

**ANNEX VI  
FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

- This report must be completed and signed by the Contact person
- The information provided below must correspond to the financial information that appears in the financial report.
- Please complete the report using a typewriter or computer (**you can find this form at the following address <Specify>**).
- Please expand the paragraphs as necessary.
- **Please refer to the Special Conditions of your grant contract and send one copy of the report to each address mentioned**
- The Contracting Authority will reject any incomplete or badly completed reports.
- Unless otherwise specified, the answer to all questions must cover the reporting period as specified in point 1.6
- Please do not forget to attach to this report the proof of the transfers of ownership referred to in Article 7.3 of the General conditions.

**1. Description**

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- 1.1. Name of beneficiary of grant contract: **Traidcraft Exchange**
- 1.2. Name and title of the Contact person: **Maveen Pereira, Head of South Asia Programmes**
- 1.3. Name of partners in the Action: **Development Wheel (DEW), Bangladesh**
- 1.4. Title of the Action: **Sustainable Livelihoods for Poor Producers in Mymensingh and Netrokona, Bangladesh (SLIPP)**
- 1.5. Contract number: **ONG-PVD/2006/118-777**
- 1.6. Start date and end date of the reporting period<sup>1</sup>: **1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012**
- 1.7. Target country(ies) or region(s): **Bangladesh, Regions: Mymensingh and Netrokona**
- 1.8. Final beneficiaries &/or target groups<sup>2</sup> (if different) (including numbers of women and men):
- Target Groups:**
- **60 Business Service (BS) providers** who develop and provide BS (including business development, market access and extension services) to MSEs in Mymensingh and Netrokona.
  - **1,200 MSEs** who provide employment and income opportunities to poor and disadvantaged communities
- Beneficiaries:**
- **6,000 poor and disadvantaged workers** who are employed by the MSEs. Using a family multiplier of 4.7, this project was designed to benefit **28,200 poor people**.

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<sup>1</sup> The entire implementation period of the Action

<sup>2</sup> “Target groups” are the groups/entities who will be directly positively affected by the project at the Project Purpose level, and “final beneficiaries” are those who will benefit from the project in the long term at the level of the society or sector at large.

1.9. Country (ies) in which the activities take place (if different from 1.7):

## **2. Assessment of implementation of Action activities**

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### 2.1. Activities and results

Please list all the activities in line with Annex 1 of the contract since the last interim report if any or during the reporting period

Activity 1:

The following activities were conducted throughout the project period:

#### **Activity 1: Planning and preparation:**

##### **Sub-activities:**

- 1.1 **Initial Planning Meeting:** Several meetings were held with partners, all ground works were completed and action plans including budget were fine-tuned, (details were given in 1<sup>st</sup> year's Report).
- 1.2 **Recruit and Induct Staff:** the Project team was recruited and inducted (See 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report).
- 1.3 **Set-up project offices:** this included renting and furnishing field offices. All equipments and vehicles were purchased following EU guidelines and the office was made properly functioning (details were given in 1<sup>st</sup> year's report).
- 1.4 **Establish Project Management Committee:** A Project Management Team (PMT) comprising representative from TX and DEW was established. The PMT was headed by the TX Country Director who is also the Project Director of SLIPP along with 2 executives each from TX and DEW who were inducted in the team (see 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report).
- 1.5 **Develop Monitoring and Evaluation System:** An M&E system had been in place. The international consultant developed a comprehensive Project Management Handbook. This handbook incorporated best practices for better project management (details were given in 2<sup>nd</sup> year's report with a copy of the handbook).
- 1.6 **Baseline Study:** A baseline survey was undertaken after selection of target group and sub-sectors. The Survey included 160 households based on random selection from our target groups and another 160 households outside our target area as a Control group. An external consulting house conducted the survey and report was submitted (report submitted to EU)

##### **Results:**

- Detailed action plans were developed
- Monitoring and evaluation systems were put in place to ensure the project meets its objectives
- A project management team was established, with clear roles and responsibilities and modus operandi agreed.
- Job descriptions for the project staff were developed and appropriate staff were recruited.
- Baseline information on target MSEs and service providers were collected.

#### **Activity 2: Detailed Research**

##### **Sub-activities**

**2.1 Market Research and Selection of Sectors:** A professional firm was hired to conduct market research for sector selection. They had conducted a scoping mission through which vegetables, duck rearing and fisheries sectors were selected. This scoping study was a combined one to identify market chains and analyse business service markets (details were given in 1<sup>st</sup> year's report with a copy of the research report).

**2.2 Participatory Market-Chain:** Based on market research, vegetables and fish sectors were selected for Mymensingh while vegetables and duck rearing were selected for Netrokona. The scoping study had followed participatory approach and sought views of stakeholders at different levels (See 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report for details and report).

**2.3 Participatory BS Market Analysis:** This was covered in the scoping study. The service providers and relevant stakeholders were identified based on sector constraints. All activities were completed and covered in previous interim reports (details in 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report with research report).

**2.4 Participatory Policy Environment Analysis:** SLIPP had conducted a policy research with participation from all relevant public and private sector stakeholders. A series of activities, including FGDs and validation workshops at local and national levels were undertaken. The study findings and recommendations were presented to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC). As a result, the agricultural policy 2010 reflected a recommendation of this policy study. It suggested the involvement of policy implementers as well as grass-root level stakeholders in policy formulation. Later on one of the associations organized a day-long review and follow-up policy workshop in April 2011. The workshop, participated by high officials from different government departments amongst many, focused on policy awareness among the producers, review of policy analysis findings by SLIPP and review of latest agricultural policy published in 2010. The workshop report is provided in **Annex-01**. (Also, see 2<sup>nd</sup> Interim report with a copy of the report).

*“the Government will make a shift from the top-down, hierarchical approach to bottom- up participatory approach in which farmers, researchers and extension workers will serve as peers.”  
(Agriculture Policy 2010, article 5.3.2)*

**Results:**

- The researches and studies were conducted in a very professional manner.
- The findings of the study supported fine-tuning of relevant intervention strategies in order to meet desired objectives.
- Through dissemination of these research findings, project could raise greater awareness amongst wider stakeholders of the issues faced by the MSEs and their respective roles
- Policy makers understood and recognized the importance of bottom-up policy formulation and its proper execution plan

***Comprehensive Result: Understanding of the supply chains and support markets for selected sub-sectors has increased***

**Activity 3: Project Promotion and Selection of Participants:  
Sub-activities**

**3.1 Project promotion (including set up of project website):** The project had launched its website (www.slipp-bd.net), organized project promotion workshop with key stakeholders and ran project orientation programs. This had helped the project to gain a better understanding from pertinent stakeholders. The project even had to expand its beneficiary level due to word of mouth and improved performance of its target beneficiaries. However, the expansion was focused exclusively in Mymensingh and in the vegetable sector.

