

**Project-related change –
consequences for char-modified PAPD**

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Project R8103

***Consensus for a Holistic Approach to improve Rural-livelihoods in
Riverine-islands of Bangladesh (CHAR)***

This document is an output from a project funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries. The views expressed are not necessarily those of DFID.

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This report presents the main outcomes of the project activities and discusses this in relation to the modifications made to PAPD by the team.

Section 1 provides an overview of change attributable to the project by summarising and interpreting the findings from monitoring.

Section 2 discusses these findings in relation to the modified PAPD approach. Outcomes are analysed with the following Inception Phase null hypotheses in mind:

- *No adaptations need to be made to the way PAPD is developed and used for consensus building for common and de facto private property resources.*
- *Participatory Technology Development and/or other technology / management interventions provide no opportunity for building co-operation between different interest groups towards PAPD, in particular between influential and poor classes.*
- *Despite this inherent flexibility, local institutions are unable to internalise the PAPD process at the interface between decentralised government and the voice coming from mobilised poor people.*

Section 1.

Introduction

The monitoring format adopted by the project was intended to 1) track consensus-related change, 2) track developments to help staff realign their activities and 3) monitor progress against log-frame developments (for a detailed description of the monitoring approach see Annex B-iii).

However, the key requirement of the project was to test PAPD and potential modification of the methodology in the charlands. The following section interprets monitoring feedback in this context and discusses findings sequentially before triangulating them and summarising with respect to the performance of the modified PAPD and its potential in future.

1.1. Stakeholder and institutional analysis

The matrix format established with the project team was simple but helped identify important opportunities and constraints (or “blockers”) to community action-planning for the two villages. The following summary draws from Kamal Hossain and Faruk-ul-Islam’s “*Report on Institutional Monitoring - Stakeholders matrix*” (Appendix 1).

The team first delineated local, meso and national level stakeholders. For the purposes of recording institutional support and involvement with the project activities and objectives, “local” institutions were taken to mean CBO, RCE and Union Parishad individuals and groups, the “meso-level” was assumed to represent Upazila and District committees and line departments, and “national level” stakeholders were represented as GO, NGO and donor groups associated with policy or projects, centrally.

The technical intervention focus of PTD and the expertise required for advice for planning within PAPD meant that the “*most important stakeholders*” were both political and administrative bodies such as the Union and Upazila tiers of government and service providers such as extensionists and line department officials, respectively. Initially, the “least important stakeholders” were considered the informal institutions such as the *salish* and *mathbor* or government bodies with peripheral responsibilities such as the Department of Youth etc. (see Table 1)¹.

For each of the project activities (technical interventions as PTD or planning as micro and macro-PAPD) the team considered the current and potential stance of the key stakeholders. A typical concern for the research team might have been “*has the Union Parishad Council proved supportive of the Community Action Plans and what could be their future role/stance?*”, for instance.

¹ *Salish* is a traditional, local system of dispute resolution, arbitrated by influential *mathbor* leaders. The research team later became more aware of the significance of informal institutional factors – especially the role of *gusthi* (clans) - in the success or failure of local-level planning (see Section 2.).

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Most important stakeholders	Local level	Union Parishad (UP), Gram Sarker? (subject to future evoln.), Chairman/Members, Rural Community Extensionists (RCE), Money Lenders, Community Based Organization (CBO), Agricultural inputs supplier, Market committee, Local politician/elite. , Mosque committee. Lease of jalmahal, Water Body Management Committee (WBMC).
	Meso Level	Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Agricultural line department in District & Upazila level: Department of Fisheries (DoF), Department of livestock (DLS), Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Land Offices, Land Register Office, Department of women, Regional Agriculture Research Station (RARS), Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI), Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC), Local NGOs, Police Station (PS), Traders, Agricultural inputs supplier, Market committee, Additional District Commissioner (ADC) revenue, District Commissioner (DC).
	National Level	Line Departments, Ministries, Policy makers, National NGOs, Donor & rural development projects (DFID-CLP etc.)
Least important stakeholders	Local level	Boat man, Bazar committee, informal institutes (salish/mathbor), fishers, Mosque Imam, wordsmith, rich farmers, Match maker.
	Meso Level	Department of Youth, Health department

Table 1. The most and least important stakeholders in the charland context.

Institutional support / obstruction for PTD

The PTD activities appeared very successful in opening up technical advice and support from those mandated as service providers. The agriculture and livestock focus of most of these activities provided a “sink” for under-employed Department of Agriculture Extension and Department of Livestock staff at meso-level.

ITDG actively encouraged linkage between activity groups and these staff and the project-trained RCEs were active in providing this bridge. The incentives for secondary stakeholder participation appear numerous and probably extend beyond simple peer or political pressure (public crop demonstrations and pronouncements by ITDG and political elite would have added gravitas, in this respect). An important factor seems to be the new local demand generated by project discussions, group formation and the face-to-face contact with the RCEs. Government extension staff are generally well-supplied with inputs but not motivated/impelled to distribute them. The project and the local planning process appeared to create the personal enthusiasm and incentive required.

Locally, the Union Parishad was not strongly involved or necessary for delivery of these services and the project-facilitated CBOs (credit groups, maize-grower’s groups etc.) were more active in identifying needs and managing access to inputs.

With respect to livelihoods diversification, the Ministry of Youth and local traders were actively involved and interested in group discussions and planning and the project team believed the Ministry could play an important role in the future. It is interesting that local traders were attracted to non-farm activities such as handicrafts and food processing and that the potential linkage function they provide to remote markets was acknowledged by ITDG.

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The greatest potential change in role predicted for the future related to increased demand and activity at the local and meso-level, especially with the consolidation of demand and the CBOs at the villages for maize and fish seed (a new role for fish seed suppliers was predicted in this latter case).

PTD did not rely on macro-level institutions for delivery but fisheries-related negotiations (specifically the ownership of jalmohals) did actually involve consultation with the MP of the region and either this type of contact or policy change may be required to repeat the process in future.

Institutional support / obstruction for micro and macro-PAPD

The community house micro-PAPD at Nadagari (isolated char)

As a local issue, with little necessary external support, the community house activities at both villages required more from local-level institutional involvement than meso and national-level inputs. In both cases, the major constraint was agreement on siting and this required local mediation. The level of interaction with different stakeholders tailed off after this initial consultation and negotiation phase (see Appendix 1: Table 3).

The CBO and the RCEs played a central role in the early stages (the RCEs presumably acting as a bridge between the CBO and planning-related agencies at Upazila and District level) and the researchers hoped that the role of the UP could be increased in these types of planning issues in the future. Despite this, the Union Council was available to provide some support for the resulting Community Action Plan.

More significant were the meso-level institutions related to land registration and land dispute resolution such as the ADC Revenue and AC Land and this appears to be one of the most significant institutional linkages and breakthroughs achieved by the project (see also **Fortnightly Diaries**, below).

The community house micro-PAPD at Nandina (attached char)

The same series of events and stakeholder involvement occurred at the attached char, but in this case the local dispute over siting was much more of an obstacle to agreement and action. Unlike Nadagari, it was thought that NGOs may have a greater role to play in the future with regards to internalising the decision-making (PAPD process). Presumably, this relate to the greater accessibility of the attached char and greater NGO presence.

The canal stocking micro-PAPD at Nadagari

Again, the local groups actively supporting this activity were the CBO, the RCEs and to an extent the UP. The role of the UP appears to grow as agreement is reached and supplies of inputs become a reality. At the meo-level, the obvious necessary institutions are the Department of Fisheries (especially at the Upazila level) and the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), himself. UNOs are closely associated with line department agencies at this level and can act as gatekeepers by approving or blocking new initiatives.

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Interestingly, the original fishers actively resisted project-related planning. These fishers were not resident to the village and had no legal rights to fish there.

Macro-PAPD – community-based jalmohal management

As the most complex, and potentially most significant, planned intervention, the range of local stakeholders and institutions here was greater than the PTD and micro-PAPD activities. This is partly because the activity was intended to cross-cut the interests of a large number of people (membership and participation was purposefully broad) and because the initial planning and negotiation stage required the input and support of several administrative bodies. Establishing the status and ownership of the waterbody took a considerable length of time and required repeat visits to the local Land Office by the RCEs, for instance.

The research team chose to differentiate the pre-PAPD phase (confidence building, information exchange, group formation etc.) from the PAPD phase proper (facilitation, consensus building, planning etc.) and the composition of important players changes over these two stages. During the preliminary phase, a broad range of local, primary stakeholders were involved in discussions. In addition, because information gathering features at this early stage, meso-level stakeholders associated with the jalmohal were also strongly involved (especially the leaseholder and the ADC Revenue). Although the entire issue of land and jalmohal tenure tends to be kept opaque by officials, the government agencies appeared to have been relatively helpful. The jalmohal PAPD was actively resisted by the absentee jalmohal lessee, however (see **Case Studies** below). Traders were seen as neutral in their stance to the PAPD and, while willing to exploit potential markets, were passive during the planning process itself.

During the PAPD phase, the project-related groups took over in importance. The newly formed Water Body Management Committee and the RCEs, as interface with the DoF, adopted a central role while the significance of meso-level institutions declined. **There is an interesting progression here from local demand-led change, enabled by meso-level service providers, before the process goes full circle and the emphasis is back on local-level modifications and management.**

To an extent the identity of the stakeholders that proved useful are self-selected by the type of PAPD intervention. In this case, the meso-level stakeholders included DoF but the District Commissioner and the UNO provided useful political backing and support to the plan.

At the national level, the MP has proved a useful champion but this may relate, in part, to his personal links ITDG. With respect to “policy changes”, the meso and national-level stakeholders have not indicated any desire for new approaches but the team believe that the Upazila and District administrations could be more receptive in the future while the line ministry service providers (DAE and DoF) could also play a modified role.

Summary

The team gleaned much useful information on the role and potential of the various institutional stakeholders. Particularly interesting was the role played by the UP. Many natural resource management projects have placed great emphasis on this level and continue to do so but it seems that the UP, at their best, are most suited to

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consolidating the identity of potential beneficiaries/groups and in freeing-up resources from above. In other words, while they were found to be rather passive in the planning phase, they did add legitimacy and weight to plans at later stages. The UP also provided support in data gathering and for agricultural development, generally. In this last respect the Upazila officials have also proved supportive. The UNO personally met with Nadagari residents during the flood of 2004, for instance, and has witnessed the level of community planning, first-hand.

Project-related structures and mediators (the CBOs and RCEs) have proved catalytic in changing roles and creating links with other secondary stakeholders, especially within PTD. With respect to PAPD, secondary stakeholders were crucial at all stage of pre-planning, planning and implementation and the Union and Upazila Level Land Offices and Additional District Commissioner (ADC) at District level were generally supportive and enabling in this respect.

The Upazila Agricultural Coordination Committee (UACC) appears a very important interface between the various line departments and service providers and a potential audience for PAPD plans.

Crucially, as the research team note, although the support of secondary stakeholders cannot be solely attributed to the community themselves (the process was heavily facilitated by ITDG), what is important is that the community *do* recognise the potential of these stakeholders and *are* aware of the difference in relationships and their function before and after the PAPD process.

Although there are undoubtedly political and administrative nodes that can permit or obstruct local-level planning such as PAPD, some of the opportunities and constraints encountered may have been a manifestation of the personal stance of individuals. In turn, this may relate to complex personal stakes relating to social and political capital and influence or it may simply relate to enthusiasm for community-based rural development, distrust of NGOs, indifference etc.

There are obvious consequences for up-scaling forms of PAPD. While it is possible to make generalisation about the type of political, administrative or technical support required for community-based planning it is impossible to guarantee its success. Project R8195 suggests that some form of prior knowledge or reconnaissance and institutional mapping is required to uncover receptive individuals at critical points in the system.

Despite this, there do appear to be several themes that operate consistently in the charland setting and that require special attention by facilitators and project designers. These generally relate to political/institutional isolation and the tendency for local, informal, political processes to fill a vacuum. These process operate throughout rural Bangladesh but the modest demand-led change associated with the market and the private sector in other areas has not taken hold in the chars.

In reflection, the team realised that these local informal institutions (the *gusthi*, the *samaj* etc.) strongly influenced levels of participation, consensus and PAPD success in the villages (see Annex B-iv for a detailed discussion of thee social institutions).

1.2 Gender analysis

The intention of this activity was to track any change in the livelihoods of women attributable to project activities. In addition to following technical developments and change in practice, the team attempted to gauge the social status and role of women and their level of participation in project and non-project activities.

A checklist of issues was drawn up by the team (see Annex B-iii) and Table 2 below was compiled by brainstorming with the research team and the gender analysis report notes from the field.

The most important feature uncovered by the gender analysis related to pre-project, social differences between the two villages and the contrasting roles of women at the sites. As Annex B-iv states, there are fundamental differences between the social composition of the villages that relate to the history of the chars and the origin of their inhabitants - the key difference being the relative social homogeneity at the attached char, Nandina. In contrast, Nagdagari suffers from poor access to services and remoteness from markets, education and healthcare.

