

Process and Results Monitoring for Community-Based Fisheries Management



Project overview

The Sunamganj Community-Based Resource Management Project (SCBRMP) aims to improve the economic well-being of participating households directly in spite of other indirect benefits they get from adjacent communities. It is critical to provide access to essential services and resources and to diversify livelihood options in Sunamganj. Often, this remote district is exposed to flash flooding and is often left out in national development programs. Vulnerability and livelihood insecurity prevail in the district, particularly among poor households. The project's target groups are the landless, marginal and small-scale farmer households and women. The SCBRMP, implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), aims to alleviate poverty among 90,000 households in Sunamganj by ensuring access to resources and building their livelihood capital.

The project began in January 2003 and will end in June 2014. The total funding of the project is Tk 20,046.63.

The community-based fisheries management approach

The project introduced a community-based fisheries management (CBFM) approach. It is a co-management process involving stakeholders from different levels with defined responsibilities and roles. The fishers are the main actors and the ultimate beneficiaries. The Fisheries Department assists in the dissemination of technical knowledge and provides backstopping support to beel user groups (BUG) for better fisheries management.

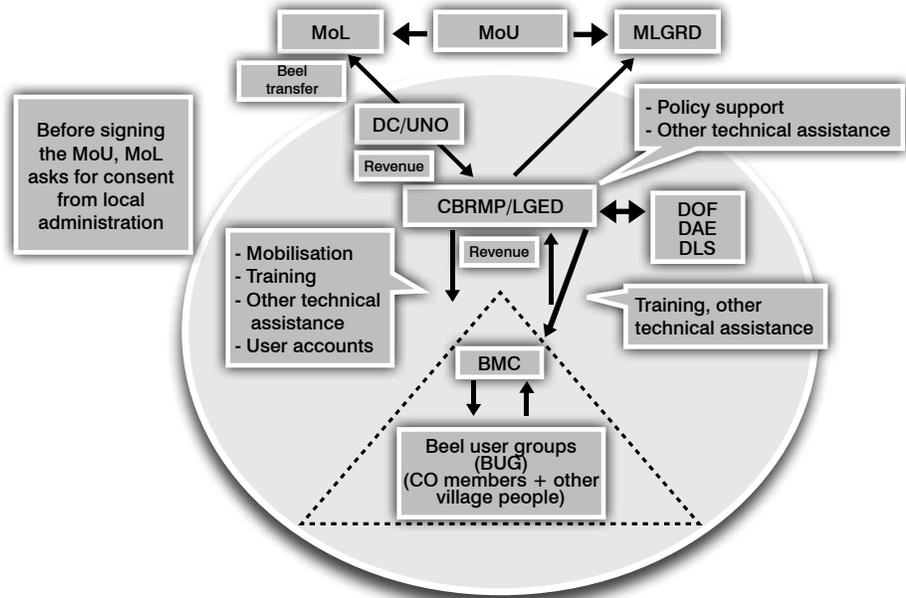


Figure 1. Beel transfer and management process.

The local administration assists in processing and handing over the beels to the BUGs and demarcating the beel area. The Worldfish Center conducts research on fish biodiversity and socioeconomic impact on fisher communities.

BUG members get training on group management, accounting and bookkeeping, group dynamics and conflict resolution, fish conservation and biodiversity, beel re-excavation, raising swamp tree nursery and beel side plantation and fish drying and fish marketing.