**3.2 Selection of 60 Service Providers Participants:**



The potential service providers were identified during the study on business service providers. The study also revealed that in an imperfect market condition (like rural farm sector in Bangladesh), developing commercial rural service provisions and providers was not feasible. So other avenues were explored. It was found that either building network with the public extension services and/ linking them to the MSE groups with developing embedded service provision and providers are the only solutions. Project effectively networked with all the district and sub-district extension offices and linked them to the MSE groups. This created a win-win enduring relationship between the Public Service Providers and the project

Vegetable seed business was insignificant (lowest) in Mymensingh amongst the 10 divisions of Syngenta. Now, after the project, the division has become 3<sup>rd</sup> highest vegetables seed selling region. The biggest change by them was to introduce 5gm seed packet for the marginal farmers. Before, the smallest packets were of 50gm as they had only targeted mid to large farmers. Initially, small-packets contributed 1-2% of the total vegetable seeds sales, now they make up 10%.  
**Photo: Field demonstration by Syngenta on quality seed**

beneficiaries. On the other hand, project approached private input selling companies and negotiated with them on a business proposition. Our proposition was if input selling companies trained their retailers and encouraged them to reach out to the MSEs then project will also facilitate linkage building with project MSE groups. Two private companies (Syngenta and Renata) showed interest and joined the project initiative on 60:40 cost sharing basis. This implied that the companies will bear 60% of the cost of building capacity of their retailers. It proved very effective for both the companies and project beneficiaries. Since being local, retailers are within the easy reach of the beneficiaries and they do not need to pay extra for services. In this way, the project developed capacity of the 163 retailers who are acting as SPs as well as input sellers.

**3.3 Orientation Workshop (including detailed identification of needs).** A day long orientation workshop was conducted with TX, partners and project staff to orient the participants with the project objectives, activities and desired results (details in 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report)..

Results:

- All key stakeholders were aware of the project, its objectives, scope and activities
- An internet platform was developed, maintained and updated regularly
- 349 service providers are trained and linked to the MSE groups
- All district and sub-district level public extension services were made available to the MSE groups
- Engaging private sector in input market model was developed and proved mutually beneficial
- An orientation workshop was completed successfully

#### **Activity 4: Capacity Building of Partner Staff, Project Staff and Local Consultants** **Sub-Activities:**

**4.1 Identify and Engage International Consultants:** An international consultant was contracted following EU procedure. The consultant completed all deliverables within the time frame (Details are given in 1<sup>st</sup> years' report).

**4.2 Identify and Engage Local Consultants:** Local Consultants were identified and engaged based on needs (Details are given in 1<sup>st</sup> years' report).

**4.3 Capacity Building of Partner Staff and Project Staff on Project Management Skills:** Traidcraft Exchange ran several formal and informal workshops with project and partner staff to facilitate their understanding of the project and to develop basic project management skills. International consultant also ran a workshop with project and PNGO staff (Details are given in 1<sup>st</sup> year's report).

**4.4 Capacity Building of Partner Staff, Project Staff and Local Consultants on BS:** SLIPP had conducted orientation on Business Development Services (BDS)-Market Development Approach and Business Plan and Enterprise Development for the staff from the project, DEW and partner NGOs. It had also increased the skills of the staff in terms of value chain development and market linkage processes. Again there were several training programs for the service providers from Syngenta and Renata and the project and PNGO staff had also attended those training programs. High turnover of project staff for better remuneration package was a challenge and the project felt the need of buffer funds for repeat induction. The PNGOs would like to carry forward a couple of skills they have acquired from this project. Through the facilitation work, they have strengthened their relationship with multifarious stakeholders, particularly with SAAO. This will help them in other projects. This was the first time many PNGO staff had worked in a facilitation model with group-based approach. They plan to integrate this if possible in their future projects. (Details in 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report)

*GRAMAUS, SHABOLOMBI, JKP, WDO have integrated groups into their micro-credit and enterprise loan programs. They have taken ownership of the project and bode well for the group's sustainability.*

**4.5 Training of Trainers (TX Bangladesh and international consultants):** A two-day long ToT was conducted by International Consultant and TX Programme Manager. ToT imparted generic training skills to the participants so that they can conduct and facilitate subsequent trainings at different stages of the project (Details in 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report).

**4.6 Mentoring Supported Practice and Review:** This had been ongoing throughout the

project period.

### Results:

- Appropriate consultants were contracted
- Training modules were developed
- Project staff and partner organisation staff had a complete understanding on project methodology.
- Project Staff, partner staff and PNGO staff were made conversant with the BDS Market Development Approach including enterprise development, policy advocacy and other related skills
- Project staff, partner staff and PNGO staff were adequately capacitated to run field level trainings
- Project staff, partner staff and PNGO staff acquired primary skills to initiate implementation of project activities in the field level.
- Project Staff, partner staff and PNGOs were capacitated to prepare business plans on their own initiatives

**Comprehensive Result: Capacity of local partners to develop and implement market development interventions has been improved**

### Activity 5: Encourage increased co-operation and collaboration amongst producers and service providers:

#### Sub-activities:

**5.1 Select Local NGOs to Assist in Development of Producer Associations:** Traidcraft worked with Development Wheel (DEW), and partnered with 8 field-level NGOs. Those are GRAMOUS, USA, GKP and MATI from Mymensingh district, and SUS, ARBAN, JKP and WDO from Netrokona district. The effort and ownership demonstrated by the PNGO and project staff were crucial to the project's success, particularly in forming the groups and guiding them towards effective functionality.

**5.2 Facilitate Development of 10-20 Local Producer Associations:** SLIPP focused more on



vegetable farmers (76 groups, 1900 beneficiaries) in comparison to fisheries (18 groups, 450 beneficiaries) and duck subsectors (6 groups, 150 beneficiaries). The number of groups in duck was low because of low number of farm households in the region. Number of groups in fisheries was low as only a few fish farmers could qualify as per the project's mandate. Number of groups in vegetable was very high because of widespread production and large number of relevant beneficiaries.

*At the completion of the project, 2,525 beneficiaries were reached in 101 groups in three subsectors.*  
**Photo: Need assessment FGD amongst group members**

**5.3 Facilitate the Development of 1 Regional Producer Association:** In 2010, four district level producers' associations were formed following constitutional requirements. These four district level associations were actively interacting with most of the public and private stakeholders. They voiced their issues, demanded that rights are protected, and negotiated with other market players to ensure a fair trading relationship. They continued to work on issues such as distribution of fertilizers, subsidies, bank loans, infrastructure development, etc. Later in 2012, they decided to form two district level farmers' associations by merging district wise associations. Election for the convening committees of two district farmers' association has been held. They are now actively working as per newly adopted constitutions. The details are presented as **Annex-02 and Annex-03**.

