



## An alternative approach to combat *Monga* and enhancing livelihood security

Bangladesh - মঙ্গা মোকাবেলায় এবং জীবিকার নিরাপত্তা বৃদ্ধিতে বিকল্প জীবিকার উপায়

### An alternative livelihood approach with lac cultivation to combat *Monga*

Most of the villagers of river bank erosion-prone areas and newly accreted *charland* (alluvial land) areas in Nilphamari sadar Upazila and Jaldhaka upazila of Nilphamari district( AEZ-2:Active Tista Flood Plain) have become almost landless due to loss of land to river beds by bank erosion. Consequently, the agricultural land owners became wage labourers. Due to *Monga* (a famine like situation), male members of the family are forced to leave the area for selling their labour leaving their family in place. These families have to face livelihood shocks like social insecurity, decreased buying capacity, limited access to food and other social services.

This vulnerable situation becomes acute during October-November of the year that is just before *Aman* (transplanted) paddy harvest and during April-May, i.e., before *Boro* (irrigated) paddy. During these lean periods, in the affected areas, there are no works/jobs for those people who have no alternative but to migrate to other areas( specially in urban/rearby cities) to work as day labourers.

Lac cultivation opened a new dimension of livelihood to earn a living and enabled them to get access to food besides having integrity of the family. The approach was initiated by the NGO named *Udyankor Seba Shangstha (USS)* that gave them training on production, processing and linked them with the market.

Due to this approach of 'alternative livelihood' generation, 547 villagers of those affected areas are now able to stay in place and almost all the members of the family are now engaged in these activities. Now, they do not have to move to other places, but have an earning to purchase food stuffs and make a decent living.

**left:** Discussing with the village-poor on the prospect of production of lac to earn a livelihood during lean period (ShoaibJU).

**right:** Processing lac for marketing (ShoaibJU).



**Location:** Nilphamari Sadar and Jaldhaka Upazila AEZ-02

**BANCAT database reference:** QA BAN 13

**Approach area:** <1.0

**Land use type:** Agroforestry

**Type of Approach:** Project Approach

**Focus:** To skip *Monga* (Famine like situation)

**Related technology (ies):** QT BAN 17

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**Date:** 15-06-08

**Edited by :** Khisha,S.K. BANCAT, www.bangcat.org

## Problem, objectives and constraints

### Problem

- No work during Oct-Nov and April-May
- Male members leave their family for job
- Severe social insecurity of woman and children
- Polygamy, AIDS, women and child trafficking
- Low soil fertility and soil organic matter

### Aims/Objectives

- To provide alternative livelihood options to generate income and skip *Monga*.
- To promote family cohesiveness and social security.
- To upscale livelihood

### Constraints addressed

Major	Specification	Treatment
Technical	Un-skilled labour	Training on lac seed production, lac production and processing
Institutional	Approached by a NGO	Awareness building of the family members as well as community members
Financial	Marketing	Market chain development
Minor	Specification	Treatment
Technical	Selection of suitable host plants	Inclusion of different host plants
Institutional	Formation of community organizations	Community approach
Financial	Access to loan and grant	Loan/financial support

## Participation and decision making:

### Stakeholders / target groups



Land users, group

### Approach costs met by:

Farmer	50%
NGO	50%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Decisions on choice of the technology:** USS and farmers jointly take decision. Women as well take part in decision-making process.

**Decisions on method of implementing the technology:** All the male and female members of the family were motivated to decide and sit with the neighbours specially for processing and marketing.

