

# British Bangladeshi Professionals Volunteer Programme

## SUMMER 2010

Since the start of 2009, BRAC UK has sent a number of British Bangladeshis from a diverse range of professional backgrounds to volunteer with BRAC in Bangladesh through its Porishod programme. Porishod means 'the act of giving back' in Bengali, and is designed to provide experienced and committed British Bangladeshi professionals with an opportunity to offer their skills to the development of Bangladesh through structured placements in-country and a platform for raising awareness about global issues on their return to the UK.

BRAC UK is a member of BRAC and was founded and registered as a charity in London in 2006. We share a common mission, ethos and collegial relationship with other BRAC member organisations in that we aim to alleviate poverty and empower the poor. Our mission is to support disadvantaged people in the UK, Asia, Africa and Latin America through the following key objectives:

- To break the barriers of poverty through economic development;
- To increase their opportunities for education;
- To improve their health; and
- To uphold their human rights and dignity.

Over the past year, volunteers representing a spectrum of professional backgrounds including business, community development, education, finance, health, human resources, law, local government, research and social services volunteered with BRAC and related institutions. We tailor your skills and experiences to these placements and support you throughout your journey by providing appropriate advice, assistance, briefing and training.



A Porishod volunteer leads a focus group discussion with a BRAC rural community group

*"BRAC International has benefited tremendously from the Porishod programme. We have had a number of outstanding professionals work with us in Dhaka, including lawyers, editors and IT specialists who have all made significant contribution to the International Secretariat's work. It is essential for an organisation like BRAC to be able to access this kind of international expertise within the context of building links with the Bangladeshi community in the UK. All of these volunteers found their work to be fascinating and challenging. It has been a win-win situation for both. We look forward to their continuous engagement."* Tanwir Rahman, Director Finance, BRAC International Programme, March 2010.

For the experience to be worthwhile for both BRAC in Bangladesh and the volunteer, we ask that volunteers make a commitment of three to eight weeks to their placement. Volunteers will also be expected to fundraise or contribute £300 towards the cost of their participation in the programme prior to departure. We have funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to cover the remaining costs of volunteering.

*"The experience was everything I expected and more...an eye opener to wider world issues and the need for international development work. It has inspired me to get more involved, and where possible offer and utilise my skills for something other than a company's bottom line."* Suhel Choudhury (Business Analyst) improved BRAC's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programme's Management Information Systems in June 2009.

*"The placement exceeded my professional expectations and I have further developed my communication and community development skills. I have seen some excellent community development projects and models of good practice which I can apply to my own work in the UK."* Shanaz Rashid (Senior Schools Project Manager) reviewed and made recommendations for a BRAC Social Development Programme, June 2009.

*"I went on this voluntary project to get an insight of working life in Bangladesh. It has helped me obtain my dream of getting back to Bangladesh and working for Bangladesh."* Bablin Molik (Post-Doctoral Researcher) trained staff on research methodologies at BRAC University, July 2009.

We are currently recruiting volunteers for summer placements and welcome applications from British Bangladeshi professionals who meet the following criteria:

- Self motivated and enthusiastic;
- Team player with good communication skills;
- Flexible and adaptable;
- Sensitive in approach;
- Self confident;
- Available for three to eight weeks for a placement in Bangladesh;
- Committed to raising awareness about development issues in the UK.

For further information and/ or an application form, please contact the Porishod Programme Officer

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