

Narrative Progress Report:

Scaling-out of salt tolerant rice variety through FARMSEED (Farmer-to-farmer seed exchange system)



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Introduction

Because seed is an important determining factor in crop production, farmers need better and more affordable access to quality seeds to improve their production. To enhance farmers' access to quality seeds, Agricultural Advisory Society (AAS) has developed an innovative, decentralized seed production and distribution system, commonly known as FARMSEED (Farmer to farmer seed exchange system) in Bangladesh. It is a demand driven community based, farmer-led approach to both formal and informal seed systems. In FARMSEED system, community based seed producers, who received special training on rice seed production from AAS, are provided with foundation seeds. The generation of seeds produced from foundation seeds represents a substantial boost in seed quality when compared with the normally exchanged seeds between farmers. Seeds produced by seed farmers become directly available in the community without being channeled back into government agencies or NGOs for processing and marketing through a network. Vigorous networking is, thus, the key to success of the FARMSEED concept. Informal seed systems can be regarded as traditional in that they normally involve long-standing, well-established practices and links between seed products and consumers. Little improvement of informal seed system can ensure the availability of quality seed in the hands of farmers, especially resource poor farmers at the community level and FARMSEED is an example. Thus, AAS has developed FARMSEED approach, which is the combination of formal and informal seed system and fully sustainable to ensure quality seed supply of the demanded crops among the farmers in general and rice in specific. Accordingly, the FARMSEED approach needs to be introduced a wider and more pervasive scale among the rice farmers with salt tolerant rice modern varieties (MVs) in coastal regions of the country. Through this project, AAS proposes to expand this model of quality rice seeds production and distribution among the resource poor farmers in coastal regions of Bangladesh.

However, the challenge is to establish FARMSEED approach, to ensure the quality seed availability of salt tolerant rice variety in coastal regions under the funding support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) approved IRRI's project on stress tolerant rice for poor farmers in Africa and South Asia. This report summarizes the progress that AAS has made as of 31 December 2008 toward achieving its assigned task.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to establish a community based sustainable farmer-to-farmer seed exchange system; ensuring, in the process, the availability of quality rice seed of salt tolerant varieties on a sustainable basis and at affordable prices in coastal regions of Bangladesh. This will be done through empowering the farmer's decision-making ability and by enhancing their skill in quality seed production, processing, preservation and distribution.

Outputs

1. FARMSEED Network financially established
2. Improved the skill and knowledge of grower group farmers
3. Increased the availability of quality seed
4. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation system established

