

Blue Gold Program

Quick assessment of the new approach of the GLD training - 6 March 2019

Background: In 2016/17 the Blue Gold Program organised Gender and Leadership Development training for WMGs through an external service provider (KNKS). It was targeting the 12 WMG EC members, several general female WMG members who had leadership potential, and a few female Union Parishad members. In total 61 batches of 122 WMGs had received the GLD training between September 2016 and April/May 2017, which was phase 1. The proportion of male and female trainees was often about equal. Phase 2 was made conditional to the performance of the service provider to be assessed by an evaluation.

This evaluation was conducted through a rapid assessment by an external evaluator at the end of 2017. The report of January 2018 on this assessment discussed the impact and the modalities of this training. The consultant found that the GLD training was highly valued at all levels, however, a revised implementation modality was proposed: by TA staff, and not by an external service provider anymore. A new approach for the GLD training was therefore developed, with as main characteristics:

- To be conducted by TA Polder teams, in particular the Community Development Facilitators (CDFs);
- Not (only) targeting the WMG EC members, but rather male and female community / WMG members.
- A gender flipchart was developed, which combined pictures with gender related messages.
- No 3-day training in a formal setting, but 5 short sessions in a more informal setting (“court yard sessions”) with some time in between.

After the flipcharts had been finalized by September 2018, the preparations were the actual GLD training started. A 2-day “dry run” was organized in October 2018 for 30 CDFs (15 per dry run) on the new GLD approach using the gender flipcharts. The trained CDFs had to start tactual GLD training in December 2018, doing at least one GLD session per 2 weeks.

About this quick assessment

The purpose of the quick assessment was to find out to what extent the new GLD approach met the expectations, in order to decide about expanding the number of CDFs able to conduct GLD training. The assessment was held between 20 and 28 February 2019 and consisted of 3 Focus Group Discussions with GLD group members: one in Patuakhali (P55/2C)¹ and two in Khulna (P25 and P27/2). Only the group in Polder 25 was mixed (women and men); the other two groups included only women. In addition 5 CDFs were interviewed, three female and two male. The detailed answers on the key questions are attached in Annex 1 and 2 to this report.

The assessment was conducted by Blue Gold’s gender team (Roksana and Kitty). Because Roksana had taken a lead role in developing the new GLD approach and conducting the dry run, the CDFs were explicitly informed that they should be open in answering the questions, also in case of critical comments.

Findings

Dry run and group formation: All interviewed CDFs were happy with the dry run training in which they participated in. It was discussed whether CDFs without dry run experience might be able to implement

¹ A second FGD in Patuakhali had to be cancelled due to heavy rain.

GLD training. A CDF observed that this might be possible with some support from a trained CDF, however, the performance would not be up to the mark.

After the dry run four of the five CDFs organised 2 – 4 GLD groups of 20 members each. At the time of the assessment 3 of the 5 GLD sessions had been conducted in all the groups, which means an average of 8 sessions per CDF, which is close to 3 sessions on average per month. Two CDFs formed mixed groups, two formed women's groups. The fifth CDF was responsible for 12 poultry FFS groups with 295 women and 5 men in total. The GLD training was integrated in the FFS program. In 4 FFS groups only one session had been conducted; in 8 FFS groups 2 sessions, all by the CDF herself.

The criteria applied for the group formation for the GLD training were not always the same, though always the WMG played a main role. Other criteria sometimes applied were: (i) no other BGP training received; (ii) having potential (e.g. to speak out / influence others); and/or (iii) not from a rich family.

Flipcharts: The CDFs all liked the flipcharts very much, in particular because it combines pictures with messages, which is considered more efficient than a verbal message alone. The pictures well reflect the local situation. Also the FGD participants appreciated the flipcharts. The picture with all family members engaged in domestic work was their favourite (their "dream").

New GLD approach: It is the opinion of the CDFs that the new approach is better than the previous approach by external service provider.