Pre-existing difference in the livelihoods strategies of women were also uncovered and some of these features seemed to affect the relevance and support of PTD and PAPD at each site. For example, PTD was very popular at Nadagari but this was not just because of the demand for increased production. Nadagari also possesses a quite different demographic composition, with men undertaking annual migration for employment on the mainland. As a consequence there are many more female-headed households at Nadagari and income-supplementing and homestead activities are attractive because household incomes can be extremely low on a seasonal basis.

The capacity of women to engage with the planning process also seemed likely to have been influenced by social contrasts between the two sites. The research team believed that the relative confidence and participation of women at Nandina, relates to greater general exposure to outsiders, outside influences, education etc. generally, for instance.

There was some evidence that women were gaining credibility through participation and membership of project groups at both sites. However, the level of participation and the role played by women was, to an extent, dictated by the PTD and PAPD activities chosen by the wider community. As a result, women in Nandina benefited from fact-finding missions to secondary stakeholders as part of the information gathering phase for the jalmohal planning. Such an opportunity for interaction with political and administrative officials was never provided at Nadagari because the interventions were largely independent of this type of support. PTD did, however, provide women the chance to engage with technical service providers and the women were vocal and publicly critical of some aspects of these stakeholders' performance. In addition, the PTD was thought to have developed women's group facilitation skills at Nadagari and flood preparedness at this village also provided new knowledge.

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Reporting issue	Nandina	Nadagari
<i>women are adopting new social roles</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> informal information collection & reporting to women greater involvement in discussions women expect husband not to migrate women participants gain more respect in household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> women with similar interests combining & samity* greater involvement in discussions women expect husband not to migrate** women participants gain more respect in household
<i>new knowledge & skills for livelihoods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> technical skills (breeding bucks, pits etc.) increased knowledge of fish prodn. (canal/jalmohal) moderate ↑group facilitating skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> technical skills (breeding bucks, pits etc.) increased flood preparedness skills high ↑group facilitating skills***
<i>mobility, linkage & voice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> women-headed committees (mixed) increased voice of some greater public confidence requests / links to service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some mothers now sending children to school women very vocal (high demand) greater public confidence women require nearby community house requests / links to service providers
<i>reasons for participation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medium demand for new employment opportunities low opportunity cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high demand for new employment opportunities low opportunity cost many woman-headed households higher woman labour / CPR reliance
<i>satisfaction & worries in participating new demands on women</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> women most pleased with community house exposure to new information & situations request for in-depth thinking risk of new activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> health improvements from vegetables women most pleased with com.house exposure to new information & situations request for in-depth thinking risk of new activities
<i>role of women in consensus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong mediation role in consensus represented in debate & activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> weaker mediation role in consensus**** few women represented
<i>decision-making capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> group meetings (e.g. credit) provided opportunities for wider discussions & mutual support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> group meetings (e.g. credit) provided opportunities for wider discussions & mutual support
<i>choice of livelihood options</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> food processing, handicraft, homestead gardening diversification via fish cultivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> food processing, handicraft, homestead gardening, goat & cattle rearing, tailoring

Table 2. Project impacts on women at the two study villages. The "reporting issues" were predefined and operated as a reminder for record keeping. (*Nadagari involvement in samity for credit and others occurred before the project. ** Especially in isolated Nadagari. ***Nadagari women had greater requirements for these skills - credit groups, other PTD etc.. ****This probably relates to lacking education).

1.3. Fortnightly diaries

The diaries were developed with the team in an attempt to systematically capture significant changes. In particular, it was the “invisible” processes relating to social and institutional breakthroughs or problems that were to be documented and at this stage of the project this represented a departure for the team from PTD concerns (i.e. the quantifiable success or otherwise of technical interventions).

Although it would have been preferable for joint-completion of the diaries (the team would have developed analytical skills together) the diaries were completed individually but with help from the senior research staff. As a result, the diaries vary in quality and the most useful interpretation of the diaries is achieved by following one researcher’s contribution over time.

The key themes of the diaries were “*participation*”, “*planning and decision-making*”, “*linkage*” and “*consensus*” and researcher notes were compiled from public “on-stage” pronouncements in meetings, in conjunction with “off-stage” comments and researcher’s “gut-feelings”.

It was possible to distil the key events and comments within each indicator type and these are summarised over time in Tables 3-6.

In summary, the level of debate and inclusion appeared to stay relatively high. Participation reduced or increased in line with the perceived progress and potential benefits to the wider community (particularly to the poor that made up the majority of participants in public meetings etc.). The project team and the facilitators appear to have done a good job maintaining enthusiasm and momentum.

Although disputes and new problems arise as project activities and potential implementation plans are introduced, there was some evidence that the CBO and the community in general were growing more accustomed to solving problems and finding sensible solutions (see RA comments in Table 6, for example).

Analysis of “process” within Project R8195 suggests that the introduction of new, project-induced conflicts in NRM projects is probably much more common than openly acknowledged. Often projects exacerbate latent conflict and widen the differences in interests rather than create consensus. Projects then tend to breakdown as wide, community, support declines and enthusiasm and participation dwindle.

Although it should be acknowledged that consensus and community planning was the key purpose of the project, some of the observations made by the RAs in their diaries suggest the potential for longer-term change. In particular, the number of independently-held meetings, trips to service providers, together with the level of understanding of the significance of external political and technical stakeholders, suggest learning and increased confidence.

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<i>Participation</i>	Observations	RA Remarks
Dec 2003	Attendance no.s ↓ but ↑ at second meeting. Quality of discussion remains good, however.	Interest was waning due to com. house impasse but land registration was successful & encouraged attendance
Jan 2004	Meetings well-attended. 6 villagers involved in land registration. Informal gathering of farmers at Nadagari re. market appraisal. Fish stocking group ↓. 60 people attend micro-PPAD for com. House in Nandina + 4 informal meetings at each “corner” of village Autonomous meeting on fertilizer	Land registration a breakthrough. No implementation of fish plan reduced interest. Attendance good for house planning – seen as +ve for most groups, esp. poor. Fertilizer issue is creating great interest & independent action.
Feb 2004	Poor people attend a meeting scheduled for “influentials” High attendance in fish meetings reduces later (30 to 20).	The poor are vocal & strongly motivated. Confidence is growing because the outside jalmohal users are being marginalised. Fish group reduces as rich realise profits are insubstantial. <u>Comment:</u> Participation would be higher with better community organisation in Nandina.
Mar 2004	Attendance high (32 & 36) at 2 Nandina meetings Contribution of “poor” and “better-off” ↑ Women numbers generally low but remain vocal.	Good progress on community house & jalmohal attracts others. The poor better understand potential & the function of the CBO (more confident). <u>Comment:</u> Executive positions held by richer except Secretary (Mr Rahman) based on social capital
April n/a		
May 2004	Informal discussions prior to final PAPD. Women attendance is low (2 regular) but are learning their potential in NRM. New attendees become involved.	<u>Comment:</u> Rich realise input of poor is required for success. Newcomers realise the potential of jalmohal for them.
June 2004	Pond owners ↑ in planning phase. General attendance ↓	Owners foresee individual benefit. Proposed May action did not occur & landowners try to capture resources <u>Comment:</u> Participation requires CBO commitment to CAP.
July 2004	Attendance ↑ (36 + 6 female) New influentials enter discussions.	CBO is resolving resource handling problem & organising meetings properly now. New influentials want influence.
Aug 2004	Attendance of poor ↑ 60%	Due to pro-poor plan & community leaders have proved themselves during the flood.

Table 3. Positive and negative developments in relation to “participation” at the project sites.

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<i>Planning & decision-making</i>	Observations	RA Remarks
Dec 2003	<p>Selection/validation/registration of land for comm. house.</p> <p>Date agreed for action planning</p> <p>Tk 17000 inputs requested from ITDG</p> <p>Fisher group agree winter stocking programme.</p>	
Jan 2004	<p>Villagers agree purchase of building from another village.</p> <p>A plan t transport other material is agreed.</p> <p>The site is agreed (village market).</p> <p>Land registration should occur by mid-Feb.</p> <p>A draft budget for the house was developed.</p>	A cheaper option than new building.
Feb 2004	<p>CBO agree start to comm. house with provisional funds.</p> <p>CBO agree transport process.</p> <p>7 jalmohal interst groups were formed by the community.</p> <p>Canal fish sharing scheme agreed.</p> <p>Next year's fish plan to be developed <i>after</i> harvesting.</p> <p>Family meetings held at night to discuss jalmohal issues.</p>	<p>Canal scheme (1/3rd to land owners, 2/3^{ds} to rest).</p> <p>Family meetings are informal and off-stage but hoped to deal with some of the <i>gusthi</i> problems.</p>
Mar 2004	<p>Commitment to 7 interest group meetings.</p> <p>17 member executive committee formed by community.</p> <p>Villagers agree identity of Chairman.</p> <p>Villagers deny committee post to landowner.</p> <p>General agreement that decisions must be recorded according to some constitution.</p>	<u>Comment:</u> Further commitment to community house will enable further planning
April n/a		
May 2004	<p>Community agree to increase links to secondary stakeholders after the public meetings (plenary).</p> <p>Farmers express need for extra hired technical advice.</p> <p>Representatives for the final workshops agreed by villagers.</p>	The fertilizer PTD has created a strong demand for extra advice and inputs.
June 2004	<p>Women agree to grow their own seedlings.</p> <p>Most villages request greater CBO effort.</p> <p>Pond owners request early access to fish seed producers.</p> <p>House to be constructed in next 2 weeks.</p>	
July 2004	<p>All villagers except landowners request return of the threshing machine to other users.</p>	The machine was grabbed by a richer farmer - a major dispute around the project.
Aug 2004	<p>A list of post-flood beneficiaries was finalised.</p> <p>Chillies will be ditributed to need y in time sof flood on a needs basis.</p>	This was part of the CAP for flood coping.

Table 4. Positive and negative developments in relation to “planning and decision-making” at the project sites.

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<u>Linkage</u>	<u>Observations</u>	<u>RA Remarks</u>
Dec 2003	<p>Intra-community - 2 groups in dispute were facilitated by RCE.</p> <p>CBO request UP support face-to-face.</p> <p>Villagers visit Land Office.</p> <p>DLS and bankers keen to provide technical and credit support to goat farmers.</p> <p>Fish producers talked to fish seed producers.</p>	<p>Villagers visited Land Office and <i>then</i> informed ITDG showing independence and confidence.</p>
Jan 2004	<p>Villagers & RAs visit land Office for info. On costs & procedure.</p> <p>ULO provides support to farmers via RCE.</p> <p>Villagers decide to target service providers during their Eid holiday visits to village.</p> <p>Baliguri UP pledges tubewells.</p> <p>Extra seeds & fertilizer to be sourced by both villages from private sector individuals.</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> Community request ongoing interaction with external stakeholders to demonstrate their commitment.</p>
Feb 2004	<p>RCE will consolidate the link to private seed producers.</p> <p>The 3 Nadagari fish groups are sharing their experiences (2 original, 1 new).</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> linkage should be more systematic</p>
Mar 2004	<p>State Minister for Finance and Planning and the Minister in Charge of Jamalpur were informed of macro-PAPD on Fish Farmers' Day 2004 – the Minister expressed his support.</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> Demand from mustard growers for links increases.</p>
April n/a		
May 2004	<p>Inter-group linkage (7) is high for jalmohal planning.</p> <p>Vertical link with DoF to publicise PAPD to UNO and leaseholders elsewhere.</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> leader believes greater links to NGOs would release credit. Neighbouring villages could be better influenced by the planning.</p>
June 2004	<p>CBO have shared the plans with UP and UNO.</p> <p>Farmers linked with mainland farmers to hold seedlings on their behalf during flood.</p>	<p><u>Comment:</u> All but the landowners of the community house are interacting well.</p>
July 2004		<p><u>Comment:</u> horizontal linkage ↑ but could be better if plans cross-cut wider interests of the poor.</p>
Aug 2004	<p>Community extended its links during the flood – GO representatives provided support with ITDG.</p> <p>Farmers have identified their own chilli training partners, themselves.</p>	

Table 5. Positive and negative developments in relation to “linkage” at the project sites.

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<i>Consensus</i>	Observations	RA Remarks
Dec 2003	RAs, RCE & community facilitator have worked at household level to quell disputes on house siting. Identification of site & volunteering of labour were major group commitments.	
Jan 2004	The villager leader has been central to problem solving. Community want extra meeting to resolve problems. Consensus reached on area to be used for house – through good interaction.	
Feb 2004	Village leaders will attempt to resolve farmers wish to maintain high fertilizer treatment.	<u>Comment:</u> The jalmohal issue requires broad agreement and all are being encouraged.
Mar 2004	The selection committee members was controversial but this was resolved by the whole community.	<u>Comment:</u> The poorer have a stronger demand for consensus regarding the jalmohal.
April n/a		
May 2004	There is a concerted effort for agreement on the jalmohal The allocation of the thresher to the rich man was questioned by the poor and resolved. The community agreed a plan for the CBO to link better with external stakeholders.	<u>Comment:</u> this is largely in order to deter external threats and users.
June 2004	The thresher and minor house (position of door!) issues are resolved.	
July 2004		<u>Comment:</u> consultation and bargaining has built capacity and experience of the CBO.
Aug 2004	Good facilitation on behalf of the CBO leader managed to reach agreement on emergency use of chilli during flood.	

