

Programme Learning Workshop Report

A Workshop with shiree Scale Fund Partners

Venue: Begum Rokeya Conference Room, RDRS Rangpur

Date: January 31, 2010

Facilitated by

Social and Economic Transformation of the Ultra-Poor Project

CARE Bangladesh

Social and

Economic

Transformation of the

Ultra-Poor

CARE Bangladesh



Introduction

A Program Learning Workshop was organized with Scale Fund Partners of Shiree on January 31, 2010. A total number of 28 participants attended in the day long workshop. The main objective of workshop was to create a forum where scale fund NGOs can share program learning, major challenges and discuss on how to overcome challenges that are emerging during field implementation. This initiative is planned to enhance horizontal learning scopes between Scale Fund Partners of shiree. This particular workshop was facilitated by SETU Project of CARE Bangladesh.

Anowarul Haq, Team Leader of SETU, as the chair of this workshop, welcomed everybody. He, in the beginning of the workshop, shared the schedule of the day. The schedule was mainly divided into four sections: a) Sharing of field implementation process by SETU, CARE and PFP, PAB, b) Field visit to SETU and PFP working areas, c) Reflections on field visit and d) Discussion on key challenges emerged from field implementation (for detail, please see the Workshop Schedule attached at the end of this report).

Jamal Khetran, Chief Operating Officer of shiree, then very briefly shared the objective of the workshop, emphasizing on the importance of learning from each other. He also thanked CARE Bangladesh to host the workshop.

Sharing of Field Implementation Process by SETU-CARE and PFP-PAB

After introduction and objective sharing, SETU-CARE and PFP-PAB organized two presentations on sharing of process and approaches.

SETU-CARE Presentation

SETU organized a bazar with three shops and all the participants were divided into three groups to visit SETU-CARE three shops. The shops were:

Shop 1: Polashbari Field Team - Sharing of Union Selection Process of SETU. Afsar Ali Akhondo and Sobota Roy presented the process. The presentation focused mostly on socio-economic vulnerability analysis at Upazilla and Union-level to identify poverty-prone unions and communities and how it has become an integral part of SETU beneficiaries selection process.

Shop 2: Sharing of Beneficiaries Selection Process and Community Mobilization - Aminul Islam and Shohida Khatun, the two natural leaders of Choto Shalmara Para of Hossainpur union, presented how community is taking lead in the SETU Community Led Total Development Process.

Shop 3: Hossainpur Union Parishad - Makhon Chandro Sarker (Chairman of Hossainpur Union Parishad) and Laily Begum (Woman Ward Member, Hossainpur) presented how Union Parishad is involved in selecting the poorest communities and other processes of SETU.

The presentations raised lessons around the following:

- How natural leaders are being emerged from the communities and how the whole community people themselves conducted well being analysis to categorize groups as per by their poverty classes, which is working well.
- Discussion on social mapping, particularly how this has been a tool which integrates people in activities and triggers local collective actions, through identifying resources and extreme poor households. An example of this exercise has led to 'community-led total sanitation'.
- Discussion on the uses of seasonal calendars. These have helped in identifying when people do not have work and when food is un-available throughout the year. E.g. during the Monga period. Natural leaders also presented what kind of local action has been taken to cope during the lean period.

- Cash for Work initiatives are proving valuable to female participants.
- Open budget sharing is helping to minimize corruption and is allowing poor people's concerns to be heard.
- Feeling that now SETU has been set up, communities will continue with the community solidarity which has been enhanced.
- Institutional mapping has also been valuable in particular for selecting SETU working Unions through both government and non-governmental institutions' efforts.

Finally, there was a 3.5 Minutes Audio Visual entitled, "Triggering the Hope for Transformation: Social and Economic Transformation of the Ultra-Poor", as a part of SETU-CARE presentation to share the activities of SETU in Field.

PFP-PAB Presentation

A.Z.M Nazmul Islam Chowdhury of PFP-PAB gave a power point presentation highlighting project's vision, mission, strategies and key achievements.

The presentation identified the following lessons learned:

- Households are involved in intermittent programmes (BRAC and other NGOs).
E.g. HHs on one embankment were supported by an ADB sanitation project.
- Issue of NGOs overlapping.
- Continual amendment of proposals / tools might divert conceptual thinking.
- Challenge of finding out beneficiaries following criteria.

Field Visits

After the presentations, participants of the workshop were divided into two groups: one group went to the field of SETU and the other group went to the field of PFP-PAB for greater understanding of approach and processes.

SETU-CARE Field Visit

The team went to Botlagari union under Saidpur district of Nilphamari. The team visited four spots.