Reaction of GLD participants: The CDFs agree that the participants react very positively, though the women often more than the men. For the women many topics are an eye-opener, such as men and women being of equal value, domestic work not being mandatory for only women, the importance of women's involvement in income generating work and their participation in joint decision-making. Men, either as GLD participants or husbands who learned about the GLD content from their wives, tend to react a bit more reluctant and less easily in the beginning, but appear to reflect on the messages, resulting in a part of the men becoming more open to the GLD messages. Various examples of positive reactions of men were encountered, such as men who said to value joint decision-making with their wife, also contributing to a happier and more peaceful family.

Effects of the training: Considering that the 5 sessions of the GLD training were not yet completed in any of the groups, it was rather early to assess the effects of the training. But all CDFs and focus groups could give some examples of increased awareness and/or of some more concrete effects. Examples:

- The GLD messages enhance women's self-confidence.
- The GLD participants, especially the women, share their learnings with their husbands, other relatives and/or neighbours. Husbands are reportedly interested to hear from their wives about the content of the GLD training. In the FFS where GLD training was integrated, it was observed that some husbands of female FFS participants came to observe the GLD sessions because of interest.
- Joint decision making seems on the rise, being enhanced by the GLD training. However, also other reasons for joint decision-making were mentioned, such as women having more knowledge (e.g. from FFS participation) and/or women contributing to household income.
- The GLD training raised awareness on domestic work, which was always seen a women's task, by both men and women. Some men expressed that if they would do a share of the domestic work, their wives have more time for productive work that contributes to household income. Especially when women are away for training or a meeting, men now more easily take up some care activities and/or accept now that lunch is later than on normal days.

- In the 12 poultry FFS groups the number of poultry houses constructed up till now is proportionally much higher than in previous poultry FFS, i.e. in 81 of the 300 concerned households. The CDF explained that the GLD session on the importance of women's involvement in productive work motivated many more women participants to actually apply the learnings from the FFS. Having a poultry house built also meant that those women were confident and able to convince their husbands to provide the investment costs for the poultry house, as the women do not have such money themselves.
- Two CDFs spontaneously informed that the GLD training also influenced their personal life; one of them said that the GLD training increased her own confidence.
- Some more examples are included in the detailed reports on the FGDs and interviews with CDFs.

Further sessions: The GLD participants all look forward for the remaining sessions. The CDFs also intend to continue the GLD training; two said to be temporary busy with other work, but will soon resume the GLD training. Reducing the number of GLD sessions (e.g. from 5 to 4) is not considered possible, unless topics are dropped.

Suggestions: A common suggestion by the CDFs is to provide snacks; however, the GLD participants did not request this. Also some written guidelines for the use of the flipcharts were suggested, for CDFs without dry run experience.

Other suggestions from CDFs and a WMG president are the following:

- Use the flipchart pictures to make a calendar
- Blue Gold should do drama on wage differences between men and women
- Vocal GLD participants should share their learnings from the GLD training, e.g. at a field day
- GLD training for WMA EC members is also needed, but in less sessions and more tailored, and including snacks.

Conclusion and recommendations:

1. The GLD training is seen as useful and effective by both the GLD participants and CDFs. This also seem to apply for integrating GLD in FFS sessions (finding based on a single interview). The GLD training is seen as well related to the participants' life. GLD training complements other BGP training and capacity building, enhancing the effects of other Blue Gold interventions, going beyond women's empowerment only.
2. There is a need to review the selection criteria and share these with the concerned CDFs. Such criteria should include:
 - WMG members without previous BGP training;
 - Mixed groups with at least 5 of the 20 participants being male, as this enhances the discussions and sharing among men as well;
 - The participants should have some potential to disseminate the messages, reaching out also to households that are not represented in the GLD training;
 - Most of the participants should be involved in or related to agricultural production, at least at homestead level
 - The WMG should play a key role in the selection process.
3. It is recommended to train the remaining CDFs in the new polders through similar dry run training as provided in October 2018. It is estimated that this concerns about 40 to 50 CDFs. Three dry run sessions, one per zone, are expected to be sufficient.

