

Enhancing Community Resilience Reducing Climate Change Impact



In the southwest coastal region Bangladesh, communities are extremely exposed and vulnerable to major natural and climate-related shocks, including: cyclones, storm surges, floods, riverbank erosion, water-logging, saline intrusion etc. Concern Worldwide has been implementing medium to long-term projects in the coastal region since 2011 addressing extreme poverty.

Concern aimed to reduce poverty amongst poor communities in coastal areas by reducing their vulnerabilities and enhancing resilience to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change.

Coastal Community Resilience project of Concern Worldwide facilitated rain water harvesting system in the community and sustainable pond water management. The project improved community water sources to ensure that all community members have access to drinking water.

Concern implemented different climate smart initiatives in the coastal areas to build up resilient community and to create alternative livelihoods; i) rainwater harvesting cum nutrition garden; ii) composite agriculture; iii) multi-layer gardening; iv) livestock rearing; v) community based pond management for safe drinking water. Those initiatives were supported by formation of self-help group, community service provider and different livelihood related trainings to ensure access to water and hygiene facilities for all.

Rain Water Harvesting System ensured access to safe potable water and improved sanitation for 6000 households in two upazilas (Saronkhola and Mongla) of Bagerhat.

Coastal Community Resilience Project enhanced the resilience of the most vulnerable communities to adapt and respond to disasters and climate-change-related shocks. The key vulnerability issues were addressed to build community resilience as follows:

- **Built resilient communities**, including diversification of climate-resilient livelihood options for extremely poor households.
- **Promoted community leadership** to support to improve resilience initiatives through activating the Community Resilience Action Groups.
- **Strengthened systems** to improve the coordination and capacity of local authorities and institutions.
- **Improved the knowledge of key stakeholders** on the effectiveness of community-led coastal resilience measures.

Rainwater harvesting building community resilience

" I have learned about rain water harvesting system and set a polymer tanks to store rain water . This tank helped me to secure enough water for my family for drinking and cleaning . Now I can take care better of my children with water facility. I have cultivated enough vegetables for my family consumption as well as sell in the local market for extra income.. I am planning to expand my vegetable garden. Also, I have a plan to use my pond for crab fattening to increase income."

"Now I have enough water for drinking and cleaning . My children are healthy as they dont suffer from waterborne diseases. We can have healthy foods over the year." Sima Mistri, Bagerhat.



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“I am happy with the livelihood and my income for composite agriculture”

Elachi Begum received training on modern methods of composite farming, vegetable cultivation, goat rearing, fish farming, and poultry rearing. She also received cash support for Rice-Fish-Vegetable farming in her land. Since then, she along with her husband started composite agriculture in their land. Her monthly income increased to BDT 50,000 from the production. She manages educational expenses for two school going children with regular income. Now, she is planning to expand the farm.

Major Impacts:

- Self Help Groups are independently operating and investing for livelihood for poor households. Women are using their savings to invest in their livelihood activities.
- Women are involved in climate-smart agriculture, crab fattening, goat and sheep rearing and smallscale poultry rearing.
- Around 6000 poor households have started livelihood with poultry farming goat rearing, fish culture, crab fattening, small business, agriculture etc.
- Community Resilience Action Group led the community disaster preparedness initiatives by coordinating with local government agencies.

Coastal Community Resilience project contributed in Sustainable Development Goal-SDG6 while providing access to safe drinking water, reducing the time women and girls have to spend collecting water, and helping to reduce water borne disease

In the coastal area, extreme poor people have adopted diversified and climate-change-adaptive livelihoods.

They are experiencing improved lives as follows:

- **Ensured access to clean drinking water** through Rain Water Harvesting System.
- **Enabled homestead gardens** for cultivating vegetables, improving nutrition.
- **Built capacity on use of resilient crops** and other agricultural activities.
- **Improved dietary diversity in household** level by nutrition sensitive homestead gardening.
- **Reduced disease and illness** caused from contaminated water

Concern Worldwide proposes some recommendations to build community resilient and reduce vulnerability following the learnings from the project. The key recommendations are-

- **Rainwater harvesting cum nutrition garden** can solve drinking water crisis and promote climate resilience adaptive livelihoods.
- **Composite agriculture** is a very potential adaptation option against climate change.
- **Innovative farming practices** should be developed tested and adopted through on-farm trials and location-specific production programs involving farmers, researchers and extension personnel.
- **Community based pond management** could be effective option for surface water management in the coastal areas.
- **Establishment of proper market facility** for all kind of crops and new innovative farming practices.
- **Involvement of private sectors** are helpful to build climate resilience livelihood for the coastal communities.

