



# Blue Gold Program success story

## Building strong and functional water management organisations: Kholsibunia Water Management Group

Kholsibunia Water Management Group (WMG) of polder 30 in Khulna has diversified and increased production from 1 to 2 crops to 2 to 3 different crops. This was possible through:

- Timely operation of the sluice
- Cleaning canals
- Canal re-excavations
- Removal of fish nets that impede timely drainage

Well-organised coastal communities such as this are able to improve the management of water resources for more productive and profitable agriculture.

### Water management by Kholsibunia WMG

- Timely drainage ensured by regular removal of water hyacinths and sediment
- Removal of illegal fishing nets from a 4.5km stretch of khal with the support of locals and upazilla authorities
- Construction of a 360m link canal with financial support from the Batiaghata Union Parishad
- Formation of a catchment committee to operate the main regulator in partnership with other WMGs

**Formation of functional Water Management Organisations (WMOs)**

500 Water Management Groups (WMGs) and 38 Water Management Associations (WMAs) formed by the Blue Gold Program in 22 polders.

**Involvement of Local Government Institutions (LGIs) and local leaders**

LGIs helped WMGs and WMAs gain control over sluice operations, removed illegal obstructions from canals, and have provided funds to support small-scale work.

**Promotion of sound and sustainable organisational practices**

WMGs and WMAs are responsible to develop a broad membership base. This is to undertake or enable collective actions, to regularly review achievements and plans, and to mobilise resources for maintenance and operation.

**Development of a strong network**

WMGs and WMAs form partnerships for better water management with LGIs as well as relevant departments and other stakeholders



**“We operate and maintain water infrastructure on the basis of our plans”**

**- Lucky Gahin, General Member, Executive Committee**

### Collective activities

The WMG in Kholsibunia works to ensure the financial stability of its members through improved livelihoods through collective fisheries, and other income generating activities.

#### Cropping intensity

The WMGs helped realise a higher cropping intensity of low-lying lands by better post-monsoon drainage, and planting new crops in the Rabi season.

#### Fisheries

The WMG obtained the right to produce fish in a small pond near the sluice. The DAE provided BDT 20,000 for the initiative and labour was organised within the group.

Many farmers have developed small ghers for fisheries to add to their income from crop agriculture.

#### Savings and credit

WMG members have access to concessional loans through the WMG savings and credit system.

They use the funds for fisheries, dairy production, goat and poultry rearing, beef fattening, crop production, and to start and operate small businesses.

A loan committee of three members runs the credit and savings operation and monitor income generation activities of members. The committee

collects loan instalments and service charges, while the cashier maintains the accounts.

#### Polder management

Kholsibunia WMG, along with 39 other WMGs, has formed a Water Management Association (WMA) to coordinate water management activities across polder 30. This includes maintaining strong relationships with the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Local Government Institutes, and other stakeholders.

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### One size does not fit all

Kholsibunia WMG is a village-based organisation comprising only 135 households. Most WMGs, however, are organised along hydrological borders, and include an average of 250 households.

Kholsibunia WMG is recognised by other WMGs as being skilled in savings and credit operations.

This activity, however, is optional, and many WMGs, even when successful in other areas, have refrained from engaging in savings and credit operations.

