



Blue Gold Program success story

Transformation from Resource Farmer to microentrepreneur

Context

The Blue Gold Program (BGP) organised Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in polder 43/2B, Patuakhali to enhance the adaptive capacity of farmers. This programme was attended by members of the Dakshin Purba Badura Water Management Group (WMG). Among the group were Resource Farmers (RFs) like Halim Hawlader, an aquaculture farmer.

The FFS also included a market visit, during which RFs:



observed the day-to-day functioning of markets



met input and output actors



established business linkages for future collaborations

Halim's story

A trusted RF among his peers, Halim welcomed the opportunity to visit the market and learn from the BGP team.

Halim made the most of the occasion. He connected with several input and output actors on the day, and planned for future collaborations.

Follow-up

On the day of the market visit, Halim collected contact details from the suppliers and buyers he met, and then kept in touch with them through his mobile phone for updates on aquaculture farming in his area.

One of the people he met was Md Mamun, an aroathder and paiker in the Amkhola Bazaar. Through this connection, Halim realised it made better business sense for the fish farmers to sell their produce as a group, rather than as individuals.

Collective Action

Halim encouraged his peers to undertake group-based selling from the 'farm gate', instead of individually and directly at Amkhola Bazaar. He contacted Mamun again, who agreed to pay premium prices for the different types of fish sold by the farmers.

To ensure transparency and avoid potential conflicts of interest, Halim then shared the information on agreed prices with members of his group during a WMG meeting.



Blue Gold Program's enhancement of food security and market orientation

- Enable farm households to increase productivity for both household consumption and surplus sales
- Availability of timely and quality services from government and private sector agencies
- Facilitation of better deals with input suppliers and bulk buyers by leveraging producer group bargaining power



Results

15 members of the Dakhin Purba Badura WMG had joined the collective sales initiative.



Improved incomes

Collective bargaining ensured all 15 farmers received premium market prices. They sold 440 kg of fish in total, and earned BDT 77,200 in the process.



Reduced costs

Farmers reduced their costs in the areas of harvesting and transporting fish, labour costs, market tolls, and shop rent.



Time saved

Farmers reported to BGP that they saved at least half a working day each when selling collectively through the WMG as opposed to selling as individuals.



Timely payments

Operating from the farm gate meant farmers received payment for deliveries of fish on the same day they delivered.



Incentives

The minimal compensation of BDT 3 per kg on fish encouraged Halim to seek out other areas where Collective Action (CA) would be beneficial, and he expanded into vegetables, poultry, eggs, rice and other agricultural commodities.

Farmers taking part in CA shared expenses, and compensated Halim for the time and effort he put into setting up these mutually beneficial arrangements.

This success motivated Halim, a RF trained by BGP to transform from a good farmer to a supply chain actor, and gradually an entrepreneur.

Collective Action (CA) has proven to be beneficial for buyers like Md Mamun the fish seller as well. He is able to source his fish from a single point of contact, and is certain of the quality of fish received.

Mamun and other buyers in the region are encouraged by the process of CA and interested to find ways to expand CA in terms of sales.

Such natural expansion of Collective Action win-wins by others on their own beyond BGP's involvement constitutes systemic change.

Type of fish	Amount in kg	Price per kg (BDT)	Total price (BDT)
Ruhi	80	200	16,000
Katol	40	240	9,600
Mrigal	40	170	6,800
Minar carp	40	220	8,800
Silver carp	120	140	16,800
Telapia	40	120	4,800
Rajputi	80	180	14,400
Total	440		77,200