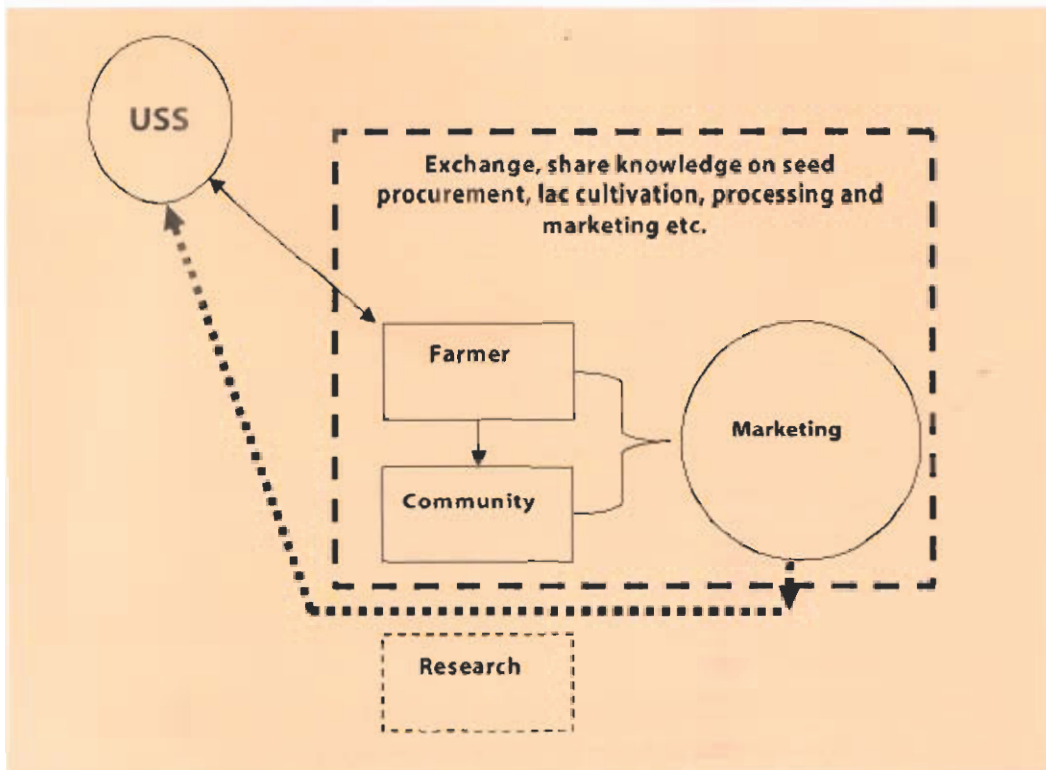
**Approach designed by:** Designed by *Udyankor Seba Shangstha (USS)*. Experience field staff/ animator of USS work with the farmer.

### Land user involvement

Phase	Involvement	Activities
Initiation	Passive to interactive	Group discussion with the promoter to implement the plan
Planning	interactive	Man and woman make the plan on which lac seed will be fastened
Implementation	interactive	Seed preparation, lac processing and marketing
Monitoring/evaluation	Interactive	Done by farm family and animators
Research	Passive	USS does through animators

**Differences in participation of men and women:** Yes, little. But women members help collection and processing of lac.

**Organogram of the Approach:**  
(ShoaibJJ).



### **Technical support**

**Training:** Before implementation of the approach to lac cultivation, USS motivated, and trained the farmer/community

**Extension:** USS carried out extension activities through their field animators.

**Research:** USS did some passive on-farm trials

### **Financial/material support (subsidies)**

**Labour:** Own labour

**Material:** Supported by USS

**Credit:** None

**Support of local institutions:** Passive support was provided by local government institutions

**Long-term impact of subsidies:** Not applicable

## Monitoring and evaluation

Monitored aspects	Methods and indicators
Bio-physical	Adhoc observation, adoption rate
Technical	Capacity building, Skill developed within the community/farmers
Socio-cultural	Social security increased, Community integrity
Economic/production	Marketing, Livelihood enhanced due to increased employment opportunity and income
Area treated	Area coverage and adoption rate
No. of land users involved	Number of participants in training/meetings
Management of approach	Cost monitoring and assessment of demand of the community

## Impacts of the approach

**Changes as result of monitoring and evaluation:** Apparent changes in attitudes were observed.

**Improved sustainable land management:** Less pressure on land and other natural resources

**Improved livelihood/human well-being:** Increased access to food due to improved livelihood.

**Adoption of the approach by other projects/land users:** Other projects/ land users are also adopting the approach to combat *Monga*.

**Land/water use rights:** Individual/leased ownership of host plants in private and public lands

**Sustainability:** Apparently sustainable due to humane approach

**Main motivation of land users to implement SWC:** An alternative approach to sustainable livelihood

## Concluding statements

Strengths and → how to sustain/improve	Weaknesses and → how to overcome
Access to self-employment in the village → More host plants may be brought under Lac cultivation	Field animators not adequately equipped → They need to be more equipped in promoting the approach
Access to food increased → Lac processing and marketing may be well organized and enhanced	Adhoc and irregular approach → Systematic and regular approach
Increased social security → Coverage of more social services and networks	No attention to improved marketing → Monitoring of forward and backward market linkages
	Inadequate attention to other social services for the community → Positive attitude to provide more social services

### Key reference(s):

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