



## CONCEPT NOTE

### SIDE EVENT AND LEARNING SESSION

**Title: BRAC Play Based Model: Experience in Community Engagement in Developing Low Cost Materials and Gender Responsive Teaching in Tanzania and Uganda**

#### **Brief Description of the Organization**

BRAC International is a leading nonprofit organization with a mission to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease, and social injustice. Our approach is grounded in the conviction that people living in vulnerable situations can be agents of change if they are empowered with the tools, skills, and hope they need to change their lives. BRAC's institutional expertise on successfully implemented programmes is applied across 10 countries, touching the lives of over 130 million people.

BRAC International has been implementing its Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme across countries in Africa, like Uganda, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Liberia and, more recently, in a country in Asia, i.e. the Philippines. The ECD model, tested and piloted in Bangladesh, has been contextualized and scaled to other developing countries to ensure the holistic development of 3-6 year old children from different backgrounds.

**Side Event and Learning Session** - 3-hour session.

In the learning session, BRAC International aims to present its play-based model in two pieces of educational content accompanied by engaging activities.

- **Empowering Learning through Low-Cost and Environmentally Friendly Play and Learning Materials**
- **Fostering Equality: Gender-Responsive Teaching in Early Childhood Development Classrooms**

#### **Empowering Learning through Low-Cost and Environmentally Friendly Play and Learning Materials**

##### **Introduction of the content**

Play is an inexpensive and effective approach, with a significant impact on children's development. It is a universal and early language for children that allows them to express their ideas, beliefs, and emotions. Play promotes positive relationships with adults and peers, and it is a way of self-expression that enables them to communicate non-verbally, symbolically, and through action. Therefore, it is crucial to create a playful environment for kids, where they can fully explore their potential. Learning materials and play materials are essential for children's learning and development, be it in a home setting or an ECD center. Selecting play materials that are environmentally available, easily recyclable, and contribute to climate resilience is a crucial aspect of our play initiative for the Green Play Lab concept.

We prioritize the utilization of materials that align with the local culture, promote eco-friendly practices, and enhance resilience in the context of climate challenges. Through the Green Play Lab, we aim to instill an



eco-conscious mindset among parents, caregivers, and children by embracing the love of nature. This initiative seeks to foster a deeper connection with the environment. This approach reflects our dedication to creating play spaces and materials that not only entertain and educate but also contribute positively to the broader goal of environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

### **How shall we show this during side events and learning sessions**

To demonstrate this idea, BRAC will

- Conduct a small play material workshop that involves 40 minutes of material development activities and 20 minutes to present the uses of these materials in promoting children's play experiences and learning.
- Participants will be divided into 5 to 6 groups, each provided with different pre-arranged materials at their tables. The objective is to craft toys or learning materials suitable for children aged 0 to 8 years, culturally relevant, and supportive of play and learning. Each group will then showcase their creations and provide a brief explanation of their intended use.

### **Fostering Equality: Gender-Responsive Teaching in Early Childhood Development Classrooms**

#### **Introduction of the content**

The early years serve as a crucial period for the formation of gender stereotypes, influencing the perceptions of young individuals about the capabilities and permissible roles of women and men. These ingrained stereotypes and societal norms persist, shaping how girls and boys perceive themselves and others throughout their lives. Given the enduring impact, ECD emerges as a strategic intervention point to prevent harmful stereotypes from taking root. During this developmental stage, fostering children's natural curiosity becomes paramount, encouraging them to explore various activities and play options within the Play Lab, unconstrained by gender norms.

The responsibility for a child's personality development transcends the confines of parents and family; it extends to the realm of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers. Positioned uniquely, ECE teachers play a pivotal role in challenging and mitigating the development of lasting harmful gender stereotypes. Their influence becomes instrumental in expanding children's horizons and helping them recognize their potential. In this context, the statement underscores the significance of teachers, play leaders, and caregivers being gender-aware and gender-responsive in their curriculum planning and facilitation. Continuous reflection and adaptation are deemed essential, emphasizing the ongoing commitment required to counteract harmful gender stereotypes during early childhood.

### **How shall we show this during side events and learning sessions**

This significant learning will be presented through an activity where

- Participants will be divided into small groups, each assigned a specific theme such as curriculum, classroom decoration, toys or learning materials, instruction, training, etc. The groups will then be given time to gather ideas on how gender-responsiveness can be incorporated in their respective themes.
- The activity will consist of 20 minutes of group work and 20 minutes for gallery walk to read the poster. Each group will work collaboratively within their theme, brainstorming how gender responsiveness can be effectively applied in their selected component.
- Then will present a slide how BRAC International implements gender-responsive teaching in the global BRAC Play Lab.

BRAC International

Agenda For Side Event and Learning Session

Title: BRAC Play-Based Model: Experience in Community Engagement in Developing Low-Cost Materials and Gender Responsive Teaching in Tanzania and Uganda

Lead Facilitators: Munmun Ahmed Chowdhury and Scholastica Pantaleo Olomi

Cofacilitator: Manoah K. William & Maeesha Saiara Khaled

Date: Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2024

Time: 9am – 12pm EAT

Length: 180 minutes (3 hours)

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focal Person</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Welcome and greeting	Manoah K. William Manager, Early Childhood Development Programme BRAC International	10 mins	Welcome remarks. High level briefing on BRAC ECD Global programming.
Opening Remarks	<i>BRAC Play Based Model: Experience in Community Engagement in Developing Low-Cost Materials and Gender Responsive Teaching in Tanzania and Uganda</i>  Susan Bipa Country Director BRAC Maendeleo Tanzania	10 mins	The general overview of BRAC Maendeleo Tanzania ECD programming and models' iterations to fit different contexts.
Developing Low-cost play materials	<i>Empowering Learning through low cost and environmentally friendly plat and learning materials in East Africa.</i>  Munmun Ahmed Chowdhury Deputy Manager, Early Childhood Development Programme, BRAC International  Maeesha Saiara Khaled Senior Manager, Knowledge, and Programme Development BRAC International	60 mins	Low-cost materials development session using environmentally friendly materials and parents and Play Leaders as workforce.
Tea Break	ALL	25 mins	
Gender Responsive ECD	<i>Fostering Equality: Gender-Responsive Teaching in Early Childhood Development Classrooms</i>	60 mins	Group discussions on how to make children's play activities gender

	<p>Munmun Ahmed Chowdhury Deputy Manager, Early Childhood Development Programme, BRAC International</p> <p>Scholastica Pantaleo Olomi Team Leader, ECD BRAC Maendeleo Tanzania</p>		<p>responsive and transformative</p>
Closing remark	<p>Susan Bipa Country Director BRAC Maendeleo Tanzania</p>	<p>15 mins</p>	