approved as feasible are financed by loans from BRAC (at the rate of 15% per annum)

BRAC staff help arrange training, inputs, marketing and other support services for the various schemes. New options for



generating employment are continually being sought and developed. Leadership and management capacity within the groups are reinforced through a regular schedule of training workshops.

Phase I: Approximately 7 lakh taka disbursed to 82 organised group. The range of employment - generating schemes included:

- for men: agriculture on leased land
- for women: agriculture on leased land
  - paddy husking
  - animal husbandry
  - eri/sericulture
  - village industries manufacturing:
    - snack-foods
    - pickles and condiments
    - hand-rolled cigarettes(Bidis)
    - block-printing

Phase II: Approximately 16 lakh taka disbursed to 169 groups. Range of activities expanded to include:

- for men: irrigation schemes, pisciculture
- for women: basketry
  - poultry
  - pisciculture
  - net- making
  - spice-grinding
  - embroidery

Phase III: BRAC PLANS TO EXTEND COVERAGE and increase productivity of current range of economic activities to cover 360 groups. If possible, additional types of schemes will also be introduced.

The economy of the Manikganj area is almost entirely one of subsistence agriculture. Poor soil conditions and lack of irrigation facilities renders the area unsuitable for intensive

agriculture. The lack of alternative resources (other than subsistence agriculture) compounded by a very high population density make Manikganj one of the poorest regions of Bangladesh.

BRAC has, since Phase I, been seeking alternative employment opportunities for the poor and disadvantaged population of Manikganj. A few of the employment-generating schemes developed during Phase I and II and to be intensified during Phase III deserve special mention:

a) Agriculture

Most of the male groups (92 during the past year) and a few female groups (4 during the past year) are engaged in collective agricultural production on jointly-leased land. Crops cultivated include: Paddy, sugarcane, wheat, tobacco, potato, and pulses. The groups use their own funds plus loans from BRAC to finance these schemes.

It should be noted that women in Bangladesh are not traditionally engaged in field operations, but in post-harvest operations. However, 4 BRAC-organized groups of women cultivated paddy, sugarcane, tobacco and pulses. During Phase III, Manikganj proposes to expand the numbers of men and women engaged in agriculture and to provide continuous training in crop production and management. In support of agricultural schemes, BRAC-Manikganj has introduced a crop insurance scheme designed to link groups to the government insurance organization.

b) Seri/culture

Sericulture is the cultivation of a variety of silk worm which feeds off mulberry leaves. Ericulture is the cultivation of a variety of silk worms which feeds off castor leaves. Silk cultivation (of either or both varieties) is one of the few areas of production which promise employment alternative to a significant number of poor women. With a minimum of investment (25 trees/

bushes, minimal space for rearing, and a taka 400 spinning wheel ), a woman who rears and spins 2,500 cocoons per rearing-cycle (45 days ) can earn approximately taka 200 per month.

During Phases I and II, BRAC developed a strong base of silk production in Manikganj:

- central service centre for:
  - production of eggs
  - quality - control and delivery
  - technical back-stopping
- six sub-centres ( each staffed by 1 trainer and one assistant )
- 2 silk-weaving centres (20 full-time weavers: 4 male, 16 female)
- sericulture production:
  - 290 rearers-cum-spinners from 47 villages produced 75,000 hanks of endi (castor) silk thread from April'81 - March'82
- Sericulture production
  - 75 rearers-cum-spinners from 11 villages produced thread for 2200 yards of mulberry-silk cloth.

Phase III: BRAC proposes to engage 1000 women in rearing and spinning silk plus-women/men in weaving silk. To support this expanded program, the following support services are required:

- Central centre for production of parent stock of eggs and worms
- weaving centre - 12 looms
- c) Pump for the landless

BRAC-Manikganj has introduced a new concept in irrigation. The idea is to enable those who do not possess land ( the primary means of production) to control water(the other major means of production). The strategy is to assist organised groups of landless to acquire an irrigation asset: a low lift pump, shallow



tube-well, or deep tube-well. With these pumps, the landless sell water to landowners in exchange for cash or kind (share of the crop).

After long negotiations with the government, BRAC entered into two agreements: one with the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) and the other with Bangladesh Krishi (i.e. Agricultural) Bank (BKB). Under these agreements, the BADC will supply the pumps and the BKB will provide the credit to procure the pumps. Groups of landless organised and authorised by BRAC qualify for the pumps and credit.

Normally, the BKB issues credit only against 100% guarantee. But the landless do not, by definition, possess the normal collateral namely, land. So BRAC worked out a system whereby 50% of the collateral would be in cash (deposited with BKB by BRAC) and 50% of the collateral would be in kind (the pump-set held in mortgage with BKB).

At present, 16 landless groups (totalling 326 members) operate: 12 shallow tube-wells, 1 deep tube-well; 2 low-lift pumps. During Phase III, BRAC-Manikganj proposes to organise an additional 35 groups (700 landless).

