

Report on Stakeholders Training Workshop

Jamalganj – Shunamganj



Date: 18th April 2022

Venue: Upazila Hall Room, Jamalganj, Shunamganj

Organized by: Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)

Assisted by: IDRC, Canada

Background:

The SAKTEE is a multi-institutional and collaborative research project for 3 years (May 2019 to April 2022) in Bangladesh. Coordinated by BCAS, the project is being implemented by Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) of the Government of Bangladesh, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) and the University of Manitoba (UoM), and Canada. Supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada the project aims to improve understanding of the dynamics of the complex set of factors that aggravate differentiated climate change and disaster impacts and vulnerability. The project also aims to fill identified knowledge gaps in the areas of gender responsive adaptation to climate change, DRR and empowerment of women for enhancing social resilience. The focus is to understand deeply the effects of climate change on women and impoverished populations in the most vulnerable regions i.e., coastal region and Haor (wetland) basin in Bangladesh. The project has a consistent focus on empowerment of women, youth, students and disadvantaged families through enhancing their knowledge, adaptive capacity, income-generation activities and skills for climate resilient-alternative livelihoods of the poor and socially disadvantaged groups in the two climate affected regions. In doing so, the feminist research and participatory action research approaches are applied to all components of the project. Action research on adaptation technology selection and demonstration in water and agriculture, exploratory research by the university students, capacity building of the poor women, disadvantaged groups, youths and students as well as the women stakeholders were the key areas of focused interventions of the project in year-2.

The project had a good start in the year1, but encountered some problems in field implementation from the last quarter of the first year (March 2020) and throughout the project year2 (May 2020 to April 2021) due to the wide spread impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and frequent lockdown situations in Bangladesh. However, the project team at BCAS and the partners developed a contingency plan (which was adjusted in the changed situation) in consultation with Program management at the IDRC and made all sincere efforts to carry out the activities at different levels with communities and actors. This annual technical report describes the planned activities, approach and methods, progress of implementation of the action research project, limitations, barriers and the key learning of the project team.

Objectives:

The key objectives of this project are as follows:

- **Explore and understand** the interrelationships of various environmental, socioeconomic, political and cultural factors and climate change that may exacerbate social and gender inequity
- **Scale-up innovative, locally tested adaptation technologies** to address worsening climate change impacts, particularly on water and agriculture, through promoting multi-level institutional coordination and integration

- **Support empowering women**, students and poverty-stricken disadvantaged households in the climate-vulnerable regions; and
- **Engage and inform policy and decision makers** about transformative climate change adaptation technologies and the potential for their integration with social and gender equity programs.

Inaugural Session:

The session started in the Upazila Hall room of Jamalganj, Shunamganj with the general introduction of the participants on the 18th April 2022. Mr. Monowarul Islam coordinated the workshop and mentions the training purpose and gives a brief lecture on the daylong matters. He says about the people who are more affected by Climate Change which is particularly women and children and that they are still considered as the most vulnerable population. Among them the most poor and vulnerable ones are the victims. The capacity and resilience are less among the people, as a matter of fact, they are being affected. A combined research methodology was done in some areas where the main focus of this research is women and how they will be helped. He also mentions the problems related to Climate Change and how we can overcome and make use of them, as well as the finding related to these matters will be discussed and identified in this workshop.

Later, Dr. Atiq Rahman says that we are lucky that we can now connect with each other electronically. He says, that it is not easy to bring all the local governments together in one place, but it is good to know that they are being able to join. In this training the discussion will be about poor and vulnerable and which technology will be used and will be helpful to be shared with everyone. Moreover, he also declares that Mr. Monowarul Islam will talk about today's matters and policies as a lot of seminars were already conducted previously and it is a great pleasure that a lot of women and children are being able to connect electronically.

Following the previous speech was the speech of the Director General-DWA Ms. Farida Parveen, where she introduces herself and says how the natural disasters is a common outcome and the circumstance and what Bangladesh government did for the benefit of women and how women are helped in this process. She also mentioned how trainings are given regarding Climate Change for overcoming themselves from these disasters. Women's role in Bangladesh was given great interest and their position is on the 7th position internationally. She also said that in the CSW New-York meeting, the decisions and things that Bangladesh will be doing was discussed on that meeting. A country paper was published on vulnerable women and a GCA project is also there where trainings are given on the matters related of their survival as well as survival through this Climate Change. Women are involved in a lot of activities now a day and DWA has been involved in developing a women's financial and economic rights. Politically women are in the 7th position worldwide and are has been in the first position 7 times simultaneously on the gender Index in South Asia.

Meanwhile among the speech of the guests, Ms. Shugandha Rani (Upazila Motsho Kormokorta, Jamalganj) talked how flood affects the livelihood of local people of Jamalganj and how we can adapt with the matters of Climate Change. On the other hand, Md. Aliduzzaman gives a brief speech and ask the participants about their ideas regarding Climate Change and what they will be able to learn from this training. The idea of Climate Change are still unknown by the stakeholders and hence they are ought to achieve a certain knowledge in this day long workshop.