4. It will not be possible to involve all WMG members in GLD training within the remaining 16 months of BGP. If the remaining CDFs, who work in new polders, will receive dry run training within the next 3 months, and they will be able to do on average 2 sessions per month², it will be possible to do GLD training for at least 410 groups until about June 2016, see calculation in the footnote³. With 185 WMGs in the new polders, at least 2 groups per WMG can be trained, with 3 groups for the WMGs with larger numbers of members.
5. Because only 2-3 groups per WMG can be realistically receive GLD training, it is important to carefully select the participants to ensure a good coverage of the WMG membership.
6. Monitoring on the progress of the GLD training is important, both on numbers of sessions and on groups and number of male and female participants. The follow-up by the gender coordinator, focusing on the quality of the GLD training, is also important.
7. CDFs should be encouraged to contact the gender coordinator whenever they have questions, as well as to report on successes of the GLD training.
8. It is strongly recommended to have also a form of GLD training for the WMAs, especially the EC members. A more condensed training program tailored to the needs of the WMA should be elaborated, focusing on women's leadership. This would fit into the capacity building of the WMAs as agreed during the retreat.

Roksana Begum
Kitty Bentvelsen

Annexes:

1. Results from FGD on GLD training
2. Results from the interviews with CDFs

² Nearly 3 sessions per month, but allowing leave and other absence, the average would be 2 sessions/ month.

³ First batch of 30 CDFs: 2 sessions over 19 months (December 2018 – June 2020) = 38 sessions = $38/5 = 7$ to 8 groups. In total $30 * 7 = 210$ groups

Remaining CDFs in new polders (estimated to be at least 40): If they receive dry run before May / June 2018, they have 12 months = $2 * 12 = 24$ sessions each = about 5 groups. In total at least $40 * 5 = 200$ groups.

Annex 1. Questions and answers FGDs with participants of GLD training

Date, Participants, WMG/polder:

FDG1: 20/2, 17 women, Karizzama khal WMG, P55/2C; they had 3 sessions by CDF

FDG2: 27/2, 17 participants (10 women, 7 men); Tolna WMG, P25: they had one session during the dry run and one session by CDF

FDG3: 28/2, 20 participants (all women); Bahadurpur WMG, P27/2; this group had 3 sessions by CDF

1. Did you have other BGP training? If so, which?

FDG1: no other training, neither their husbands had. However, they did attend demonstrations (on poultry?)

FDG2: most participants had past or current other BGP training: 11 in poultry, 7 in beef fattening and 14 on paddy cultivation / CAWM

FDG3: about 17 of the 20 women participated in FFS training, homestead (already completed) and/or poultry (on-going).

2. # of GLD sessions they had?

FDG1: 3 sessions

FDG2: 2 sessions

FDG3: 3 sessions

3. Opinion / reaction about the received GLD training?

FDG1: They gave examples on topics as gender discrimination and domestic work (if we share, we have more time for productive work).

Earlier we had no training and we thought that all domestic work is women's duties, we are bound to do all domestic work. After training we realized that it is not only our duty, rather, we have to share domestic work. This will also increase love and mutual understanding and respect.

Did you discuss this with your husbands? Yes, they first did not take it easy, but after some time they realize that helping their wives is fair and creates time for her to do more productive work and have some rest.

Example of a woman (Dalia): When my husband comes back from the field, he takes rest. At that time I am cooking, which takes me a long time. If my husband would help me, the cooking will be quicker. And thereafter we both would have time to jointly take rest.

FDG2: The training was very good, and several examples of training topics and training messages were given by the FGD participants. A woman liked the message very much that if gender discrimination is reduced, the family will be more happy. They are interested in the next sessions of the GLD training, even if there won't be snacks (those were served during the dry run).

FDG3: Very good, as they learned many things, for example about how to improve livelihood, how to do joint decision-making, having joint income, and about domestic work. And yes, all are interested in the next two sessions!

4. Were pictures clear? And which pictures were most remarkable for you?

FGD1: Yes, the pictures were clear and the messages were very effective. Most remarkable: domestic work (one woman doing many activities, with the many hands).

FGD2: Their most famous picture is the one where all family members are involved in doing domestic work (meal preparation).

FGD3: Very good, they clearly understood the pictures, they are similar to their life. The picture with all family members doing domestic work is their dream.

5. Does the GLD training contribute to changes in your life / in your relationships? (effect of the training for you?)

FGD1: They are very happy with the 3 GLD sessions so far. This training is related to our life. They are very happy when their husbands now start realizing that domestic work is not only for women to do.

