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Issue-3
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BLUE GOLD TRENDS WATCHER

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EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY-LED AGRICULTURAL WATER MANAGEMENT IN PATUAKHALI THROUGH HORIZONTAL LEARNING

Patuakhali:

The underlying objective of Community-led Agricultural Water Management (CAWM) is to increase agricultural crop production and income through improved internal water management, introduction of modern crop varieties and crop synchronization within sub-catchment areas in Blue Gold Program (BGP) polders. In Patuakhali area the CAWM was piloted in 2016. In order to disseminate learning of CAWM activities, the farmers involved in CAWM organize crop cutting festivals, in which they invite other farmers, including farmers from different WMGs, for experience sharing. Other farmers were attracted to CAWM approach where farmers jointly do water management and, if needed, solve field problems jointly; they also saw the use of modern varieties with higher crop yield and less crop damage in CAWM areas than in neighboring crop fields.

Extensive field visits were done and FGDs were conducted to learn general views about CAWM activities. Local farmers said that CAWM activities are bringing about positive changes in traditional mindset as regards water management and crop production system, and dependency on the external support is reducing. Farmers have learned from CAWM activities how to solve drainage problem and improve water management collectively and that modern crop varieties bring in higher income than local varieties. BGP has introduced

BRR dhan 52 (risk tolerant improved variety) in CAWM areas.

In 2016 BGP initiated CAWM activities in 6 WMG areas in 4 polders of Patuakhali zone; as practiced elsewhere, parts of WMG catchment areas were taken under CAWM supported by BGP. However, learning from BGP supported CAWM activities, other farmers of area adopted some of the CAWM practices. They jointly re-excavated small khals to facilitate drainage of their fields and cultivated modern variety rice, BRR dhan 52, instead of local variety. The following table shows the adoption of BRR dhan 52 cultivation by other farmers of CAWM catchment areas.

It may be noted that farmers outside BGP support area cultivated BRR dhan 52 despite serious scarcity of seeds; they reported that they had to buy seeds of this rice variety from local markets with much higher price than its original price. Nurjahan, Age 52. She has 2 sons and a daughter. She is a member of Atharogachia WMG in Polder 43/1A. Last year (2016), she attended a crop cutting festival in Polder 43/1A. Inspired by the success of CAWM, especially by observing high crop yields, she cultivated BRR dhan 52 in 2.5 acres this year (2017). There was drainage problem in the area where her lands are. Farmers of her area re-excavated a silted up khal connected to the main khal; her sons participated in the reexcavation of khal.

Table 1: Expansion of CAWM Area-

Polder No.	Name of WMG	Catchment area under WMG		
		Catchment area of WMG (ha)	CAWM area covered by BGP support in 2016 (ha)	Area where BRR1 dhan 52 was adopted in the catchment in 2017 without BGP support (ha)
43/2D	Morichbunia	260	21	130
43/2B	Daribahr char	450	21	350
43/2B	Solilabunia	400	21	160
43/2A	Dakshin Bighal Dakshin	300	15	210
43/1A	Atharogachia	300	40	225
43/1A	Dakshin Sonakhali	250	20	200
Total		1,960	138	1,275

Blue Gold Program is implemented by:

Bangladesh Water Development Board & Department of Agricultural Extension

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PARTICIPATORY MONITORING IS A TOOL OF WMG MEMBERS, WHEREBY THEY TRACED THEIR OWN PROGRESS

LIFTED MAY 2017 AT OUTCOME LEVEL:

Over 1000 farmers, including 500 women, participated in the participatory monitoring activities. The findings of the survey are as follows:

- 90% of the farmers reported that they were satisfied with the CAWM activities.
- 85% of the farmers reported that they were satisfied with the CAWM activities.
- 80% of the farmers reported that they were satisfied with the CAWM activities.

The second level of participatory monitoring was conducted in May 2017. A total of 1000 farmers participated in the survey. The findings of the survey are as follows:

- 90% of the farmers reported that they were satisfied with the CAWM activities.
- 85% of the farmers reported that they were satisfied with the CAWM activities.
- 80% of the farmers reported that they were satisfied with the CAWM activities.

The following table shows the number of BRR1 dhan 52 farmers who participated in the survey.

Performance level	No. of BRR1 dhan 52 farmers (per Performance level)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
High Performance	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55
Medium Performance	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Low Performance	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65
Total	45	60	75	90	105	120	135	150	165	180

Source: Results of BRR1 dhan 52 survey.

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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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