*One SAAO in Netrokona mentioned he now gets 50-70 calls per day directly from farmers where 4 years ago it was 10-12.*  
**Photo: Farmers Training by SAAO**



**5.4 Encourage Increased Networking amongst Service Providers:** Business service providers have increased their networking through different technical and business management training,

networking workshops, agro-fairs, exposure visits, etc. They were also encouraged to actively participate in different farmer groups. This helped them to understand their customers better. 13 business service providers were elected to the Executive Committee of the four district level producers' associations. As per association's action plan and activity implementation strategy, associations and business service providers jointly organized different events like agro-fair, field demonstration, awareness campaign, linkage building workshop with government stakeholders; which led to increased networking and collaboration amongst business service providers and associations.

#### Results:

- 101 local producer groups/association were formed with 2,525 farm based MSEs
- Two District level Regional Agro-producers' Associations were formed merging 4 trade based associations which were initially formed.
- Service providers became associate members of the associations that ensured better networking, collaboration, information sharing amongst service providers and with producers

**Comprehensive Result: Producers and service providers experienced greater cooperation and improved linkages**

### Activity 6: Capacity Building of Key Stakeholders in Negotiating, Lobbying and Advocacy Skills

**6.1 Preparation of Workshops:** The concept of collective organization was new to the farmer groups since they knew more about credit groups. Therefore, the project had taken careful handholding approach to guide the groups. It also explained to them in clear terms as to what the farmer groups should have expected to achieve from the subsequent workshops on negotiation, lobbying and advocacy skills.

#### 6.2 Workshop for Producer Associations on Negotiating, Lobbying Advocacy Skills

The first batch of training in rights, networking, lobbying, negotiation and advocacy took place in 2010. Therefore, a refresher capacity building training for the four producers' associations was held again in the final year. 48 association members attended this two-day training. The training was practice oriented with sessions on sharing the learning and small group exercise. It was based on real-life examples and issues related to the producers' rights. At the same time they shared their learning and experience since last training. The reports are provided as **Annex-04, and Annex-05**

The two district level associations had organized two district level linkage building/networking workshops with government bodies and business membership organizations. Later, they organized two follow-up linkage building/networking workshops with government bodies and business membership organization to strengthen established linkage/network and share learning and experience since last workshop. The reports are given as **Annex-06, and Annex-07.**

#### 6.3 Mentoring for Producer Associations to Encourage a Joint Approach to Negotiation and Lobbying

The producers' associations have been motivated

#### ***Vottopara vegetable producers' group awarded agro-machinery subsidy from DAE through effective networking and negotiation***

25 vegetable famers from Vottopara village of Netrokona Sadar joined with SLIPP in 2008. SLIPP supported them to develop into a Self Help Group (SHG) and built their capacity on both technical skill-production knowledge and rights based initiatives-networking, lobbying, negotiation and advocacy skill; which in turn empowered the farmers to benefit from collective initiatives as well as engage in effective networking and dialogue with government stakeholders on an ongoing basis. For instance, Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) announced to give 25% subsidies on selected agricultural farm machineries to farmer groups and Department of Agriculture (DAE) implemented the policy. Lal Chan Miah, president of Vottopara vegetable producers' group, came to know the information from Upazilla DAE office. He shared it amongst group members in a monthly group meeting and decided to apply for a power tiller machine which they could use for multi operations like irrigation, tillage, transportation, threshing, rice milling, etc. Accordingly, in June 2011, they applied and awarded the subsidy and bought a power tiller for BDT 82,500, while regular market price was BDT 110,000. In last six months, the group rented out the power tiller and made profit of BDT 54,000, where rental fee and operating costs were BDT 90,000 and BDT 36,000 respectively. The group also established an IPM club and is now getting support from DAE on disease and other on-farm management. Lal Chan said "We developed good relationship and linkage with government offices through SLIPP which help us to get benefit from existing government policv and extension services."

and encouraged to adopt a collaborative approach and effectively conduct negotiation and lobbying with government stakeholders, and get benefits from agricultural governance. Since fourth year of the project, the producer associations have continued joint initiatives and organized different negotiation and consultation meeting with public and private stakeholders. This resulted into increased influence over the institutional and business environment. Thus, association and group members are represented in different government committees and initiatives, such as union level agricultural committee, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) club, Integrated Crop Management (ICM) club, Farmers' Field School (FFS), Local Extension Agent for Fisheries (LEAF), etc.

#### **6.4 Workshop for Service Providers on Networking, Lobbying and Advocacy Skills**

It has been covered in activity 6.2, as they are representing in the producers' association executive body.

##### **Results:**

- The producer groups and association are capacitated to engage in negotiation, lobbying and advocacy with duty bearers at different levels.
- The producer groups and associations could identify and prioritize the issues and concerns that affected them most.
- The producer groups and association have effective influence over the institutional and business environment using their acquired networking, lobbying and advocacy skills
- The producer groups could succeed in local/sub-district/district levels to engage at better terms with upper value chain actors in the market
- New agriculture policy reflected on and addressed some of the basic issues of the producers (infrastructure, equipment support scheme, banking facilities, setting union level information hub, etc)

***Comprehensive Result: Influence of producers over business environment has increased***

#### **Activity 7: Assessing Needs and Stimulating Demand amongst Producers**

##### **Sub-activities:**

**7.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Producers to Assess Needs (to ensure development of appropriate services) and Build Understanding of the Need for BS (DEW and project staff):** In the beginning of the project, FGDs were conducted with the producer groups to understand the problems impeding the growth of a sector, probable solutions and desired service provision. Attendance from other stakeholders, like input sellers and service providers was also ensured to create awareness. The project oriented the producers on the role of the project, benefits and process of group formation and received their feedback. Later in 2011 of the project, another round of FGDs was conducted as part of monitoring and evaluation. Simultaneously weakness and problems of individual groups were identified and future direction and solutions were suggested.

**7.1 Stimulating Demand through Marketing of Services (DEW and project staff) –** Effective implementation of SLIPP service delivery model integrating public and private services stimulated the demand for services. It is mentioned above field level public extension officers receiving calls from producers 5 times more than that of just before the project intervened. Similarly, a report from Syngenta showed that the sales of project trained retailers has been increased by 100 percent in Netrokona and Mymensingh Districts whereas the sales of non-trained retailers was increased by only 35%.

##### **Results:**

- The needs, constraints and issues faced by the producers were identified and addressed while fine tuning the intervention strategy
- Producer groups are aware of affordable services from the value chain actors and also free services from Public Benefit Service Institutions
- The demand for services has increased by manifolds
- The retailers are also realizing the benefits of providing embedded services to the producers.

