

Existing Farming Systems in the Saline Affected Area of Bangladesh (Satkhira District)

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Research area: **BANGLADESH**

Research Background and Objectives

Farming system is considered as a unique and reasonably stable arrangement of farming enterprises that the household manages according to their physical, biological and socio-economic environments.

In trying to help the farmers, it is necessary to learn from the farmers, to understand their practices and the reasons why they do such things. Almost all of the rivers contain saline water came from the sea and for the reason the most of the cultivated filed become saline which is a major problem for the crop production.

Keeping these point in mind a study was set up with the following objectives

1. To find out the existing farming system in the saline affected area of Bangladesh
2. To find out the relationship of farming systems with the farm families.

Findings

A basic survey was conducted during the period from August to September 2009 at Shuktia village in the district of Satkhira, a saline affected coastal area of Bangladesh, to find out the existing farming systems of that area. The study village has got an area of 177 ha and situated by the side of a river named Dolua. The village got 227 households out of which 135 households are engaged in agricultural activities. The total population is 1023 of which 542 are male and 481 are female. Four types of farm categories have been found and landless (44.49%) and small farmers (45.37%) occupied the maximum. The other two categories were medium and large comprising only 9.25% and 0.88%, respectively.

It has been found out that there were 24 farming systems exists in the study village out of which **Cattle-Goat-Poultry-Fish-Crop** based farming system is being practiced by 57 households. I have found 11 types of major cropping patterns of which **Fish-Boro rice** covering the maximum area which is about **56.67%** of the total cultivated area. The villagers are cultivating three types of rice (based on growing season) namely **Aus, Aman and Boro rice**, and 22 different summer and winter vegetables.

Among livestock and poultry component, Chicken got the most importance and it was reared by 186 household, which is followed by Cattle, Duck, Goat and Pigeon, respectively.

Golda (*Penaeus monodon*), the tiger shrimp, was cultivated by most of the farmers (131 households). From the basic survey it is clear that the farmers of the Shuktia village is trying to maintain not only a single enterprise but a combination of different enterprises (crops, cattle, poultry, fish, goat etc.) to get maximum output from their limited land as the rice is mainly cultivated one time in a year in most of the land because of the salinity and drainage problem.



Picture 1. A typical rice field growing *Aman* rice in the study area



Picture 2. A Shrimp cultivating plot locally called *Gher*



Picture 3. The Fishermen are catching fish from *Gher* by traditional implements



Picture 4. Rearing Cattle in the Homestead area