Table 6. Positive and negative developments in relation to “consensus” at the project sites.

Diary summary

The diaries were intended to act as guidance to the team and to realign observations away from technical developments to social and institutional prospects or constraints. In this respect, the diaries succeeded and the team dialogue regarding these issues (discussion of *gusthi*, linkage with service providers etc.) became more open and sophisticated. The tables above merely represent some of the key RA observations at the time.

With respect to analysis, however, the diaries probably required more careful management and handling. It would have been useful if the diaries had been compiled jointly from the team’s field notes and observations. Completing these diaries jointly would have reduced the discrepancies in style and quality between the various RAs². The requirement here was to detect and explain the quality and direction of change (not absolute change) and this would have been more achievable in group dialogue and would have been more consistent week to week.

² A similar team approach to process documentation is successfully being applied in Project R8365.

1.4. The Major Meeting Report

The intention of the Major Meeting Report was to capture breakthroughs or problems made in public, more formal, gatherings. Although some quantitative information was recorded (the number of participants etc.), the purpose was to critically assess motives and interests and to assess the significance of public statements and positions. It was left to the team to decide which meetings should be considered “major” and worthy of documentation. In total, three major meetings were documented at Nandina and four at Nadagari.

The significance of the reports and the feedback

The team were unable to document all such meetings in this manner (these reports were just one of several that required time-consuming translation to English and during the latter stages of the project the frequency of spontaneous but “major” meetings increased). As such, the feedback does not provide a timeline of the development of community meetings and public agreements. Rather, it functioned to prompt some of the research team to consider potential developments and some of the more hidden problems that may arise (see Table 7.).

The team were perceptive in recognising the potential problems to be encountered from landowning elites and of failing to maintain momentum through continuous discussion. These themes emerged several times.

With respect to the meetings themselves, the most critical appeared to be the one to review the performance of the CBO committee at Nadagari. The committee had been widely criticised and a new group of young challengers had made a public stand and challenged the committee members (see Annex B-iv for background). The team recognised the impact of the *gusthi* on reaching agreement but made notes querying the true motive of the young challengers.

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Site	Issue	Decisions	RA thoughts	Recommendations
Nadagari	<i>Site of community house</i> (15/12/03)	The land of Idris is suitable & accepted by all. This will be verified by Land Office by 17/12/03	This could raise confidence & participation (consensus was reached). However, many were absent so conflict could still arise.	RAs must help community approach Land Office. There needs to be more informal discussion between groups on siting. Links to external stakeholders need to be established for support.
	<i>Action plan for community house</i> (31/12/03)	New construction costs should be borne by the landowner. It may be preferable to use existing house. Costs then would be about Tk 25000 (20000 from ITDG) & poor would donate labour.	Majority agreement but will volunteers come forward? Local stakeholders appear committed to engaging secondary stakeholders	Financial aspects need to be developed & clear. The CBO (Village Development Committee) needs to propagate the details.
	<i>Dispute resolution over use of project inputs</i> (6/04)	ITDG inputs should be focussed on poor men & women. Fish seeds must be procured/produced soon.	The community facilitator appeared capable of receiving respect & reaching consensus.	We need to maintain links between community and other stakeholders. Need to remind people of agreement to produce affordable fish seed soon.
	<i>Strengthen the CBO</i> (14/10/04 – 200 + present)	Young members of credit providing societies suggest replacing resigned CBO members with new members. This was not confirmed by the community to date.	Factions were visible (gusthi) but discussion was ordered. Input of young generated overall enthusiasm. There is renewed concern within the CBO regarding their position & performance.	Although the gusthi divisions hamper decision-making, if action can be achieved this could increase social capital for future. The motive of the young people is unclear – community development or access project funds?
	Nandina	<i>Orientation meeting on jalmohal</i> (11/2/04)	Participants expressed the need to resolve conflicts as they arise & to ensure strong village organisation.	Open discussion with argument between rich and poor on distribution of jalmohal benefits.
Participants agreed 7 main interest groups & committed to separate group meetings to raise their own issues before final planning.			Argument of the poor for equal share quite convincing. CBO open to other opinion. No follow-up meeting was arranged & there is danger some will side with powerful external leaseholders	Jalmohal information needs to be shared with community now – to build their confidence (social capital) & show potential.
<i>Site of community house</i> (11/2/04)		The land of one landowner was not released - land of Edris was selected instead (this corresponds to the agreement in the early micro-PAPD). As with Nadagari, this will be verified by Land Office by 17/12/03	There is a potential problem if this land is not registered – one of the other landowners has been annoyed and may not contribute again.	Need to maintain interaction between community, RAs and external stakeholders.
<i>Post-flood rehabilitat'n</i> (23/8/04)		The meeting identified the vulnerable household types – depends on resource base, poverty and flood impact (needs based)	General enthusiasm to implement the community action plan but only 19 attendees. Resource allocation is a problem - causes jealousy.	This general agreement may raise social capital/consensus and participation but discussion & planning must continue.

Table 7. Feedback from the Major Meeting Reports. RAs interpreted the significance of the meetings to village planning and identified the requirements to implement any decisions.

1.5. The Community Monitoring System (CMS)

Some form of participatory monitoring and evaluation was a log-frame requirement for the project (Output 3) but its actual form was a topic of debate within the research team (see Appendix 2, for instance). The CMS that evolved was actually a very informal but routine process of reporting to both the community and to ITDG but some of the early reservations of some team members remained – especially the issue of sustainability and institutionalising of such a process (see later).

The development of the CMS is covered in greater detail in Annex B-iii but essentially the process depended on a community-elected representative communicating local issues of project performance and outcomes to project staff. The process of information gathering by these Community Monitors (CMs) operated informally at tea shops, group meetings and during “off-stage” discussions but it was also an opportunity for the community to discuss progress or problems in isolation from ITDG. This latter aspect was one of the main participatory characters of the approach. The other was the manner in which monitoring was decided. The communities rejected conventional forms of indicator and instead agreed to consider up to 10 positive or negative changes on a monthly basis.

Social/institutional versus technical/physical observations

The CMs and the communities were in no way prompted to report on specific project, or project-related, issues. Naturally, because the CMS was associated with ITDG, project issues came to the fore but the feedback also revealed something about changing priorities and concerns as community-planning progressed at the two villages.

As discussed, the demand for PTD at the isolated char was relatively high because livelihoods options were constrained and because certain social features of Nadagari meant that women were more active in supplementary household income generation. In addition, community-planning was reduced here for three main reasons;

- 1) antagonism between different *gusthi* groups restricted agreement and cooperation,
- 2) physical characteristics of the char and its age have confused the property rights issue and undermined long-term commitment and, relating to both these,
- 3) access to secondary stakeholders and the ability to influence service providers is particularly weak.

The social and physical setting in Nandina was very different and a macro-PAPD planning activity took central stage during the latter half of the project. This process involved regular interaction between the community, service providers and political stakeholders (see Case Studies below). There was less demand for PTD at Nandina.

The main theme represented by the CMS feedback is the switch from technical and physical observations and concerns to social and institutional ones. To some extent this might be expected because the project design had intended to make this progression and to follow the regular ITDG pathway from simple, practical solutions to more complex market and institutional issues.

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However, PAPD was intended to make people more aware of the services available to them and the potential of collective planning in this respect. The type of community feedback did, in fact, change with time to incorporate social issues relating to acceptability of plans, linkage with outside institutions, public support or conversely to local disputes. Figures 1 and 2 present the total frequency of technical versus social observation made by the community and the CM and its change over time. At both sites social and institutional issues outweigh concerns over technical constraints or approval of new benefits from alternative cropping etc.

Tables 8 and 9 present the community-identified events of interest during the monitoring period for Nadagari and Nandina, respectively.

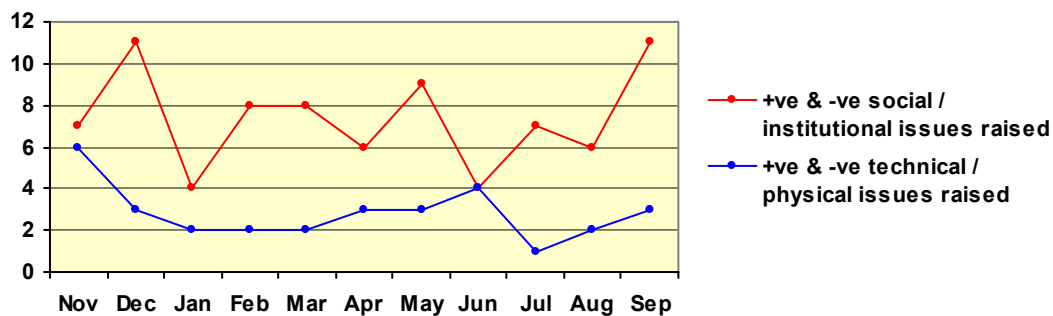


Figure 1. Nadagari - the frequency of positive and negative social / institutional observations versus technical / physical issues raised. The issues were reported to ITDG via a Community Monitor. The total number of technical observations was much higher than Nandina, reflecting the greater demand for technical support here.

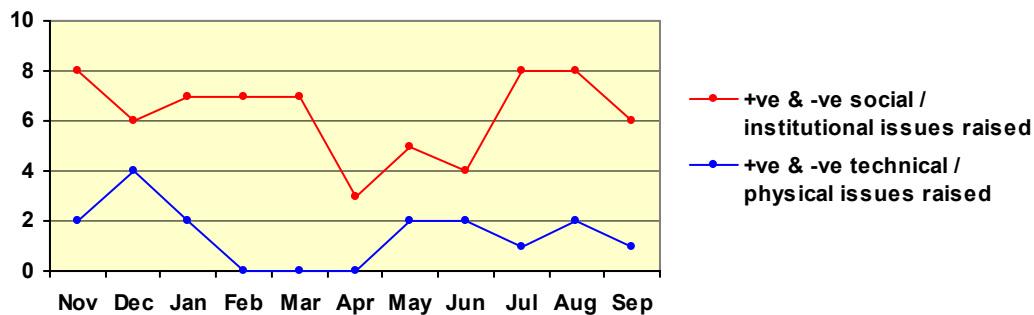


Figure 2. Nandina - the frequency of positive and negative social / institutional observations versus technical / physical issues raised. The issues were reported to ITDG via a Community Monitor. Technical considerations and requirements reduced in significance as PAPD negotiations raised social and political issues.

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Month	+ve changes		-ve changes	
	Social/institutional	Tech/physical	Social/institutional	Tech/physical
11/03				
observations	4	5	3	1
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Community leaders now confident to engage UNO” • “RARS link is v. useful” • “discussion & participation ↑” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “training has doubled choice of maize” • “pit compost is viable & popular with women” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “gusthi division appearing on canal access” • “house siting causing conflict” • “delays ↓ interest” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “veterinary charges ↑”
12/03				
observations	6	1	5	2
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “appreciation of UNO role” • “land dispute resolved” • “local demand for transparency in house plan & use” • “canal fisher group develop own plan” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “identity of goat farmers for training agreed” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “CBO is not transparent” • “no progress on village development” • “many still dependent on loans” • “meetings waste our time” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “lack of progress & visible change” • “resources still unavailable”
1/04				
observations	3	1	1	1
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “land was allocated to the CBO” • “CBO dynamics are positive” • “the poor spontaneously donated labour on house” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “widespread awareness of need for organic matter” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “distrust of landowners in relation to canal & share of catch” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “fertilizer applied to paddy rather than vegetables”
2/04				
observations	5	1	3	1
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “fish was shared fairly as planned” • “village committee has succeeded” • “poor have influenced the CBO” • “villagers have embraced advice” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “women are enthusiastically growing vegetables” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “gusthi division is preventing a collective approach” • “strong leadership is required” • “... because house issue is under threat” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “misunderstanding of fertilizer advice”
3/04				
observations	5	1	3	1
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “UP expected to support plan” • “sharing of fish catch was fair” • “local demand for better CBO” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “approval of cross-visit with RARS)” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “suspicion of CBO fund management” • “Participation ↓ as landowner gets more influence” • “conflict between landowner and neighbour” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “flood protection measures still needed”
4/04				
observations	5	1	1	2
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “villagers ↑ role in participatory decisions” • “leaders contributed their funds first” • “a poor man was selected for help” • “the CBO document the meetings” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “maize marketing is easier than expected” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “gusthi is preventing cooperation” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “account keeping is poor” • “thresher has not been v. useful”

Table 8. Positive and negative changes as identified by Nadagari residents and community monitor. Feedback has been arranged as *social & institutional* and *technical & physical* and comments are paraphrased via RA reporting and notes (see Appendix 3).