## **Activity 8: Capacity Building and Mentoring for Service Providers**

### **Sub-activities:**

Based on feasibility, the project had decided to foster service provision from the current value chain actors instead of imposing a new service provider on the system. The idea was to make service provision affordable and embedding it as part of the transaction process for the producer groups. All the activities under this were directed to enhance service quality and scope of the service providers to reach out to a wide number of beneficiaries with effective service delivery.

### **8.1 Preparation for Workshops 1 and 2**

The project developed training modules on the workshop topics, which were fine-tuned and finalised by international consultants. The training module was developed following a proper need and capacity assessment. Market realities (e.g. five days training at a stretch was not a feasible option) were also considered while designing the workshop.

### **8.2 Training Workshops 1 and 2 on Business Development, Business Counselling and Client Management Organisation.**

Total 177 service providers (input retailers, duck and fish hatchery owners, feed crushers, compost producers, Paravets, PNGO staff and Individuals) have received a series of training workshops on the aforementioned topics.

### **8.3 Mentoring, Supporting Practice and Review :**

In between and after the two training workshops, project staff and PNGO staff provided regular one-to-one mentoring support to the trained service providers within the context of their work situations, assisted them with any challenges that arose. At the same time, they reviewed service providers' activities and tasks and involved local service providers for supporting practices as required.

### **8.4 Feedback Workshops:**

Feedback and learning/good practices on business management and clients counselling from trained business service providers was collected on regular basis. The counselling focused on practical solution at farm level such as field visit, demonstration, practical training, etc. Trained service providers shared their learning, experiences and client needs with project staff and local consultant during their farm visit. Based on this, appropriate training workshop curriculum was identified and incorporated for developing workshops 3, 4, 5 and 6.

### **8.5 Preparation of workshops 3, 4, 5, and 6:**

The project had taken an effective cost sharing approach for conducting the training that also helped to achieve sustainability. The project identified the market leader input suppliers (Syngenta and Renata) with wider coverage, network and market share. Their trading partner retailers were also more knowledgeable than other retailers were. The project presented the idea and incentive for the company and obtained buy in from them to conduct these workshops on resource sharing basis. The intervention partners even contributed in enriching the training materials.

### **8.6 Training Workshops 3, 4, 5 & 6 on BS:**

This set of training workshop is technical training on inputs and soil management, cultivation technique, post harvest management, market linkage etc. Technical experts conducted and mentored the training as local consultants in consultation with TX, DEW and project staff.

The following is a description of the content of the training programmes:



### Training on cultivation techniques:

Md. Aminul Isalm, A member of SFCG, Said, "We had incorrect knowledge about fish feed formulation, and we did not know about the source of alternative feed ingredients. We received hands-on training on cost effective feed formulation technique from a feed expert through SLIPP. We gained enough knowledge and skill on that. For example, we advice farmers to use fishmeal instead of bone meal to reduce production cost and increase quality. By doing so, farmers reduced feed cost by BDT2/ kg and increased quality. Farmers are now motivated to use this formulation, as a result, our customer base has almost doubled."

**Photo: Feed Crushers' training by DOF**

- This set of technical training was conducted to develop the knowledge and skill of the producers on different vegetables cultivation techniques and their inputs and post harvest management. 110 trained BSPs (vegetable inputs sellers, soil collectors and compost producers) organized and conducted these trainings. During the project period, 57 and 53 batches of practical training on vegetable cultivation techniques were conducted in Mymensingh and Netrokona respectively. Total 3,917 vegetable producers from both the districts attended the trainings. Experts from DAE provided mentoring support to these trainings. The reports are presented in **Annex-08 and Annex-09**



- This set of technical training was conducted to develop the knowledge and skills of the producers on different fish cultivation technique and their inputs management. 30 trained BSPs (fish inputs sellers) organized and conducted 30 practical training on fish cultivation in Mymensingh. 925 fish producers attended the training. Expert from Department of Fishery attended the training as mentor. The report is available in **Annex-10**

- This set of technical training was conducted to develop the knowledge and skills of the producers on duck rearing technique and inputs management. 10 trained BSPs (duck inputs sellers)

organized and conducted 10 practical training on duck rearing in Netrokona. 345 duck rearers attended the trainings. Experts from Department of Livestock attended the trainings as mentor. The report is given as **Annex-11**

### Training on Sustainable Soil Management:



- As practical training, 10 trained compost producers established 10 field demonstration and field days in Mymensingh and Netrokona to showcase the importance and benefits of compost fertilizer for soil fertility management and crop yield. 931 farmers from different vegetable groups attended the training. Experts from DAE and SRDI attended the training as mentor. The training demonstrated that the demo farmers have increased their vegetables productivity by 30-36% and reduced chemical fertilizer cost by 20-30% by using compost fertilizer. DAE and SRDI appreciated the results and encouraged compost producers to disseminate their product among the neighbouring producers community. The reports are presented as **Annex-12,13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21**

"I was under the misconception that the more fertilizers I apply, the better yield I will get. As a result, I used to apply too much fertilizer in my land, yet the yield was not satisfactory. After joining with SLIPP, I came to know the benefits and importance of soil testing from Mr. Golam Hossain, a trained soil collector. I decided to try out the service and have reaped the benefits – I have significantly lowered my cost and increased my yield. Now I have adequate knowledge about soil testing and have also informed my fellow producers. I will avail soil testing service in coming season for the rest of the land that I own. In our area more than 300 farmers have tested their soil test and now Baruamari is a model soil testing village"- Jalal Uddin, a successful farmer in Baruamari  
**Photo: Golam Hossain cultivated tomato by soil testing**

### Market Access Training Workshop of BSPs:

- 10 trained BSPs and Mymensingh District Vegetable Association jointly organized a district level market access workshop along with vegetables fair in January 2012 in Mymensingh. Main



objective of the workshop and fair was to promote their products and build mutually beneficial linkage with the district and national level output traders and wholesalers. A large number of traders from respective districts and Dhaka attended the fairs and participated in workshop. 88 participants attended the workshop. Around 8,000 farmers and other stakeholders visited the fair. Many traders placed spot orders for future purchase and many even agreed to take the products from producer group's accumulation centre. This initiative proved to be quite effective and successful, to solve the problems of small producers in accessing markets. The association pledged to take this initiative forward and to continue dialogue with the traders and their associations. Besides producers and traders, high officials from district and upazilla level, other elected local government representatives and local elites attended the fair and workshop. The report is available in **Annex-22**

*"We used to sell our vegetables individually, yet the transportation cost was high, almost two times. Group selling has reduced our transportation cost and saved our time also since one of our group members only managing the selling arrangements. Traders find us as important suppliers for them."*- Muklasur Rahman Mukul, a farmer from the Boira vegetables farmers' group which has reduced transportation cost by 50% and increased profitability through collecting selling.  
**Photo: Collective selling by Boira Vegetable Group**

- Mymensingh Fish Producers' Association organized a market access workshop with fish traders in May 2011 in Mymensingh. 62 participants attended the workshop. Department of Fisheries also attended to provide different technical information to the participants. The workshop focused on existing demand and supply situation of fish as per varieties, existing consumers, seasonality of production, price, modality of buying and selling arrangement, future plan etc. The details are provided as a report in **Annex-23**

### **8.7 Monitoring, Supported Practice and Review;**

Project staff, under the guidance of the project management team, provided one-to-one mentoring and follow-up support to the trained business service providers. They have also reviewed service providers' activities and tasks and facilitated different need based training workshops during the project period.