1. Rug Unit - Partnership with Private Sector for Creating Income Options

This is an initiative of SETU that involves private sector to create sustainable income generation option throughout the year.

Place: Near Botlagari High School, Ward # 01, Union: Botlagari, Upazilla: Saidpur, District: Nilphamari, the total number of Extreme Poor involved = 25



2. Collective Fish Culture in a Canal - A Community Initiative

This is an example of how local collective action is taking place to use available local resources and opportunities.

Place: Mallipara, Ward # 08, Union: Botlagari, Upazilla: Saidpur, District: Nilphamari, # of Extreme Poor involved = 13 (Total = 51 HHs)

3. Community Managed Tutoring Centre

This initiative is an example of community action towards total development where attempt has been made to ensure quality education for the most



marginalized households within a community.

Place: Masua Para, Ward # 07, Union: Botlagari, Upazilla: Saidpur, District: Nilphamari, Total Students = 32 (Boys=17, Girls=15), # of Extreme Poor HHs = 06, Name of Volunteer: Shiba Rani

4. Discussion with Union Parishad and Natural Leaders

The discussion was arranged to demonstrate the importance of institutionalize development process within local government and what kinds of benefit it can yield from it.

Place: Botlagari Union Parishad, Upazilla: Saidpur, District: Nilphamari

PFP- PAB Field Visit

The team went to the Luxmitari Union of Gangachora Upazilla under Rangpur district to see the UDPS (one of PAB partners) activities both in embankment and sandy areas.

1. Different Livelihood Options Carried out by PFP Participants on the embankment (bi-cycle mechanics, sheep rearing, tailoring, etc)

2. Sandbar Cropping

The project appeared to be working well while issues were raised over its sustainability following the programme ending. In particular, there may be a power imbalance between the owners of these plots in comparison with the surrounding and much larger tobacco activities. Does the project need a sponsor with more clout to keep the land? The representative from PAB was hopeful that the incentive of food will mean that pumpkin production will outgrow that of tobacco.

- Women were saying that the plots need more nutrients.
- At the moment, indigenous knowledge is being used to control pests.



Visit to the pumpkin plots

3. Small Enterprise (Diesel/Shallow Engine Repairing/Assembling) Training

The young men receive 5 days of training with the aim of later becoming known in their communities and providing their trade. The project also provides help with inputs following the training. There were questions raised as to whether beneficiaries were leaving the training with the full set of tools and skills needed to begin work and whether the training could be linked with formal training courses to allow recipients the ability to gain a recognised qualification with certificate.

Reflections on Field Visits

At first the group which visited CARE-SETU project shared their findings (including learning) of field visits and then there was a plenary discussion.

Reflection on SETU-CARE Field Visit

- RUG unit is a very impressive intervention for the extreme poor people, where 25 (in each RUG unit) extreme poor are producing floor-mats and which has pre-defined markets. The visitors argued that it could be a good example of family supports in economic point of view.
- Community-based fish culture is a good community-led initiative to intervene in the community. The visitors commented that these groups need legal entity. Technical supports to ensure maximum utilization of resources should be ensured by the project.
- Community Managed Tutoring Centre's objective is to stop the drop-out rate of children from education - this is also an exciting initiative, but only 30 taka per student for the teacher/volunteer is not enough, commented by the visitors. SETU can think of providing monetary assistance for this.
- Inclusion as well as Capacity Building of Union Parishad in the mainstream of the project activities is very much crucial and this approach has been highly appreciated by the house. Jamal (Chief Operating Officer of shiree) suggested Uttaran to learn this and if possible to adopt it in Uttaran areas for better targeting of extreme poor.

Reflection on PFP-PAB Field Visit

- Livelihood Options (Sandbar Cropping) as have been introduced in the Char Context are very impressive. Since, pumpkin cultivation by applying the technology of sandbar cropping is only possible for 4-5 months, the project needs to better think about other livelihood options for the rest of the year so that the respective Extreme poor households can have certainty of food round the year. In the gap of pumpkin cultivation period, apiculture can be introduced.
- Without providing feeding inputs, small ruminant rearing project (sheep/goats) were likely burdensome to the recipient while the concerned HH has to spend additional Tk. 30/- for the ruminants feeding purpose. It is to be noted here that out the total income of such HH is only Tk. 120/- 130/- per day.

