

Internal Evaluation report (draft) of
Enhanced Coastal Fisheries (ECOFISH^{bd}) project

Location: Bhola District, Duration: 5 years from June 2015 to September 2019
Evaluation date: 19-23 January 2020



A. Introduction:

According to a report by the Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute, over 3700 metric tons of *Jatka* are caught annually from inland rivers. To address the causes of the declining of hilsa population and other fish and to improve the resilience of the fishers' community, USAID initiated that ECOFISH project. That project was jointly implemented by the WorldFish and the Department of Fisheries (DoF), Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock where COAST was the implementing partner. The project areas were two sanctuaries of lower Meghna and Tentulia river of Bhola district.

B. The objectives, COAST conducted this brief internal evaluation to know the-

- a. Impact of this project
- b. Achievement
- c. Good practice
- d. Failure
- e. The integration of Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) in the project
- f. Lessons learnt
- g. Recommendation.

C. Methodology:

Literature review, Personal Interview, Focus Group Discussion, Field visit and Observation, Findings sharing and exit meeting with Project Implementation Unit (PIU) staff.

D. Evaluation and Findings

i. Impact level

Outcomes	Intermediate Result	Result happened and Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisher-folk/ community participate in adaptive co-management activities. Fishermen follow regulation and Act related to sanctuary zone, leave monofilament current net and respect fishing ban periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-management activities of fishing mechanism established. Existing property rights regime in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members attend most of the meeting, got awareness on not to catch <i>Jatka</i> and learnt cow, goat, duck and <i>Turky</i> rearing, etc. Women were active in protecting hilsa by coordinating with family members and doing farming. Sending their children to school rather fishing. Representation ability increased of user groups (fishers group) in the decision-making process, especially in family and savings group.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found there was a lacking in receiving services after ending the project, e.g. regular vaccination program and treatment for farm animal. ECOFISH is currently not supporting this and farmers are facing lack of coordination and encountering financial loss.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unauthorized and destructive fishing nets using significantly reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abiding Hilsa Fisheries Management Action Plan (HFMAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HFMAP implementation increased effectively through the linkage between fishers' community, local government authorities. Dissemination of ECOFISH messages also remind fisher community not to catch Hilsa during bane period and yearly activity plan to save Hilsa. Usages of unauthorized fishing nets reduced significantly.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Radio was supposed to play an important role broadcasting messages from Barisal but it did not happen due to the lack of initiatives from government team in time, PC said. PC also said, Radio Meghna broadcasted some messages but due to limited frequency, it didn't cover Bhola and other areas. Therefore, nobody from fisher community interviewed could say anything about it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are more capable in terms of create self-employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available self-employment activities/ farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found a number of farming and non-farming activities where women were engaged and their income increased.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farming and non-farming activities facing a blow due to lack of treatment and immunization facilities, especially for cow and goat. Though there was an agreement between IGA receiver and local UP member—not to sale the IGA that we provided them. However, it requires continuous monitoring from us or ECOFISH or the members could sale the whole IGA otherwise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish co-management in project area. 	Linkage developed between fishers and different stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-management committee formed.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-management committee formed very lately, at UP level in July and district level in September 2019. Therefore, members could not be engaged actively with LGIs, Govt. and Fisheries offices and also could not play significant role in receiving services from that government institutions. Not found members access to local financial institutions other than their own savings. COAST only just introduced them some local financial institutions but the services they would supposed to receive from that institutions would not work for them.



A fisherman shows big sizes of Hilsa fish, an outcome of the fishing ban; Jahirul Islam, COAST

ii. Achievement

- All most all activities were done accordingly in time and beneficiaries (7200) are found happy with the services COAST provided to them.
- 99% IGA found in place and beneficiaries are being benefited from the.
- Savings group established and members are doing savings regularly, know their deposited amount, running loan activities.
- Burn rate was 99%.

iii. Good practice

- Due to the initiative of this project, the representatives from fisher folk communities are being invited to attend in the Union Parishad (UP), Upzilla and District level Hilsa conservation strategy meeting.
- 100% fishermen are aware of Hilsa conservation, fishing size, prohibited nets name for Hilsa catching and rules and regulations in this regard.
- They now have their names on the list, therefore, they do receive various information from the government relating to Hilsa fishing, ban period, list, facilities, awareness, etc.

iv. Failure

- One handicraft company, name Pavels, which trains local producers, especially women, supplies raw materials and finally buys finished products from them on credit and market it elsewhere in the country. However, Pavels did good for 2-3 times but then it had gone out with the finished products, did not come back to pay the rest money to the producers. Although it was not a planned activity of this project, injected by the ECOFISH somewhere in the middle of this project, brought some negative fame and dissatisfaction of beneficiaries to COAST.

v. Integration of Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS)

- Local community participation was ensured in project designing and implementing activities.
- Formal feedback was not done systematically and Risk assessment too.
- Most of the beneficiaries could not say about COAST staff expected behavior and Complaint Response Mechanism (CRM) system.
- Complaint submitting numbers did not found in the most places, project implemented.

vi. Lessons learnt from beneficiary and stakeholder feedback

- COAST ECOFISH has done a lot of coordination between GO-NGO institutions and fisher folk communities. Shared necessary information, organized and mobilized field efficiently, provided training and awareness messages, started savings programs and helped deploy relevant government officials to go wherever necessary to save *Jatka fish*. In compression, the project covered a little area. Hilsa production happens in many parts of Bangladesh. So, this type of project will be implemented in every sanctuary places at one go.
- ECOFISH project wanted a change the attitudes in the fisher folk communities but five years project is not enough to sustain it. Therefore, the project should run for long time with a holistic approach, e.g. grant, education, continue services, etc.
- Government law enforcement agencies were also a big stakeholder to stop fishing during ban period. Project also needed to support them with logistics so that they could also continue mobile court in different spots and run awareness campaign. Government initiative is more effective than NGOs.