### **8.8 Regular Review Workshops for Service Providers to Share Learning:**

Regular review and follow-up workshops at the field level were arranged to share learning, experiences and good practices and to refresh the learning. Following review and follow-ups, training workshops were organized.

#### **Refresher hands on training on fish hatchery management:**

A Professor (Hatchery Expert) from Bangladesh Agricultural University conducted day-long hands on training on fish hatchery management for SPs (fish hatchery owner, hatchery technician), SLIPP and PNGO staff in June 2011, at Muktagacha. 31 participants attended the training. Hatchery owners and technicians shared their learning and experiences since the last training regarding brood fish management, fry hatching, nursing fingerling, water management, pond management, etc. The report is given as **Annex-24**

#### **Refresher workshop on sustainable soil management:**

- 30 trained compost producers and 2 vegetable producers associations jointly organised two refresher training on compost fertilizer production process in September 2011 in Mymensingh and Netrokona. Core objective of the workshops was to share learning and experiences, good practices and feedback since the last training about compost fertilizer production-raw material collection, mixing, damping process, temperature control, use of effective microorganism, recycling of wastage, etc. An expert from Natore Development Society, a national level composting technology provider, conducted the training as local consultant. A total of 95 participants attended the training. The reports are given as **Annex-25 and Annex- 26**
- Trained soil collectors organised three batches refresher training on techniques of soil collection and sampling for soil testing in September 2011 in Mymensingh and Netrokona. The overall objective of the training was to share learning and experiences, good practices and feedback since the last training about soil collection and sampling preparation for soil testing.

Upazilla Agriculture Officer of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) and Scientific Officer of Soil Resource Development Institute (SRDI) conducted the training and 120 participants attended it. The training reports are given as **Annex-27 and Annex-28**

**Follow-up workshop on ethical and responsible business:**

Three producers' associations (Mymensingh District Vegetable and Fish Producers' Association, and Netrokona District Vegetable Producer Association) and 25 trained BSPs organized 3 follow-up and awareness raising workshops on ethical and responsible business in October 2011 in Mymensingh and Netrokona. The workshop reviewed harmful effects of mixing colour and chemicals with vegetable and fish, ill impact of adulteration of production inputs, importance of ethical business practices, existing government laws and regulations against food adulteration and mixing chemicals and role of respective government bodies, etc. Association leaders shared their experience and learning since last workshop and expected more support from local government and administration. High officials from the district and upazilla level government administrations, local government representatives and local elites attended the fairs and workshops. In total 148 participants attended in the workshops. The reports are given as **Annex-29 and Annex- 30**

**Follow-up market access workshop:**

Two trained fish hatchery owners and fish producers' association jointly organized two follow-up market access and networking meetings with fish nursery owners, fingerling traders and fish producers in June 2011 in Mymensingh. The core objective of the workshops was to strengthen linkage between fish hatchery, fish nursery and fish producers to promote a market for quality fingerlings which is very important for fish productivity. Department of fisheries (DOF) attended in the workshop as resource and mentor. 135 participants attended in the workshops. The workshops focused on importance and benefits of quality fingerling, how to identify quality fingerling, fish density, fingerling rearing technique, price, services, fish hatchery and nursery visit, and field demonstration on quality fingerling . The reports are given as **Annex-31 and Annex 32**.

**Results:**

- 349 service providers received training and transfer their knowledge directly to 2,525 producers and many thousands more who received indirect benefits from these trained service providers.
- Trained service providers offered better services to the producers
- Participatory approach was undertaken by the service providers to reach out effectively with their services
- Service providers undertook proactive marketing strategy
- Demand for services has been increased by 100% (there was none in baseline)
- Repeat business has been experienced by the retailers cum service providers as the customer satisfaction has been increased

**Comprehensive Result: The demand and supply of business services have been increased manifold.**

2.2. What is your assessment of the results of the Action? Include observations on the extent to which foreseen specific objective and overall objectives were met and whether the Action has had any unforeseen positive or negative results. (please quantify where possible; refer to Logframe Indicators).

An independent external evaluator recruited by Traidcraft conducted a final evaluation of the project. The evaluators assessed the results and impact against the objectives, outcomes and indicators set at the beginning of the project. They also offered recommendations and learning for follow-up. As per the report:

- On average 50% increase in productivity (minimal cost increase but huge increase in yield)
- On average 34% (against targeted 30% as per project LFA) increase in sales despite erratic price fluctuation
- On average 38% increase in income/profitability (against targeted 15% as per project LFA)
- On average 32% increase in employment in vegetable and 13% increased employment in fish sub-sector while no significant increase in duck sub-sector. Duck rearing is a domestic

activity and thus the 20% increase in employment targeted in project LFA could not be achieved. On average employment increase is higher than the target.

- Nutritional intake has improved in all sectors (Fig.12) especially in fish (75%) and duck (65%). Generally the vegetable farmers in Mymensingh were comparatively better off to begin with, thus the change was lower (48%).
- The beneficiaries have improved the quality of their healthcare by going more to hospitals (26% increase), pharmacy (22% increase) and MBBS doctors (26% increase) instead of village doctors (23% decrease).
- In terms of education, who has 1 child 100% of them are sending them to school, while who has 2, 93% of them are going to school and who has 3 only 67% of them are going to school (a bit low but far better than the baseline figure)
- 13% improved their latrine from traditional to semi-pucca, 12% from semi-pucca to hygienic latrine

