

Water Management and Productive Sectors Innovation Fund

Report of Quarter 2 – 2015

1. Women-managed Small Household Ponds (SHHP) project requests extension

On 18th June, WorldFish submitted a no-cost extension the SHHP project, citing that the project going to end by 30th June as per the previously extended contract. However, since some of the funds of the SHHP project remain unspent, WorldFish wishes has requested for a further no-cost extension for a period of three months (July-September 2015).

As per the original no-cost extension, WorldFish will submit the final report on the SHHP project to Blue Gold by June 30, 2015. During the second period of no-cost extension (July-September 2015), WordFish will focus on fine tuning the research regarding *Technologies, Economic Analysis and Measurement of the Women Empowerment Index (WEI)*.

2. Follow-up on water hyacinth handicraft production

The Innovation Fund Manager has made contact with a company that might potentially serve as the private sector partner for a water hyacinth handicraft production project within Blue Gold. The company, *Classical Handmade Products BD*, has previous experience in partnering with NGOs and has been asked to submit a project proposal.

3. NICE Foundation submits research proposal on Kawra pig-rearing community

The proposal of the NICE Foundation regarding research on the Kawra pig-rearing community in the South-West of Bangladesh has been approved by the EKN on 23rd June, 2015. Blue Gold will move forward with the official procedures, drafting and signing a contract. The NICE Foundation aims to start their activities within the Blue Gold program on August 1st, 2015.

4. ACACIA Water works on revised proposal

The project proposal from ACACIA Water, focused on the adaptation of MAR technology for agriculture practices, has been reviewed by the EKN. Comments provided by the EKN on 31st March 2015 have been passed on the ACACIA, who are currently in the process of revising their original proposal. It is expected that ACACIA will submit their revised proposal mid-July. Once approved, implementation of the ACACIA project is aimed for September 2015.

New initiatives of Q2 - 2015

5. Inclusion of Innovation Funnel to Procedures Manual

The Innovation Fund Manager has updated the Procedure Manual for the Innovation Fund, by adding an additional tool that allows the effective management of innovative concepts. This tool, the Innovation Funnel, allows the Innovation Fund Manager to apply a graphic structure for the selection of project applications.

The Innovation Funnel approach starts by starts with a broad range of project proposals and gradually refines and selects from among them, creating a handful of innovative development projects that can be pushed to completion and introduction within the Blue Gold program. A variety of different product and process ideas enter the Innovation Funnel for investigation, but only a fraction become part of a full-fledged development project.

The goal of the Innovation Funnel is to create a portfolio of projects that will meet the Blue Gold program objectives, while applying the Innovation Fund resources strategically and ensuring that the selected projects deliver on the objectives anticipated when the project proposal was approved.

The updated Procedures Manual will be finalized and shared with EKN in Q3.

6. Visit to Urban Dredging Demonstration Project (UDDP) in Dhaka

On 15 April a team of Blue Gold, consisting of the Innovation Fund Manager and the staff of Component 2, visited the project sites of the UDDP project in Dhaka. The purpose if the visit was to research the potential suitability of UDDP's C86xs floating bulldozer for use and / or implementation in the Blue Gold polder areas.

One of the focus activities of the Blue Gold program is the excavation of canals in the polder areas. Making use of specialized dredging machinery offers the potential to increase the production output and continue excavation work during the three month rainy season in Bangladesh. Although the UDDP project has two floating bulldozers in use, unfortunately both were out of service during Blue Gold's project visit. Therefore a follow-up visit is recommended to gather more experience on the C86xs

floating bulldozer. Additionally, the Innovation Fund Manager will explore other options of suitable dredging machinery for the Blue Gold program.

7. Visit to Bengal Meat production facility in Pabna

On 12 April a team of Blue Gold, consisting of the Innovation Fund Manager, the Livestock Expert and the Market Development Expert visited the production facility of Bengal Meat in Pabna, Bangladesh. The aim of the visit was to evaluate collaboration possibilities between Bangla Meat and Blue Gold, specifically on the topic of livestock farming as an income generating activity for Blue Gold farmers.

Both sheep and cow rearing offer potential to become an alternative income generation activity for farmers in the Blue Gold polders. However, many questions remain open before Blue Gold can proceed to undertake a pilot. With the potential to involve a private lead firm (Bengal Meat) and a firm establishment that the Blue Gold polders are indeed good production areas for sheep and/or cattle (fattening), the feasibility of this operation and especially the presence/feasibility of forward and backward linkages needs to be looked at, along with the impact it could have on economic growth (read income/jobs) and the strict requirements of Bengal meats will have to be ascertained as end-market provider.

Together with Component 3 and 4, the Innovation Fund Manager is searching for relevant partners that would allow Blue Gold to take this initiative forward.

8. Visit to solar irrigation project of Action in Development, Jhenaidah

On 23rd June a Blue Gold team consisting of the Innovation Fund Manager and the Leader of Component 3, visited the solar irrigation project sites of Action in Development (AID) in Jhenaidah. The aim of this visit was to learn more about AID's implementation of solar irrigation pumps in farmer communities, Specific information as collected on the technical setup, the feasibility and financial sustainability, the business model and the community involvement.

Blue Gold learned that next to a demand for irrigation services, there is a potential (unmet) demand for the provision of electricity to rural farmer communities. Additionally, the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) plays a key role in financing solar power projects in Bangladesh. Blue Gold is interested in exploring solar power irrigation for Polder 22, and will continue to follow-up with AID on this topic.

9. Polder Landscape Planning

Blue Gold has contacted Michel Boom of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) to assist in the development of an integrated planning approach for Polder 22. If successful, this planning approach can be extended for use with the other polders of the Blue Gold program.

Michel Boom was part of the mission of the reconnaissance mission of the Dutch Water Authorities (DWA) and Dienst Landelijk Gebied (DLG), who visited the Blue Gold program between 16 – 28 January 2015. The focus of the reconnaissance mission was to explore possibilities for mutual cooperation with the Blue Gold program. Blue Gold found that Michel's international expertise in polder landscape planning approach (Sketch&Match) is extremely valuable for Blue Gold, and has requested his help with promoting a process of integrated planning at polder level with the various key stakeholders of the Blue Gold program.

Michel will join Blue Gold during a two week mission, which will start in the third week of August.