#### d) Poultry

Although most village women in Bangladesh keep a few chickens which scavenge around the homestead, most often very little attention is paid to poultry rearing. Poultry rearing can become more productive if attention is given to improved breeds, food, and housing plus regular vaccination campaigns.

BRAC has, therefore, developed and continued a poultry programme. After several years of experimentation with poultry extension services, BRAC has decided to continue two approaches to poultry extension:

- extensive approach: distribution of improved variety eggs

to be hatched by local-variety hens to as many BRAC-organised women as possible

- intensive approach: distribution of loans to purchase 10 local variety hens and one improved-variety cock to members of selected BRAC groups.

To support either approach, field staff plus members are trained in vaccination and poultry rearing.

Phases I and II: After an initial cock-exchange programme (in 12 villages) was abandoned, 65 villages were covered by the extensive egg-distribution approach (10,000 eggs distributed ) and 3 groups of women were involved in the intensive approach. Two women from each village<sup>were</sup> covered plus 4 field staff received poultry rearing and vaccination training.

Phase III: BRAC -Manikganj proposes to expand its poultry programme to cover 180 villages:

- extensive poultry in all 180 villages

20 rearers each village	= 3600
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2-3 trainees each village	= 360
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- intensive poultry with selected groups.

In addition, BRAC-Manikganj proposes to experiment with home-based broiler production by engaging 50 of the best rearers.

#### e) Block-printing

BRAC constantly seeks not only alternative agriculture-based employment but also alternative non-farm employment. One programme selected for introduction and development in Manikganj was block-printing.

Phases I and II: To date, 30 women from 11 groups are engaged in block-printing in 3 workshops. One field staff and one woman have been trained in management and cost accounting for the block-printing programme.

Phase III: BRAC-Manikganj proposes to open an additional

8 workshops plus one central production-cum-training centre to engage an additional 20 women in block-printing.

Various other employment-generating schemes have been introduced:

Farm-based:

Cow rearing	375	Families
paddy husking	275	"
horticulture	365	"
pisciculture	150	"

Non-farm:

bidli making	70	"
spice grinding	15	"
snack food	14	"
net making	46	"
pickles making	12	"
jute craft	24	"
bamboo craft	8	"
embroidery	75	"
weaving	31	"

During Phase III, BRAC-Manikganj proposes to train 50% of all group members (roughly 4500 men and women) to grow trees (fruit and firewood) and grasses(fodder).

To develop and support the skills/technologies required by these various economic schemes, BRAC has developed its own cadre of technical staff who continually provide training to both group members and BRAC field staff. During Phase III, BRAC-Manikganj will continue to provide training in all the farm plus non-farm skills listed above.

## 5. HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

Over the years, BRAC has developed a three-level health care and family planning delivery system:



Doctor	1 per project
Paramedics	1 per 5-10 villages
Health auxiliaries	1 per group

The health auxiliaries are chosen from the membership of individual groups: both male and female. They receive training in preventive health, family planning, and treatment of 15 prevalent diseases. They are trained and supervised by the paramedics, who are trained and supervised by the doctor. In addition to treatment of prevalent diseases, the BRAC health system undertakes:

- vaccination campaigns (DPT & TT)
- midwife - training
- vitamin A campaigns
- T.B. treatment
- family planning

Phase I and II a total of 150 health auxiliaries (both male and female) were trained and supervised by 10 paramedics.

Phase III: BRAC-Manikganj proposes to develop an additional 100 health auxiliaries in order to have 1 male plus 1 female health worker in each of 125 villages. Over time, BRAC-Manikganj will select 30 health auxiliaries (3 per union) to be promoted and trained to replace the paramedics. And during Phase III, BRAC-Manikganj proposes to expand its coverage of DPT vaccination and to increase the numbers of traditional midwives trained (another 200 will have their skills upgraded).

BRAC-Manikganj also runs a small Nutrition centre where mothers bring malnourished children for one month nutrition treatment - cum-training. The centre is housed in "abandoned" property obtained from the government on a 10 year lease. The property has space and accomodation to house more than the nutrition clinic and ward. Therefore, BRAC-Manikganj proposes to convert part of the property into a training-cum-production centre for women

(in weaving, silk rearing and spinning, etc.) The idea is that three-quarters of the production will be carried out by previous skilled-or-trained village women and that one quarter of production will be reserved for skills training of mothers who bring their children to the clinic.

## 6. PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although BRAC has designed innovative education materials and developed strategies for adults, BRAC has largely, except in the health-family planning sector, overlooked children. Recently BRAC's Materials Development Unit at BRAC's head office in Dacca has begun to design innovative primary education materials. These now need to be field-tested.

BRAC-Manikganj proposes to open 100 schools for 25 out of schoolers between the ages of 8 to 12. Under the guidance, of the Materials Development Unit, Manikganj field staff will supervise the running of these schools and the field-testing of the materials.