Duration

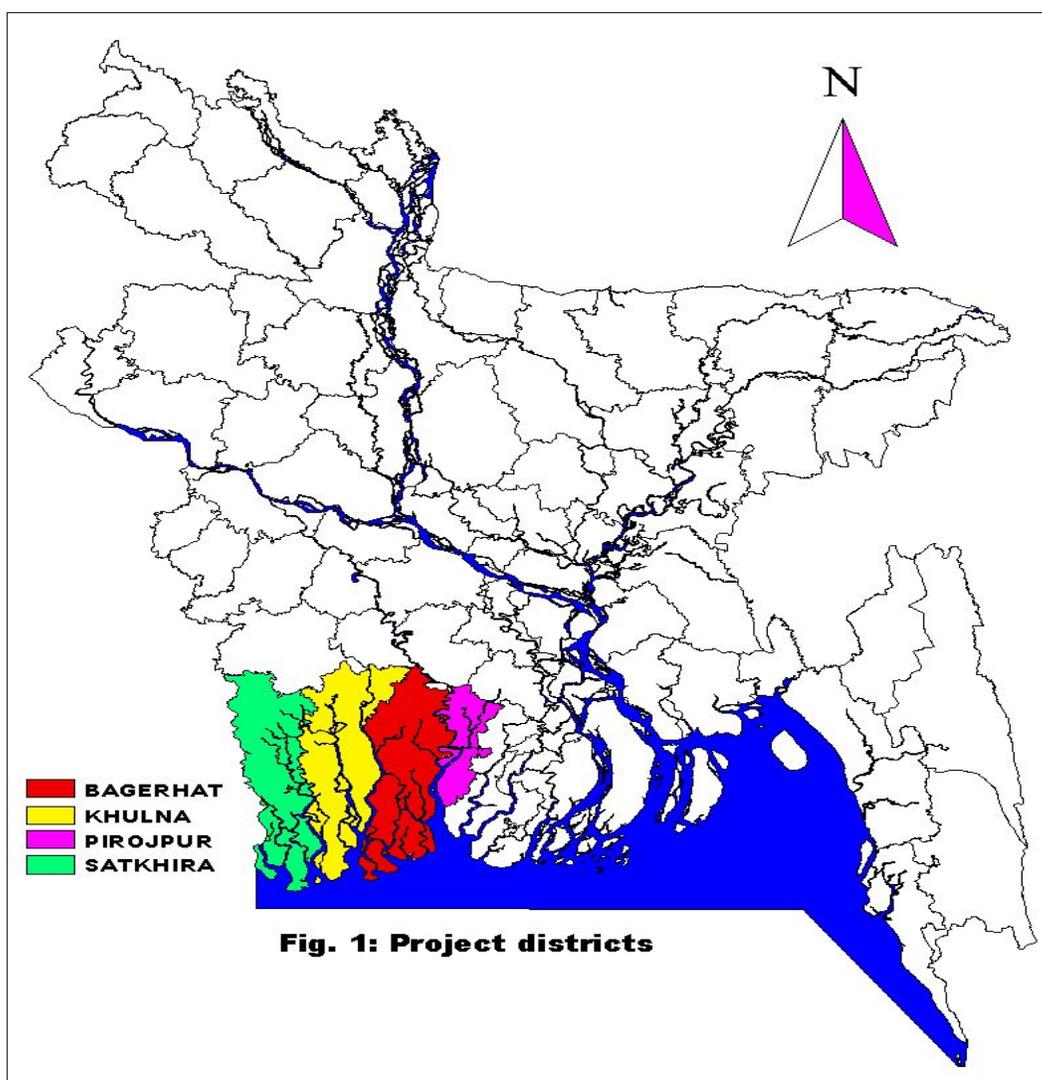
AAS has been sub-contracted for 27 months under the early cycle of the approved IRRI project funded by BMGF beginning from 1 June 2008 to achieve the above-mentioned outputs of the project on Scaling-out of salt tolerant rice variety through FARMSEED in coastal regions of the country during.

Reporting Period

The narrative progress report of the assigned task is covered from 1 June to 31 December 2008 (As per signed LOA item no. 5).

Location

As per sub-contract, AAS has been implementing the project activities in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts with partner NGOs. The project location (Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts) is shown in the following Fig.1:



Progress to date

AAS has been sub-contracted by IRRI for successful implementation of the activities of the approved project on Scaling-out of salt tolerant rice variety through FARMSEED in coastal region of the country. Accordingly, AAS has accomplished the following progress during last seven months starting from 1 June 2009:

I. Partner NGOs network formation:

AAS has selected 22 local NGOs as the members of proposed FARMSEED Network for dissemination salt tolerant rice varieties in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagherhat and Pirojpur districts in collaboration with Mostafa Nurunzaman, Director, Shushilan and Dr. M.K. Basher, CSO & Head, GRSD, BRRI. Partner NGOs network has been formed during launching participatory workshop on Scaling-out of salt tolerant variety through FARMSEED. The network name was given as "Aeteejha" by the participants (Chief Executives of NGOs) of the workshop, which was held on 6 June 2008 at Shushilan office Khulna. Details of member organizations of Aeteejha are provided in Annexure I. Network (Aeteejha) will be responsible to take various agricultural development programmes including FARMSEED for scaling-out salt rice varieties in coastal regions of the country. District wise involved member NGOs list of Aeteejha is given in the following Table1:

Table.1: District wise member NGOs of Aeteejha

District	Member NGOs
Satkhira	Nakshikantha Women Organization, PROGOTI (Peoples Research on grass root Ownership & Traditional Initiative), IDEAL, Bhumiz, Mukti Foundation, PPS, Palli Chetana, Shushilan, AAS
Khulna	NICE Foundation, Koyra Unnayan Foundation, Rupsha Mohila Unnayan Sangstha, MOUCHAK, SEBA, Aporajita Mohila Samaj Kallayan Sangstha, BRIC, Rupokar, Shushilan, AAS
Bagherhat	Aash Bangladesh, BADHON, Dipte Bangladesh, Ganomilan, Chitra Unnayan Sangstha, Shushilan, AAS
Pirojpur	SBGUP, AAS

AAS has intention to establish FARMSEED approach to disseminate the salt tolerant rice variety in coastal region with various potential partners including NGOs, CBOs and RPFs (resource poor farmer groups). During FARMSEED model development with funding support from IRRI/PETRRRA project, AAS found grass root level organizations (CBO, RPFs and very small local NGOs) were more efficient than National NGO, Regional NGO and even established local NGO. Moreover, the project learned that community based organizations are more effective than NGOs in facilitating the FARMSEED process. Similarly resource poor farmers groups are more effective than CBOs. Accordingly, AAS will give more emphasis to work with grass roots level partners such as CBOs, RPFs etc. in future in collaboration with GRSD, BRRI and Shushilan under AAS's direct delivery.

