Capacity Building Training of Women
On Water Management and Environment Conservation

Report

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Supported by:
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Report on
Capacity building for women on
Climate Change Impact on Water and Way Forward

Background
Khulna city is located in the coastal belt of Bangladesh one of the most vulnerable areas to climate change. Climate change is likely to impact Khulna water supply by slightly reducing rivers water availability increasing salinity levels. Citizen of Khulna city have been suffering from limited access to water supply services. Only 23% of the population of about 1 million has access to piped water supply and the rest resorts to alternative sources, such as shared public taps and tube wells built by privately. The existing system is old and poorly maintained, resulting in substantial leakage and low quality of water.

Many unconnected households rely on shared public taps and spend a daily average of 90 minutes fetching water imposing particular burden on women who tend to manage water for whole family. It is clear that Women are directly linked with water management. Without proper and active participation of women water management is not possible. Increased women participation is a requirement of the Bangladesh Nation Water Policy (NWP) and will be explored in the field of project preparation and planning; empowerment in water schemes; training in the management and operation of local water supply.

It has become increasingly accepted that women should play an important role in water management and that this role could be enhanced through the strategy of gender mainstreaming. Participation in water management can also improve the dignity of women through giving them a voice and choice. It also improves targeting and efficiency.
Women undertake crucial roles in environmental management, such as water supply and sanitation, agricultural development, hygiene education at the household level. Poor women regard safe and physically close access to potable water, sanitation facilities, and abundant energy supplies as crucial aspects of well-being, reflecting women’s role in managing the household. Thus women need to actively participate in decision making during planning, operations and maintenance, behavioral development and changes in user communities through social mobilization and hygiene education in coordination with all relevant organizations and ministries, NGOs, CBOs, local government bodies and other related agencies.

However, in reality, most women are not included in policy decisions about the environment even though such decisions often affect them in disproportionate and negative ways. In urban slums and rural areas women are responsible for collecting water and fuel, fishing, home gardening, planting and feeding. Their participation is crucial, especially in the field of environmental policy changes, deforestation, water scarcity, soil degradation, exposure to agricultural and industrial chemicals, organic pollutants and others which impact on women’s workloads, nutrition and health.

To promote and implement BWP’s program, IRV and Bhairab Area Water Partnership will jointly initiate the program to create awareness and capacity building of women on water management and environment conservation in the drinking water sector in selected Khulna slums.

Report of the training workshop:
With the support of Bangladesh Water Partnership, Bhairab River Basin Area Water Partnership and Initiative for Right View (IRV) organized a day long Capacity Building Training on “Water Management and Environment Conservation” on 11 November 2015 at VIP lounge, Khulna press club, Khulna.

The training workshop was divided into inaugural and technical session.

Inaugural Session: Eng. M.D. Kamaluddin Ahmed; Deputy Managing Director (Eng.) Khulna WASA was present as chief guest. Among the especial guests Moqbul Hossain Mintu, President, Khulna Press Club, Khulna, Tusar Kanti Roy, Head & Assistant Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology were present. The session was chaired by Kazi Zaved Khalid Pasha, Coordinator, Initiative for Right View. The inaugural speeches was delivered by Marina Juthi, Secretary, Women Water Network, Khulna presented the goal objectives of the training.

As especial guest Tusar Kanti Roy, Head & Assistant Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology expressed that information and data collection is very important for taking development initiatives. His university has been conducting research on river and environment conservation. He shared that southwest coastal region of Bangladesh is very much vulnerable to climate change. Due to climate change soil salinity of the land is increasing day by day. At the month of Chaytro and Baishak
water scarcity problem is very high. He hoped that participants will share who much they are suffering from the scarcity of water. We not only think about water but also about sanitation system. Unhygienic latrine is injurious to health. There are many latrine situated on river and on canal or beside the water bodies. As a result our fresh water sources are polluted. IWRM is very much important for the water management of the southwest coastal region. An integrated initiative can make fruitful result.

As special guest Moqbul Hossain Mintu, President, Khulna Press Club, Khulna shared that Water is life. Water crisis is a universal issue. Water problem is in every where. In Saudi Arabia water price is higher than petrol. In Nepal people are carrying drinking water in their cars. There are two water supply system in Bangkok one system for urban and another for rural areas.

