

Integrated Workshop Report

Shifting Grounds: Institutional transformation, enhancing knowledge and capacity to manage groundwater security in peri-urban Gangetic delta systems



1. INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP

The Researcher, Kolkata and Jagrata Juva Sangha, Khulna, in coordination with Saciwaters, Hyderabad and TU Delft, Netherlands have organised two “one-day” workshops on 7th and 10th October 2015 in Kolkata and Khulna respectively. Both Ends, Netherlands and Gomukh, India along with SaciWATERs played the role of facilitators. Principally funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NOW-WOTRO), these two stakeholder workshops were part of “*Shifting Grounds: Institutional transformation, enhancing knowledge and capacity to manage groundwater security in peri-urban Ganges delta systems*” project. Saciwaters Scan-Secretariat to Cap-Net co-funded these two workshops. As a first step towards Negotiation Approach, these two workshops brought together local communities of the study villages irrespective of their socio-economic background and provided them a platform where they can discuss their day-to-day water related struggles and find out some feasible solutions to their problems. The primary goals of these workshops were to sensitize the local villagers about the project and share the project findings so far in order to promote local participation and sustainability in local water resource management.

2. GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP

1. *Introduce the Negotiated Approach (NA)*
2. *Discuss the role of civil society and local people in order to achieve the desired result*
3. *Obtain personalised advice from experts and peers in related to local participation, empowerment and institution building*
4. *Build a platform where local people of different social, economic and religious background can share and discuss their problems*
5. *Build their capacity to do a stakeholder mapping and find out the feasible short and long-term solutions to their water related problems by themselves*
6. *Share the project findings so far and discuss appropriate ways in order to continue this two-way channel where knowledge and information would be shared both ways.*

3. PARTICIPANT DETAILS

In Kolkata, the workshop was attended by 20 persons from one of the study villages, Tihuria, situated at the Sonarpur Block of South 24 Parganas district. These villagers are mostly involved in agricultural work along with other professions such as fishery and non-agricultural works present in the region. Almost half of the participants was female, mostly housewife or daily labour under public construction schemes.

In Khulna, about 35 persons from study village hogladanga, attended the workshop. While the primary profession of the villagers were agricultural activities, there were fishermen, daily labours as well as local primary level school teachers. Women were mostly housewives or daily chore workers. More than half of the participants were female.

For both Kolkata and Khulna, the participants were mostly middle aged (35-45). However, there were lot of young people present in both the locations.

4. PROCEEDING OF THE WORKSHOP

A. Introduction of the participants and resource persons

After a brief welcome address by local NGO in their respective locations to the participants of the workshop, the participants of the project introduced one another in a very different manner. Since the primary goal of the workshop was to initiate dialogues between different stakeholders, it was decided to form a group of 2 people sitting side by side. Every person was given the responsibility to talk to his group partner and introduce him/her to others. Participants enjoyed the style and enthusiastically participated in the exercise.

B. Introduction to the Project:

After the informal introduction of the participants, TU Delft and SaciWATERs presented the project and updated about the project status. It was followed by an informal introduction to Negotiated Approach in Kolkata by Gomukh and in Khulna by Gomukh and Both Ends together.

Program	Kolkata	Khulna
Welcome Address	Mr. Partha Sarathi Banerjee, The Researcher	Mr. ATM. Zakir Hossian, Jagrata Juba Shangha
Introduction to the Project	Professor Wil Thissen, TU Delft Dr. Poulomi Banerjee, SaciWATERs	Professor Wil Thissen, TU Delft Mr. Samir Bhattacharya, SaciWATERs
Project Status Update	Leon Hermans, TU Delft	Leon Hermans, TU Delft
Introduction to NA	Professor Vijay Paranjpye, Gomukh	Professor Vijay Paranjpye, Gomukh Remi Kempers, Both Ends

Introductory Session

C. Group Formation:

After the introductory session, participants were divided in some groups. Care had been taken to see whether member of the same family doesn't fall under the same group. Besides, special efforts have been made to form the group as diverse as possible in respect to genders, age, social and economic class. The group names have been chosen from the names of local rivers. In Kolkata Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati and Bhagirathi were chosen while in Khulna Rupsha, Pasur, Bhairab, Kopotakkho and Baleswar were selected by the participants themselves. Each group was assigned with one or two facilitators.

