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Blue Gold Program success story
Women in Collective Action and Market Linkages: increasing benefits and empowerment

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Context

Visit any rural market in Bangladesh, and you will observe that almost all of the visitors are men. Maintaining contact with traders is seen as a male affair. When women engage in productive activities, such as poultry rearing, or growing rabi crops like watermelon, their husbands usually buy the inputs and sell the produce. Even if women sell any surplus such as eggs to their neighbours, they do not always keep the money. Rather, they may give it to their husband. And if women sell produce, they tend to accept the prices offered by the trader, rather than negotiating for better rates.

Turning point

With improved water management in the polders, the options for growing rabi crops such as (highly profitable) watermelon increased. Almost all of this cultivation was carried out by the women. But after they harvested the watermelons, it was the men who sold them to the traders and pocketed the money. Some women then asked: "is this fair?"

After becoming aware of this and other issues for women in relation to market access, BGP made more effort to also target women with market information, and to promote women's involvement in collective actions.

Blue Gold interventions

- Training on market linkages and women's empowerment to 172 women and 33 men
- Market-orientated Farmer Field Schools (FFS) with 1,750 women participants
- Market linkages integrated as a subject in all homestead FFS from Cycle 10 onwards, reaching nearly 13,000 women
- Promoting collective actions for economic activities, directly involving 25,250 women
- Training for agricultural input suppliers, also including several women

NB: Men and women participated in all above-mentioned interventions

Results of training on market linkages

- Enthusiastic women farmers: getting insight into marketing is an eye-opener for many of them
- Sharing information about market linkages with their family earned them increased respect
- Use of market knowledge: (i) using a phone to contact traders and collect price information, and (ii) better negotiation when selling
- Motivated to participate in—or even initiate—collective actions
- More income for (women) farmers, more confidence and empowerment, and more joint decision-making with husbands. Example of Lipika: Earlier she sold eggs at BDT 8. Now, she collects her and other people's eggs to sell at BDT 10



Collective Action in the marketing context:

Jointly buying inputs, jointly selling produce and/or jointly acquiring market information. Water Management Groups (WMGs) and/or Resource Farmers (RFs) often play a key role in organising collective actions. Benefits are achieved through group bargaining power, reduction of costs and/or increase in revenues.

Market linkages:
 Market linkages refer to both the purchase of inputs and the selling of outputs.



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Summary[\[edit | edit source\]](#)

Women in Collective Actions and Market Linkages: increasing benefits and empowerment

empowerment is a process, enabling people to make choices and convert these into desired actions and results. In doing so, people take control of their own lives, improve their own position, set their own agenda, gain skills, develop self-confidence, solve problems, and develop self-sufficiency. Empowerment leads to genuine participation of all actors as it is a process of gaining self-confidence for individual development as well as to contribute towards development of others.

File history

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current 07:17, 4 February 2021		1,240 × 1,753, 2 pages (1.8 MB)	Bigblue (talk contribs)	Women in Collective Actions and Market Linkages: increasing benefits and empowerment

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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.

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