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Month	+ve changes		-ve changes	
	Social/institutional	Tech/physical	Social/institutional	Tech/physical
observations	3	3	6	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “one community leader embraced PAPD training” • “solar panel on house encouraged group action” • “villagers are planning for flood risk” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “the thresher can be used for other purposes” • “villagers appreciated soil testing” • “solar panel set up” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “one community leader <u>rejected</u> PAPD training” • “house hi-jack is preventing participation” • “conflict over use of thresher” • “UP and Upazilla not contributed yet” • “disputes along gusthi lines continue” • “threat of resignations in CBO” 	
6/04				
observations	3	4	1	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “conflict over thresher resolved by village leader & meetings” • “neighbouring village asked about planning & decision-making” • “BRAC are first NGO to supply credit here” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “pit cultivation is a success” • “Goat production now profitable” • “flood friendly cropping is established” • “BRAC supply credit” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “gusthi recriminations continue” 	
7/04				
observations	4	1	3	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “some believe new leadership is better” • “women told leaders to be more pro-poor” • “presence of groups like RARS & DLS has ↑” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “crop diversification has occurred” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “lacking financial transparency of CBO” • “CBO leaders do not select poor for emergency relief” • “there is worry about lack of boat” 	
8/04				
observations	4	2	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “we have confidence to link with DLS, DAE and DoF” • “DLS service has increased” • “CBO leaders have been challenged on accountability” • “young groups emerging as enthusiastic force” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “chilli disease ↓” • “DLS service has increased” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “still need financial transparency of CBO” • “CBO members want personal benefit” 	
9/04				
observations	6	1	5	3
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “young group have expressed optimism regarding plans” • “young have discussed problem of current CBO” • “informal discussion & enthusiasm ↑ with new, young input” • “CBO have targeted their activity better” • “there has been an independent meeting to discuss CBO format” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “the RCEs are approved of” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “greater unity required to site the house” • “community boat not provided by ITDG” • “ITDG not met priorities (credit, communications and market development)” • “it is expensive to attend meetings” • “the solar panel has been monopolised by the landowner” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “community boat not provided by ITDG” • “ITDG not met priorities (credit, communications and market development)” • “it is expensive to attend meetings”

Table 8. contd. Positive and negative changes as identified by Nadagari residents and community monitor. Feedback has been arranged as social & institutional and technical & physical and comments are paraphrased via RA reporting and notes (see Appendix 3).

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Month	+ve changes		-ve changes	
	Social/institutional	Tech/physical	Social/institutional	Tech/physical
11/03				
observations	6	2	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “there is consensus form poor to rich on house” • “villagers expressed need for CBO for better management” • “fish prodn. from ditch relieving conflict on pond” • “we can stem outside motive by unity” • “more integration between us now” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “maize is very popular” • “pond fish farmers are very content” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “doubt over unity for water body plan” • “some leaders not pro-poor” 	
12/03				
observations	3	4	3	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “government institutions are useful for soil fertility” • “banks are now willing to finance goats” • “tech. advice for maize offered by government institutions” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “greater fertilizer (boron) knowledge” • “tech. advice for maize offered by government institutions” • “women producing vegetables” • “1 woman has goat ” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “neighbours of maize growers worry about poultry predators” • “all stakeholders need to be more pro-poor” • “some recipients of inputs are not respectful” 	
1/04				
observations	5	2	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “fish stock group is inspiring others for jalmohal issue” • “community leaders operating as good facilitators” • “Women and poor fishers are more vocal in meetings now” • “poor putting pressure on rest for CAP” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “60% satisfied with pond fishery” • “we know now boron helps fertility” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “gusthi groups must operate to strengthen CB” • “some influentials will benefit most” 	
2/04				
observations	5	0	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “elite ensure high participation of poor” • “ITDG has helped (with DoF, Upazilla etc.) to represent area” • “community, esp. young, recognise importance of cooperation” • “women have made impact on CBO” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “leaseholder may conspire with outsiders to reduce local interest” • “Not easy for villagers to influence CBO” 	
3/04				
observations	5	0	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “leaders organised a meeting for all to air concerns” • “participation good – labour contributed to community house” • “Landless see chance for gains though participation” • “community contributed to National Fishers’ Day & lobbied minister • “participation of poor in decision-making & input to CBO committee ↑” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “poor have pressurised leader to provide information on jalmohal issue” • “leader are not developing the capacities of others in order to keep power” 	
4/04				
observations	3	0	0	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “women’s role in jalmohal issue acknowledged by elites” • “many people recognise local mentality is changing” • “landowners agreed equal share – participation ↑ as result” 			

Table 9. Positive and negative changes as identified by Nandina residents and community monitor. Feedback has been arranged as *social & institutional* and *technical & physical* and comments are paraphrased via RA reporting and notes (see Appendix 3).

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month	+ve changes		-ve changes	
	Social/institutional	Tech/physical	Social/institutional	Tech/physical
5/04				
observations	3	2	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “participation in CB & discussion is high” • “villagers met to discuss marketing for first time – threat-free setting” • “Poor form the waterbody management committee have influence at executive level” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “training form BADC on soil fertility was useful” • “livestock vaccination proved effectiveness of planning” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “community v. dependent on leader (Mr Rahman)” • “inputs have created jealousy” 	
6/04				
observations	3	0	1	2
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “fishers satisfied with jalmohal plan” • “leaders link with DOF & UNO to explain plan & get support” • “seeing benefits encourages us to participate” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “some villagers confused on leaders role in planning” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “goat disease outbreak” • “frequency of community meetings should increase to better inform people”
7/04				
observations	7	1	1	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “most believe selection of flood relief is fair” • “better community support for flood sufferers this year” • Villagers held their own meeting for jalmohal” • “we should plan with important institutions (DoF, UNO)”consensus and support was high during flood” • “villagers plan to grow vegetables after flood & pursue DAE for inputs” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “flood relief was very timely” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “CBO leaders need to be fairer in selecting beneficiaries” 	
8/04				
observations	6	2	2	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “post-flood planning was effective & pro-poor” • “greater concern for others now” • “linkage to Upazilla Health administration” • “UNO supported jalmohal plan & asked for police support” • “neighbouring village (Char Roha) are asking assistance on their water disputes – our village is proud” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “medical treatment for poor” • “4 ponds leased for seed production” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “2 ponds remain unstocked due to land dispute” • “Some think these landowners get better access to benefits” 	
9/04				
observations	5	1	1	0
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “participation ↑ - no.s & level of activity” • “UFO & RDSM are visiting jalmohal for updates” • “contributions to fishery increased with assurance of transparency to poor” • “women are more keen to be active” • “cross-visit to pen culture system created more enthusiasm” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “villagers favour voucher system for handling project money” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “too much emphasis on one leader can prevent development of others like Mr Rahman” 	

Table 9. contd. Positive and negative changes as identified by Nandina residents and community monitor. Feedback has been arranged as *social & institutional* and *technical & physical* and comments are paraphrased via RA reporting and notes (see Appendix 3).

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Finally, with respect to institutionalising the CMS the question of purpose and incentive are key. There obviously needs to be some form of local planning operating for internal monitoring to be useful. In turn, there are two questions here; 1) is it realistic to assume extension of PAPD-type planning at the project sites and 2) will this occur within the framework of a facilitated project or will it occur autonomously? In any context, it is unlikely that structured consensual planning will operate without a project presence. However, at the project sites, it is possible that similar activities and linkage to secondary stakeholders might be brought forward without reliance on a NGO facilitator but by drawing on the political and technical institutions mandated to perform such roles. The issue of PME in such a context is still questionable – i.e. who/what is being monitored and for what purpose?

In summary, community-generated evidence is most likely to have a role and impact within externally-facilitated processes because NGOs and others operating within a broader rural development setting are more frequently required to meet donor demands for participation and community monitoring³. The role of “participation” in the agriculture, fisheries and water sectors is dubious.

Some of the project team’s experiences with attempting to establish the CMS are presented in Box 1.

In October 2003, we encouraged local people to select two community monitors (volunteers, not paid by project) to capture 10 overall changes (project & non-project issues) that occur every month in the two study villages. Villagers gave responsibility as community monitor Mr Jamal Uddin for Char Nandina (attached char) and Mr Nizam Uddin for Char Nadagrai (isolated char). This was also a form of off-stage monitoring. The community monitors and their concerns also overlapped with development and community indicators (see attached on monitoring & indicators).

Community monitoring system (CMS): This system has progressed but faces major challenges to ensure institutionalisation. The two community monitors have provided useful support to the project. In Nadagari, for instance, the community monitor facilitated in resolving a problem with the use of a rice threshing machine, reorganising a CBO meeting with the RA team and providing feedback on this problem. In Char Nandina, the community monitor provided people’s reaction to the training on chilli production and disease resistance method. The training was consequently prioritised in the post flood plan by the community.

There have been problems with the CMS, however, with one community monitor falling unwell and the other suffering from his personal work load. The community of Nandina have selected one substitute as CM namely Mr Quader (young & committed). In addition, it is difficult for the community monitor to provide the whole change of community/village views without arranging a monitoring meeting. Introducing community indicators may have yielded more information of “off stage” events.

Despite this, the project has received considerable information on change, formally & informally, from the villagers as their voices and confidence grew.

Kamal Hossain, September, 2003

Box 1. Research team experience with “institutionalising” the CMS.

³ Project R8195 found that projects with sector-specific themes (facilitated by line agencies) tended to misuse the notion of “participation” and to use local involvement as a means to roll-out pre-defined interventions. Cross-sectoral or environment-oriented projects characteristic of donor-supported programmes tended to be more adaptive and responsive.

1.6. The Case Studies

The case studies were a means to develop narratives or “stories of change” associated with the project. To a large extent they were intended to complement diary and meeting reports and to ensure the capture of breakthroughs and problems. Much of their content related to technical breakthroughs and developments at the villages but they also chronicled social and institutional developments associated with PAPD and community negotiation. The following summaries focus on these types of issues and are taken from the case study reports of PTD, micro-PAPD and the macro-PAPD at Nandina (see Appendices 4, 5 and 6-7, respectively for the full reports).

PTD Case Studies

Although the PTD activities were designed as an entry point and a mechanism to develop community-ITDG links and trust, several social and institutional developments resulted from the local negotiation and linkage with service providers it generated.

The effort to investigate maize as a supplementary crop to disease-prone chilli was broadly supported by the communities of both villages. To date, there are some constraints to production which relate to new knowledge and crop management (disease control and sufficient fertilizer etc.) but the research team recognised the institutional links this activity generated. Some of the constraints to improvement – access to credit and seed – required the groups to think about alternative sources of credit, the prospects for community credit groups and improved communications with block supervisors (agricultural extensionists). In addition, as with each of the PTD groups, the maize-growing groups were closely associated with the micro and macro-PAPD at the two villages.

Pit culture of vegetables had two main social elements; it provided an additional role for women in production and it increased the amount of vegetables for household consumption. In addition, the team noticed linkage between neighbouring households through interest in the technology and local share or sale of the produce.

ITDG also facilitated a PTD with external research institutions – experiments with Boron fertilizer to improve the mustard crop. Both chars are mustard growing areas and ITDG engaged with the DAE, RARS and BADC to ensure soil testing and supply of suitable Boron treatments. The technical development here was considerable and mustard growth and market process were boosted but in addition, the participating farmers became more familiar with block supervisors and BADC – both on a personal level and with respect to their potential function. The mustard-growing group have also reached a consensus between them and overcome some initial caution in adopting the new approach. ITDG have also facilitated linkage to private institutions within this PTD and encouraged dialogue with reputable seed and fertilizer suppliers in the area. Overall, the 15 participating farmers have been able to communicate the need to evaluate soil fertility and apply suitable fertilizer to other residents in the two villages.

The PTD to investigate fish culture in the river tributaries in Nadagari was interesting because it was a deliberate experiment to test prospects for community fisheries management on behalf of the poor. The potential to fence and stock the canal at Nadagari was discussed with the community early on when livelihoods and options and constraints were being aired.

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This PTD was revealing because the up-stream versus down-stream factions that emerged were later to be reflected in the power differentials within the macro-PAPD (see below).

A series of formal and informal meetings were held whereby the membership and activities of the group were defined. The PTD targeted 60 beneficiaries (21 landowners and 39 part-time fishers) and worked through a Canal Fishery Management Committee. The UNO was proactive in facilitating the activity and balancing the concerns of the richer and poorer groups.

In summary, the canal was successfully demarcated and stocked with various carp and wild species (see Appendix 4 for technical aspects of PTD performance). Technically, the PTD indicated that this type of intervention could be appropriate in numerous local charlands settings. The project identified a planning, preparation (bamboo fencing), stocking and harvesting regime to fit the narrow 5-6 month time window in such tributaries.

From a social and institutional perspective, the participants demonstrated the ability to manage a relatively complex and technical intervention in conjunction with DoF, particularly the District Fisheries Officer. This PTD, more than any other, introduced local stakeholders to the process of management planning, dispute resolution, potential impacts on others and the importance of consensus. Participants transferred this knowledge to the micro-PAPD issue of the community house in Nadagari (below) and residents of Nandina have visited the site to learn lessons from their experiences.

Micro-PAPD Case Studies

The micro-PAPD activities were the beginning of community-level negotiation proper. The research team adopted the term to describe planning based on low to medium-risk interventions i.e. actions that were unlikely to fail by disadvantaging any groups, were not contentious and which required only moderate technical and institutional conditions for success. The team developed a three-stage methodology for these micro-PAPD activities. The following is summarised from RA reporting (see Appendix 5).