II. Conduct workshop on FARMSEED

Participatory orientation workshop on Scaling-out of salt tolerant variety through FARMSEED was conducted with 21 NGOs in collaboration with Shushilan and GRSD, BIRRI, Gazipur at



Dr. M.K. Basher presenting (Left), M. Nuruzzaman speaking (Middle) and Harun-Ar-Rashid presenting (Right) at the workshop

conference room, Shushilan, Khulna on 6 June 2008. Mostafa Nuruzzaman, Director, Shushilan, Dr. M.K. Basher, CSO & Head GRSD, BIRRI and Harun-Ar-Rashid, Executive Director, AAS were facilitated the participatory workshop. Mostafa Nuruzzaman delivered his welcome address at the beginning of the workshop. Dr. M.K. Basher and Harun-Ar-Rashid presented through Power Point on Rice Seed net-Bangladesh and Scaling-out of salt tolerant rice variety through FARMSEED approach respectively in the technical session of the workshop. Implementation plan and strategies of the project activities were decided during open discussion in the plenary session of the workshop. Special emphasis were given in plenary session to implement the selected activities to disseminate BIRRI dhan 41 during 2008 T. Aman and BIRRI dhan 47 during 2008-9 Boro season in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagherhat and Pirojpur districts in collaboration of member NGOs of the network. The workshop was ended with concluding remarks from participants, M. Nuruzzaman, Dr. M.K. Basher and Harun-Ar-Rashid. List of participants of the workshop is provided in Annexure II.

III Conduct staff training

Two participatory staff training courses were conducted on rice seed production practices of BIRRI dhan 41 and BIRRI dhan 47 on 6 June 2008 and 21 November 2008 respectively at conference room of Shushilan, Khulna. A total 21 staffs of the member NGOs participated in



Participants at staff training (Left), Harun-Ar-Rashid presenting (Middle) and participant speaking at the staff meeting (Right)

both the training courses. Staff training were conducted: (1) to share the seed production guidelines of BIRRI dhan 41 and BIRRI dhan 47; (ii) to prepare the project activities implementation strategies and plan for 2008 T. Aman season and 2008-09 Boro season; and (iii) to plan for dissemination of BIRRI dhan 41 and 47 in the selected districts of the coastal region. At the end of the training involved staffs of member NGOs received and carried the allotted quantity of seed (2 kg packets) of BIRRI dhan 41 (2008 T. Aman) and BIRRI dhan 47

(2008-09 Boro) for distribution among the trained farmers at the selected communities. Each trained staff was provided seed production guidelines of BRR I dhan 41 & 47 along with the seed production monitoring formats.

(IV) Community selection and group formation

Involved member NGOs were selected the suitable communities for seed production and dissemination of BRR I dhan 41 and 47 in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts at the beginning of the project cycle. Salt tolerant rice seed production farmers' groups were formed during implementation of farmers training on seed production practices of BRR I dhan 41 & 47 at communities under the leadership of the involved member NGOs.

(V) Prepare seed production guidelines

Seed production guidelines of BRR I dhan 41 and 47 were prepared for distribution among the trained staffs of involved member NGOs in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts. Project management and monitoring formats were prepared and distributed among the trained staffs and chief executives of the involved member NGOs.

(VI) Conduct farmers' training

Project staff in collaboration with trained staff and chief executives of the involved member NGOs conducted participatory farmers training on seed production practices of BRR I dhan 41



Farmers at BRR I dhan 47 training (Left), Trainers at farmers' training (Middle) and Farmer (Female) at open discussion (Right)

and 47 at community during 2008 T. Aman season and 2008-09 Boro season. At the end of the training, staff of member NGOs distributed the seed among the trained farmers at community during 2008 T. Aman and 2008-09 Boro seasons. The staff of member NGOs documented farmers' participation in training session and seed distribution. Member NGO-wise number of farmers participated in training sessions during 2008 T. Aman and 2008-09 Boro seasons are provided in the following Table2:

Table 2: Member NGO-wise number of farmers participated in training sessions during 2008 T. Aman and 2008-09 Boro seasons.

