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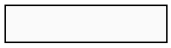

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04 Policy framework, history of interventions and project definition

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Policy and regulatory framework for Participatory Water Management[edit | edit source]

BGP combines a substantial investment in water infrastructure with a strong focus on the establishment of Participatory Water Management (PWM). Given this distinguishing feature of the program – a feature which it shares with several other donor-funded water sector projects – this section provides an overview of the policy, legal and regulatory provisions, which establish the bandwidth within which PWM can be implemented.

Briefing Materials



The following materials illustrate concepts, interventions, outcomes and lessons learnt, including through stories from community members.

Slide decks

• Lessons learnt (no notes)
• WMOs: building sustainable partnerships for participatory water management

Thematic brochures

• Lessons learnt for scaling out: how participatory water management contributes to inclusive development
• Improving the productivity of land in coastal Bangladesh: outcomes of interventions 2013-2019
• Improving the productivity of land in coastal Bangladesh: outcomes of interventions 2013-2020

Videos

• PWM: an integrated approach - animation (Bangla with English subtitles)

While communities in Bangladesh, as elsewhere, have always taken initiatives towards managing water resources for their own benefit, Participatory Water Management – i.e. an explicit approach by Government whereby water management actions by water users organised on a scheme or

catchment basis, or on the basis of sub-units thereof – complements or replaces centrally organised water management actions – is relatively new. Farmer groups for water management were notably formed for irrigation management purposes in the 1960s and 1970s; both for pump irrigation and in major irrigation schemes. Participatory Water Management, however, only became a Government policy applicable for all water management in flood control, drainage and irrigation schemes by the end of the 20th century. The 1999 National Water Policy sounded the starter's gun for promulgating legal provisions for PWM: several guidelines, regulations and acts that – taken together – provide the regulatory framework for Participatory Water Management.

The table provides an overview of the prevailing policy, legislation and regulation for PWM. Short discussions of each element are available through hyperlinks and/or attachments. After the overview, this concludes with a section that zooms-out again to reflect on today's context for Participatory Water Management.

Table 1: Overview of policy and regulatory framework

Title	Formal publication / approval	Status
National Water Policy	January 1999	Policy
Guidelines for Participatory Water Management	April 2001	Guidelines
Bangladesh Water Development Board Act	July 2000	Act
National Water Management Plan	March 2004	Plan
BWDB Participatory Water Management Rules	February 2014	Rules under the BWDB Act 2000
Bangladesh Water Act	2013	Act
Water Rules (Bangla only)	August 2018, with guidelines for District, Upazila and Union level published in 2019	Rules under the Bangladesh Water Act 2014
Bangladesh Delta Plan	September 2018	Plan

In addition to the above documents that shape present-day Participatory Water Management, several other policies influence water management practices. We mention here the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009, the National Women in Development Policy 2011.

History of interventions[edit | edit source]

Water resources management in Bangladesh faces immense challenges in order to resolve diverse problems and issues. The most critical of these are floods in the wet season and the scarcity of water in the dry season; the expanding water needs of a growing economy and population; the supply of safe drinking water and sanitation; arsenic problem; water pollution and massive river sedimentation and riverbank erosion. Furthermore, there is a growing need for maintaining the eco-systems, particularly the fish resources and wetlands and there is the issue of competitive demand of various water uses. The water management is increasingly facing challenges of exogenous developments of a global nature, such as climate change and sea level rise, as well as of upstream river basin developments in neighbouring countries. Climate changes will influence both food security and water availability in the following ways: extreme weather events will lead to more cyclones and floods with consequent drainage congestion and water logging; salinity and salt water intrusion; higher glacial melt leading to higher river discharge, river and soil erosion; more droughts leading to increased irrigation demands.

Based on the above, the goals and objectives for the development and utilization of water resources in Bangladesh may, in short, be stated as follows:

Goals[edit | edit source]

- Make efficient use of water resources to optimise the growth of agriculture, including fisheries, forestry and livestock
- Provide navigational facilities for the growth of commerce, industry and transportation
- Prevent land, water and environmental degradation
- Accommodate land reclamation and accretion
- Minimize the adverse effect of flood and drought on rural and urban communities
- Adaptation to climate change.