He emphasized that women engagement in water management is very much important. He is very happy to see that women from different slums taking the training. He hoped that the training will be very helpful for them. It is necessary to reduce the wastage of water in every spares of life. He said that we should manage water properly. Coordination should be increased in institutional level to community level. Women should come forward. For proper water management women role is important. The government is very much gender sensitive and helpful for women empowerment. Women should be educated and empowered. As a result women will develop them and country will be also progress.

The chief guest expressed his thanks to the organizers especially BWP to involve slums women in water management initiative. Water is very much essential for environment conservation and also for the human being. Water scarcity has been increasing day by day. Unplanned urbanization and climate change also increasing the problem. Dependency on ground water has been increasing crisis and Arsenic problem. During the dry season ground water level goes down. Tub-well does not work then. In the world drinking water has only 1%. By impact of climate change after Aila and Sidr Koyra, Dacop, Shayamnagar, Morelganj and Saronkhola people suffered for safe drinking water. Then in these areas salinity was 10 thousand p.p.m.

People couldn’t use these for any purpose. In these slain water fishes can’t alive. We can’t do any work without water. In Shayamnagar and Koyra there is no sweet drinking water. Water users of city wastage much water. We should aware about the proper usages of water. In Khulna city salinity and
iron problem has been increased. During the rainy season water logging problem is a common phenomenon in Khulna city. We need planned and integrated approach to conserve our water resources. The two presentations on water management and environment conservation are very much practical and informative. Government should take initiative for the proper water treatment and sewerage network management. I hope that through this training the knowledge and skill of women on water management will be increased.

As the chairperson of inaugural session Kazi Zaved Khalid Pasha Joy, Convener, Bhairab River Area Water Partnership said that water is very much precious in coastal areas. He shared an example that a woman in Gabura of Shyamnagar upazila in Satkhira district told him that it is easier to lend money than giving a glass of water. They have to spend 4/5 hours to collect water. Even they are unwilling to entertain guest in evening thinking about the shortage of water. This problem is looming towards the cities now. Dwellers of Khulna city are also facing water crisis. He hoped that women will come forward and will engage in water management process. They have opportunity and can develop their experience and skill through this kind of initiative and able to implement in their future life. At last thanked to all for participate the meeting.

Open Discussion
As open discussion Ms. Reka shared that they are also facing water crisis. They depend on tube well for their drinking water. There are 15 tube wells in their areas but all are not functioning well. Presence of salinity is increasing day by day.

Ms. Halima shared that they living in a densely populated area. Water management system is not very well. 40 to 50 families have been depending on a tube well. They have to wait long time in a long queue for collecting drinking water.

They got less water than they need. So they will be very happy if they get continuous water supply for their household affairs.
Ms. Minu said that in their areas they have only one water supply tap. Many times they did not get water after waiting a long time. The water they get is not sufficient. Salinity of water is increasing. Number of ponds is decreasing. In the dry season water crisis increased. In our areas we are suffering for water but in many areas they waste water. It is pathetic. Tube well did not work well. we demand pipe line water supply.

Ms. Nilu Day said that Water is our life. Without water we can’t live. We shouldn’t waste water. We need to preserve fresh water. We are very happy to participate the training.

Ms. Lopa shared that as young this training will be very helpful for them. She came to know about climate change. I also came to know about the impact of climate change in food security, environment and water management. She also mentioned that women can play vital role in water resource management as they used to collect and use water for daily household works.
Technical session
Technical session has been facilitated by Marina Juthi, Secretary, Women Water Network, Khulna and Kazi Zaved Khalid Pasha, Coordinator (CEO), IRV.

Marina Juthi facilitated training on Women and Water Management. Her topics of training were:

- Introduction
- Traditional Relation of Water and Women
- Water Scarcity and Women
- Integrated Water Resource Management, Gender and Empowerment
- Gender
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Women Empowerment
- Women Position in Water Management
- Ability to Participate in Community Water Institutions

Kazi Zaved Khalid Pasha Joy, Convener, Bhairab River Area Water Partnership facilitated his training based on the following topics:

- Background
- Climate Change and Environment
- Adverse Effect of Climate Change on Water
- Water Management

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