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Final Report

Review of the gender activities of the Integrated Farm Management Component (IFMC) Bangladesh

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April 15 2018

Prepared by Christine Hunter and Nasima Akter

Executive Summary

The Department of Agricultural Extension and the Embassy of Denmark in Bangladesh are jointly carrying out the Integrated Farm Management Component (IFMC) as part of a wider effort to promote agricultural development and contribute to poverty reduction. The immediate objective of IFMC is increased agricultural production among female and male members of landless, marginal and small farming households. The project aims to ensure that women farmers benefit as well as men. A gender strategy was included in the Development Project Proposal (DPP) to guide mainstreaming of gender across project plans and operations.

This review was commissioned to assess implementation of the gender strategy and provide recommendations for strengthening gender mainstreaming in IFMC. The methods included analysis of project documents, interviews with the Embassy of Denmark and project staff and focus group discussions with farmers and farmer-facilitators in the field. The field work was carried out in eight sites in Bangladesh between February 2016 to 2018.

The IFMC gender strategy takes a mainstreaming approach addressing some aspects of programme design, implementation and monitoring. The strategy recognises women as farmers with entitlement to agricultural services on equal terms with men. It states that women and men should share household responsibilities and decisions over income, and that women should have control over income they generate. The strategy implies an intent to reduce gender inequalities facing women farmers but does not have a clear goal or set minimum standards, leaving the expectations for project implementation unclear and posing a challenge for monitoring and evaluation.

IFMC promotes farmer empowerment and the DPP does have economic, personal and social empowerment. These dimensions do not address differences among small farmers and therefore do not address the changes needed to support empowerment of women given that men make in the household and community compared to men. An empowerment framework could support more gender-responsive design, implementation and monitoring for the rest of the project.

The field work found that farmer field schools (FFS) are reaching women, who are 50% of all participants. Women FFS participants report increased income due to FFS and that this makes the extra hours of work to participate in the FFS worthwhile. Women are able to handle the small things around farm-eggs and poultry and locally made fish that sold in hand. The husbands and mutual support among women farmers is an important benefit of FFS. Women and men often work jointly on field tasks but women's contributions are not recognised. Women speak freely to women-only sessions but household dynamics affect women's willingness to speak out in FFS sessions when men are present. The field work found no evidence of any significant change in decision-making in the core households and identified some limitations where women's substance from decision-making in the household is impacted in FFS sessions. Enumeration of FFS sessions and review of the curriculum identified changes that could be made to increase accessibility for poor women and men and avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes.

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Summary of the Final Report of IFMC's Gender Assessment 2018
gender 15apr_18 Report IFMC Gender Strategy Review.pdf

Integrated Farm Management Component (DANIDA-funded program)

File history

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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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