Facilitator	Name of Participants
Yamuna Group	
Dr. Poulomi Banerjee	Susanta Manna
	Sanjib Manna
	Prasanta Manna
	Jhorna Mondol
	Shyamali Joyardar
Bhagirathi Group	
Samir Bhattacharya, &Rezaul Hasan	Sajal Kumar Manna
	Krishna Haldar
	Malati Mondol
	Durga Purakait
	Rahul Manna
Ganga Group	
Professor Vijay Paranjpye, Partha Sarathi Banerjee, and Sharlene Gomes	Shakti Khan
	Arun Roy
	Sachi Rani Mondol
	Shrabonti Mondol
	Sunil Gupta
Saraswati Group	
Nazmul Huda, and Ranjit Guha	Tapas Manna
	Tinku Mondol
	Anjali Mondol
	Rabin Sui

Kolkata Groups along with the facilitators

Facilitator	Name of participants	
Pasur Group		
Rezaul Hasan and Sharleen Gomes	Subroto Roy	
	Aroti Roy	
	Konika Bala	
	Debika Roy	
	Animesh Roy	
	Binoy Golder	
	Dulal Roy	
Bhairob Group		
Sk. Nazmul Huda	NishikantaBiswas	
	Proshanto Roy	
	NemaiMondol	
	Mizan Sheikh	
	Sujit Roy	
	Lupa Roy	
	Lotika Roy	
	Md. Mainuddin Patwary	
	Raju	
	Kopotakkho Group	
Binoy Majumder	Shormila Roy	
	Birupoma Roy	
	Radhakanto Roy	
	Sonjit Mondol	
	Sawkot Hossain	
	Nipu Sikder	
	Nitai Roy	
	Rupsha Group	
	Samir Bhattacharya	Nivanon Kumar Roy
Ashok Kumar Roy		
Nuton Roy		
BijoyRoj		
Sumita Roy		
Helena Begum		
Ruma Begum		
Baleswar Group		
Riad Hossain	Utpal Roy	
	Rumpa Roy	
	Mithu Roy	
	Champa Roy	
	KalidshBasar	
	Suvash Roy	
	Tushar Mridha	

Khulna groups along with the facilitators

D. Group Discussion 1:

Group discussions were divided in two principal parts. Before the lunch participants were instructed to identify the constraints and challenges they face related to water. At this stage no distinction between groundwater and surface water has been made and they were asked to discuss problems related to water from quality, quantity, affordability, accessibility or equity perspective. The idea was to understand how various users face challenges of competitive uses of water, what are the drivers of the demand, factors of seasonality, the opportunity cost related to poor quality or inadequate quantity of water etc.

Although, lying in two different countries, surprisingly the challenges for both the country appeared to be quite same. The major problem for both the location is drinking water. In Kolkata drinking water is supplied by PHE overhead tank while in Khulna people rely on deep tube well for drinking water. Drinking water scarcity is the main problem as groundwater having both salinity and arsenic contamination is not at all reliable for drinking or cooking. Groundwater available from shallow hand pumps is used for domestic purposes, but its quality seems not suitable for drinking or cooking.

In Kolkata, the supply of drinking water from PHE is irregular and inadequate, the number of drinking water outlets of the PHE supply inside the village is less than required and villagers are not aware about the quality of the supplied water. Further, huge amount of PHE supply water is wasted due to lack of maintenance and management. A large number of villagers buy packaged water from the plant set up inside the village at a high price though its quality is not ensured by any kind of testing. During summer, even poor families are forced to purchase drinking water. Surface water in this locality is being polluted by the drainage canal which runs near the village, carrying waste from the Kolkata city. Hence, canal water is used only for fish cultivation and irrigation. It could not be used for any other purpose. Moreover, the canal water is not available throughout the year. It dries up during the summer season, causing scarcity of water required for irrigation and fisheries.