Readers can find a sample copy of beneficiary and stakeholder feedback taken during the evaluation period in Bhola. <https://www.facebook.com/sohel.mhamud.7/videos/1533369743478472/UzpfSTEyMjg5MTA3NTg6MTAyMjI3MzQ0MzI0MDkyOTE/>

vii. Recommendations

- An advocacy could be initiated to use current nets, which have a standard space (25cm or something like that) for catching Hilsa. The Government commonly saying to stop using destructive fishing gears like current *jal*, *behundi jal* and *chargherao* mosquito *jal*, etc. But this is not a pragmatic solution, fisher folk community say.
- Fishermen do not get sufficient aid from government during ban period. It would be an advocacy too.
- Engage law enforcing agencies to continue the mobile court and awareness campaign during ban period, if possible.
- Services like vaccination and treatment for cow and goat rearing is necessary for long time and need to manage it anyway, if possible.
- Savings groups' activities have been suspended for four months as the project ended. ECOFISH is replacing in the bank transaction as principal signatory. The progress is slow and members are thinking to dissolve the *Somity* and saving activities. Which *Somity* wants to dissolve, we should inform ECOFISH.
- Whole AIGA could be sold, therefore local members should be engaged more to sustain this initiative.
- Core Humanitarian Standards should be strengthened in every project.

Evaluation conducted by-

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AD-MEL&HA

Report submit on 6 February, 2020

A story of a self-reliant woman in Hilsa preservation

One Monowara Begum. She is the president of a Hilsa Preservation Group in the village of Hazikandi under Tazumuddin Upazila of Bhola. She is the lone woman in Bhola district is acting as a president in leading a Hilsa Preservation Group. Like Nagor Majhi (fisherman) and Tota Majhi, she is also leading other male fishermen members in her group for three years, increasing awareness among other fishermen in preserving Hilsa.



She, under the ECOFISH project, funded by USAID and supported by the Government's Fisheries Department and WorldFish center, organizes regular and series meetings with the fisherfolk community. Even in the last rainy season, when the embankment got cracked and her village went submerged, she, along with members of her Hilsa Preservation Group, visited households and understood them that what would be the benefits if they do not catch fish in the river during this fishing ban period. She repeatedly underscored the fishermen to obey the 'protection and conservation of fishing rules'.

The fishermen kept the promise made to her and also saw the benefits. In the last Hilsa season, the country witnessed the highest Hilsa production in the last decade. Not to catch *Jatka* and Egg-laying fish and their conservation during the fishing ban period were the main reasons behind that success. Poor fishermen will see better luck if this system continues. Hilsa could contribute bigger more to the economy of this country. Like Monowara, besides men, some of the women are also contributing more to preserving Hilsa. On the occasion of the International Women's Day, COAST places it's sincere homage to the women for their greater contribution to the country.

Annex-2: Alternative Income Generating Activity (AIGA) photos



Hilsa production increased 2.5 times

State minister informs parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hilsa production has increased by more than two and a half fold in the last 15 years due to various efforts of the government including imposing ban on catching brood hilsa and jatka (hilsa fry), State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru informed parliament yesterday.

In 2017-18, hilsa production stood at 5.17 lakh tonnes, up from 1.99 lakh tonnes in 2002-03, the state minister said while answering a query from ruling party lawmaker Abdul Latif.

Khasru said market price of total 5.17 lakh tonnes hilsa will be around Tk 20,000 crore if price of one kilogramme hilsa was Tk 400.

The question-answer session was tabled at onset of the day's proceedings.

The state minister said Bangladesh's hilsa management policy has become a model, and India and Myanmar are following it. He hoped that the total production of hilsa will cross 5.5 lakh tonnes in the next five years.

While answering another question from lawmaker Manjur Hossain, Khasru said 38,571 tonnes of dried fish



Hilsa being sorted at the Boro Station Machhghat of Chnradpur yesterday. Good catch in the Padma and its confluence with the Meshna has resulted in the prices of hilsa to drop a little.

PHOTO: ALAN PALASH

daily sun

Update : 2019-04-14 00:00:00

EcoFish, Bangladesh Project, WorldFish and Fisheries Department take out a procession



EcoFish, Bangladesh Project, WorldFish and Fisheries Department take out a procession on the Bhola Government College campus on Saturday as a campaign for protecting Hilsa by avoiding Panta-Ilish on the Pahela Baishakh. — SUN PHOTO

Annex- 4: Questionnaires used for data collection

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প্রশ্ন	নাম
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তার ক্রয় মূল্য কতো ছিলো ?	
কত টাকার বিক্রি করেছেন ?	
এখন কত টাকার আইজিএ আছে ?	
এ প্রকল্পের দুটো ভালো দিক বলুন	
এ প্রকল্পের দুটো নেতিবাচক দিক	

সুপারিশ (যদি থাকে):

মূল্যায়নকারীর মন্তব্য (যদি থাকে):

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সেখানে কি কি বিষয় শিখেছেন?	
শিখে আপনার কি লাভ হয়েছে?	
এ প্রকল্পের দুটো ভালো দিক বলুন	
এ প্রকল্পের দুটো নেতিবাচক দিক	

সুপারিশ (যদি থাকে):

মূল্যায়নকারীর মন্তব্য (যদি থাকে):

Annex- 5: How the project will contribute to ECOFISHBD, overall objectives and intermediate results-

