

Toggle menu
Blue Gold Program Wiki

Navigation

- [Main page](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Random page](#)
- [Help about MediaWiki](#)

Tools

- [What links here](#)
- [Related changes](#)
- [Special pages](#)
- [Permanent link](#)
- [Page information](#)

Personal tools

- [Log in](#)

personal-extra

Toggle search

Search

Random page

Views

- [View](#)
- [View source](#)
- [History](#)
- [PDF Export](#)

Actions

File:Gender 6mar 19 proposed approach to GLD training.pdf

From Blue Gold Program Wiki

The printable version is no longer supported and may have rendering errors. Please update your browser bookmarks and please use the default browser print function instead.

- [File](#)
- [File history](#)

- [File usage](#)

Blue Gold Program
Quick assessment of the new approach of the GLD training - 6 March 2019

Background: In 2016/17 the Blue Gold Program organised Gender and Leadership Development training for WMGs through an external service provider (KNKS). It was targeting the 12 WMG EC members, several general female WMG members who had leadership potential, and a few female Union Parishad members. In total 61 batches of 122 WMGs had received the GLD training between September 2016 and April/May 2017, which was phase 1. The proportion of male and female trainees was often about equal. Phase 2 was made conditional to the performance of the service provider to be assessed by an evaluation.

This evaluation was conducted through a rapid assessment by an external evaluator at the end of 2017. The report of January 2018 on this assessment discussed the impact and the modalities of this training. The consultant found that the GLD training was highly valued at all levels, however, a revised implementation modality was proposed: by TA staff, and not by an external service provider anymore. A new approach for the GLD training was therefore developed, with as main characteristics:

- To be conducted by TA Polder teams, in particular the Community Development Facilitators (CDFs);
- Not (only) targeting the WMG EC members, but rather male and female community / WMG members.
- A gender flipchart was developed, which combined pictures with gender related messages.
- No 3-day training in a formal setting, but 5 short sessions in a more informal setting ("court yard sessions") with some time in between.

After the flipcharts had been finalized by September 2018, the preparations were the actual GLD training started. A 2-day "dry run" was organized in October 2018 for 30 CDFs (15 per dry run) on the new GLD approach using the gender flipcharts. The trained CDFs had to start actual GLD training in December 2018, doing at least one GLD session per 2 weeks.

About this quick assessment

The purpose of the quick assessment was to find out to what extent the new GLD approach met the expectations, in order to decide about expanding the number of CDFs able to conduct GLD training. The assessment was held between 20 and 28 February 2019 and consisted of 3 Focus Group Discussions with GLD group members: one in Patuakhali (P55/2C)¹ and two in Khulna (P25 and P27/2). Only the group in Polder 25 was mixed (women and men); the other two groups included only women. In addition 5 CDFs were interviewed, three female and two male. The detailed answers on the key questions are attached in Annex 1 and 2 to this report.

The assessment was conducted by Blue Gold's gender team (Roksana and Kitty). Because Roksana had taken a lead role in developing the new GLD approach and conducting the dry run, the CDFs were explicitly informed that they should be open in answering the questions, also in case of critical comments.

Findings

Dry run and group formation: All interviewed CDFs were happy with the dry run training in which they participated in. It was discussed whether CDFs without dry run experience might be able to implement

¹ A second FGD in Patuakhali had to be cancelled due to heavy rain.

Go to page

GLD training: A CDF observed that this might be possible with some support from a trained CDF. However, the performance would not be up to the mark.
 After the dry run for the GLD approach: 1 - All 30 groups of 20 members each in the form of the assessment (all the 1-10 sessions had been conducted in all the groups, which means an average of 2 sessions per CDF, which is close to 3 sessions on average per month). Two CDFs formed mixed groups, two formed women's groups. The 10th CDF was responsible for 10 (mostly) 10 groups with 20 members and 1 case in total. The GLD training was organized in the 10th group, in a 10th group only one member had been contacted, in 10th group 2 members, all from the CDF formed.
 The criteria applied for the group formation for the GLD training were not above the same, though always the 10th group is a mix. Other criteria mentioned: equal work (10th group GLD training method), 10 having potential to be equal to / influence others, women had not been a role model.
 Flipcharts: The CDFs did not do the flipcharts very much, in particular because it contained pictures with messages, which is considered more efficient than a verbal message alone. The pictures well reflect the local situation. Also the 10th participants appreciated the flipcharts. The picture sets of having members engaged in activities were seen that because they "saw".
 New GLD approach: It is the opinion of the CDFs that the new approach is better than the previous approach by external service provider.
 Reaction of GLD participants: The CDFs agree that the participants need some practice, though the content often repeats that the new GLD approach many trainees are an eye opener, such as men and women being of equal value, women work not being mandatory for only women, the importance of women's involvement in income generating work and their participation in joint decision making. Also other GLD participants or trainees who learned about the GLD content from their wives, have to read a lot more situations and less needs in the beginning, but appear to reflect on the messages, resulting in a part of the new learning more open to the GLD messages. Some examples of positive reactions of men were enthusiastic, such as men who used to take part decision making with their wife, also contributing to a higher and more peaceful family.
 Effects of the training: Considering that the 1 session of the GLD training were not yet completed in any of the groups, it was rather early to assess the effects of the training. But all CDFs and focus groups mentioned some examples of increased awareness and/or of some non-specific effects. Examples:
 • The GLD messages enhance women's self confidence.
 • The GLD participants, especially the women, share their thoughts with their husbands, other women, and/or neighbors. Activities are especially interesting to her from their areas about the content of the GLD training. In the 10th were GLD training were organized, it was observed that some husbands of female 10 participants open to discuss the GLD messages because of interest.
 • Joint decision making areas on the way being informed by the GLD training. However, also other reasons for joint decision making were mentioned, such as women having more knowledge (e.g. from 10th participants) and/or women contributing to household income.
 • The GLD training seem appreciate or tolerate work, which was always seen a woman's task, by both men and women. Some also expressed that if the result is an effect of the training work, then women have more time for productive work that contributes to household income. Especially when women are busy for training, men may need to take some extra work activities, and/or arrange more that work to take their own workload.


[next page →](#)

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Click on a date/time to view the file as it appeared at that time.

Date/Time	Thumbnail	Dimensions	User	Comment
current 13:39, 9 December 2020		1,240 × 1,754, 11 pages (775 KB)	Saad.chowdhury (talk contribs)	

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There are no pages that use this file.

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Namespaces

- [File](#)
- [Discussion](#)

Variants

This page was last edited on 9 December 2020, at 13:39.

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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