- *Micro-PAPD: Example 1 - The community house at Nadagari*

The planning of community buildings at both villages provided a valuable introduction for ITDG and the villagers to PAPD and the process of negotiation and interaction with secondary stakeholders. Although the community buildings were widely supported, planning was complicated by disputes over siting. In a sense, this issue provided a microcosm of the ownership negotiations and the role of the elite that would later influence the macro-PAPD (see below).

The community house micro-PAPD at Nadagari was conducted in the same three basic phases as the others – a preparatory phase followed by a pre-PAPD and finally a micro-PAPD workshop.

The **preparatory phase** included what the team call an “experimental PAPD” where the principles of community planning and the benefits of consensus are introduced to villagers. Although local residents were enthusiastic, moving discussion away from immediate livelihoods concerns to potential, broad improvements or “envisioned

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futures” required careful management. The PTD process was intended to develop this skill and build trust and confidence. As with Nandina, government officials, line departments and other NGO staff visited the site and listened to local concerns. In parallel with the institutional interaction and linkage that was being facilitated, the PTD process that ran concurrently also built up a better level of technical awareness and understanding by local people and the service providers.

It was during this stage that it became apparent that some poor were unwilling to attend public meetings on the land of influential individuals. A demand for a neutral, community meeting place, was uncovered.

The **pre-PAPD phase** developed this issue further and uncovered distinct factions and barriers to cooperation across *gusthi* (kinship) lines. In response, the research team ensured that in following meetings (six group discussions were held in this phase) that a full range of representative stakeholders were present and participating, including individuals from different livelihoods groups, age groups and sexes.

During these meetings it was agreed that a future community house could provide a place for general discussion, marriage and religious ceremonies, adult and child education, a mini-flood shelter and as a village guest house. The participation of women was to be encouraged through suitable training and education activities and political parties were to be prohibited from using the building for their own purposes.

The **micro-PAPD workshop** consisted of a formal, half-day, meeting initiated by the provisional village committee president and attended by 17 women and 24 men from different socio-economic groups. The issues discussed related to siting, the earthworks required, size and cost and the source of funds and other support.

The most contentious issue was that of land donation. Several of the richer residents donated between 5 and 15 decimals of land and various amounts towards land registration and earthworks. Obviously, there was social and political capital or kudos to be gained here.

The next stage was to entrust a 6-member committee to investigate these different offers, paying particular attention to documentation and the validity of their land rights and long-term tenure. The preference of the community was to select land registered under the “1962 Land Record” in preference to that register in the “1982 Land Registry”.

The committee investigated the potential of the Union Parishad Council to manage budgets and contribute towards costs and construction work. It was agreed that final budgets would be discussed when the land donation issue had been resolved.

Since the micro-workshop the DC of Jamalpur has approved the construction and formally requested the UNO of Madargonj to provide the required support. The UNO subsequently expressed his support and four further meetings were held to select a plot for the construction. ITDG helped facilitate this process by insisting the land owners provided their registry papers and by fixing a deadline for their submission (15 December 2003) while villagers approached the Land Office for extra documentation.

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The documentation required from the Union and Upazila Land Office included plot number, Khatian, gross official location of land, land identifications papers (Parcha) and the land deed (dalil).

With this information available, the villagers held an open meeting with ITDG to make a final decision, elaborate a budget and identify the source of required funds.

- *Micro-PAPD: Example 2 - The canal fishery at Nadagari*

In Nadagari, the **preparatory phase** helped identify the canal as a potential focus for community activity and discussed the relevance of the canal to different sections of the community. On this basis, the community agreed to discuss the canal in relation to feedback from the various interest groups (landowners from upstream, middle sections and downstream, part-time fishers from inside and outside the village etc.). The entire community were able to contribute to the discussions but these groupings ensured that both influential landowners and the poor, reliant on the canal, were properly represented. At this stage, existing conflicts were discussed and these centred on the distribution of benefits between owners and users (the poor as jute reapers, boatmen and fishers).

The **pre-PAPD phase** was intended to build confidence and start the engagement process with secondary stakeholders. Landowners started to realise the financial potential of stocking the canal and symbolically established *khata* (brush piles to attract fish for capture) independently from the other groups. Several meetings were held at this stage to agree which groups should benefit but the meetings managed to reach a consensus and to ensure the spread would include poor, part-time fishers. Potential conflict with external fishers was avoided by resolving access rights at meetings with the UNO, UP and UFO. The role of these secondary stakeholders was important here and it was agreed that visiting fishers would have rights to fish during open flood but not-post-flood. Although ITDG played a crucial role in attracting the attention of these stakeholders, some of these players played a very constructive role in the process, themselves, especially the UNO, UFO and UP Chairman for the village.

Before a workshop meeting was held, the community agreed to separate the canal into two workable sections, each with its own stocking and harvesting rules but both open to participation by the poor.

The **micro-PAPD workshop phase** consisted of a formal half-day session with three groups – landowners, landowner/part-time fishers and fishers – intended to agree a consensual management plan for the canal. Several of the original (R7562) PAPD tools were applied here including problem census, prioritisation and public discussion of solutions. A structured STEPS approach was not adopted but technical, social and financial issues regarding the problems were well-considered. Most problems related to the need for external advice and support and help with access to inputs including fingerlings. A project denoted Fishery Extensionist was given the task of maintaining these links with the relevant service providers. Finally, the participatory action plan stated that 60 beneficiaries would actively participate, that the majority were poor users and that a 14-member canal fishery management committee would establish rules of participation and use. Initially, Tk. 100 investments were contributed. Secondary stakeholders were later invited to discuss the plan but no public plenary was held.

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Summary

This extended two month PAPD process (both these micro-PAPD case studies developed over a much longer time frame than the R7562 version) seemed to have helped the participants to deal with the trade-offs and negotiations necessary for movement forward. The committee has subsequently taken over many of the logistical and planning tasks originally steered by ITDG but it remains to be seen how sustainable it would be as an autonomous entity. Interestingly, the project team saw themselves as an important support (or check) to the management committee and did not assume a workable committee completely autonomous of ITDG-facilitation during the project. With respect to future management, the project team suggest a role for secondary stakeholders such as the UP and Upazila level Officers to check representation within the committee. It is unlikely that these officials will be neutral or particularly pro-poor, however.

The greatest threat to this micro-PAPD appears to be the risk of withdrawal from community-wide management by the landowners. Despite the uncertain future of the committee, the planning process through PTD and micro-PAPD may have engendered new informal institutions – that is, the way the community now link with secondary stakeholders and service providers. The project as a whole is trying to make normal interaction between the poor and their representatives and in this regard the micro-issues appear to have made progress in this respect.

- *Macro-PAPD Case Study*

The introductory, confidence-building, phase including PTD and micro-PAPD activities was perhaps longer than anticipated. This was partly the result of unexpected obstacles to community-level planning related to pre-existing social factions (*gusthi*) and the need to develop extra confidence within village-level debates within the research team, themselves. The early focus on easier, quick and technical solutions to well-defined problems helped build confidence and links with other stakeholders but postponed the team's engagement with wider and more complicated problem-solving. The research team's terminology – "low-risk" versus "high-risk" PAPD – perhaps revealed some trepidation in this regard.

However, a major unifying and cross-cutting plan was developed at Nandina and a process of macro-PAPD has subsequently established an apparently equitable and, for now, sustainable management structure. The issue of securing the village jalmohal and stocking this waterbody has attracted a critical mass of local and secondary stakeholders and this was largely due to the knowledge and enthusiasm of Kamal Hossain. The following section summarises the process by which the jalmohal and its management was negotiated and agreed by the community.

The macro-PAPD process that evolved can be represented as several over-lapping phases – a *familiarity phase* ("experimental PAPD"), *issue identification*, *information gathering and sharing*, *group formation*, *1st plenary*, *committee formation*, *2nd plenary* and, *finally, implementation* (see Table 12 for a summary of the planning process). The following summary stresses the process post-issue identification because the early stages were common with PTD and with the introduction of the project to the community, as a whole.

The **familiarity phase** was similar in both villages and occurred before discussion of the jalmohal. It lasted about ten days and merely introduced project staff and

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community-planning concepts to local residents. **Issue-identification** occurred during this early phase as a natural development of the discussion with local people regarding opportunities and constraints to livelihoods in the village.

Information gathering and sharing centred on discerning the status of the jalmohal and making the necessary enquiries with secondary stakeholders such as the Upazila Fisheries Officer, the Land Department and other political stakeholders. ITDG facilitated this process but a community-nominated individual worked closely with the team to uncover jalmohal-related issues and to take on the concerns and interests of primary stakeholders in the village. The process of knowledge sharing operated informally, through continuous dialogue between ITDG, the community representative and the community and was consolidated during 3-4 mixed stakeholder meetings.

The main breakthrough at this stage was establishing the existing and potential status of the waterbody and making this clear to the community. The waterbody, was in fact a jalmohal, requiring a lease from the Ministry of Land and potentially private or group-managed.

Group formation was largely directed by the villagers and resulted in 7 main groups based on their stake and interest in the jalmohal. These were; Richer groups (consisting of major landowners around waterbody), Medium rich (smaller landowners and waterbody lessees), Fisher groups, Landless groups, Women and Poor (no waterbody or landownership). These groups discussed jalmohal issues and prospects for consensual management amongst themselves but with ITDG facilitation. The main issues discussed are presented in Table 10 below.

Interest Group	Declarations (position) & Issues (interests)	Comment
"Richer" (landowners of jalmohal) x 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family-level negotiation of share • Some lack concern • Stake via future sales & processing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These leaseholders may still cause trouble for selfish gain • Seed costs could be prohibitive
"Landless" x 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed equal share • Labour should compensate for capital investment • Enthusiastic for increased income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be difficult to ensure full participation (transparency required) • Seed costs require early planning
"Fishers & leaseholders"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishers demand equal input to planning (good knowledge) • Unity will be required to deal with illegal outside fishers • Real potential for increased production real bring economic benefits to village • Excessive vegetation has hampered fish production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity still not formed • Fishers will require compensation not to fish • Fisher input maybe undermined - cannot afford full investment • Seed cost depends on quantity and source
"Women" x 33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will improve nutrition • Women should be involved to increase their skills • Women can be involved in processing • Will provide income-earning opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women could be involved in seed production, guarding & sorting • Other groups unwilling to support women ("<i>their households already presented by us</i>")

Table 10. Early discussion and issues raised by 4 of the 7 macro-PAPD interest groups. These meetings were held after "group-formation". The research team recorded their own reservations and precursors to success after these meetings.

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During the **1st plenary** these issues were presented to all groups and initial attempts at conflict resolution and agreement were attempted. Even before this plenary there were encouraging signs that the issue was being discussed “off-stage” within and between these groups. The team stressed that many of the differences of opinion between richer and poorer groups were, to an extent dealt with before these public and structured workshop meetings. In this case, for instance, the rich stakeholders agreed that for one year, at least, an equitable harvesting regime would be tested. This is an important feature of the char-adapted PAPD (see later).

The plenary was managed in a relatively structured manner and reflected the PAPD approach used within Project R7562. The 7 groups presented posters outlining their concerns and proposed solutions. The problems were ranked and prioritised across groups (Table 11). 55 people were presented, representing between 5-10 members of the 7 groups as intended.

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Problem & rank	Breakthrough / proposed solutions
1. Lacking of unity in village.	Villagers now confident enough to undermine outsider/illegal access to waterbody. Have to be more united for access & to gain benefit from resource.
2. Acceptable sharing system.	Group pressure convinced richer of equal sharing system. This brought a significant contribution to greater unity.
3. Acceptable committee.	All the groups agreed to make acceptable committee representation from each group.
4. Lack of local fish seed.	Villagers decided they will produce fish seed to reduce operation costs.
5. Financial investment.	Sufficient support required to help poor make the contributions.
6. Acceptable accounts system.	Projection of expenditure & income has to be provided to the board of community house weekly or bi-weekly.
7. Aquatic vegetation.	May be reduced by stocking of grass carp as biological control. Fishing could be done through feeding in selected areas away from weed.
8. Lack of institutional support.	The vital stakeholders must be identified. Community leaders will take the responsibility to ensure their support in community action plan & attempt to influence policy-related stakeholders.
9. Benefits to fishers, poor & women.	Protect fisher rights by ensuring access. Maintain equal (small) contributions. Widows and women-headed HHs will get access.

Table 11. The Ranked problems and their suggested solutions identified during the 1st plenary.

A simple STEPS was also conducted during this plenary (see Appendix 6 for more detail). This exercise introduced the level of thought and planning necessary to achieve various aspects of the stocking intervention and highlighted the social and political aspect of sustainability and feasibility.

The STEPS process achieved a consensus on prioritising the need for equal access and equal distribution of benefits from the activity.

Finally, it was agreed that groups would discuss and select representatives for **committee formation** on May 11th 2004.

The **2nd Plenary** (or final planning workshop) was attended by 34 residents and established a Community Action Plan for jalmohal management. Following the previous day's discussion, the structure and membership of the committee was agreed (29 members representing all stakeholder groups later expanded to 31 to accommodate more poor) and arrangements for contributions finalised (Tk.300-500 from 250-300 members).