In Khulna, the village has a sufficient number of tube wells but only one out of those ten tube wells provides quality water. Hence, there is always a queue in those few tube wells. Sometimes, villagers have to go to other nearby villages, ranging between 1 to 5 kms away, to fetch water. Some good tube-wells are out of order due to over-use and lack of maintenance. Once, there is some problem, the tube-well never gets repaired and gets corroded by lying idle for years. According to the villagers, just by repairing these decaying tube-wells, half of the water problem can be solved. Digging a tube-well is private investment. Even if collectively villagers can afford to dig some, they are scared to dig as there is no prior test for the water quality of the particular digging location. It has been found in past that some people dug tube-wells and afterwards the quality of water turned out to be less than desired. Apart from these tube-wells, there is a canal present in the village and it is a major source of water for irrigation and fishery. However, the canal is almost filled up and it can't carry water for irrigation during summer. Every year during monsoon the water spills up in the paddy field wasting both harvest and cultivated fishes. There is an immediate need to excavate the canal.

E. Group Discussion 2:

After lunch the same groups have been resembled with their particular set of specific problems, expressed in their own terms and they were asked to identify solutions of each problem. Instead of going for a vague solution like we should do this or government should do that, solutions were more specific. It was either which department of the government should do this, when to do this, what efforts have already been made towards this goal, why previous efforts were not successful etc. Some of the solutions suggested by the participants are

Kolkata	Khulana
Increase the number of supply outlets inside the village.	Proper management of KCC waste dump system
Increase the number of overhead tank to meet increasing requirement of the villagers.	Need more tube wells
Panchayet members should discuss the drinking water issue with the BDO, SDO, and other responsible officials to find out way out to solve the problem	Alternate source of water
Quality of the available drinking water should be tested at regular intervals	Need proper allocation rules of resources
Number of deep tube-wells should be increased	Bottom-up approach should be implemented to avoid conflicts and ensure cooperation
Jilla Parishad must take initiative to re-excavate the canal.	Ensuring pure supply water from KWASA
Water from all groundwater resources need to be sent to the laboratory for quality check	Make deep bore to preserve water
Testing of quality of groundwater should be done before installation of each new tube-well.	Establishment of Water Treatment Plant in Union level
Canal should be re-excavated	Canal excavation in proper time of the year
Steps should be taken to close down the packaged water plant inside the village.	Reconstruction or Proper management of sluice gate
Villagers should preserve rain water	Stop leasing and encroachment of canal
Training on rain-water harvesting	Soil and water test before drilling
Long term solution for Tolly Nala	Digging canal and connecting it with river
	Share information with everyone in the village
	Regular cleaning of existing waste
	Build watershed to preserve rain water
	Possession of illegal eviction on canal
	Need community based monitoring
	Arrange more workshop and seminar by ensuring the local participants
	Government enforcements to protect canal
	Sluice gate management should be well coordinated.
	Commercial extraction of ground water should be minimized

F. Feedback

At the end of the training program, participants were given an evaluation sheet and were told to evaluate the workshop based on the questions written in the paper. First question was about necessity of the workshop. Most of them concluded the workshop as a way to solve their problems. They added that this kind of workshop is essential to increase their awareness as well as their working capacity. Issues like safe drinking water, deep tube wells for irrigation and canal re-excavation is very important for them- they added. They further think that their knowledge and capacity will be increased if they can participate in similar types of workshop and training in future. They thought, this kind of workshop is needed for their own good and they thanked the organizer for such initiative. The next question was about which part of the workshop they liked most. Most of them said they liked everything about the workshop. Few of them said the content of the workshop was most educative. They were sad to know that peri-urban areas of our neighbouring country are also facing same kind of problems. They are delighted to know the process of negotiation in order to resolve a problem and the role of community regarding water issues. All of them said they found nothing to dislike about the workshop. One of them said he was saddened by the news of no financial support to carry such work beyond these formal set-ups once or twice in a year. About which part of the workshop will help, they think the information they got on environment, water and soil issues from the workshop will be helpful for them. They came to know about the rain water harvesting system, dredging of rivers and canals, negotiation process with the government for tube wells and soil and water quality test before tube well installation. They think the initiative of this workshop will solve their water related problems in near future. Government officials from District administration and Upazila should have been involved in the workshop, they thought. More time should be spent on health and sanitation issues and the ways of solution. They expected more intensive initiative for the awareness and capacity building of the mass people of their village. More community people should be involved in the negotiation process. They hope JJS will help them to negotiate with the government.

