



alleviation of poverty  
and  
empowerment of the poor



**BRAC**

## Biographies

### **Fazle Hasan Abed** **Founder and Chairperson, BRAC**

Dr. Abed was born in Bangladesh and educated at Dhaka and Glasgow Universities. After graduation, he joined Shell Oil in Chittagong as an accountant, and when the Bangladesh Liberation War erupted in 1971, he was a corporate executive with the company. However, Dr. Abed could not ignore the atrocities of the war, and left Shell Oil for London, where he helped to initiate Help Bangladesh, a campaign that raised funds for Bangladesh's effort in the war and awareness of genocidal acts. When Dr. Abed returned to Bangladesh, he founded BRAC, then the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee. Initially, BRAC sought to rehabilitate returning refugees in northern Bangladesh. It aimed to facilitate their social mobilization and build their capacity, enabling them to control and manage their own destinies. BRAC's strategy originated from Dr. Abed's conviction that a holistic approach was necessary to eradicate poverty. He especially believed in the necessity of reconstructing gender roles and making education a basic human right that was accessible to all. Beyond the basic programs within BRAC, Dr. Abed established BRAC University in April of 2001, BRAC Bank in 2001, and, in 2002, began replicating BRAC Bangladesh's programs in international markets, starting in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, and later expanding to Pakistan and Africa. Under his leadership, BRAC has grown into the international organization that it is today, with a remarkable reputation throughout the development world. Dr. Abed is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Clinton Global Citizen Award (2007), the Gates Award for Global Health (2004), and honorary doctorates from Queen's University (Canada), the University of Manchester (United Kingdom), and Yale University. Dr. Abed also serves on many executive boards and has produced scholarly articles on various aspects of international development.

### **Susan Davis** **President & CEO, BRAC USA**

Susan Davis is a thought leader in international development and civil society innovation. She is a founder and current President & CEO of BRAC USA, a newly created organization to support BRAC's global expansion to Africa and other countries in Asia. In addition she was a founding board member and Chair of the Grameen Foundation and current board member. She serves on Ashoka's international board committee that selects Ashoka Fellows. She is also Senior Advisor to New York University's Reynolds Program on Social Entrepreneurship. Previously she led Ashoka's Global Academy for Social Entrepreneurship and oversaw Ashoka's expansion to the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia. In addition, she served as a Senior Advisor to the Director-General of the International Labor Organization. Prior to that, she led the global advocacy group, Women's Environment & Development Organization. She has extensive micro-credit experience from her years with the Ford Foundation in Bangladesh and from her work with Women's World Banking. Earlier, she was the Assistant Director of the export trading company of the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey. She serves on numerous other boards including Project Enterprise, Sirleaf Market Women's Fund, and African Women's Development Fund USA. She is on Mary Robinson's Advisory Council of Realizing Rights: the Ethical Globalization Initiative. She was educated at Georgetown, Harvard and Oxford universities.

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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