## 7. FIELD ORGANISATION AND PERSONNEL:

The basic structure of field organisation with Programme Organisers and Paramedics living in field camps and providing support and assistance to village level organisations and reporting to a Project Administrator remains intact. During the later part of Phase II a new camp was opened at Krishnapur Union as more and more villages came under BRAC coverage and daily travel to this union 8 miles from Manikganj camp became time consuming and wasteful. BRAC currently operate from 5 field camps and will continue to do so throughout Phase III. Apart from Paramedical staff a new group of technicians specifically trained to provide supporting services to livestock programme (poultry and cows) was added during the later part of Phase II as more and more villages came under poultry and livestock development programme. Activities

planned for Phase III will require following categories of personnel who are currently deployed in the project.

Project Administrator	-	1
Medical Officer	-	1
Programme Organisers	-	18
Paramedics		10
Technician (Poultry & livestock)		5
Technician(sericulture)		6
Technician(Block printing & weaving)		2
Asstts.(service centres)		7
Accountants		2
Service staff		6
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		58
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## MANIKGANJ PROJECT

## PHASE-III

B U D G E TCovering period 1st April, 1982 to 31st March, 1985A. Medical Programme:

1. Doctor salary & benifits Tk. 4,000x36 =	144,000
2. Paramedic Tk. 1,200x10x36	432,000
	<hr/> 576,000
3. Travelling 20%	115,200

Training

4. Village Health Worker 100x Tk.20x60 days	120,000
5. Dais 100x Tk. 20x7 days	14,000
6. Medical supplies Tk. 3,000x36	108,000
7. Equipment for village health workers 100x Tk. 700	70,000
8. Child Welfare Centre running cost Tk. 6,000x36	216,000
	<hr/> 1,219,200

B. Functional Education:

1. Material cost Tk. 550x100 centres	55,000
2. Teachers' Training 200xTk. 20x15 days	60,000
3. Follow up materials	50,000
	<hr/> 165,000

C. Primary Education:

1. 100 centresx25x Tk. 20	50,000
2. Teachers Training 150xTk. 20x10 days	30,000
	<hr/> 80,000

D. Employment Generation:i) Poultry and Livestock

a) Salary of Technicians 5x Tk. 1,200x36	216,000
b) Supplies of Medicine and Vaccine Equipments 5x Tk. 20,000	100,000
c) Training of village level livestock workers 200x Tk. 20x15 days	60,000
	<hr/> 376,000

ii) Ericulture

a) Salary of Technicians 6x Tk. 900x36	194,400
b) Service Centre Asstt. 6x Tk. 600x36	129,600
c) Training 700x Tk. 20x10 days	140,000
d) Spinning wheel( to be provided as grant) Tk. 400x700	280,000
e) Service Centre Supplies 6x Tk. 500x36 months	108,000
	<hr/> 852,000

iii) Block Printing

Technician 1x Tk. 1,200x36	43,200
Assistant 1x800x36	28,800
8 village workshops 8x Tk. 7,000	56,000
Working Capital	<hr/> 50,000
	178,000

iv) Weaving  
50x Tk. 500

Technician 1x Tk. 900x36	32,400
Supplies	<hr/> 20,000
	77,400

Sub total of D (C/O)

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1,483,400

Sub total of D (B/F)	1,483,400	
v) <u>Other skills training</u>		
300x Tk. 20x10 days	60,000	
Supplies	10,000	
	<u>70,000</u>	1,553,400
 E. Irrigation Schemes:		
Cash guarantees to Banks (35 shallow tubewells)	500,000	500,000
	<u>500,000</u>	
 F. <u>Field recurring expenses</u>		
Salaries and benefits:		
1. Programme Administrator 1x Tk. 3,500 p.m. x36	126,000	
2. Programme Organisers 18x Tk. 2,000x36	1,296,000	
3. Accountant 2x Tk. 2,000 p.m.x36	144,000	
4. Service Staff 6x Tk. 700 p.m.x36	151,200	
	<u>1,717,200</u>	
5. Travelling and Transportation 20% of salaries	343,440	
6. Stationery and Supplies Tk. 3,500 p.m.x36	126,000	
7. Rent and utilities Tk. 6,000 p.m.x36	216,000	
8. General Maintenance Expenses Tk. 3,000 p.m.x36	108,000	
	<u>108,000</u>	
		2,510,640
 G. <u>Field Non-recurring expenses:</u>		
1. Motor Cycle 3x Tk. 18,000	54,000	
2. Bi-cycle 10x Tk. 1,800	18,000	
3. Furniture and Fixture & Equipment	50,000	
	<u>122,000</u>	122,000



H. Head Office 10%		<u>615,024</u>
Total Budget (Sum of A to H)		6,765,264
Less: unspent balance of Phase II	120,495	
Stock of construction materials to be financed from other sources	<u>280,080</u>	
		<u>400,575</u>
Net fund requirement		<u>Tk. 6,364,689</u>

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