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Detailed planning occurred within this plenary. For instance, it was agreed that the committee membership would not be available to CBO representatives but that the new Water Body Management Committee (WBMC) could interact with, and be advised by, this committee if required.

In addition, logistical/technical requirements were finalised, including; financing, women's participation, fish seed sourcing, fencing, guarding, harvesting, marketing, distribution, profit sharing, accounting and long-term planning. It was agreed that 5% of the profits would be diverted to "social assistance" of the elderly, widowed and the poor.

Much of this final planning drew on the institutional awareness developed by ITDG over the preceding months (a product of PTD and micro-PAPD). For instance, the identity and role of the various secondary stakeholders was considered and the conditions required for their support was discussed. The following day, an evening meeting, organised by the community themselves, outlined the findings and suggestions of the plenary to the village. The intention was to demonstrate the level of thought and support already achieved for the CAP.

A component part of the CAP was a written five year plan that pledged to fix the current membership and sharing system (one member per village household and equitable share of profits).

To date, the **implementation** phase has focussed on financial and practical aspects of stocking. Collection of membership payments has been conducted in one or two instalments, dependent on ability to pay, after the formation of a CAP bank account.

Some of the participants already had basic knowledge of fish stocking (from training by ITDG) and this has since been developed by DoF. In addition, community leaders and committee members have pledged to establish links with important technical and political stakeholders absent during the 2nd plenary⁴. The project partner NGO, RDSM, has also been proactive in providing support to the CAP and has organised over 100 households in producing the fish seed. Unfortunately, the severe flood of 2004 destroyed a large proportion of the nursery stock but stock did eventually commence in October after the flood drawn down.

The popularity of the scheme has seen membership increase from 200 to about 400 in January 2005, representing virtually the whole village (see Annex B-iv).

The stages and breakthroughs as summarised by the RAs are presented in Box 2.

⁴The stakeholder and institutional matrix provided useful guidance to the participants and to ITDG, in this respect.

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1. The issue emerged in the scoping study and was again tested during PAPD. It was also discussed in deferent PTD sessions and villagers raised the issue in several discussions with outside visitors. It was seen as a community issue, where the interest of different groups may vary, and provided an opening for wide participation in grass roots planning.
2. The collection of information created an opportunity for discussion & criticism among the villagers. They came to realise that it could be a potential benefit all. The people also came to understand that everyone would have access to the water body but that as a private property it was necessary to obtain papers and permission from the Land Department. Groups were also encouraged to express concerns/opinions “off-stage” as well as “on-stage” in the discussion in addition to participation in micro-PAPD activities.
3. PTD and micro-PAPD provided the opportunity to develop community facilitators. These efforts to organise small-scale consensus building activities helped developed the mentality for consensus building. The micro-PAPD contributed well to overall participation in the PAPD of the village.
4. Surfacing of groups from space and time, interaction within and between the group members also happened. PAPD on stipulated time frame may not bring such type of result. Which we got from allowing more time to sensitize, confidence building of groups members. It also significantly contributed to mobilization and empowering of interest groups prior to entering in PAPD phase.
5. Strong interaction and sharing between the groups created an opportunity to gauge group and individual opinion. People became more used to speaking in public, helping represent the needs of the poor such as fishers. This has brought greater unity among the villagers.
6. Richer stakeholder agreed an equal sharing system, increasing unity and significantly contributing to the implementation process.
7. It is important to ensure some ownership of the plan by relevant institutions (some absent from plenary sessions) but it was decided this should be a continuous process by the villagers. They thought institutions, such as DoF, could have a strong role in communicating needs and providing support and services. Community leaders decided to have a follow up meeting to execute the CAP.
8. If local fish seed production is not confirmed, it may reduce interest of the poor (increased costs).
9. Access to the waterbody may be strengthened for outsiders (lease holders) if local unity is weakened. However, the lessee must clarify the fact the water of Nandina is private property. It will requires strong support to CAP from ADC revenue. However, this may be subject to policy change. The DFO has given his promise to negotiate with ADC to expose latest position and will address this issue with the Minister in charge of Jamalpur district. The Minister is very keen to see waterbodies brought under aquaculture in Sarishabari.
10. The CBO and community leader need to be aware that the richer, landowners, are likely to attempt to capture the jalmohal having used the community to secure it initially.
11. Transparent and accountable accounts system is a must. There is a question of how this will be checked. The CBO will not have substantial sources to handle whereas, the WBMC will need to handle considerable accounts. This may undermine the authority of the CBO, however. If the CBO is the central point for village development perhaps it should have the main financial powers. It is important to pre-empt potential conflict between the CBO & the WBMC.
12. For instance, the CAP proposes that 20 % of fish profits should be used to meet next year’s operational costs. Who will preserve it - the CBO or the WBMC? The CBO has the authority to plan future spending etc. but this must be agreed in suitable discussions.
13. Again, 5% of profits is to be preserved as an assistance fund for the poor. This could be handled by the CBO but improper management will cause resentment and questioning of the committees.

Box 2. Key macro-PAPD developments and issues as identified by the RA team.

(Source: Case Study – Progress on Macro PAPD on Jalmahal/ Water body in Char Nandina: Kamal Hossain; Appendix 6).

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Date	PAPD stage	Format	Achievement	Parallel PTD
Jan 2003	<i>“Experimental” PAPD</i>	9 day open discussion / mixed stakeholders	Introduced PAPD concept & identified jalmohal issue & potential	PTD issues & activities introduced
Jan-April	<i>Informal/formal meetings</i>	Mixed with/without ITDG	Planned info. gathering – Mr. Rahman elected as representative	
April-June	<i>Information gathering</i>	ITDG, Rahman & secondary stakeholders	Ownership/legal status & prospects identified with UP, Upazila, Land Office, ADC Revenue, DFO & UFO	
July	<i>Information dissemination</i>	3-4 formal mixed meetings	Jalmohal status explained, options discussed & informal exchange with PTD groups	
<i>Annual flood - process stopped!</i>				
Feb 2004	<i>Pre-planning meeting</i>	Mixed meeting to identify working groups	7 groups, leaders & responsibilities agreed	
	<i>Community-facilitated group meetings x 7</i>	Separate meetings of 10-40 members	Problem prioritisation, sharing mechanism and rules formed	
May	<i>1st Plenary</i>	Mixed (&x7 groups), no secondary stakeholders	Each group presents solutions	“Off-stage” discussion with PTD participants on jalmohal issue
	<i>Independent meeting</i>	Mixed, ITDG absent	WBMC refined (29 to 31 members to incorporate more “poor”)	
	<i>2nd Plenary</i>	Mixed with secondary stakeholders	“Service negotiation” with secondary stakeholders, finalised subscription, budget & timing	
<i>Implementation</i>				
	<i>Monthly WBMC issues-based meeting</i>	Mixed with WBMC & ITDG	Dispute resolution, general management decisions	

Table 12. The Macro-PAPD process developed at Nandina. In parallel with the PAPD process, PTD discussions and linkage to service providers were occurring formally and informally.

Summary

The scope of the macro-PAPD process was considerable. Although the stocking of the jalmohal was the community-identified objective, the information-gathering and negotiations that were required brought villagers into contact with political and service providing stakeholders *outside* the char. In this regard, the previous PTD and micro-PAPD activities had developed a level of confidence and aptitude within the community and the community representatives.

In retrospect, the selection of the jalmohal provided the community (and the project) the opportunity to test planning within the context of contested and muddled property and use rights. Although the problem of shifting and contested property rights is not unique to the charlands setting, there are several geographical and physical features of the chars that make this a severe constraint to public commitment to plans and planning⁵. The long timeframe required here appears to be a direct consequence of the wide range of political and personal interests that needed to be navigated by ITDG and the community representatives.

The macro-PAPD seems to have succeeded in releasing political backing and general good will from those institutions that matter – these include Union, Upazila and District level representatives, authorities and agencies (particularly DoF).

With respect to sustainability, there are questions concerning the management of the CBO and the related Water Body Management Committee (WBMC) independent of some form of project facilitation. Some of the issues concern the management of jalmohal funds and the allocation of profits to the poor or for reinvestment in stocking. These issues were identified by the project team but perhaps greater attention needs to be paid to the ways in which these committees can remain representative, retain public support and ward off threats from powerful interests. Of interest here is the way in which the team re-directed committee membership to better represent the poor. The team acknowledged that they had to be forceful in fending off the landowners with an interest in monopolising fish production and harvesting. Experience of stocking elsewhere, has shown that success tends to attract the less poor and more entrepreneurial individuals with surplus capital⁶.

However, what this project has achieved, and what may work to assure some longevity, is a system that is not dependent on external subsidy for inputs and which does not rely on preferential access rights for the project. PAPD in this context is a new way of working because the impetus and resources must be generated by primary stakeholders in conjunction with other institutions, not the facilitator. ITDG provide the initial energy but *not* the material inputs and support required.

⁵ These include the confusion over khas (government) land versus private land exacerbated by the shifting land of the chars. In addition, the chars are politically marginalised and poor people, especially, are external to any form of dispute-resolution or verification process.

⁶ Project R8195 found that stocking projects such as the Oxbow Lakes Project and the stocking component of the Fourth Fisheries Project suffered from new conflict and early collapse of community-management. Preferential access arrangements for “genuine fishers” and inputs are easily captured by others – often those with no previous involvement in the fishery (see Lewins et al 2004).

The monitoring strategy in retrospect

Two forms of monitoring proved to be particularly useful from a project management and team development perspective. The institutional/stakeholder matrices succeeded in prompting the team to record negative, as well as positive, developments and encouraged thinking about “unblocking” barriers to progress. In parallel with the ITDG strategy to link communities with service providers, this helped develop a greater appreciation of the significance of the various political, administrative and technical agencies at different scales.

Secondly, the diary and meeting report formats did much to realign the focus of the team in the field and in their dealings with secondary stakeholders because it moved the emphasis away from PTD and the procurement of inputs towards scrutinising the relationships and linkages between the various interests. The diary was developed with the team just as the project was to make the move towards macro-PAPD and a guiding format was welcomed because it explained that new, “wordy”, types of information were interesting and significant to the project.

The diary and meeting reports instantly enabled the team to think analytically about the significance of comments made “on-stage” and “off-stage” and to assess the social and institutional feasibility of commitment and planning.

From a project management perspective, this switch from technical and visual observations and documentation to social and institutional features was timely and required. Monitoring activities had been stepped up at a time when the team should actually have started to accelerate planning activities with the communities. The “process documentation” format of the diaries and meeting reports helped redirect project focus, however.

Section 2.

PAPD modifications in summary

PAPD as developed and tested in Project R7562 was intended as a tool to build local consensus by uncovering co-dependencies and developing greater understanding between stakeholders. It was also meant to highlight opportunities to facilitators and options for future management, especially in a project context. Technically, PAPD draws on several existing methodologies (stakeholder analysis, problem census and business approaches to dispute resolution, for instance), but the overall theme is to stress that problem-solving may result in unexpected solutions and outcomes. This is, in part, because the problems themselves are not pre-determined by the facilitator but are the output of joint-discussion.

The aim of PAPD in the project context is to develop agreement and collective action on future management strategies which address the needs of all groups and their interests.

The normal sequence of activities within PAPD is outlined in Figure 3. There are three phases:

- a scoping phase which attempts to uncover local institutional issues and identify key participants through stakeholder analysis
- a participatory planning phase which comprises the workshop proper and uncovers key issues and potential solutions
- and finally, an implementation phase in which agreements are converted into action through appropriate management and institutional design.

Stakeholder analysis deconstructs the “community” and acknowledges that distinct groups exist with differing (but over-lapping) livelihood concerns and interests. The aim is to represent the diversity of these interests within the workshops and normally this follows some form of local reconnaissance where key informants provide context on the types of livelihood activities and related issues.

Stage 1 *Stakeholder analysis, problems census, prioritising & filtering*

The initial stage of the PAPD workshop centres on a problem census held with each stakeholder group in isolation. The participants list and rank problems that impact their livelihoods together with tentative solutions and these are filtered into natural resource management (NRM) and non-NRM issues by facilitators.

Stage 2 *Individual/joint discussion of problems/solutions including STEPS*

Feedback from each group is then presented back to all stakeholders before potential solutions are worked through in more detail. A key activity at this stage is STEPS analysis which examines social, technical, environmental, political and sustainability issues for each proposal.

Stage 3 *Public plenary to state agreed solution & seek external commitment*

Finally, the findings of each group are presented and discussed publicly with all stakeholders and agreement is reached on the way forward. Ideally, this culminates in the setting up of an implementation committee which has the responsibility to take proposals forward, make links with relevant local institutions and secure financial support for local activities. This process of consolidation is crucial to ensure that

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discussion is converted to action. By inviting secondary stakeholders, such as Union Parishad officials and Upazilla fishery or agriculture staff to the group discussions, it is hoped that this process is encouraged.

