

Name of project:	Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction (CFPR)
Donors:	DFID, EC, AusAID, Canadian CIDA, NOVIB
Implementing organization:	BRAC
M&E organization:	Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC
Project start date:	January 2002 (starting in 2002 first phase completed in 2006 and second phase commenced in 2007)
Project end date:	December 2011 (end of second phase)
Geographic coverage: (countries)	Bangladesh (33 poorest districts out of a total of 64 districts)
Status of impact assessment (when are/were baselines to be conducted, what quantitative or qualitative assessments have been done, etc.)	Two round surveys were already been conducted (baseline in 2007 and follow up 2009) using RCT. Using these surveys, impact assessment studies are underway and expected to be completed by 2010. (However, a number of impact assessment studies are available based on the first phase of CFPR.) Some qualitative baseline information needs to be collected; as the programme is scaling up over time, this may be conducted in early 2011. For quantitative information, a fresh baseline may not be required. The RCT designed survey would be repeated again in 2011 through which additional information on gender issues may be collected.
To what extent is the project targeted to women?	CFPR is a 100% women targeted programme. However the accrued benefit due to intervention falls on the household in its entirety.
Does this project aim to directly build assets, or would increases in assets be a secondary effect (e.g. project aims to increase incomes, but people might then invest in assets)?	Programme directly provides physical assets (livestock, poultry, etc) to build economic asset base in the targeted households. Enterprise skill development training and continuous monitoring by the programme staff help develop these assets further to yield income. This income may then be subsequently invested by the beneficiaries themselves to further their income streams.
What kinds of assets might have observable changes (for men or women)?	(For each type of capital below that you think your project may affect, please mention the kinds of assets that may be affected )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural capital (e.g. land, water):</li> </ul>	Land holding in terms of purchase and mortgage/shared in is expected as the participants experience an increase in come. Given that the targeted households are mostly landless, they try to manage at least some homestead lands once their income increases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical capital (e.g.</li> </ul>	Due to increase in income from the physical asset

<p>housing, equipment, cell phones):</p>	<p>transfer, households are likely to improve housing conditions, and increase other assets like chair/table, bed, mobile phones, tube-well etc.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial capital (savings, credit, remittances):</li> </ul>	<p>Once enrolled as programme beneficiaries, the women start to save weekly in their respective BRAC current accounts. Income from asset transferred by the programme is likely to contribute to increased saving behavior. After two years of extensive support the women become eligible and are encouraged to take soft loans from BRAC microfinance with flexible terms and conditions. It is thus expected that the project would positively affect the savings behaviour and credit market participation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social capital (e.g. group membership, connections, either within communities or with outsiders):</li> </ul>	<p>Project has a specific component on social development. A committee representing local elites are formed in order to mobilize local resources for the ultra poor and make secure of the assets provided to the women. Project staff also trains the women on how to articulately communicate with local government representatives. As a result, the women's communication with the local elites and other stakeholders do increase ideally leading to improved social wellbeing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human capital (e.g. education, skills, health, nutritional status):</li> </ul>	<p>One of the main components of the project is the health support. From the established endeavour of BRAC, the health volunteers make weekly home visits to the beneficiary households. BRAC also provides medicines free of cost for basic illnesses.</p> <p>Although the programme has no direct component pertaining to education, it is expected that through the livelihood changes there should be positive effects on education. However, the project staffs teach the targeted women on how to write their names and count numbers during their regular home visits.</p> <p>Project also provides a weekly subsistence allowance of Tk. 175 to smooth current consumption needs. This coupled with income increase from asset transfers raise food expenditure which is expected to have an impact on nutritional status of the household members.</p>
<p><b>Brief abstract about the project—what is it trying to achieve, what is the strategy being used for integrating gender into project implementation and in M&amp;E/impact evaluation? (max 1 page)</b></p>	

The CFPR programme emerged out of three decades of learning from BRAC's rural poverty alleviation programmes. A crucial lesson was that the moderate poor benefited from the widely available microfinance; the poorest did not in most of the cases, however, either because they lacked access, or because they were too poor or vulnerable to make productive use of such services. This signalled the need for new approaches to tackling the specific livelihood constraints of the ultra poor. The key aims of CFPR are to (i) improve their livelihoods of the ultra poor women and their families by achieving positive economic, social and aspiration changes; (ii) access to mainstream development services; and (iii) to empower the ultra poor women. CFPR is designed to 'push down' with instruments specially designed to help the ultra poor build their livelihoods and develop their human capabilities, while 'pushing out' to remove the wider socio-political constraints on their development, and raise the profile and priority of ultra poverty within the wider society.

CFPR was launched in 2002 and ended its first phase in 2006 targeting 100,000 ultra poor women and their families. The currently implementing phase (2007-2011), i.e. second phase intends to target about 360,300 ultra poor women and their families in its grant based packages. Second phase of CFPR also addresses heterogeneity among the ultra poor by delivering different support packages.

To reach the households, a targeting methodology is followed which combines geographical, participatory, and proxy means test targeting. Programme uses five specific inclusion criteria and three exclusion criteria. One of the exclusion criteria is that household does not have an active female member because all kinds support to the selected households are geared through a female member who are physically active enough to take care of the assets and benefit from it. Once finally selection of the household, programme provides the women with enterprise development training and subsequently transfers the assets (livestock, poultry, nursery, etc). The women are also given awareness raising trainings on health and hygiene practices, social and legal issues. Other components of the programme support include a weekly stipend, health care support, social development etc.

Research and Evaluation is an integral part of CFPR. For the purpose of evaluation of CFPR phase II, a rigorous evaluation design was undertaken using RCT. The survey represents both finally selected ultra poor and other households in the community for both the treatment and control areas in order to gauge the spill over effect. The survey was designed to repeat after every two years following the baseline in 2007. First follow up survey was conducted in 2009 and the second follow up survey would be in 2011. The questionnaire was administered to the female members of the households (in case of treatment respondent women were the programme participants). In the quantitative surveys, following information was collected:

- 1) Income and employment (with more detailed information on respondent women's employment)
- 2) Asset (physical, natural, financial, human i.e. health and education)
- 3) Social net works
- 4) Social, political, and legal awareness and empowerment (in terms of household decision making) of the respondent women
- 5) Self-perceived food security
- 6) Housing condition
- 7) Immunization, breast feeding, sanitation and hygiene practices
- 8) Three-day recalled food consumption and expenditure and non-food expenditure for last one month/year

For the first phase of the CFPR, twenty working papers, a number of research monographs and peer

reviewed journal articles were produced. These are available at BRAC-RED website:  
[www.bracresarch.org](http://www.bracresarch.org)