#### **Qualitative results of the action:**

- The project and activities were relevant in the context of local economy of Mymensingh and Netrokona.
- The sector selection scoping study had not considered beneficiary level relevance. This had resulted in choice of sectors where project contribution would have been low or hard to measure. However, the project quickly addressed the issue by increasing the number of beneficiaries in vegetables sector. This had helped the project to attain income and employment level performance indicators successfully.
- The PNGO involvement was not full time and high staff turnover had put the project delivery under challenge. This was overcome by utmost commitment from the remaining and new staff that had joined the project at different timeline.
- The skills and capacity development of the PNGO shows promising result in terms of their commitment to carry forward certain expertise.
- The promotion and orientation on the project helped to gain wider understanding from multifarious stakeholders.
- The group formation was done in phases. The newer groups still need necessary handholding to survive and enjoy the benefits of being in a group. However, the association is expected to play the role of back-stopper for these new groups in absence of the project.
- The participatory process of problem identification and selection of relevant stakeholders as embedded service providers was well worth project efforts.
- The core essence of the project was group formation and mobilization. This triggered the interest of public and private service providers to network with small farmers through these groups for wider outreach and retention.
- The capacity building of the beneficiaries and service providers were based on need assessment, analysis of absorption capacity and designer as per market realities. This had made the trainings and workshop more effective.
- The capacity building of the producer groups on rights, lobbying, advocacy and compliance helped the groups to demand for better public and private services based on effective and righteous negotiation.
- The project received acceptance from the top government agricultural departments and agencies for bottom-up and inclusive approach and this was further adopted by these agencies through the latest agricultural policy.
- The producer groups have established reasonably sound network with service providers. This will help them to solve any problem in future without further support from the project staff.
- Although linkage with forward linkage was not as strong as with backward supply chain for the producer groups, there are strong evidence of group benefits through collective selling and negotiation.

A national level workshop involving all stakeholders, interest groups, policy and decision makers was organized to disseminate the project outcome, experience and evaluation findings. This workshop allowed the project to share results and learning with stakeholders, including buyers and key decision makers. Please see **Annex-33** for the final evaluation report.

2.3. What has been the outcome on both the final beneficiaries &/or target group (if different) and the situation in the target country or target region which the Action addressed?

The details of the outcome on the final beneficiaries and/or target groups and the situation in the project area is given in the final evaluation report. As per the final evaluation, the project has achieved the following in terms of higher productivity, lower cost, faster growth and better market access:

- Increased adoption of soil testing services (76% as opposed to 12.4% in baseline) have reduced the cost of fertilizer (by 40%) and increased soil fertility. Usage of appropriate type and amount of inorganic fertilizer and micronutrients (64% in test group as opposed to 31% in control group) also contributed to this improved performance of the farms. Fish farmers have also gained from soil testing services as it helped to manage their pond better.



- Increased sources of information for appropriate dosage of fertilizer and micronutrients have also helped the farmers.

Although information from retailers and other business men have decreased by (3% and 7% respectively), the increase of reliable government sources by 56% are attributable to improved performance of the farms. This also validates the fact that group structure has made public service providers closer to the producers.

Md. Suroj Miah, is a vegetable producer from Baruamari, Gouripur under Mymensingh district. After soil testing he could reduce cost of fertilizer by 28% (from BDT 4820 to BDT 3470, for 50 decimal lands) and increased around 39% yield of Chilli (from 3140 to 4364 kg, from 50 decimal lands).

**Photo: Suroj Mia cultivated chilli by soil testing**

- Use of compost fertilizer have also increased (by 20%) amongst the beneficiaries of the project as opposed to a declining trend amongst the control group.
- The farmers are using better quality seeds sourcing more from the government (33%) and reducing dependency on retailer (-13%). They also increased using their own seed (22%) after learning seed preservation techniques. They are also sourcing less from the retailers. However the private seed company Syngenta enjoyed a significant surge in market share in that region through increased interaction with the producers, retailers and customer responsiveness.
- The duck mortality rate has decreased to 1/2 ducks per season from 6 out of 13 ducks per season. This is due to the project's continuous support on livestock rearing, disease management and control, cures and medicines and proper duck feed.
- Group formation has helped the producers to establish stronger linkage with 163 input retailers, 2 large input companies and 10 public service/government organizations. This has enabled the producers to improve their productivity.
- Formation of regional association, networking and sharing amongst the groups and with the service providers and linkage with government departments have resulted in access to quality services, inputs and favourable policy environment.
- Meetings with producers associations and memorandum submitted by Mymensingh Association to the Prime Minister through Deputy Commissioner resulted in change policy formulation approach. Now Government publicly acknowledged the importance of bottom up policy formulation process. Government also promoted establishment of local government level committees and announce more sustainable benefit packages for the producers.

**SPECIAL NOTE: The overall achievements of the project against the project LFA are summarized in ANNEX A**

- 2.4. Please list all publications (and no. of copies) produced during the Action on whatever format, amongst others containing new approaches, innovative ways of communicating (please enclose a copy of each item, except if you have already done so in the past).

Please state how your publications are being distributed and to whom.

Publication	Period	How distributed?	To whom?
Project brochure	2007-08	Through different meeting, workshop and training	Project stakeholders
Vegetable cultivation handbook	2008-09	Through training on cultivation technique	Business service providers and vegetable producers' group
Fish cultivation handbook	2008-09	Through training on cultivation technique	Business service providers and fish producers' group
Duck rearing handbook	2008-09	Through training on rearing technique	Business service providers and duck producers' group
Project final evaluation report	2011-12	Will be distributed through mail (both postal and electric)	Project stakeholders, donors, related forums, NGOs, civil society, policy makers, etc

2.5. Please list all contracts (works, supplies, services) above 5000€ awarded for the implementation of the action since the last interim report if any or during the reporting period, giving for each contract the amount, the award procedure followed and the name of the contractor.

Works/supplies/services	Amount <sup>1</sup> Euro	Procedure	Name of Contractor
None			

2.6. Describe if the Action will continue after the support from the European Community has ended. Are there any follow up activities envisaged? What will ensure the sustainability of the Action?

SLIPP tried some innovative approach in implementation phase. The term innovation is used here strictly to refer to adaptation of new practice (not new product or process) by the project target group. The rural producers/entrepreneurs in Bangladesh are very familiar with joining hands to form credit groups and/or social association/club. SLIPP originally planned to form some producer associations but not very localized smaller groups. However, during the fine tuning of strategy and action plan based on the findings of initial detailed research, PMT encountered several challenges to implement the project without any major deviation from original design and activities which could ensure delivering the stipulated outputs. The absence of rural service provision and the bleak prospect of individual rural service providers made PMT to look for alternatives that would be effective and efficient without compromising the quality. Therefore, SLIPP took following innovative approach to get the **best value for money and make the action sustainable**:

**Formation of Localized Producer Groups and then move ahead for Gradual Progression of forming Local Associations, Regional Associations and so on:** The primary goal of the project was to make services available to the marginal producers who cannot afford to buy institutional/private services. SLIPP study found it could be done by two ways viz. through Public Extension Services and/or through value chain actors. The Public Extension Service Providers are handicapped with their limited resources so they can not cover the huge number of producers, who require their services; on the other hand the private value chain actors (such as, input sellers or output buyers) do not see any economic benefit of providing embedded services to an individual producer. Group formation effectively addressed both the issues. The Public Service Providers are now able to reach out to the producers in groups and the private businesses are expecting business growth since the project is also encouraging groups to purchase together to save cost and ensure quality. Group formation is efficient because a SP can reach a large number of recipient and/or customer by making a single trip within a couple of hours. The quality of services is maintained throughout by close interaction among PNGO, project staff, groups and service provider.