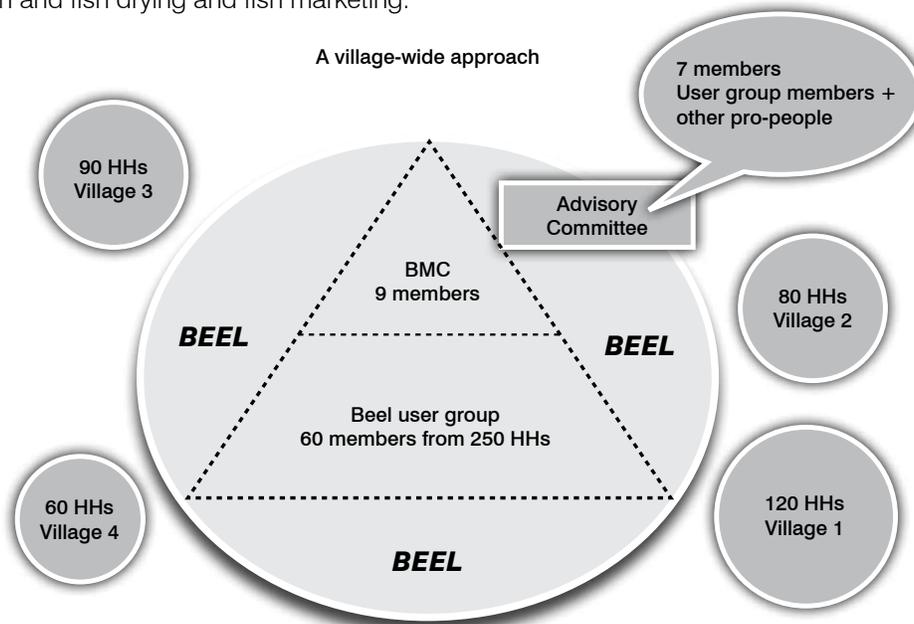


Figure 2. The management process involving beel user groups (BUG) and the Beel Management Committee (BMC).

The M&E system for CBFM

Beels are selected primarily on the basis of digital resource mapping results and, later, on the findings from participatory rural appraisal, which is carried out to understand the social context, location of command villages and fisher households, and some other issues related to beel fisher management. Finally, an inventory is made of interested fishers who may be included in the BUG.

Each BUG has an executive committee of 7-9 members, elected through secret balloting by the BUG members. They serve for a period of 2 years. The committee leads the BUG, following a set of rules developed in line with the government's Jalmahal management guidelines and standard democratic good practices. The BUG has its own account and books for recordkeeping of financial transactions and other data such as fish catch, sale, income and expenditures. The unique part of the beel management process is that the tasks are handled with respect to beel resource management—e.g., demarcation, re-excavation, harvesting, guarding and conservation. The community fishers themselves plan, implement and monitor in a participatory manner.



The M&E system has been developed around the project logical framework. The primary stakeholders, project staff and top-level officials and experts from LGED and other concerned departments have been consulted on different issues that relate to M&E components and process. The project has been practicing an M&E system since its inception; it is mostly done at the activity level. To meet the need for further critical and systematic assessment of higher levels of results, this M&E system is developed. Although the system covers all levels of performance from activity to goal, the major focus was on result level 1 (i.e., output) and its effect (i.e., purpose defined as result level 2).

Table 1 shows the various reporting formats, their purpose, frequency of use and the entity responsible.

Table 1. Reports used for monitoring and evaluation.

SL #	Description	Frequency	Use	Responsibility	Location
1	BUG supervision report	Monthly	Collection	SMSs /SO	Grassroots
2	Monthly progress report	Monthly	Collection	SMSs /SO	Grassroots
3	Beel profile and summary	Yearly	Project compilation	FSC	PMU
4	BUG audit report	Yearly	Project compilation	FSC	PMU
5	Excavation report (seasonal)	Weekly	Summary analysis	FSC	PMU
6	Beel harvesting report (seasonal)	Weekly	Summary analysis	FSC	PMU
7	Development and socioeconomic report	Yearly	Project compilation	FSC	PMU
8	Fisheries report	Quarterly	Project compilation	FSC	PMU
9	Component-wise physical and financial report	Yearly	Project compilation	M&ES	PMU

The BUG supervision report covers indicators such as members' savings, attendance in meetings, group fund and leadership rotation, all valuable parts of a CBFM. The beel profile summary covers indicators such as members' profile, expenditure on beel development, other investment income and net profit information.