5. RESULT

The workshop has been perceived by all to be a success as a first step towards Negotiation Approach and all the pre-defined goals of the project have been achieved.

A. Discuss the role of civil society and local people in order to achieve the desired result

During the first session as well as the concluding session, the role of civil society and local people has been discussed. The principle objective of NA is to empower civil society and local people to sustainably manage their own resources, by enabling them to protect and fulfil their rights, and propose and negotiate viable long term strategies to alleviate poverty and ensure healthy ecosystem. Hence, it has been decided that through discussion, efforts will be made to identify where local civil societies need capacity building and they will be capacitated with proper through training throughout the project period and beyond.

B. Obtain personalised advice from experts and peers in related to local participation, empowerment and institution building

Tailored advice from experts and peers specifically related to 1) local participation, empowerment and institution building, and 2) sustainable management of water resources were obtained. Experts were invited for this purpose, from TU Delft from Netherlands, Both Ends from Netherlands, SaciWATERS from Hyderabad, India and Gomukh from Pune, India. Both Ends and Gomukh have extensive experience of conducting Negotiated Approach specifically designed for the region while TU Delft and SaciWATERS contributed with their vast knowledge on groundwater management, socioeconomic factors impacting groundwater along with formal and informal institutional set-up.

C. Build a platform where local people of different social, economic and religious background can share and discuss their problems

Break-out group sessions comprised of people from different gender, age and socioeconomic backgrounds allowed for more detailed discussions on key challenges that participants are facing. These sessions were perceived as highly relevant and useful. The workshop clearly gathered a wealth of knowledge and experience on resources management and dealing with conflict situations.

D. Build their capacity to do a stakeholder mapping and find out the feasible short and long-term solutions to their water related problems by themselves

During the last session, participants were asked to do a stakeholder mapping for their daily water needs and discussed how to reach these formal and informal stakeholders. As part of the project, one doctorate research project is underway on institutional system mapping. During the course of project, the knowledge gathered from the research project will be disseminated contributing to the knowledge and empowerment of the local people.

E. Share the project findings so far and discuss appropriate ways in order to continue this two-way channel where knowledge and information would be shared both ways.

Representatives of TU DELFT and SaciWATERS presented the project findings so far to the local participants and asked the opinion of local people whether any important issue related to groundwater management is omitted. The contribution of local people to this discussion was spontaneous and they presented all their problems and lacunas of overcoming those problems in structured manner. It has been decided that apart from biannual Negotiated Approach workshop, a series of monthly mango tree meetings will be conducted where knowledge and information will be meticulously shared.

6. LESSONS WITH REGARD TO THE NA

The NA at first always brings up many doubts and questions in regard to its methodologies, proceeding and usefulness. It remains a question for many how it is different from other participatory approaches. Although it was the first step towards Negotiated Approach and main objective of this workshop was to initiate dialogues between local water users, it has posed a few challenges nonetheless such as:

- A. Negotiated Approach is complicated word for many. It is not only about negotiation. There were some misunderstandings as to the approach and it was difficult for the local NGOs to convince the participants about the usefulness of the workshop.
- B. Since it is not a fixed, step-by-step approach, but still in the validation phase the proceeding of the workshop was confusing for some.
- C. Lack of knowledge of local NGOs concerning the approach posed little problem at the initial level. It is still not clear how many workshops will be required to bring all the stakeholders in the same platform and how long it will take for at least some of the local people to acquire negotiation skills.
- D. One important element for the success of NA is the ability to unite all the stakeholders. It has been found that the local community in rural Bengal is divided according to political affiliations and it is difficult to bring all of them under the same umbrella in the background of political polarization at the grass root level.