**Developing Embedded Service Provision involving Parent Companies:** SLIPP could have trained any retailer (input sellers) as embedded service providers but effectiveness, quality and sustainability could have been the issue. Instead, SLIPP identified the market leaders in the region, and contacted them with business propositions. The selected companies – Syngenta for fish and vegetable sectors and Renata for duck sector, have good market reputation and are market leaders. However, realizing

that negotiation with any businesses must be on business terms i.e. what is for them in it. The project presented its logic that trained retailer can bring more sales of their products. Satisfied customers, who get valuable embedded service, would not only come back again and again but also bring more customers by spreading word of mouth. Ultimately, the logic was proven. The trained retailers have experienced significant increase in sales. The project had convinced the companies to share 50-60% of the cost to ensure ownership. **Now many companies have started their own retailer training programme while Syngenta set-up a training centre where they are providing training to their retailers round the year.** After series of dialogues, both the organizations agreed to work with SLIPP.

Involving parent companies ensured following benefits:

- **Effectiveness:** Both the parent companies follow very stringent procedure for appointing a retailer. They often cancel agency ship if a retailer violates agreed terms. As the trainings were conducted by representatives of these companies, the SPs (retailers) were attentive. The arrangement ensured active participation and proper uptake of knowledge and skills. Ultimately, these trainings were much more effective than the trainings conducted by independent consultants.
- **Efficiency:** The producers are getting effective services at almost no cash expenditure. SLIPP ensured that producers get those services effectively. Further, SLIPP had continuously encouraged the retailers to reach out to these producers, attend their group meetings to provide information and knowledge, which are not specifically linked to any business transaction. **They are now continuing it to promote their business and attract more customers.**
- **Sustainability:** An in house study by Syngenta showed that trained retailers experienced about 100% sales growth whereas similar untrained retailers experienced 30% growth. The parent company is very encouraged and planned to train all their retailers and also arrange refresher training time to time. Other retailers and parent companies are showing keen interest to follow this. However, it is a two way process i.e. service should be demanded and the service providers should get benefit from providing services. Our producer groups became aware of this, are demanding the services, and started receiving it, creating strong demonstration effect among neighbouring producer communities. So, it is apparent that it would be a self-sustaining process without further outside intervention after phasing out of SLIPP..

**Integrated Market Approach:** SLIPP undertook an integrated market approach acknowledging the fact that in order to ensure that producers truly benefit from their business, all the following issues must be addressed: (i) The value chain within which target producers operate (backward and forward) (ii) the service provisions and (iii) the policy environment. SLIPP was directly working with the value chain actors and also service providers (most are also part of value chain other than public service providers and institutions). This approach faced challenges but had been effective in the limited scope of the project. The main challenge was changing policy environment to make it more conducive to the marginal producers/entrepreneurs. However, in SLIPP major thrust in policy level was in raising awareness of the existing policies that are supposed to benefit producers but currently ineffectively implemented. A participatory policy research was conducted which identified the limitations. The findings were disseminated in the right forums including the concerned ministries and agencies. Involving all actors in the process ensured knowledge sharing about the roles and responsibilities of the respective actors in implementing the policy decision. It also made producers aware of these policies as well as, who to approach when they would encounter any problem. This approach also appeared to be effective and prospective for ensuring sustainable impact.

Besides these, Traidcraft Exchange in partnership with DEW have undertaken two scale-up projects in terms of number and scope. The scale up projects will work while working at the producer level but also equally at Association level which were formed under this project. These initiatives will solidify our actions already taken and go beyond.

2.7. Has the Action promoted gender equality, disabilities? If yes, please explain<sup>3</sup>

Though project had no specific gender focus, but since Gender is one of the key focuses of TX strategy, during sector selection the project had been particularly keen to include as many women as was possible. The project had included ethnic minorities where women were more active force in

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<sup>3</sup> To refer to EC Guidelines on gender equality, disabilities...

livelihood activities. It particularly included the duck sub-sector where women participation was much greater. The project didn't have specific focus on disability since the chosen sub-sectors were not much disability friendly.

2.8. How and by whom have the activities been monitored/evaluated? Please summarise the results of the feedback received, including from the beneficiaries.

At the initiation of the project, the project developed M&E tools. The international consultant developed a handbook and all the project managing staff followed this hand book. Moreover, the team followed all available M&E tools to ensure the project activities meet the project activities. The process the project team had followed are:

- Base Line Survey
- Regular monitoring to track physical and financial progress by the project managers
- Quarterly PMT meeting where this apex body took stock of the project progress, provided solution to minor issues and if required took strategic decision after reviewing progress and intervention plan.
- Regular field visits by TX and DEW officials
- Annual audit by the external auditor
- Internal Mid-term review
- Follow-up actions based on the MTR findings
- Final Evaluation by external evaluator
- Final Audit by external auditor

The MTR report captured the feedback and based on that the management had taken corrective actions (MTR report is enclosed)

2.9. What has your organisation/partner learned from the Action and how has this learning been utilised and disseminated?

There are several learning from this unique project, those are:

- **Building Ownership:** Success of any projects mostly depends on how quick project creates a sense of ownership amongst its target beneficiaries. Again unless the beneficiaries understand and buy the ideas, there would be no sense of ownership and the project will be limited to at best effective execution that will not lead to anywhere.
- **Start working on developing a local anchor or guardian for the groups from the very onset of the project:** Sustainability of group based intervention depends on the cohesiveness of the group. The final evaluation report revealed that if the groups were chosen as per locality with a leader at the helm, then the groups become cohesive in nature. Again, to promote this fraternity and cohesiveness the groups should follow the methods they were taught, such as monthly meeting, keeping records, assigning responsibilities, etc. Therefore, groups should be trained on governance and they should be mentored and nurtured intensively in first couple of years.
- **Sufficient budget for capacity building of local partners and staffs of the project as well as the local partners:** In any project, upon discernible positive impact in the first phase, usually one can try to expand the project within budget to increase outreach for better efficiency and outcomes. SLIPP was not different. Despite limited budget, fewer human resources and negligible budget to engage PNGO in the project, SLIPP had to hurdle with this uncertainty dilemma. Fortunately, excess producer groups were formed spontaneously and neighbouring groups took the charge of mentoring and nurturing those new groups. However, it remains always a danger. So in future, this probability of impromptu expansion of beneficiary size should be considered at project design stage and adequate manpower and budget should be made available.
- **High turnover of project staff:** The challenge with the SLIPP model is it requires intense human resource at the initial stage to guide the group towards full functionality. In addition, full staff retention over 5 years would be difficult to manage thus repeated induction will become a necessity. Thus, in case of future scale-up or replication the project should have additional budget for hiring and induction of new or replacement staff.



