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Grass-Root Level Field Experience in Water Management¹

by Dr. Shamsul Alam

For the national development that can be achieved through proper disaster management, real environmental stability, usage of arable lands, integrated water management, it is vital to consider the climate change perspective. The coastal region of Bangladesh faces the most adverse effects of climate change. In the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, the severe vulnerability of the coastal area is mentioned with importance. A Finance department team of Bangladesh Planning Commission went to Dumuria and Botiaghata Upazilla of Khulna and Satkhira Sadar Upazilla. The purpose of the visit was to observe Blue Gold Program activities and discuss with the concerned stakeholders about the problems farmers are facing in the field.

Before starting discussion on Blue Gold Program, it is necessary to mention some points on the risk of climate change especially about increase in temperature, rainfall, effect of increase in sea level and also about the strategies and major activities for the coastal areas specified in the Bangladesh Delta Plan.

Bangladesh is one of the disaster-prone countries due to its geographical location, risk of climate change and being a delta land. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC-5), Bangladesh is one of the top ten disaster prone countries in the world. Cyclone, storm, tornadoes, drought, flood, riverbank erosion are the common problems in our country. Due to rapid unplanned urbanization, rural development and industrial development without considering the necessary environmental protection measures, the pressure on the environment and environment is increasing. Dealing with climate change risks, natural disasters and maintaining sustainable development trends in the country are the major challenges at the moment. Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 has been taken into account for long-term development of the country considering the factors water resource management, climate change and environmental challenges.

Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 is a techno-economic, holistic and long-term strategic integrated plan. This plan specifically addresses the climate change and its detrimental effect. Moreover, water supply and environment related targets have been further timely specified in this plan.

In the last five decades, the average temperature of Dhaka City has increased by 1.1 degree Celsius and average annual rainfall decreased by half. In 1971, the annual average temperature of Dhaka City was 25.6 degree Celsius that increased to 26.7 degree Celsius in 2016. That means in the last 45 years, the average temperature of Dhaka City has increased by 1.1 degree Celsius. On the other hand in 1971, the average annual rainfall was 640 millimeter which decreased to 370 millimeter in 2016. Global temperature has already reached 1°C above pre-industrial era. 2018 was one of the warmest years on global record. This clearly gives an evident of the impact of the climate change. Moreover, the sea level has increased by four millimeter in the coastal areas of Bangladesh in the last two decades. If the temperature continues to increase in this rate, then our 19 coastal districts will become submerged as a result of increase in sea level. It is predicted that by 2030, 14 percent area of the country will become

¹ The original article was published in Bangla in the "Bonik Barta", a Bangla-language daily newspaper, on 3rd February 2020. This English language translation was prepared without consulting the original author.

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continuously vulnerable to floods, and options available might go up to 1 to 20 percent. As a result of this, most of the western of the country will be affected and the overall economy will suffer.

New under the implementation of Blue Gold Program, Blue Gold Program is implemented by Water Development Board and Department of Agricultural Extension that mainly aims to increase agricultural production and to create a sustainable and economic development in the selected pattern of villages, Sadaria, Bangladesh National center through proper water management. Blue Gold Program works in total 100 pattern covering an area of 10000 hectares. The program is being implemented with financial support from the Government of Bangladesh and the Government of the Netherlands.

Blue Gold Program works for the water management infrastructure, the environment, capacity, skills, job creation and supporting, skill and social construction and helping to increase of the to increase waterlogging resulting in more agricultural production and increase income of local people.

Another main objective of Blue Gold Program is to establish water management organizations (WMOs) covering the members of the pattern area. The purpose is to form WMOs by involving the local people so that they can cultivate more during the dry season and increase their income through regular operation and maintenance of their gates and crop diversification through sustainable water management.

Water Management Association (WMA) and Water Management Group (WMG) are formed according to the administrative and technical condition history of the village. Type of water flow and drainage system in the pattern area. Both Water Management Association (WMA) and Water Management Group (WMA) are registered under the Bangladesh Water Development Board. Each WMA must be formed from at least 100 of the total households in that area and minimum 80% of the members must be female. The management committee of each WMA will consist of 12 members chosen by the members of the WMA. On the other hand, the general committee of the Water Management Association (WMA) will be formed consisting of four members from each WMA according to the management committee of the respective WMA. WMA will also include members of the respective city and WMA will include 10 members of WMA also an important role in the economic development of local people through improved water management for irrigation.

Agricultural production is the main livelihood and source of income for the people living in the pattern. Through proper water management, agricultural production can be increased which will help to family consumption along with more income opportunities by selling additional products. Blue Gold Program mainly focuses on increasing agricultural production and increasing market linkage to increase income. By proper water management for irrigation, it has been possible to increase the agricultural production. As a result, poverty reduction and standard of living has improved. Farmers can obtain more profit by increasing their production by market demand and marketing of their quality products. The success of the Blue Gold Program has led to improve farmer field schools, Farmer Field School (FFS) centers, training and agriculture are implemented by the Department of Agricultural Extension to increase agricultural production and to increase market linkage. Through technical training centers, the selected knowledge from the farmer field school is passed to others so that technology can be benefited. The success of water management in agricultural production has brought a smile to the farmers in the pattern area.

Four pattern which have been visited, it was there were 10 established area, 7 Water Management Organizations, 100 Water Management Groups, 15 500 households and total number of the members 10000 have been built.

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Grassroot Field Experience in Water Management (English) - Bonik Barta


IPWM

Dr. Shamsul Alam

In-polder water management; term used in Blue Gold to describe water management interventions which aim to deliver excess water from the field through field drains to secondary khals and thence to primary khals for evacuation through the sluice/regulator

File history

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current 06:50, 22 September 2021		1,240 × 1,754, 3 pages (672 KB)	Saad.chowdhury (talk contribs)	

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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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