The entire process is intended to be carried out across 5-8 days and to be facilitated by several skilled staff. PAPD has been applied at numerous sites within several large NRM projects in Bangladesh, including the DFID-supported Community-Based Fisheries Management Project (CBFM-2). In this context, PAPD provides a systematic methodology to attract community support and to quickly identify unifying interventions. PAPD represents an entry point to longer-term resource use negotiation, committee formation and local management. However, because PAPD is applied in the project context, implemented activities are intended to fit overall project themes and objectives – normally the sustainable management of fisheries resources through community-level management committees.

In addition, several of the resource use dilemmas and conflicts surrounding aquatic resources are common throughout rural Bangladesh, as are the potential solutions⁷. In summary, it is possible to apply PAPD in a focussed and directed manner in the project setting.

The Char-modified PAPD approach

While the project was to test the suitability of the PAPD approach in the char context, it was thought that there were distinct parallels between some of ITDG's approaches to rural development and facilitated, consensual planning. In discussions with the R7562 team prior to the project start, it was made clear that PAPD had previously attempted attractive and cross-cutting examples of community planning early on, in order to build social capital and mutual awareness between livelihoods groups. The intention here was to gain momentum and some level of enthusiasm for other new pro-poor and sustainable practice or project activities.

ITDG has also been attempting change by building on modest technical improvements and building up to more intractable market and institutional issues relating to security, access rights and representation. The approach adopted in this project adopted participatory technological development (PTD), for instance, to "*break the ice*" and prove the short-term relevance of the project. In parallel, another, more subtle, process was occurring whereby local residents were encouraged to talk about wider-ranging constraints and opportunities to their livelihoods. The next step was to engage the communities in modest and more advanced planning (micro and macro-PAPD, respectively) with the relevant village and external stakeholders.

The approach adopted by the ITDG team evolved gradually over the span of the project but several important lessons have been learnt (see Section 1) and these are incorporated within the modified approach below. As an action research oriented project, the intention was to enable flexibility and to establish an adaptive process over the course of the research. The setting and the research questions were predetermined, but the approach required learning and modification on part of the team⁸.

⁷ For instance, CNRS have found that waterbody or *khal* re-excavation can often unite communities because increased water flow improves fisheries (inward movement of stocks and breeding fish) and farming interests (increased irrigable water and reduced stagnation), simultaneously.

⁸ Some of the following observations build on the report on introducing PAPD to the communities (Appendix 8).

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In the context of the charlands, institutional constraints are particularly acute. Access to service provision, social, political and influence are all lacking. Their geographic isolation, poor resource base and contested rights of tenure go some way to producing these constraints. In such a setting, NRM requires a broader approach of social and rural development that goes beyond demonstrations of natural resource-based solutions.

As expected, key constraints to establishing consensus and the capacity for community-level planning were social ones. Government and NGO presence in the chars is extremely weak and the communities themselves are often recently displaced and fractured. The project strategy was to introduce the greater project objective (consensus and planning) over an extended period the team called the “familiarity phase”. Technical support and facilitation with external service providers through the PTD were deliberately intended to build the level of trust and discussion and interaction between the various stakeholders before moving on to larger, more cross-cutting planning through PAPD.

In summary, the process was extended considerably from a workshop based set of exercises to an eighteen month process of interaction, discussion and facilitation on behalf of the communities. The following sequence is summarised in Figure 4.

Stage 1 *Familiarity phase (experimental PAPD), issue identification*

The initial stage of the PTD/PAPD approach was to introduce concepts of community-planning and consensus and to learn of key livelihoods constraints in mixed group meetings. The broad concept of PAPD was introduced – what the team termed “experimental PAPD”. During this stage larger, more “difficult”, issues and problems are highlighted and potential solutions discussed. The process extended over a period of about 9 days. During this phase, the original PAPD can be re-evaluated. In the char context, for instance, *gusthi* (kinship) groupings appeared as significant as livelihoods or resource-user groups normally established with the facilitator⁹.

Stage 2 *Information gathering and sharing, group formation, 1st plenary*

An information gathering process is established around a specific, unifying and cross-cutting prospective intervention. Researching and reporting responsibilities are delegated to community-identified representatives. A facilitator creates links with the relevant secondary stakeholders, local government institutions such as the Land Office, Union and Upazilla level agriculture and fisheries agencies¹⁰.

The wider community is formally and informally updated of prospects and technical requirements for progressing by the facilitator and the community researchers before a formal, open group meeting is held to discuss planning. The community develop several (in the project’s case, seven) distinct groups in order to represent multiple interests and delegate responsibilities. These groups are supported in their establishment but select their own representatives and allocate responsibilities with no interference. The groups’ stance to the intervention is discussed and potential problems/solutions identified before a plenary is held where the concerns and suggestions are presented and negotiated in public.

⁹ This stage incorporated original PAPD tools (problem census, STEPS etc.). See Appendix 9 for documentation of community exercises and feedback.

¹⁰ Appendix 9 documents early consultation with Upazilla stakeholders.

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Stage 3 *Committee formation, 2nd plenary, implementation*

The committee formation process is a gradual one and occurs in parallel with the PTD activities in addition to the PAPD negotiations. By this stage, several community representatives will have experience of representing interest groups (PTD members) to ITDG and other external stakeholders. In this case, a Water Body Management Committee (WBMC) was formed with basic membership and denoted roles. This happened with little facilitation from ITDG and was modified by the community to be more representative of the poorest.

Roles and responsibilities are confirmed and agreed in a public plenary. Key to this stage is the “service negotiation” between the community and the secondary stakeholders invited to attend the meeting(s). The relevant sector-specific agencies are present and Union Parishad and Upazilla officials are encouraged to publicly acknowledge and support declarations. The intention is to reach agreement on the timing and logistics of implementation. Finally, the intervention is implemented (in this case, by releasing fingerlings in a public ceremony with Upazilla Fisheries and local government officials). The PAPD intervention is then modified and managed by interaction between the management committee and participants - the WBMC meets once every month.

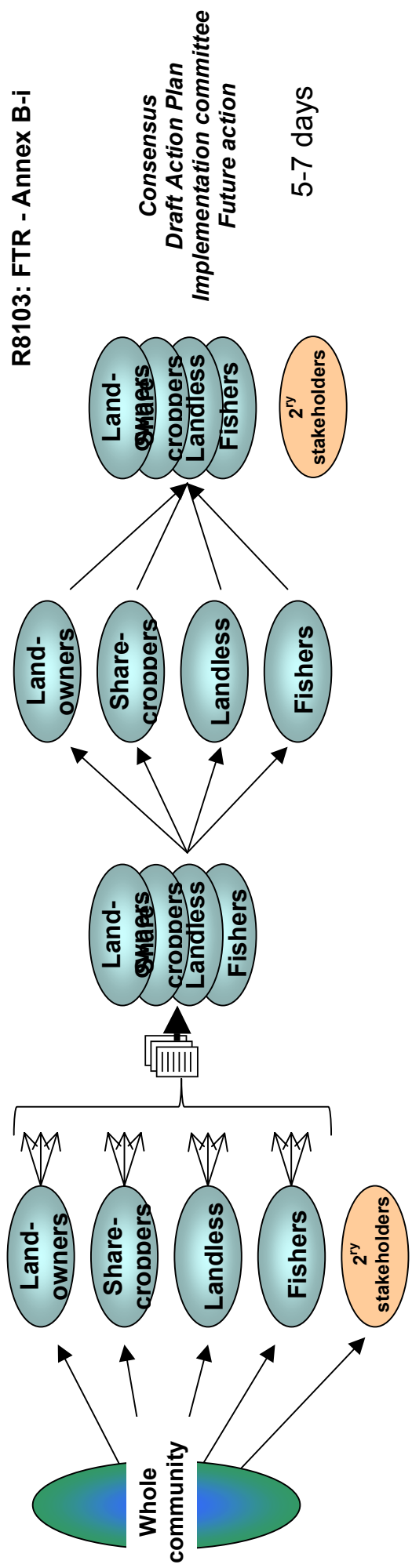


Figure 3. The PAPD approach as developed in project R7562. The approach is workshop-based and may take between 5-8 days to conduct.

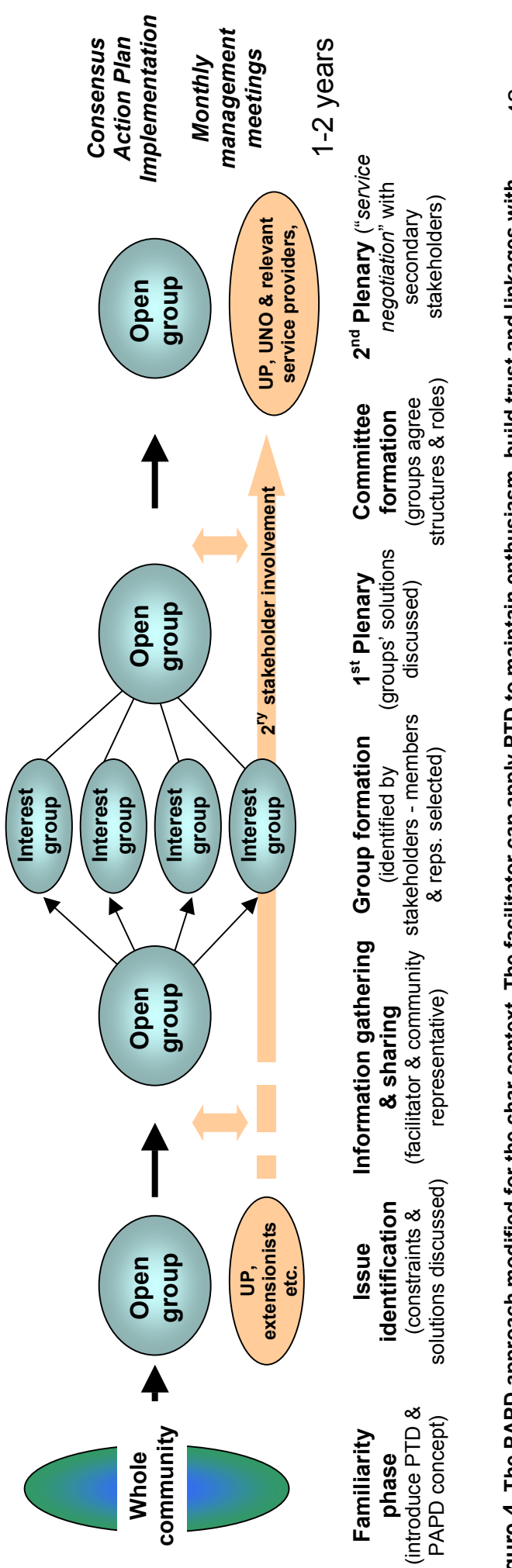


Figure 4. The PAPD approach modified for the char context. The facilitator can apply PTD to maintain enthusiasm, build trust and linkages with secondary stakeholders. This PAPD is process-based with regular formal / informal contact between community and facilitator over 12-24 months.

Key PAPD modifications and their relevance

Some of the most interesting and potentially useful aspects of the team's use of PAPD relate to overall flexibility. The char-modified PAPD adopted to plan jalmohal management at Nandina recognised that local stakeholders have their own ways of negotiating new opportunities and their impacts in an off-stage setting – contrasting somewhat with the intensive workshop form of PAPD within the project-setting of the Community-Based Fisheries Management Project, for instance.

The role of secondary stakeholders during the planning phase and the plenary sessions also needs discussion here. In this macro-PAPD, secondary stakeholders were to be more actively engaged once roles and responsibilities had been drawn up by participants and ITDG. In Project R7562, the final plenary was deliberately opened up to Union Parishad officials in an attempt to consolidate local, public support and to place peer/political pressure on officials for their future support in implementation. In this project, it was argued that there may be a trade-off involved when including political and service provider stakeholders during public planning meetings. ITDG have expressed some reservations with respect to the original approach. Public pronouncements by political officials in meetings in the charlands have not been taken very seriously by ITDG and tend to represent bland, general support for local development rather than commitment to specific activities (see Annex B-iii: Appendix 2 - Developing the new Diary and Meeting Reports, for instance). The argument is that secondary stakeholders are more likely to provide the required support when the request is specific and that this is more to occur in an open environment where participants feel free to express their views and concerns.

Another new aspect of PAPD applied here is that conflicts (or rather disputes) associated with community proposals were openly acknowledged by all stakeholders, including ITDG. The fact that ITDG felt impelled to intervene at times on behalf of some of the poorer stakeholders groups indicates that this planning was dynamic and engaging. This may not correspond to the purest definition of consensus – a win-win or positive-sum game where the position of all has been strengthened – but there are few new management opportunities than can provide pro-poor outcomes without disadvantaging some group (whether this means landowners, rent-seeking officials, or part-time users of the resource, for instance).

The following section distils the important project findings with respect to the use of PAPD in the charlands context. Before discussing these key findings (relating to *timing, formal and informal institutions, the flexible approach to monitoring and the meaning of "success"*) in more detail, several key issues with respect to PAPD management are outlined.

PAPD management

Obviously the PAPD process has been extended here from that developed in R7562 and used elsewhere. The macro-PAPD process at Nandina took about 18 months from early discussion to implementation – partly due to the relationship-building required between these isolated communities and ITDG and partly because of the social, political and institutional issues that had to be accommodated or tackled (land/jalmohal ownership, secondary stakeholder roles and local responsibilities etc.)