NGO	District	2008 T.Aman	2008/09 Boro	Total
Nakshikantha	Satkhira	25	30	55
PROGOTI	Satkhira	25	30	55
IDEAL	Satkhira	25	30	55
NICE Foundation	Khulna	25	30	55
Koyra Unnayan Foundation	Khulna	25	30	55
Bhumiz	Satkhira	25	30	55
Rupsa Mohila Unnayan Sangstha	Khulna	25	30	55
Aash Bangladesh	Bagerhat	25	NC	25
BADHON	Bagerhat	25	NC	25
Mukti Foundation	Satkhira	25	NC	25
PPS	Satkhira	25	30	55
MOUCHAK	Khulna	25	30	55
Dipte Bangladesh	Bagerhat	25		25
Palli Chetona	Satkhira	25	30	55
Ganomilan	Bagerhat	25	30	55
SEBA	Khulna	25	30	55
Aporajita Mohila Samaj Kallayan Sangstha	Khulna	25	30	55
Chitra Unnayan Sangstha	Bagerhat	25	30	55
BRIC	Khulna	25	30	55
Rupokar	Khulna	25	30	55
Shushilan	Satkhira	-	70	70
SBGUP	Pirojpur	-	90	90
Total	-	500	640	1140

NC = Not conducted yet

(VII) Conduct field monitoring

Trained staffs of member NGOs were received two types of monitoring formats for conducting field monitoring of seed production practices during 2008 T. Aman season (BRRI dhan 41) and 2008/9 Boro season for assessing the performance of the seedbed and main field after transplanting. Regarding feed back on field monitoring of seed production plots of BRRI dhan 41 (2008 T. Aman season) from 20 member NGOs was found very minimum. Accordingly, assigned field coordinator of AAS will conduct field monitoring under close supervision of Harun-Ar-Rashid, ED, AAS and PI of the project at seedbeds followed by main-fields during 2008/9 Boro season with BRRI dhan 47 in collaboration of trained staffs and chief executives of the member NGOs in Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts.

(VIII) Conduct impact assessment

Trained staffs and Chief Executives of member NGOs were received the structured assessment tools (format and guidelines) for BRRI dhan 41 (2008 T. Aman season) during staff training and participatory workshop. Both format and guidelines were presented for better understanding among the participated staffs and chief executives of member NGOs during staff training and participatory workshops for chief executives at Shushilan office, Khulna. AAS assigned field coordinator will conducted the proposed assessment under close supervision of Harun-Ar-Rashid, ED, AAS and PI of the project on the performance of seed production and its use of BRRI dhan 41 in collaboration with trained staffs and chief executives of member NGOs during January/February of 2009. After compilation the survey data, the AAS staff in collaboration of trained staffs and chief executives of member NGOs will conduct the validating participatory workshops at selected communities (2 communities/district) to assess the acceptability of BRRI dhan 41 during T. Aman season for its scaling-out plan in coastal region of the country.

Activities plan during January-June 2009

AAS in collaboration with member NGOs will accomplish the following activities by the end of May 2009:

Activities:

1. Selection of suitable CBOs in four working districts in coastal regions
2. Formation of resource poor farmers groups (RPFs) in collaboration of Shushilan and SBUGUP under AAS direct service delivery approach
3. Conducting field monitoring at Seedbed and main-field of BRRI dhan 47 (2008/9 Boro) in four working districts in coastal region
4. Conducting impact assessment on seed production and its use of BRRI dhan 41 during 2008 T. Aman season
5. Conducting validating participatory workshops at selected communities to assess the acceptability of BRRI dhan 41 during T. Aman season in coastal region of the country
6. Conducting seasonal participatory workshop on the performance of BRRI dhan 41 during 2008 T. Aman season in coastal region and its scaling-out plan in coastal region in the country
7. Conducting training for group coordinators on seed production practices of selected rice variety for coastal region

Activity Chart: January-June 2009

Activity	January	February	March	April	May	June
1. Selection of suitable CBOs in four working districts in coastal regions						→
2. Formation of resource poor farmers groups (RPFs) in collaboration of Shushilan and SBUGUP under AAS direct service delivery approach						→
3. Conducting field monitoring at Seedbed and main-field of BRRI dhan 47 (2008/9 Boro) in four working districts in coastal region			→			
4. Conducting impact assessment on seed production and its use of BRRI dhan 41 during 2008 T. Aman season	→					
5. Conducting validating participatory workshops at selected communities to assess the acceptability of BRRI dhan 41 during T. Aman season in coastal region of the country		→				
6. Conducting seasonal participatory workshop on the performance of BRRI dhan 41 during 2008 T. Aman season in coastal region and its scaling-out plan in coastal region in the country			→			
7. Conducting training for group coordinators on seed production practices of selected rice variety for coastal region						→