Technical Session:

The first technical session was conducted by Dr. Dwijen Mallick on “*Climate Change Impacts & Gender Sensitive Adaptation of Climate Change in perspective of Bangladesh*” virtually in zoom. He at first thanked everyone and the guests for their valuable words and speech. He then started his session by mentioning few of the important things and said that he will be elaborating those matters throughout his presentation. He mentioned about Climate Change and its current Trends and Impacts (according to IPCC). Later, he mentioned about the Bangladesh perspective regarding Climate Change on women and lastly, the technologies for Climate Change and who are making them that is basically benefiting the agriculture and water sectors. He explained about the key messages of IPCC and its six reports which were printed so far and he also mentioned that these reports were written by the 400-500 scientists of the world. There are three volumes in these reports (AR-6) and one of the key messages are “Climate Change is widespread, rapid and intensified and its impact is across the world”. He says, in between the next 30-40 years all the ice will melt in the Himalayas and so more flood will occur and heavy rain will be seen in South Asia. Also, in 50 years all these water is finished and so, we need to start with the processes for adaptation as soon as possible so that we can help ourselves and others. The level of CO₂ has also increased in the air and a relationship is being formed between the rise in temperature and carbon emission which is a great matter of concern. Moreover, a lot of problems will and is already occurring due to Climate Change and these climatic extremes will become our new normal in the near future if we do not start improving the current state. He also says that the most affected regarding these effects will be on human health and later the various factors of Climate Change and its effects in perspective of Bangladesh was discussed along with some of the challenges and solutions in terms of women and children ended this part of his session.

The next session was conducted by Mr. Monowarul Islam on “The Requirements and Priorities of the Gender Sensitive Climate Change Adaptation Technologies (CCAT) for the Haor Areas of Bangladesh”. He said that the most vulnerable among women are the marginalized people and we have to work a lot for solving these matters and issues regarding Climate Change factors that are affecting the people of an area. However, all the work are done and planned suitably for women and we will be used to help these vulnerable society with the help of the stakeholders.

After the end of the two technical session, there was an open discussion session where all the participants gave their invaluable opinions regarding their learnings and shared specific knowledge in this session. The first participant said how it is possible to farm on the holes that are present in front of the houses and also in the ponds that are already there. Moreover, women can plant vegetables around the houses and in the open yards they can also farm ducks and hens. She also mentioned to avoid using mosquito nets to fish as it does not leave out even the juveniles, as a matter of fact, during the season there is no fish in the ponds to catch. As for the next participant, it was acknowledged that a lot of changes are occurring due to climate change and it is specifically affecting the corn harvesting. For that reason, the harvesting should be done with modern technologies and new methods should be implemented for harvesting the vegetables in sacks during the rainy seasons. He also said that it is very important to achieve these outcomes

Technical session by Mr. Monowarul Islam



within the range so that it is more beneficial for the farmers. The third participant offered to provide vaccine for those who have cows with the fund that is being given to him for supporting the marginalized. Apart from helping them with these benefits, he will also help them understand the process of harvesting grass which will be eventually beneficial for both the cow health and the amount of milk that the cow produces. Lastly, he asks the women present to share this information with the other women and make them recognize about the animal hospital for the problems of their animals. The following participant shared how he and his organization helped and cooperated with everyone during the pandemic and have made some small roads and flood shelters. Recently, as per his concern, the most dangerous disaster to occur frequently is the lightning strikes and hence they are working with these matters. As a recommendation he directed to keep fire extinguishers in every households as a precaution, also mentioned that everyone who lives in the haor areas should be more careful as the boats sink quite frequently during the flood times. The last participant was a NGO member who said that at first it is very necessary to understand the difference between weather and climate and the disasters that is being caused due to the transformation. There are two types of disaster, natural and anthropogenic and it is crucial to understand the consequences based on the livelihood of the haor areas. It is very important to

understand on how people are being affected by climate change and will have to acknowledge the everyday situations to bring a remedy to the unwanted circumstances.



Open Discussion Session

After the end of the open discussion session, His Excellency the DD-DWA talks about how to overcome Climate Change and its effects and how all the GOs and NGOs are working together to help all the vulnerable population which consists of mostly women and children. He also said that we have to learn the adaptation processes and it is necessary to implement as per the requirement.

A group work was conducted where the participants were divided into three groups; GO, NGO and Female Member Group. There they shared some of their opinions and crucial point of views in terms of providing a solution to the problems that had occur. These are as follows:

GO Group:-

- 1) To give training through pen and paper by inspiring women in agricultural production work
- 2) To raise awareness about agricultural work through backyard meetings
- 3) To ensure atleast 30% of women in the group based agricultural trainings.
- 4) A group based IGA training system is running
- 5) A training is ongoing for the agriculture, fisheries and groceries business in exchange of food.
- 6) Through the 'Ma' assembly, a woman's further education and awareness raising is being ensured.
- 7) DAE is giving training for raising awareness of women in improving their knowledge in planting trees and conservation of the environment.
- 8) To increase awareness in disaster preparedness and the number of female members in the union disaster committee.

NGO Group:-

In case of Agriculture:-

- 1) To arrange training on agriculture for women.
- 2) To arrange the agricultural materials from different NGOs
- 3) To create opportunities to communicate with different governmental departments
- 4) To arrange the use of agricultural materials with the help of the modern technologies.

In case of Drinking water:-

- 1) To arrange communication links with the public health prosecutors.
- 2) To arrange communication links with the NGOs those who works with WASH
- 3) To arrange sources of wealth from different NGOs with simple terms.

Female Member Group:-

The types of service we provide to the ordinary people.

- 1) Extensive harvest is being affected due to the natural disasters.

The services that can help us to give a better service to the people from the government and non-governmental organizations. The followings in brief are described below:

- 1) Collaboration of the government is required for the resolution of the excavation of the canals and waterlogging.

Lastly, as a **concluding speech** Mr. Monowarul Islam concludes it by giving a brief speech about Shunamganj and that it is one of the climate hot-spot zone for all the disasters that occur. Their ecological, geographical and environmental context is different. It has more negative impacts than positive ones due to climate change and so, a joint effort is required for all the participants present from different sectors can work together to make a good change in making the situation more favorable. He also said that if we are able to use the abilities we consist of, only then we will be able to be a safe population from all the disasters of climate change. As a result, today's workshop is regarding the use of our knowledge in field level and to build a link between each other while it is considered to be an integrated process to work together.