Objectives[edit | edit source]

- Irrigation objectives, including major surface water irrigation and minor irrigation to meet agricultural demand
- Flood management objectives, including climate change resilience and adaptation through the protection of critical urban and rural areas and control of land erosion from river actions
- Energy and power generation objectives, specifying the use of dams and other control structures
- Navigation objectives, specifying the use of water for inland navigation
- Land reclamation and accretion objectives, specifying the use of reclaimed land
- Poverty alleviation objectives.

The erstwhile East Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority (EPWAPDA), an autonomous organisation, was created in 1959 to fulfil some of these goals and objectives, as a consequence of the United Nations' funded Krug Mission under the East Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority Ordinance of 1959 (EP order No.1 of 1959). The mission concluded that water resources development would be essential to the increase of agricultural production. It therefore recommended the creation of coastal polders to protect the rice crops from tidal floods and salinity. Consequently, the Coastal Embankment Project constructed 37 polders in the period 1960-1972, with a view to cultivating High Yielding Varieties (HYV) of rice. Simultaneous the EPWAPDA Master plan focusing on flood control and drainage was prepared in 1964. Activities created under the Master plan yielded immediate results. However, after a few years, an evaluation showed that the increase in agricultural production was not up to the required level. The present Bangladesh Water Development Board was established in 1972 under presidential order no. 59 of 1972, when the former EPWAPDA was split into two organisations: BWDB dealing with water and PDB dealing with power. BWDB is a body corporate under the administrative control of the Ministry of Water Resources.

A mission funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in 1972 recommended a strategy for the implementation of small, low cost quick generation Flood Control and Drainage (FCD) and Flood Control, Drainage and Irrigation (FCDI) projects.

In 1974, another devastating flood occurred. This generated a renewed interest in the area of flood control and prevention. A policy was adopted for the quick implementation of flood control and drainage improvement projects. The Early Implementation Project was the first project implemented in line with this new established policy. Thereafter many other projects followed as can be seen below in Table 2, which includes brief descriptions of many of the projects.

Review of Water Resources Projects in the Coastal Zone[edit | edit source]

Table 2 below lists the 21 projects which have contributed to water resources development in the coastal zone over the last 45 years. Summaries of these projects can be found by following the hyperlinks. Of note is the considerable influence of the Government of the Netherlands (GoN) – which has been the main or co-funder of 14 of the 21 projects.

Table 2: **Overview of water resources management projects**

No.	Name of the Project	Implementation period	Donor
1	Early Implementation Project (EIP)	1975-1997	GoN
2	Delta Development Project (DDP)	1976-1988	GoN
3	Land Reclamation Project (LRP)	1977-1991	GoN
4	Second Small Scale Flood Control Drainage and Irrigation Project (SSSFCDI)	1988-1994	WB & CIDA
5	Systems Rehabilitation Project (SRP)	1990-1997	WB
6	Flood Action Plan (FAP)	1990-1995	multiple incl GoN
7	Compartmentalization Pilot Project (CPP)-FAP-20	1991-2000	GoN & KfW
8	Khulna Jessore Drainage Rehabilitation Project (KJDRP)	1993-2002	ADB
9	Char Development and Settlement Project (CDSP)		
9a	Char Development and Settlement Project (CDSP I)	1994-1999	GoN
9b	Char Development and Settlement Project (CDSP II)	2000-2005	GoN
9c	Char Development and Settlement Project (CDSP III)	2005-2011	GoN
9d	Char Development and Settlement Project (CDSP IV)	2011-2018	GoN & IFAD
9e	Char Development and Settlement Project Bridging (CDSP- B)	2019-2022	GoN & IFAD
10	Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector projects		
10a	Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project	1996-2002	ADB & GoN
10b	Second Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project (SSWRDSP)	2002-2009	ADB & GoN
10c	Participatory Small-Scale Water Resources Sector Project	2010-2019	ADB & GoN
11	Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) - Assistance to the Program Development Office of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Program (PDO-ICZM)	2002-2006	GoN
12	Integrated Planning for Sustainable Water Management (IPSWAM)	2003-2011	GoN
13	South-west Area Integrated Water Resources Planning and Management Project		
13a	Southwest Area Integrated Water Resources Planning and Management Project (SAIWRPMP)	2006- 2015	ADB & GoN
13b	Southwest Area Integrated Water Resources Planning and Management Project - Additional Financing (SAIWRPMP -AF)	2015-2022	ADB & GoN
14	Estuary Development Program (EDP)	2007-2011	GoN

