

Abstract

This paper commences by examining the evolution of a programme designed to reach the poorest people in Bangladesh, to improve their immediate situation and to give them the assets and other skills to move out of poverty and dramatically reduce their vulnerability – BRAC's Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction/Targeting the Ultra Poor Programme, or CFPR-TUP. It then reviews what is known about the impacts of TUP, and finds evidence that the programme is both reaching significant numbers of Bangladesh's poorest people and improving their economic and social condition. The concluding sections draw lessons from the TUP about the types of programme design features and the processes required in order to develop such ambitious initiatives.

Keywords: Bangladesh, social protection, asset transfer, microfinance

This paper will form the basis of a chapter of the forthcoming edited volume 'Social protection for the poor and poorest' by Barrientos and Hulme (March 2008, Palgrave Macmillan).

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Acknowledgements

Our thanks to Bangladesh's poor people and BRAC's staff for helping us learn from their experiments and experiences. Particular thanks to Fazle Abed, Founder-Director of BRAC; Imran Matin, Munshi Sulaiman and the entire BRAC-RED team involved in research on CFPR-TUP; and Rabeya Yasmin, CFPR-TUP Programme Coordinator.

Acronyms

AKF-C – Aga Khan Foundation - Canada
BRAC - Formerly known as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BRAC-RED - BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division
CFPR - Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction
IGVGD - Income Generation for Vulnerable Group Development
NSUPs - non-selected ultra poor households
STUP - Specially Targeted Ultra Poor
SUPs - Selected Ultra Poor Households
TUP - Targeting the Ultra Poor Programme
VACs - Village Assistance Committees