Assessing BUG performance

An internal audit is done. It is an independent appraisal put in the project's M&E system to examine and evaluate the performance of some core activities of BUG. The annual internal audit is conducted by project staff coming from different upazilas; one upazila staff audits another upazila to make the audit more transparent and acceptable. The internal audit lends support to project management, enabling them to make decisions and promote good governance in BUG. This audit helps establish reliability and integrity of information; ensure compliance with policies, plans, procedures, laws and rules; safeguard assets and use resources efficiently. The internal audit of BUGs is one of the most important parts of the M&E system to assess the sustainability of CBFM. The format is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Format used in determining BUG rating.

Sl.No.	Assessment indicator	Total number	Marks obtained
Good governance			
1	Goal and objective of the group understood	3	
2	BUG bylaws received and practiced	4	
3	Regular meetings conducted with satisfactory member attendance	4	
4	Savings mobilised	4	
5	Leadership rotation	3	
6	Meeting resolution of BUG and BMC written/record keeping	4	
7	Beel management-related information written out and disseminated	3	
Subtotal		25	
Social background			
1	Number of female members in BUG	3	
2	Number of female members in the BMC	3	
3	BUG formation (majority are fisheries)	3	
4	Conflict resolution	4	
5	Advisory Committee formed and activities lined up	3	
6	BUG's social acceptability	4	
Subtotal		20	
Financial management			
1	All books and records written and properly kept	5	
2	Management cost weighed against income	5	
3	Management of fish sale	5	
4	Guarding expenditure	5	
5	Fish harvesting expenditure	5	
6	Remarkable findings/objections in the internal audit	5	
7	Cash-on-hand situation	5	
Subtotal		35	
Management			
1	Demarcation pillar established and maintained properly	3	
2	Members aware of total expenditure and plans	3	
3	Activities related to fish catch	4	
4	Guarding activities	4	
5	Training received on fish conservation and reproduction	3	
6	Individual future plans on beel asset development.	3	
Subtotal		20	
Grand total		100	

Assessment score:

Score (>3-year-old group): >80 = good/A; 60-80 = moderately good/B; <60 = Unsatisfactory/C

Score (< 3-year-old group): >70 = good/A; (50-70) = moderately good/B; <50 = Unsatisfactory/C

For BUG, a detailed monitoring system has been put in place to capture all necessary data to analyse performance and get results on beel management yearly and monthly.

Results of studies on CBFM

Studies were carried out to regularly monitor CBFM. They include the 3rd cycle of the fish catch study, the 2nd cycle of the biodiversity monitoring study and the BUG livelihood impact study of SCBRMP. A short description of the study results is given below.

a) Livelihood development

In the 2010 livelihood study, it is revealed that average income increased by about 28%, whereas income increased by 180% compared with a base income among participating households. Fishing was the income source with the highest contribution in all study periods, but there were differences in the other categories. In 2004, 43% of the income was derived from fishing, but in 2012, 27% of the income came from fishing, which was about 76% higher than the base year (Figure 3).

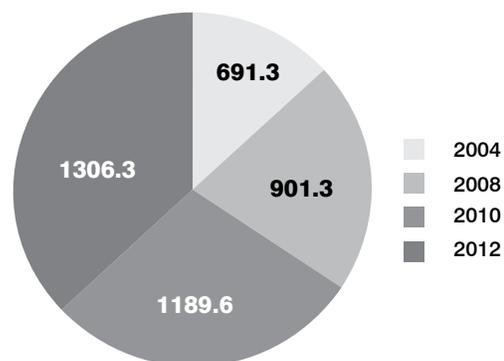


Figure 3. Comparative incomes (US\$) across different study years. (1US\$=60 Tk)