15	Small Scale Water Resources Development Project (SSWRDP)	2007-2014	JBIC
16	Water Management Improvement Project (WMIP)	2008-2015	WB
17	Coastal Embankment Improvement Project Phase 1 (CEIP)	2013-2020	WB
18	Blue Gold Program	2013-2020	GoN
19	Bangladesh Delta Plan		
19a	Preparation Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 (BDP 2100)	2014-2017	GoN
19b	Support to the Implementation of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 (SIBDP 2100)	2018-2022	GoN
20	Irrigation Management Improvement project (IMIP)	2015-2020	ADB
21	Smallholder Agricultural Competitiveness Project (SACP)	2019-2025	IFAD

Project definition[edit | edit source]

The Blue Gold Program has been defined on the basis of accumulated insights on how best to pursue Participatory Water Management. In the course of its implementation, it has itself become an arena for refining the approach for Participatory Water Management.

The definition of the Blue Gold Program has been set out in various key project documents, which have been revised and amended over the eight+ year life of the Program:

- The **Administrative Arrangement** signed on 20th February 2013 between the Minster for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Economic Relations Division (ERD) for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) sets out the broad arrangements for the implementation of the Blue Gold Program, including the contributions of both parties, arrangements for the delegation of responsibilities, obligations concerning customs duties and taxes, reporting requirements, arrangements for evaluation and the settlement of disputes. Under this Arrangement, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) represents the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- The **Contribution Arrangement** signed on 4th December 2013 between the Minster for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Economic Relations Division (ERD) for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) expands on the Administrative Arrangement setting out details of payments by instalments, reporting requirements for progress and financial reports, final reports, and annual audit reports.
- The **Program Document**[1] of August 2012 prepared for the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) sets out the rationale for the Blue Gold Program 'taking account the lessons learnt over the past ten years, the new insights into how to deal with the challenges of created by the very dynamic rivers of Bangladesh and the new communication technologies.' Development of market linkages and the promotion of innovation were included in the project design. During project implementation, project design changes were incorporated by the development partners, and confirmed during Annual Review Missions.
- **Development Project Proforma** (DPP) are the official Government of Bangladesh (GoB) formats for project planning and budget allocation. When approved, allocations against the Project can be made into the departmental annual work plans and budgets (Annual Development Programs). For a department to receive allocations it must have its own DPP. BWDB and DAE each have separate DPPs for the Blue Gold Program, both of which were revised during project implementation, in keeping with Government procedures.
- Separate **Memoranda of Agreement** have been signed between BWDB and the Department

for Livestock Services (DLS) and the Department of Fisheries (DoF) since the scope of their activities in Blue Gold did not warrant the formulation of separate DPPs. Funds for the agreed activities of DLS and DoF were provided through the budget of the technical assistance (TA) team on behalf of EKN.

- A **Technical Assistance (TA) Contract** defines the broad scope of activities for the technical assistance team commissioned by EKN to support implementation of the Blue Gold Program. Extensions to the end-date of the Program, and adjustments to the scope of services formalised through a number of amendments to the TA Contract.

Further information on these key documents is presented in Section G Chapter 28 'Project management Arrangements'.

References[edit | edit source]

1. ↑ *Program for Integrated Sustainable Economic Development by improving the Water and Productive Sectors in selected Polders, Program Document* (PDF). GoB, GoN, BLUE GOLD. August 2012.

See also[edit | edit source]

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A process by which the local stakeholders are directly and actively involved in identification, planning, design, implementation, operation & maintenance and evaluation of a water management project.

Blue Gold Program

A process by which the local stakeholders are directly and actively involved in identification, planning, design, implementation, operation & maintenance and evaluation of a water management project.