One of the more interesting aspects of the team's approach, however, was the way in which groups evolved over the course of the planning. Group formation occurred relatively late in the process and, unlike the R7562 PAPD, the proceeding discussion

was not based on normal livelihoods group distinctions. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, the team recognised quite early that the interests (and constraints) did not, in fact, break down to fisher versus farmer/landowner concerns. In turn, this partly related to the nature of the proposed activities and plans which were not exclusively natural resource management issues (flood mitigation plans, the location and construction of a community building etc.).

Secondly, and perhaps most crucially, the team realised that factionalism related as much to kinship differences (*gusthi*) as to occupational groupings. Each *gusthi* group contained a range of livelihoods stakeholders and people of different socio-economic standing but obstacles to progress tended to relate to power struggles for influence between the *gusthi*. This was particularly manifested in the disputes over the site of the community house in Nadagari (see Annex B-iv for more detail).

Eventually, when group-formation was required in order to highlight problems, concerns and solutions for different prospective users of the jalmohal, the process was very lightly facilitated by ITDG. The seven group types were established by the community themselves and members were elected independently of ITDG. Later on, however, ITDG were impelled to intervene in the composition of the WBMC and this raises some questions concerning the role of facilitators in future. There is a trade-off here between allowing the planning process to evolve independently - increasing the sense of ownership and legitimacy - and ensuring that the process meets broad project/donor objective – in this case, that planning is pro-poor and equitable. Although it is possible to produce broad guidance on the role of participation and how it may require some directing, ultimately the way tools such as PAPD are applied relates to the experience and ability of the facilitator in question and the function that participation is intended to perform. PAPD will be most effective and meaningful when facilitated by agencies with the relevant community-level experience and as a part of projects or programmes that have far-reaching social/institutional development goals.

The significance of project experiences

In summary, the project findings/experience can develop the PAPD process in 5 particular areas;

1. Timing

PAPD in some contexts is applied as rather an introductory, ice-breaking activity. As an action research project, with PAPD at the centre, the same constraints were not a factor here. The project team were allowed to develop personal relationships and trust with a client group suspicious of outsiders and unused to interacting with NGOs and development projects (especially in Nadagari).

PTD and micro-PAPD were intended to “*test the water*” and to slowly develop a local habit of interacting with service providers and political representatives. People became used to debating options and representing their own interests in a public setting. In the case of the macro-PAPD at Nandina, these skills and the knowledge collected during early planning were transferred to the wider-reaching issue of community jalmohal management.

From start to implementation, this macro-PAPD took about 18 months to achieve. The long timeframe was partly a function of the research team, themselves, learning and building up their own confidence, before tackling a major issue with powerful, external, interest groups.

Project experience suggests that momentum and confidence takes time to build in these isolated settings. Recently, the role of the *gusthi* groups in controlling or blocking change has been challenge by the cross-cutting CBO and popular support for challengers to membership of the committee.

2. The role of formal institutions (service providers and political representatives)

PAPD in the project context draws in secondary stakeholders during the public plenary sessions in order to provide gravitas to the occasion and place some pressure on local political stakeholders for continued support.

In this project, however, the ITDG team and community felt the need to consolidate the planning process further *before* presenting detailed plans to these stakeholders. The team expressed their concern that these public meetings were used by political stakeholders to garner public support through hollow pronouncements unrelated to community plans and the project.

The land and jalmohal aspects of charlands planning have required interaction with political and administrative bodies up to District level. The Assistant District Commissioner was found to be responsive to and supportive of community planning within the project and his support opened up opportunities to influence the Land Registry agencies further down the chain. The UNO at Upazila level was also found to be supportive and was active in engaging the UFO and Union-level representatives.

The role of the Union Parishad changed during the lifespan of the project. Pre-planning the UP was relatively passive and any public pronouncements were routine and support-seeking. However, once the planning stage proper had started and the scope and potential of the process became more obvious the Union role became more supportive and facilitatory. During the information-gathering phase of the jalmohal macro-PAPD, for instance, the Union Parishad actively created a bridge between ITDG and the community to the line department agencies, the Land Office, UNO and the District administration.

Finally, once the information-gathering and planning was complete, the Union-level administration became less significant. Links had been formed with the relevant service providers (DoF and DAE personnel at Upazilla level, for instance) and the Union Parishad stood to one side. The Union Parishad role had been strongest in the mid-planning period where the potential beneficiaries and necessary agencies were being identified.

In terms of technical service provision, the project forged relationships with under-utilised staff at Upazila level. Community plans created a demand for livestock vaccination, soil testing, crop demonstrations etc. where previously there had been none. Local residents then formed their own personal (and business or client) relations with these staff, suggesting an element of mutual gain and sustainability.

In summary, it appears that Upazila government appears to be critical node for enabling local PAPD. The UNO can act as gatekeeper for channelling external funds or support from other political and service providing agencies. In addition, the District administration has proved crucial and supportive for land and jalmohal resolution. To some extent this may relate to the personalities encountered (an informal institutional

aspect – see below) but it seems these administrative bodies would provide similar function in charlands planning elsewhere.

3. The role of *informal* institutions (including elite and social factions)

The project has taken a pragmatic stance towards the “problem” of entrenched power relations and strong, local vested interests. For instance, the elected community representative in Nadagari was the son of the previous Union Parishad Chairman and in this regard, could be considered an elite member of the community. However, the political capital that this individual possessed enabled him to exert pressure and to influence political and service providing institutions in ways that newly formed CBOs would not have been able to on their own. Similarly, the MP that expressed his support for the project had personal links with a member of the ITDG team.

The social and demographic character of the chars vary but experience at the isolated char, Nadagari, suggests potential constraints to planning in more recently settled villages¹¹. Annex B-iv reviews in detail the role of the *gusthi* groups at the village and how they have obstructed decision-making within micro-PAPD processes. It is interesting that in both villages there seems to be an interest in incorporating informal and existing institutions into PAPD. To some extent a reliance on the *salish*, mosque and the *samaj* indicates a preference by some poor to work through established power networks and to entrust decision-making to their patrons. There are two main why the *status quo* may tacitly be permitted to represent the poor on their behalf; 1) the political and social power these institutions provide reduce the transaction costs required to ensure implementation of decisions¹² and 2) it reduces the income-earning opportunities relinquished by the poor during their attendance at meetings.

It is widely acknowledged that elites and pre-existing power differentials can modify or destroy intended management structures and activities but there is also a growing recognition that it can be counterproductive to attempt to circumvent them completely -true consensus entails identifying win-win options than can benefit the interests of all. However, the balance between facilitating an evolving local process and of over involvement (or interference) that may be unrealistic outside the project context is a delicate one. The ITDG team, themselves, have identified the key role they played in re-framing committee representation towards the poor and deflecting pro-landowner interests, for instance. Without careful scrutiny and concerted effort by the team the process would have been co-opted by elite but these raises questions over institutionalising PAPD in other contexts and with other facilitators. For instance, while commentators such as Bode (2002) propose some form of social reconnaissance to identify potential supporters and catalysts for change, transferring these skills and realigning agencies and NGOs to think in new ways is a difficult task¹³.

¹¹ Social capital and hence the potential of consensual planning, tend to be weak in displaced “communities”. The level of social capital is particularly low in transitory settlements and refugee camps where pre-existing bonds are broken.

¹² Toufique (1997) analyses the incentives for fishers to work with pre-existing *mastaan* groups that control access to waterbodies through extortion and violence, rather than form their own collectives of “genuine fishers” with preferential *de jure* access to jalmohal leases.

¹³ Operationalising the right type of thinking about projects and their formal/informal institutions takes time with agencies normally associated with credit provision or committed formation for pre-defined objectives. Training to Community-Based Fisheries Management (CBFM-2) in documenting “processes” needs to be followed up with more prescriptive frameworks.

However, the differences between the processes and outcomes at the two villages suggest greater prior knowledge of the areas was required before PAPD was introduced. While some of this relates to geographic characters (distance from markets, flood risk etc.), the strongest influencers appear social and institutional. In turn, whether formal or informal, these can be ubiquitous or site-specific. Some form of social and institutional mapping should highlight those site-specific characters that provide opportunities or obstacles to consensual planning. Many of these would relate to the informal institutional setting of the site in question – personal allegiances within Union-level government relating to *gusthi* or party politics, the interests of the Union Chairman, the function of the mosque committee (is it already associated with flood mitigation or land rights issues?), the level of respect for *salish* and their local role, the identity and interests of other elite etc.

4. A flexible approach to monitoring

The monitoring strategy has evolved over the course of the project. Originally, the emphasis was on detecting tangible changes in participation, livelihoods and production. To some extent, the project team needed to develop a recognition of the need for qualitative discussion of the “processes” evolving at the two sites and of ways to capture this change in a systematic manner. The key tools here were the diary and meeting report formats but the process of developing these with the team was informative for all project staff and consultants. This activity reinforced the need of the team to critically assess the meaning of what was seen and heard in terms of wider, long-term project objectives (testing the significance of PAPD to the charlands context and investigating prospects for lasting change).

The narratives developed by the team were intended not just to provide material for final reporting but to realign project and community strategy in real time. Although the broad areas to consider were pre-determined in diary design (*decision-making, linkage, dispute resolution* etc.) the content of diaries and the interpretation of their meaning was directed by staff. In some respects, this approach mirrors the flexible approach to reporting as developed within the most significant change (MSC)¹⁴ approach (see Annex B-iii).

Because PAPD relates to social capital and, particularly in isolated contexts like chars, to formal and informal institutional change, reporting had to highlight the ways people and vested interests were working with or reacting to PAPD concepts and plans. The overall approach to institutional change reflected the findings and recommendations of Project R8195 which suggests focussing on the processes that operate at interface between the project, communities and external stakeholders.

5. The meaning of “success”

The role and function of PAPD depends on setting and objective. In strongly-facilitated projects with distinct NRM objectives, consensual community-level planning can be a useful mechanism to raise the level of awareness and support for more equitable or sustainable management and practice. In the case of the chars, social development and empowerment may be a more pressing requirement. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, these areas have little or no interaction with

¹⁴ See, for example, Davies (2002).

project-aligned agencies or NGOs. Work in this context cannot assume the future presence of these secondary stakeholders and must attempt to build lasting relationships with those institutions that *do* function and that *are* ubiquitous throughout rural Bangladesh – Union and Upazila level government bodies and staff, the samaj, the mosque and patron-client relations.

A particularly pressing issue in the chars relates to security of access rights and tenure. Currently, allocation of private and khas land is controlled by a complex institutional melange representing the personal interests of privileged and political stakeholders and maintained by opaque process and deliberate obfuscation.

However, in the case of the canal and community house micro-PAPDs and the macro-PAPD on the jalmohal, the project has demonstrated that this institutional landscape can be navigated by local and poor stakeholders with the facilitation of an agency such as ITDG. The land and the jalmohal required for these community initiatives was secured through a lengthy process of interaction and repeat visits to the Land Office and District level bureaucrats. The message here is that property rights can be negotiated for and by the poor and that the poor can be introduced to the formal and informal institutional workings of secondary stakeholders.

At the village level, PAPD has attempted to build cooperation between existing social factions. The *gusthi* (kinship groups) at Nadagari represent an informal but resilient institution in its own right. Initially, differences between these groups represented a serious constraint to decision-making and agreement but towards the end of the project there were some signs that younger and more pro-active individuals were challenging these local barriers. This relates directly to the greater (social capital and institutional) goals of PAPD in development.

The issue here is how sustainable these impacts on social and institutional constraints actually are. This project has invested considerable effort forging links and relationships between poor charland residents and the political stakeholders and service providers that are meant to represent them. However, although ITDG acted as a catalyst, injecting a base level of energy and incentive into the system, local people were active in shaping the direction and form of dialogue that resulted from village to District level. Project diaries have captured the fact that many community delegations to secondary stakeholders evolved independently of ITDG coordination.

In summary, the purpose of PAPD in the charland context should be to form links with external institutions in order to release future support and collaboration. The livelihoods constraints in the chars largely relate to political and institutional isolation because and the project has shown that service providers can ameliorate problems associated with environmental setting and factors related to production.

Conclusion

In summary, the PAPD approaches adopted by ITDG and the communities of Nadagari and Nandina have achieved much with respect to institutional linkage and cooperation. The long time-span entailed here was partly a function of the co-learning process (both the community and the project team were feeling their way) and also the social and institutional issues that need to be overcome in the charlands setting.

A key recommendation would be to ensure better prior knowledge of institutional setting of prospective sites for PAPD. Not all villages will be able to garner the social

and political support needed to produce plans and implement them. In future, it will be necessary to glean as much background knowledge of potential opportunities or obstacles before committing fully to engaging with communities and others. In the context of large-scale programming in the chars, some form of context analysis should be made available and compulsory. Institutional mapping and social analysis should ideally be carried out by agencies with prior experience and by staff with social science backgrounds, however.

cation, for instance.

between different interest

r PAPD to achieve this at Nandina and Nadagari. *of getting things done”)* and there appears potential

Box 3. Project experience / findings summarised in relation to the Inception Phase null hypotheses.

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