- **Ensuring balance between economic and other criteria:** The scoping mission for sector selection was skewed towards economic criteria and the other criteria of disaster risk reduction and engagement of women was either not considered or were given much less weight than the economic criteria. It would be essential to ensure a balance between economic criteria and the other livelihood criteria to have deeper impacts against the mandate.
- **Making Facilitation Work:** SLIPP correctly identified quick win interventions to demonstrate tangible results. This gained the trust of the beneficiaries required to execute more complex interventions at later stages of the project. However, it could backfire. For instance, undertaking output interventions which is the most difficult intervention due to immense externalities, at a later stage could not create much impact. The profitability increased at a very erratic market condition (most of the time producers fetch persistently decreasing price) due to supply-side interventions, not much at demand side.
- **Cross Cutting Issues like Gender and Climate should be given adequate consideration:** SLIPP was not mandated to address these issues. However, working in agriculture made SLIPP to focus more on sustainable agriculture. SLIPP addressed quite a bit issues regarding climate by promoting soil testing and usage of compost fertilizer but it could be more methodical and integrated. Similarly SLIPP did not consider gender aspect initially but gradually included this issue. However, the selected sub-sectors except Duck were highly skewed to male participants. It did incredibly well with women where they included them like ethnic communities and duck sub-sectors. These has to be considered at the project design stage.

### 3. Partners and other Co-operation

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3.1. How do you assess the relationship between the formal partners of this Action (i.e. those partners which have signed a partnership statement)? Please specify for each partner organisation

TX had signed a partnership agreement with Development Wheel (DEW), a national NGO. TX had developed the capacity of DEW in collaboration with an international consultant. A project Management Hand Book had been developed. Besides a Project Staff Manual had also been developed. TX also built capacity of the DEW in fund management and reporting. DEW had been cooperative and receptive.

DEW, being a fair trade organization, had been closely associated with TX. Initially there were challenges in terms of influencing an organization to change certain business practices and slightly upgrade and modify their working habit and attitude. However, DEW has now overcome those hurdles and works smoothly following newly acquired advanced management skills. They have become very efficient and proactive in delivering the project in close collaboration with TX. DEW has demonstrated commendable capacity in delivering important milestones successfully.

At the regional level, there were 8 local NGOs who are termed in this report as PNGO (partner NGO). All these organizations were participating in the project sincerely and performing their agreed roles satisfactorily. While most have adopted TX methodology successfully, one particular PNGO failed to keep up a satisfactory performance and so it had been replaced by another interested, well-performing PNGO in the locality. The new arrangement had led to better output in the field.

3.2. Is the partnership to continue? If so, how? If not, why?

TX continues its' partnership with DEW through a related scale-up project in the project area titled "Alleviating Poverty in North-East Bangladesh (APONE)". The project is funded by DFID (Global Poverty Action Fund) – 75%, and TX-25% and in another project titled "ALO – Alternative Livelihood Option" funded by UK Big Lottery fund .

3.3. How would you assess the relationship between your organisation and State authorities in the Action countries? How has this relationship affected the Action?

TX have a good working relationship with the state authorities. Government officials participated enthusiastically in all TX programmes. They have extended enormous support. Besides, as per law, the project officials had attended the monthly monitoring meeting on NGO activities in the office of the Deputy Commissioner. Officials of NGO Affairs Bureau of Bangladesh visited the project sites more than once and they expressed their satisfaction. In final dissemination workshop, Director

General, NGO Affairs Bureau attended as the Chief Guest. Director, Food Crops Wing, Department of Agriculture Extension also attended the programme as Special Guest.

At the national level as well, the project has been able to generate a lot of interest. The project networked with all relevant offices and agencies at the national level and briefed them about its activities and objectives. The response from them was overwhelming.

3.4. Where applicable, describe your relationship with any other organisations involved in implementing the Action:

- Associate(s) (if any)
  - Sub-contractor(s) (if any)
  - Final Beneficiaries and Target groups
  - Other third parties involved.
- 
- *Associate(s) (if any)*: Grass root NGOs (PNGOs) had been working in this project to facilitate the producer group formations and assisted in proper functioning of these groups and their association. They interacted and monitored the services provided by the trained business service providers and public service providers.
  - *Sub-contractor(s) (if any)*: No sub-contract during this reporting period. However in the early stage of the project a service contract with Margdarshak Community Development Support Services Pvt. Ltd. of India was signed. The value of the service contract was 52,975 EUR. Under this service contract, Margdarshak rendered consulting and training services to the project. The trainings include advisory service on project management, capacity building training of project, partner and PNGO staff on project management skills, business counselling and client management skills of SPs.
  - *Final Beneficiaries and Target groups*: Target groups or for that matter, the final beneficiaries were actively taking part in the project activities. The project's intervention strategies were fine-tuned based on feedback from them through the FGDs.
  - *Other third parties involved*: As it was reported in the previous reports, it was necessary to involve the parent manufacturing company to get input sellers or other value chain actors involved in the project. So the project had initiated dialogue with few reputed and market leader companies. Out of them three companies saw the effectiveness of the project approach which had inclusive benefits for the company, the retailers and the producers. Therefore, contracts were signed with Syngenta, Renata and Natore Development Society (NDS). They had been supporting the project's training of SPs since then.

3.5. Where applicable, outline any links you have developed with other actions

Not Applicable

3.6. If your organisation has received previous EC grants in view of strengthening the same target group, in how far has this Action been able to build upon/complement the previous one(s)? (List all previous relevant EC grants).

Not Applicable

3.7. How do you evaluate co-operation with the services of the Contracting Authority?

#### 4. Visibility

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How is the visibility of the EU contribution being ensured in the Action?

The project is following the EU visibility guidelines. In all the press notes, ads and media news the funding from EU has always been highlighted. In all the banners it was distinctly written that the

project is co-funded by EU. All the project partners and implementers are informed about EU's role and its visibility guideline. All the printed materials are with prominent display of this message. News clips and pictures are attached in the **Annex 34**.

**The European Commission may wish to publicise the results of Actions. Do you have any objection to this report being published on EuropeAid Co-operation Office website? If so, please state your objections here.**

No objection.

Name of the contact person for the Action: Ms. Maveen Pereira

Signature: ..... Location: Dhaka, Bangladesh  
(on behalf of Maveen Pereira, Signed By Shahed Ferdous, Country Director, TX Bangladesh Programme)

Date report due: November 30 2012, Date report sent: November 05, 2012