FDG2: They gave various examples:

- Man: Earlier we thought that domestic work is mandatory for women. Now we realize that if we also do some domestic work, women have more time to do productive work / income generating activities. When women do poultry and vegetable cultivation and help in the field, this will increase income, savings and a peaceful life.
- Other man: Sometimes we do some violence to women. I did not realize that women are human beings. If we pursue peace and happiness and work together, we will be a peaceful family.
- Woman: women earlier thought that they have to do all domestic work and have no right for decision-making, only the male. Now we changed our opinion, we are part of the family and have the right of decision-making.
- In general: men have started to contribute to domestic work, but still to a small extent, and especially when the women are away for training or a meeting.

FGD3: They are now more aware. For example: women do many tasks, but do not get paid; the men work less, but get paid.

The women also tell that earlier domestic violence was very common, with husbands even daily slapping their wives, which the women used to accept as they saw themselves as property of their husband. Presently domestic violence is much less, e.g. once a month. Now that women increased their mobility, contribute more to income, increased their knowledge and learned many things, they protest more against violence. The reduced violence is not directly due to the GLD training (neither did they take the session on domestic violence yet), rather it is a more general trend, but with BGP activities contributing to the reasons why domestic violence reduced (women's increased mobility, knowledge, etc).

6. For women: Are you now more involved in decision-making in family and/or more confident (e.g. as potential leaders)?

For Men: would you accept now (after GLD) women more for joint decision-making and/or as (WVG) leaders?

FGD1: They now take decisions a bit more jointly. Their confidence is increasing and they get some 'power' to do things with their husband. As a consequence, the husbands seem to be more happy. They now realize that as a partner they can share their opinion with their husbands.

FDG2: The women say that some of them (4 or 5) are now (more) involved in decision-making. Several women in the FGD clearly radiate confidence.

A man confirms that he now involves his wife more in decision-making. The women say that their husbands became more positive towards women's participation in (any) training. The husbands do not question their wives when they go to a session. And if cooking is delayed because women attended training, husbands do not shout to them anymore, rather, it is accepted that the meal is late.

Note: The above effects seem not only due to GLD training, but also a consequence of many group participants being involved in other Blue Gold training (FFS and/or CAWM)⁴.

FGD3: Joint decision-making is reportedly increasing, enhanced by the GLD training. About 16 of the 20 women get some money from their husbands, but only 4 have the freedom to spend without asking the husband first. More than three quarters of the women raised hands when asking about increased confidence, but also their FFS membership may have also contributed to this.

They share their GLD learnings with others, in their family and/or with neighbours. After the first session, when they talked with their husbands, the men did not react much. But now their reaction is more positive, and the men start realizing that working together is helpful for both.

7. Any other issues / information

FDG1: --

FDG2: The president of the WMG (Tolna) suggests that the flipchart pictures are used to make a calendar. The women agreed enthusiastically.

FDG3: The current CDF is leaving to work in another polder; the new CDF will have to do the two remaining GLD sessions.

⁴ This GLD group was formed for demonstration during the dry run, and this group formation was not based on specific criteria. The selection criteria of GLD participants in the other groups include that they have not yet participated in any other BGP training.

Annex 2: Questions and answers interview CDFs about GLD training / use of the gender flipcharts

1. Date, location, and number of GLD groups / sessions up till now:

CDF1: 20/2/2019, P55/2C. Did 9 GLD sessions in total: 3 groups each 3 sessions (of the 5).

CDF2: 24/2/2019, P47/4. Conducted 6 sessions in total: 2 groups each 3 sessions

CDF3: 26/2/2019, P43/2A. Responsible for 12 FFS groups on poultry. In 8 groups 2 gender sessions were conducted up till now; in 4 groups one session.

CDF4: 27/2/2019, P25. Formed 4 GLD groups, in each group 3 sessions have been conducted.

CDF5: 28/2/2019, P27/2. He formed 2 GLD groups, and conducted 3 sessions in each group. He cannot complete the GLD sessions as he is being transferred to P22; his successor (also a CDF with dry run experience) then should conduct the remaining sessions.

2. Opinion on dry run

CDF1: Good / excellent, because everybody could practice what we have to do.