Annexure. I:

Scaling-out of salt tolerant rice variety through FARMSEED Stress-tolerant rice for poor farmers in Africa and South Asia (IRRI/BMGF Project)

List of Member Organizations of Aeteejha (HwZn)

SL #	Organization (Name)	Chief Executive (Name)	Designation	Address	Working district	Mobile / Phone / E-mail
1	Genetic Resource & Seed Division (GRSD), Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI)	Dr. M.K. Basher	CSO & Head	Gazipur	-	Mob: 01711283982 E-mail: mkbashar.brri@gmail.com, mkbashar.brri@yahoo.com
2	Agricultural Advisory Society (AAS)	Md. Harun-Ar-Rashid	Executive Director	8/7, Block-B, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207	Natore, Sirajganj, Pabna, Rajshahi, Jhenaidah etc	Ph: 8113645 Mob: 01712094218 E-mail: aas@bdcom.com
3	Shushilan	Mostafa Nuruzzaman	Director	Ho # 157, Rd # 1, Muzgunni R/A. Khulna	Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat	Ph: Mob: 01720510199 E-mail: director.shushilan@gmail.com, contact@shushilan.org, shushilan_ho@yahoo.com, shushilan@shushilan.org
4	Nakshikantha Women Organization	Chandrika Ban Erjee	Director	Nakipur, Shyam nagor Satkhira	Satkhira	Ph: 088-04726-74172 Mob: 01716-134867, 01714-573942, 01718-554692
5	PROGOTI (Peoples Research on grass root Ownership & Traditional Initiative)	Ashck-E-Elahi	Secretary	Nakipur, Shyam nagor Satkhira	Satkhira	Ph: 04726-74218 01718-405066 E-mail: progoti_as@yahoo.com
6	IDEAL	Dr. Md. Mazrul Islam	Executive Director	Parulia, Debhata, Satkhira	Satkhira	Ph: 04732-72112 Mob: 01711-866504
7	NICE Foundation	Muzibur Rahman	Secretary	Keshoblal Road Daulatpur Pabla	Khulna	Mob: 01917-565607
8	Bhumiz	Achinta Shaha	Director	Tala, Sathkhira	Satkhira	Mob: 01715-645168

9	Koyra Unnayan Foundation	Shahanaj Parvin	Director	Koyra. Khulna	Khulna	Mob: 01716-698838
10	Rupsa Mohila Unnayan Sangstha	Arifa Yasmin Shimu	Director	67/ West Bania Khamar, Khulna	Khulna	Mob: 01711-061464
11	Aash Bangladesh	Md. Kamruzzaman	Director	Rail Road, Bagerhat, Opposite of Krishi Bank	Bagerhat	Mob: 01818-078181
12	BADHON	A.S.M. Monzurul Hasan	Director	Dashani traffic Mor, Bagerhat	Bagerhat	Mob: 01711-950380
13	Mukti Foundation	Gobinda Ghos	Director	Tala, Satkhira	Satkhira	Mob: 01716-840757
14	PPS	Abdur Sabur	Director	Katia, Sarkarpara, Satkhira	Satkhira	Mob: 01711-483102
15	MOUCHAK	Md. Mahabubur Rahman	Director	Pabla, Daulalpur, Khulna	Khulna	Mob: 01912-903734
16	Dipte Bangladesh	Rafael Khan	Director	Mollahat, Bagerhat	Bagerhat	Mob: 01711-933294
17	Palli Chetona	Anisur Rahman	Director	Zoredia Bangdaya, Satkhira	Satkhira	Mob: 01711-309148
18	Ganomilan	Dr. Ranajit Biswas	Director	Chitalmari, Bagerhat	Bagerhat	Mob: 01711-814196
19	SEBA	Mina Haldar	Director	146/3 Khanjahan Ali Road, Khulna	Khulna	Mob: 01714-956157
20	Aporajita Mohila Samaj Kallayan Sangstha	Kazi Morzina	Director	Shonadanga Sargical Hospital, Shatata Biswas, Khulna Road	Khulna	Mob: 01734-958776
21	Chitra Unnayan Sangstha	Sabina Bulbul	Director	Chitlamari, Bagerhat	Bagerhat	Mob: 01718-550357
22	BRIC	A.S.M. Ahidul Islam	Executive Director	North Deana, Daulatpur, Khulna	Khulna	01715-707865 E-mail: bricngo@yahoo.com
23	Rupokar	Nurul Amin Khoka	Director	Koyra. Khulna	Khulna	Mob: 01717-666148
24	Sundarban Bhumukhi Grameen Unnayan Prokalpa (SBGUP)	Md. Eunus Ali Mollah	Executive Director	Vill: Shapleza Post: Schillargonj, Upazila: Mathbaria, Pirojpur	Pirojpur	Mob: 01730036620 E-mail: sbgup_bd@yahoo.com
16	CDP	Anowara Alam	Coordinator	55/02 Islampur Road, Khulna	Khulna	Mob: 01914884064

