Eradicating Extreme Poverty: Ultra-poor *Graduation* as a Social Protection Tool

Mushtaque Chowdhury, PhD
Vice Chair, BRAC and Professor of Population & Family Health, Columbia University

London School of Economics
London, December 9, 2015
With a Humble beginning in 1972, BRAC is Working Internationally
BRAC’s Approach for Addressing Poverty and other Social Injustice

• Economic development and social protection
  – Microfinance, Agriculture and food security, Enterprises and investments, Targeting the ultra-poor

• Expanding horizons
  – Education, Migration

• Empowerment
  – Community empowerment, Gender justice and diversity, Human rights and legal services

• Well-being and resilience
  – Health, nutrition and population; Water, sanitation and hygiene, Disaster, environment and climate change
BRAC’s Scale and Diversity

- Population Coverage: 138M
- Annual Expenditure: 932.4M
- Employees: 115K
- Community Health Workers: 111K
- Schools: 45K
- Graduated Students: 11.2M
- Borrowers: 4.8M
- Women Received Assets: 525K
- Received Legal Education: 3.9M
A lot more to be achieved…

• In our collective endeavour to
  – ‘End poverty in all its forms everywhere’ (SDG 1)
  – ‘End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture’ (SDG 2)

• In Bangladesh
  – About 30-40 million people live below the lower poverty line
  – 15 million below 70 cents a day (the ultra-poor)

• Globally
  – Almost a billion people still live below $1.25 a day
  – About 800 million people do not have enough food to lead healthy active life
Why Target Ultra-poor (TUP)?

- Financial services often do not reach the ultra-poor
- (leading to) exclusion from linked livelihood and social services
Targeting the Ultra Poor (TUP): The Graduation Programme
Creating Pathways Out of Extreme Poverty

Poverty Line (1/2 dollar a day in PPP)

- Poor (85% of the selected HHs)
- Non-Poor (53%)
- Non-poor (51%)
- Non-poor (41%)
- Poor (2%)
- Poor (6%)

2002 (Before Programme)
2005 (3 years from programme)
2008 (3 years from end-programme)
Distinguishing Features of the TUP Model

- A social protection tool
- Rigorous targeting
- Address multiple constraints
- A time-bound strategy
- Creates a pathway out of extreme poverty
- A sustainable change in livelihoods
- Creates ‘Hope’
Challenges

• How to get governments to scale it using own resources
• How to reduce cost; are all the components equally important? Same intensity?
• Graduating in situations without MF
• Synchronizing the operational definition of UP with universally understood (under $1.25/day)
• A TUP for conflict countries?
• How to leverage on other effective tools to multiply impacts
A Short Video on TUP

Thank you!