CDF2: Happy with the dry run because it gave the guidelines for the GLD sessions. It was very effective to conduct the dry run. No need for improvements as all was included.

CDF3: Very good.

CDF4: Very happy with the sessions.

CDF5: Was very good.

3. Your opinion on the flipcharts (FC)

CDF1: The combination of pictures with the messages is very efficient, much more than only a verbal message. The FC is also an eye-opener.

CDF2: She likes the FC very much as the pictures are combined with detailed information. The combination of pictures and messages is very effective. The pictures reflect the lives of the participants very well; they can easily understand the pictures.

CDF3: When giving a message only verbally, the understanding is often not clear. But with the pictures, the message can be easily understood.

CDF4: He is happy with the flipcharts. He has a few comments on an individual picture and message. As a previous FFS facilitator he also conducted the FFS nutrition module, and he thinks that all information of the FFS nutrition module information could be shared (the flipchart has the key messages). And he pointed to one specific picture on decision-making which is not immediately clear to the participants. But many other pictures are clear, such as the one with all family members engaged in domestic work (a favourite!).

CDF5: He likes the flipcharts very much, because earlier messages were given through speech, which was not always clear. The combination of pictures and verbal messages is much stronger.

4. Group formation / Selection criteria used for group formation

CDF1: The following criteria were used: (i) no other BGP training yet received; (ii) with potential (to speak out, to influence others); (iii) the selection was discussed with the WMG president, secretary, etc. The three groups she has are only women's groups, as males say that they do not have time and no interest. Men should also be made aware of the GLD issues, but the women will first motivate the men to join the next groups, but this needs time.

CDF2: She selected 2 mixed groups, as having mixed groups seemed more effective to her because also men need these messages. Selection criteria were: potential leaders, who inspire others, who are role models and who have leading positions in the WMG. The WMG EC was involved in the selection process: the president, secretary and various general members. Of the 20 group members of each group, 15 are women and 5 are men.

CDF3: The gender training is given to 12 poultry FFS groups, with in total 295 women members and 5 men.

CDF4: GLD training to 4 groups, each 20 participants, of whom 15 are women and 5 are men (80 members in total). Selection criteria: general WMG members who did not engage in other BGP training and are not from a rich family. The selection was coordinated with WMG EC members during their meeting.

CDF5: The selection of the two groups was by the WMG EC members; they selected the 20 women per group. The CDF intended to have two male groups in a next cycle.

5. Your opinion on the set-up of the GLD training

CDF1: This set-up is better than earlier. Currently she is busy with other work, but soon she will continue with the remaining sessions.

CDF2: She likes this new approach, it is better than the previous GLD training by the external service provider. If at the end of the training (i.e. the 5 sessions), each participant would implement at least two learnings, this would be a good BGP achievement. When she conducted the session that covers income generated activities, she emphasized the importance of doing improved / increased homestead production, depending on resources available. She is now following-up on this.

CDF3: They have 3 ways to use the gender flipchart in the FFS: (i) in between an FFS session; (ii) at the end of an FFS session; and (iii) as an extra session (e.g. in a week that no FFS session is held). The CDF said that the women are interested to learn about the gender topics and are motivated to either stay longer or come for a special session. She thinks that completing all 5 sessions per FFS group is feasible, as all sessions are important and the women are very interested in these topics!

CDF4: not discussed.

CDF5: This approach for GLD training is much better than the previous set-up (i.e. by KNKS as external service provider). It was discussed whether CDFs who did not participate in the dry run could also conduct GLD training. In his opinion this is possible, but it will never be up to the mark. Maybe a CDF with dry run experience can work closely with one without this experience. But the best is to have all CDFs first participate in a dry run before they conduct GLD training.

About the desired number of GLD groups per WMG: If the WMG has less than 200 member: 2-3 groups; if more than 200 members: 4-5 groups.

Also WMA EC members would need GLD training, but 5 sessions will take too much of their time, hence fewer sessions, but still as a separate training.

6. Reaction of the participants in GLD sessions? Different from men and women?

CDF1: See FDG1.