A defined set of temporary activities through which facilitators seek to effect change

Bangladesh Water Development Board, government agency which is responsible for surface water and groundwater management in Bangladesh, and lead implementing agency for the Blue Gold Program

Sedimentation is the process by which fine particles of silt and clay suspended in river water settle out, for example when there is a drop in velocity.

the removal of materials in the river bank by water flowing in the river channel; also termed bank scour. In coastal polders, riverbank erosion - if unchecked - can result in breaches to polder embankments - where they are aligned close to rivers - and consequent loss of human and animal life as well as damage to farmland, crops, housing, and other infrastructure.

the south-western coastal zone is characterised by broad tidal flats and fluvio-tidal plains, lying approximately 1 metre above sea level, with drainage provided by numerous tidal creeks and channels a some major rivers. Empolderisation now protects the intrusion of sea water to agricultural areas but restricts the deposition of sediments to within the channels, thus reducing the drainage capacity of the rivers and channels, causing drainage congestion.

East Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority

High Yielding Variety - Introduced varieties developed through formal breeding programs. HYVs have a higher yield potential than local varieties but require correspondingly high inputs of fertiliser and irrigation to achieve high yields.

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Flood Control and Drainage

Flood Control, Drainage and Irrigation

Government of the Netherlands; a donor to the Blue Gold Program

World Bank

Char Development and Settlement Project

Small Scale Water Resources Development Sector Project

Japanese Bank for International Cooperation

Bangladesh Delta Plan

Support to the Implementation of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100

Government of Bangladesh; a donor to the Blue Gold Program

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the contractual representative of the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and signatory to the agreement for the Blue Gold Program with the External Resources Division of the Ministry of Finance as the signatory for the Government of Bangladesh

Also known as 'business linkages'. Linkages refer to the trading relationships between and among producers, input providers and traders, and other enterprises in a supply chain or value chain. We refer to Backward linkages on the input side and Forward linkages on the output side of the producer.

Development Project Proforma: a formal document which sets out the intention of a GoB organisation to invest in a development project, seeking approval for the investment and, if successful, a budget allocation. The DPP follows a prescribed format, including the project's financial and physical scope, benefits, and proposals for monitoring and internal and external audits. The approval of a development project proposal follows a number of stages: formation with preliminary studies, formulation to develop greater detail and with additional information to make the economic case for the project, scrutiny by the executing agencies and concerned ministries, appraisal by the Planning Commission, recommendation for approval by Project Evaluation Committee (PEC), Minister/ECNEC approval, and inclusion of a budgetary allocation in the Annual Development Plan (ADP).

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the economic case for the project, scrutiny by the executing agencies and concerned ministries, appraisal by the Planning Commission, recommendation for approval by Project Evaluation Committee (PEC), Minister/ECNEC approval, and inclusion of a budgetary allocation in the Annual Development Plan (ADP).

Department of Agricultural Extension, a department of the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for disseminating scientific research and new knowledge on agricultural practices through communication and learning activities for farmers in agriculture, agricultural marketing, nutrition and business studies.

Development Project Proforma: a formal document which sets out the intention of a GoB organisation to invest in a development project, seeking approval for the investment and, if successful, a budget allocation. The DPP follows a prescribed format, including the project's financial and physical scope, benefits, and proposals for monitoring and internal and external audits. The approval of a development project proposal follows a number of stages: formation with preliminary studies, formulation to develop greater detail and with additional information to make the economic case for the project, scrutiny by the executing agencies and concerned ministries, appraisal by the Planning Commission, recommendation for approval by Project Evaluation Committee (PEC), Minister/ECNEC approval, and inclusion of a budgetary allocation in the Annual Development Plan (ADP).

Department of Livestock Services, a government department under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock responsible for the livestock industry in Bangladesh

Department of Fisheries, a government department under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock responsible for regulating the fisheries industry in Bangladesh

Technical Assistance

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Variants

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Blue Gold Program Wiki

The wiki version of the Lessons Learnt Report of the Blue Gold program, documents the experiences of a technical assistance (TA) team working in a development project implemented by the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE)

over an eight+ year period from March 2013 to December 2021. The wiki lessons learnt report (LLR) is intended to complement the BWDB and DAE project completion reports (PCRs), with the aim of recording lessons learnt for use in the design and implementation of future interventions in the coastal zone.