- Skill transfer training on technical trades like: Shallow engine repairing/assembling, Van/Rickshaw/Bicycle repairing were seemed sustainable livelihoods. SCF, a partner of SHIREE which is implementing projects in the Southern parts of Bangladesh viz: Khulna, Bagerhat, Shatkhira has opportunities to apply the similar pattern of technical skills transfer training as PAB has been doing in the Northern parts of Bangladesh.
- It would be beneficial for the trainees of technical trades training, if they could have full set of engineering tools. In this regard, budget for inputs may be re-considered – COO-SHIREE opined.
- It was opaque whether PAB is only addressing the economic vulnerabilities of the target beneficiaries or there are also some social development activities since this type of activities were not introduced to the visitors.

Discussion on Present Key Challenges Emerged in Field

Discussions raised the following issues:

- *Beneficiary selection criteria.* In the case of Uttaran, it is often a case of which land is available. Should we see households on a case by case basis? Should the criteria concerning micro-credit be re-thought?
- *Overlapping.* Do we need to broaden the physical space in which we are looking for extreme poor>> suggested by Practical Action-Bangladesh?
- *Single versus Multiple Intervention.* There is large scope for learning here. E.g. where the pumpkin plots are, could there also be a honey bee project or floating gardens like DSK is working on in Kamrangirchar?
- *Interventions for Physically Challenged Extreme Poor.* SETU-CARE has created a space for the physically challenged people to get access to Govt. Safety-net Programmes. Uttaran is thinking to distribute income-asset; e.g. Uttaran could provide a van/rickshaw to the physically challenged extreme poor and this extreme poor could rent it to others. PA-B is thinking to explore a 'old-home' for those people. This is one of the areas where scale partners can learn from each other.
- *Learning Mechanism.* Discussions pointed to the way we need to think creatively about how we can be interactive. Participants should receive documents documents and plans over emails. Specific learning agenda for each workshop can be set in advance, so that participants can prepare themselves for focused discussion. For the next meeting we should bring our documents, plans and household examples to share.
- *Next Meeting.* It was decided that programme learning workshops would be held roughly every 3 months regionally and that these would include each of the scale fund NGOs and the regionally specific innovation fund NGOs. NETZ was suggested as the next host.

Cultural Program Followed by a Dinner

Lastly, the day was rounded off and enjoyed with a cultural event arranged by CARE in which a number of CARE as well as other NGO staff participated! Followed by the cultural programme, there was a dinner party hosted by SETU-CARE.

Workshop agenda:

Date and Time	Events	Responsible/Facilitator
8:30- 9:00	Registration/Welcome/ introduction	TL-SETU, CARE
9:00-9:15	Objective of the workshop	COO-shiree
9:15-11:15	Present project detwails by CARE & PAB (other will be offered for short introduction of their project if interested) Discursion on Presentation	All NGOs
11:15-11:30	Tea Break	
11:30-15:00	Field visit with demonstration of some unique activities (Team will be formed with minimum 1 representative from each NGO)	Team-1: CARE & Team-2: PAB
15:00-16:00	Lunch	
16:00-17:00	Open discussion on field visit	All
17:00-17:30	Question and answer on operational issue	shiree
17:30-18:00	Free time	
18:00-19:00	Cultural events	CARE
19:00	Closing dinner	CARE

List of Participants

SL#	Name of Participants	Designation	Organization
01	Jamal Khetran	COO	SHIREE
02	Md. Delower Hossain	PM	SHIREE
03	Hannah Marsden	Yung professional	SHIREE
04	Sabina Yesmin	Knowledge Manager	SHIREE
05	Md. Manzarul Karim	PM	SHIREE
06	Md. Lotiful Bari	Knowledge Manager	SHIREE
07	Shafayet Hossain	Coordinator-M&E	SHIREE
08	Kazi Hasanuzzaman	Field Coordinator	OVA
09	A.N.M Kaiser Zillany	TC-KM	CARE
10	Reajul Islam	TC-EE	CARE
11	A. Mannan Molla	Manager-Operation	PAB
12	Nazrul Islam	Area Coordinator	NETZ
13	Md. Elius Ali	TO	NETZ
14	Anowarul Haq.	Team Leader	CARE
15	Aminur Rahman Bablu	Head M&E	UTTARAN
16	Abdul Khaleque	PC	UTTARAN
17	Bibakananda Adhikary	PM, SETU	SKS
18	Nazmul chowdhury	PM	PAB
19	Md. Mizanur Rahman	DOM	PAB
20	Umme Habib	TPM	Save the Children-UK
21	M. A. Akanda	AR	CARE
22	Makhan chandra Sarker	Chairman	Union Parishad
23	Sobita Roy	AR	CARE
24	Shahida Begum	Natural Leader	CARE
25	Amimul Islam	Natural Leader	CARE
26	Laily Begum	Member	Union Parishad
27	Md. Harunur Rashid	Office Helper	CARE
28	Rafiqul Islam Sarker	TPM	Save the Children-UK