CDF2: The women participants take the messages very positively as they are very much related to their life. The men take the messages less easily than the women, but still good enough, but they are somewhat reluctant to give space to women. Instead they tend to laugh, but at the same time the messages are a kind of eye-opener to them (“they knock them”).

CDF3: She first emphasizes that the gender flip chart and the Dry Run was also very useful to herself, as it increased her own confidence too.

The women FFS participants react very positively on the gender issues, up till now they learned about gender, domestic work, the importance of women’s involvement in income generating work and joint decision-making. The women share their learnings with their husbands, but also with neighbours and/or relatives. Some husbands (who are not FFS members themselves) come to the sessions to observe the messages on gender and they react positively. But there are also men who think more conservatively, e.g. about domestic work being only for women. In her opinion, however, they need more time to eventually change their mind.

CDF4: All participants, both women and men, are happy with the training, no (major) different reactions. He always suggests to the participants to share the messages with others, which they do. He also uses the messages in his personal life.

CDF5: The reaction of the women participants is very impressive and positive. Earlier they thought that they were no human beings like men and had no rights. The participants share their new knowledge with family members and/or neighbours.

7. Did you already observe any effects of the training (such as awareness increased and/or changes in behaviour)?

CDF1: Yes, see FGD1. Re nutrition: the participants now appear to replace potatoes by vegetables (rice and vegetables instead of rice and potatoes, which they were used to eat). Participants are sharing their experiences of the GLD sessions with other people in their community.

CDF2: Even though only 3 of the 5 sessions were held, she has some examples of effect. The first example is about a woman whose husband already for quite some time had promised her to give her some of his land for her security, but which never materialized. Now that the woman participated in the training and shared her learnings with her husband, he actually gave her the promised land. The second example is about a woman who was very sick. Her husband, who had also attended the nutrition session, now told her to eat an egg daily for her recovery.

The participants are sharing their learnings, especially with family members.

CDF3: Some husbands (especially those who came to observe the gender sessions during the FFS) realize that the training -both the poultry and the gender training- is essential for their wives. They help their wives to enable her to attend the training and to implement the FFS learnings.

Example: The gender sessions emphasize the importance that also women should be involved in income generating work, to increase household income but also to make them less vulnerable. The result is that the FFS women are now more motivated to do good poultry rearing, and up till now 81 women (of the 300 FFS participants) already had a proper poultry house constructed. This is a much larger proportion than in previous FFS. The costs for the poultry housing is usually paid by the husbands, which shows that 81 husbands were interested to support their wife doing income

generating work. All this is increasing women's self-confidence and joint decision-making between husband and wife.

CDF4: The training gives women more confidence. He gives the example of a woman whose family did not agree to let her participate in the 5-day residential training for poultry worker as she is a divorcee. But with her increased confidence she could convince her family to allow her.

CDF5: After the first session, the women became more interested in the next sessions. There is now some more awareness and confidence.

8. Any comments on the arrangements for the GLD training? Suggestions for improvement?

CDF1: Snacks will be helpful. NB Reducing the session from 5 to 4 is only possible if a topic is dropped.

Our observation: impact on leadership could not yet be discussed as session 4 had not yet been conducted.

CDF2: She also comments that snacks will be helpful, as that makes it easier to manage that all 20 participants attend all 5 sessions. She thinks that all 5 sessions are needed.

She agrees that the WMA members also need this GLD training, of course! A same set-up, also 5 sessions on 5 different days, but with snacks.

CDF3: Suggestion: the use of the gender flipchart in FFS helps to motivate the participants (especially the women) to engage more in IGA work and their husbands to be more supporting.

About the size of the flipchart: it does not fit easily in her bag, but it is the right size for participants.

CDF4: Some more guidelines for the use of the flipchart would be useful, especially for CDFs who did not attend the dry run training. Now it is difficult for CDFs who did not attend the dry run to use the flipcharts and conduct the GLD training.

Another suggestion: Wage discrimination is everywhere. Blue Gold should address this through drama.

CDF5: Suggestion: When there is a field day, women who participated in the GLD training and have the capacity to speak out, should present and discuss learnings from the GLD training.

Other observations

The junior socio-economist of Patuakhali confirms the usefulness of the flipcharts. The pictures well reflect the local situation and the group participants easily understand the messages.