



***Story of 'Shimulbhanga'- restoration and renovation of water ecosystem initiated by the local people to fight back disaster***

The 6<sup>th</sup> AMCDRR, Bangkok, Thailand, 22-26 June, 2014

**Concept Note for Ignite Stage #4**

**11:30-12:00, 24 June**

Title of the good practice	<i>Story of 'Shimulbhanga'- restoration and renovation of water ecosystem initiated by the local people to fight back disaster</i>
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Abstract	<p>The good practice of restoration and renovation of local water ecosystem will focus on experiential and empirical action research initiatives that illustrate how local communities can get involved in the policy mechanism process through investing local effort to bring multifaceted impacts on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Risk reduction and adaptation processes are indivisible part of the survival of the local community. The relationship among local wisdom, practice, innovation and natural surroundings has formed the unique socio-anthropological fabric blended with ecosystem approach which can be linked to the global knowledge towards an effective disaster risk management.</p>
Location	<i>East Sujonkathai, Goila, Agailjhara, Barisal, Bangladesh</i>
Context	<p>Natural hazards and frequent disaster have been a part of geographical and indeed historical realities of the coastal community in Bangladesh. Land is degrading, water bodies are shrinking at rapid scale. Lack of conservation ethics and recognition of local people's policy, practices, wisdom and risk management.</p> <p>There is limited focus on local efforts of DRR &amp; CCA as conventional paradigms offer little space for inclusion of local community into the policy formulation and implementation process where they become mere recipients of development outputs only. Bridging the linkage between local experiential</p>

	wisdom and global knowledge where community themselves are actors towards building resilient nation.
How the problem was addressed?	<p>Community Situation &amp; Risk Analysis Approach including Base-line of resource mapping, Inventory of Common Property Resources including <i>Khas</i> land (Lands under Government ownership), water bodies and agriculture with Eco-system approach was applied.</p> <p>Participatory Action Research with involvement of local people, local Government Primary School including children and youth linking to local policy formulation for up scaling. They were engaged at various steps by the community leadership, field visit, formal and non-formal information exchange with a commitment to invest their own effort in renovation and restoration of ecosystem.</p> <p>The key challenge was community mobilization and addressing the power conflict, lack of financial resources etc. A news board was placed within the community which is still serving as a communicating tool with the people. Simultaneously, formal and informal discussions were going on in various places like fields, in tea stalls or in leisure time among the farmers and community people regarding the way of practicing ecosystem management for risk mitigation. <i>Krisoker Sor</i> (Farmers' Voice) relentlessly were providing input to raise discussions and shared information on risk factors, disaster preparedness, laws, policies, international agreements, rights of the farmers, the causes of deprivations etc. Thus valuable opinion were building up and people were becoming conscious about individual and community responsibilities for disaster preparedness for their own survival. Finally after two years of the initiative, people seemed to be organized around one point that it is possible to fight back disasters through community participation and action. These actions lead a Government project to offer the community with partly renovated canal as a development by-product.</p> <p>Emotional attachment of the community with "Shimulbhanga" was the key driver of success. Engagement of youth and children and also the local govt. primary school and managing body.</p>
Result and Impact	<p>Thus the local community is already integrated to renovate and restore their own canal and water ecosystem by themselves.</p> <p>People got empowered by their own initiative and became enthusiastic. Local Govt. bodies are being involved with the process of local initiative and policy formulation.</p> <p>Water ecosystems are being used for multifaceted purposes to improve the live and livelihood of local people.</p> <p>Local community people are now better prepared to combat disaster towards building resilience.</p>
Measuring success	Regular community monitoring, follow-up and discussion board are maintained to measure the result and further improvement in resilience building.

	<p>Various ecosystem approach related indicator were used to measure the progress including addressing the water congestion, increase in water flow for removing of man-made blockage, free from environmental and water pollution, water body renovation and restoration, flora and fauna conservation that also contribute for biodiversity conservation, using of water resources for irrigation purposes for agriculture, multi-faceted use of local water sources.</p> <p>The initiative could have gained further stronger movement had there been active participation of the policy maker, higher level government body and influential political leader.</p>
Replication	<p>The initiative of renovation and restoration of 'Shimulbhanga' canal which is flowing over directly 7 villages of the Agailjhara and Gournadi Upazila of Barisal district, which has created great enthusiasm among 40 adjacent neighboring villages that are indirectly linked with the water flow. Process is going on to replicate the initiative in their own location, so that they can get benefit of the water flow and can better able to responds to disaster at local level.</p>
Relevance to HFA	<p>This initiative linked with the HFA Priority Action 5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.</p> <p>The HFA integration came to at a later point of the initiative when this good practices draw attention at international level during the 5<sup>th</sup> AMCDRR and later on 4<sup>th</sup> GPDRR, Geneva. Also the community voice got reflected in recently held UNISDR strategic Dialogue with CSOs and Community Practitioners on Post-2015 Framework for Disaster management on 10-11 February at Geneva with the representation from Krisoker Sor (farmers' Voice). However, the post HFA/ HFA 2 should have provision for scaling up of local initiative and local policy formulation for disaster mitigation. Local funding should be created and local people's access to high level discussion need to be ensured.</p>
Documentation to share	<p><a href="https://www.dropbox.com/s/qkfjt5xrprs8zf7/KSFVbd%2Cwaterstoriesreport.pdf">https://www.dropbox.com/s/qkfjt5xrprs8zf7/KSFVbd%2Cwaterstoriesreport.pdf</a></p>