Annexure.II:

Participatory workshop: *Scaling-out of salt tolerant rice variety through FARMSEED*

Sponsored by: Stress-tolerant rice for poor farmers in Africa and South Asia (*IRRI/BMGF Project*)

Date: 6 June 2008

Venue: Training Room, Shushilan, Khulna

List of Participants

SL #	Name	Designation	Organization	Address	E-mail / Phone / Mobile
1	Momin Uddin	P.O	Bhumiz	Tala, Sathkhira	01715645168
2	Shahin Akter Doli	Executive Director	Pison	Pison Mohila Unnayan Sangstha, 78, Bagmara Main Road, Khulna	01711398391
3	Raphyel Khan	Executive Director	Dipte Bangladesh	Mollahat, Bagerhat	01711933294
4	Jacob Gomes	Coordinator	Dipte Bangladesh	Mollahat, Bagerhat	01711237005
5	Monjurul Hasan Milan	Executive Director	BADHON	Dashani traffic Mor, Bagerhat	01711950380
6	Sheikh Nazmul Karim	Coordinator	Aash Bangladesh	Rail Road, Bagerhat	01818078181
7	ASM Wahidul Islam	Executive Director	BRIC	North Deana, Daulatpur, Khulna	01715707865 E-mail: bricngo@yahoo.com
8	Md. Mahabobur Rahman	Chief Executive	MOUCHAK	Pabla, Daulalpur, Khulna	01912903734
9	Pranto Monojit	P.O	SEBA	146/3 Khanjahan Ali Road, Khulna	01714956157

10	Sabina BulBul	Director	Chitra Unnayan Sangstha	Chitlamari, Bagerhat	01718550357
11	T.M. Younus	Supervisor	NICE Foundation	Keshoblal Road Daulatpur Pabla	01917565607
12	Abdus Sobur	Coordinator	PPS	Katia, Sarkarpara, Satkhira	01711483102
13	Kamrul Hasan	Coordinator Finance	CDP	55/02, Islampur Road, Khulna	01711449874
14	Ashek-E-Elashi	Secretary	PROGOTI (Peoples Research on grass root Ownership & Traditional Initiative)	Naleipur, Shyamnagar, Satkhira	01718405066
15	Tapan K. Karmakar	Coordinator	Nakshikantha Women Organization	Nakipur, Shyawnasar, Satkhira	01714573942
16	Anowara Alam	Coordinator	CDP	55/02 Islampur Road, Khulna	01914884064
17	Dis Mohammad	Secretary	Rupokar	1.Modinabad, Koyra	01717666148
18	Md. Mujibur Rahman	Manager	Koyra Unnayan Foundation	Koyra. Khulna	01716698838
19	Hironmoy	Coordinator	Rupsa Mohila Unnayan Sangstha	67, West Bariakhmar main road, Khulna	01711061464
20	Gobinda Ghosh	Director	Mukti Foundation	Tala, Satkhira	01716840757
21	Md. Anisur Rahman	Director	Palli Chetona	Satkhira	01711309148
22	Dr. Md. Nazrul Islam	Coordinator (CEO)	IDEAL	Debhata, Satkhira	01711866504
23	Dr. Ranjit Biswas	Executive Director	GMI	Chitolmare, Bagerhat	01711814196
24	Harun-Ar-Rashid	Executive Director	AAS	8/7, Block-B, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207	8113645
25	Dr. M. K. Basher	CSO & Head, BRRRI	BRRRI	Gazipur, Dhaka	01711283982
26	Mostafa Nuruzzaman	Director	Shushilan	Ho # 157, Rd # 1, Muzgunni R/A. Khulna	01720510199