b) Comparison with national production

The average national production of inland open water capture fisheries was reported to be 263 kg/ha, 279 kg/ha, 356 kg/ha and 262 kg/ha in 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 financial year, respectively (DoF 2011). However, average national production of river fishery (including estuary) was reported at 180 kg/ha, 162 kg/ha, 180 kg/ha and 169 kg/ha in 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11, respectively. At the same time, average production from river fishery only at the SCBRMP sites was found to be 192 kg/ha, 199 kg/ha, 267 kg/ha and 199 kg/ha, respectively. Simultaneously, average national production of beel fisheries only was reported to be 616 kg/ha, 694 kg/ha, 615 kg/ha, and 714 kg/ha in 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively. Average production from beel fisheries only (pooled from both open and organised catch) at SCBRMP sites were found to be 663 kg/ha, 659 kg/ha, 720 kg/ha and 670 kg/ha in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, respectively. Figure 4 presents a comparison of the national and SCRMMP production.

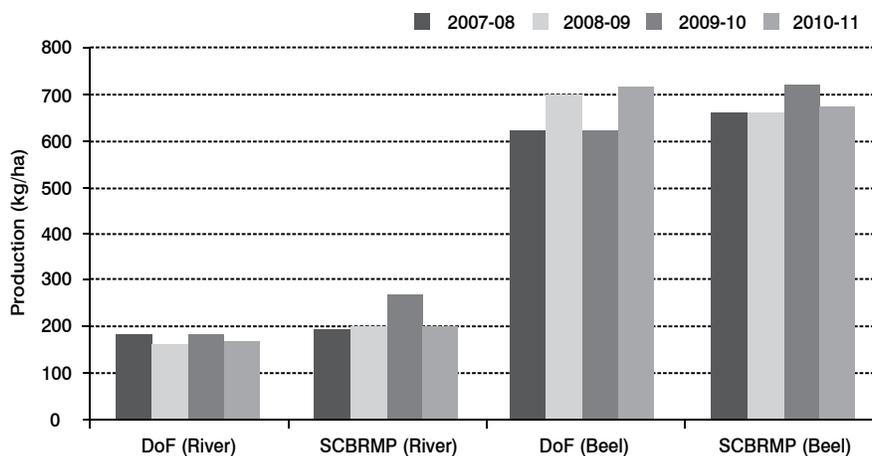


Figure 4. A comparison of national and SCRMMP fishery production.

Lessons learned

The project monitoring system of CBFM has effectively been put in place. Project performance has been monitored on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and yearly basis. Quarterly and semi-annual workshops have been arranged for progress review. The annual workshop has been arranged for progress review and for preparing the next year's activity plan for CBFM. A detailed annual work plan and budget has been drawn based on the project logframe and this serves as the basis for project implementation.

The Project Steering Committee and the District Project Coordination Committee meet at regular intervals to review yearly progress of the CBFM. The Upazila Project Coordination Committee also reviews progress of CBFM activities regularly. SCBRMP is a follow-up project and the beels are being received from the Ministry of Land under a memorandum of understanding for a period of 10 years in the first stage. Later, based on performance, the Haor Infrastructural and Livelihood Improvement Project (HILIP) may be extended for 10 more years. All BUGs are sustained based on strong M&E provided by SCBRMP for CBFM. The replicated project HILIP has in fact has been developed based on the M&E system and lessons learned from SCBRMP.

Conclusion

The community-based beel fisheries management approach introduced by SCBRMP is viewed as a unique and replicable approach to ensure sustainable open-water fisher production. It has given poor fishers access to productive resources that was not earlier possible. Now, fisher folks faces social and other access-related problems, collectively. For better management, policies that support fisher communities are needed. This will enable them to make maximum use of beel resources and assist them build their capacity.

Acronyms and abbreviations

CO	community organisation
CBFM	Community-Based Fisheries Management
SCBRMP	Sunamganj Community-Based Resource Management Project
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
BUG	beel user group
BMC	Beel Management Committee
MoL	Ministry of Land
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
Beel	water body
DC	district commissioner

UNO	upazila (subdistrict) Nirbahi officer
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DLS	Department of Livestock
HHs	households
PRA	participatory rural appraisal
AWPB	annual work plan and budget
MoU	memorandum of understanding
M&E	monitoring and evaluation

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Bio-sketch and contact details

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