7. WAY FORWARD

All participants were positive to continue both individually in their locality, using the insights from the NA and the workshop, as well as a group. Encouraging was the fact that The Researcher, Kolkata and JJS, Bangladesh showed lot of enthusiasm to continue the good work in order to attain some positive results.

- A. One or two monthly informal workshops will take place in the project location for next six months. These mango tree meetings will provide platform to share project findings with local people as well as update the project members regarding the steps towards sustainable groundwater management.
- B. According to the availability of additional funds, few informative and educative videos can be made and shown to the local people regarding the sustainable groundwater management, various ways of water conservation, hygiene and sanitation, rainwater harvesting etc.
- C. Interested and knowledgeable persons from each village will be identified and a core group will be formed. They can also be invited in future workshops for their capacity development and knowledge sharing.
- D. Mapping of the respective localities will be done with the involvement of community people identifying the groundwater sources (existing water resources and water conflicts areas) and village map will be developed.
- E. In addition to that, JJS is planning to organize negotiation meeting between the community groups with the government service providers in six months interval. JJS staff will work as facilitators and some Capacity Building workshop on Advocacy and negotiation is also envisaged.
- F. Both Ends and SaciWATERs will follow-up link with various donors to look into the possibilities of some additional funding in order to support these mango tree meetings, video projections and capacity building workshops.

Annex

Participant list Kolkata

Sl. No	Name of the Participants	Locality	Contact No.	Age	Sex	Occupation
1	Sajal Kumar Manna	TihuriaDakshin Para	9007806545	40	M	Farmer
2	Tapas Manna	TihuriaDakshin Para	8013807119	31	M	Farmer
3	Susanta Manna	TihuriaDakshin Para	8620951409	21	M	Farmer
4	Sunil Gupta	TihuriaDakshin Para	8013947417	44	M	Farmer
5	Rahul Manna	TihuriaDakshin Para	7278660417	24	M	Farmer
6	Shakti Khan	TihuriaDakshin Para	7686933629	20	M	Farmer
7	Arun Roy	TihuriaDakshin Para	9831799672	35	M	Driving
8	Krishna Halder	TihuriaDakshin Para	9804260299	18	M	Student
9	Sanjib Manna	TihuriaDakshin Para	9836487020	30	M	Farmer
10	Prasanta Manna	TihuriaDakshin Para	8013644380	35	M	Farmer
11	TinkuMondol	Saheberabad	9903617423	28	F	Panchayet Samity Member
12	Anjali Mondol	Saheberabad	9903458066	24	F	NREGA Supervisor
13	Sachi Rani Mondol	Saheberabad	7059709893	40	F	Housewife
14	ShrabontiMondol	Saheberabad		18	F	Student
15	Jhornamondol	Saheberabad		40	F	Housewife
16	ShyamaliJoyardar	Saheberabad		35	F	Housewife
17	MalatiMondol	Tihuria		35	F	Housewife
18	Durga Purakait	Saheberabad		30	F	Housewife
19	Rabin Sui	Tihuria	9007783432	25	M	Driving

Participant list Khulna

No.	Full Name	Gender	Profession	contact number
1	Nivanon Kumar Roy	Male	Fish Farmer	8801712336667
2	Ashok Roy	Male	Land Business	8801759180145
3	Suvashchandra *Roy	Male	Agriculture	8801733813862
4	Nipu Sikder	Male	Land Business	
5	NishikantoBiswas	Male	Fish Farmer	8801913549486
6	Animesh Roy	Male	Fish Farmer	
7	Utpal Roy	Male	Agriculture	8801920715540
8	Subrata *Roy	Male	Land Business	8801731980474
9	Tushar KantiMridha	Male	Land Business	8801754645016
10	Binoy Golder	Male	Agriculture	
11	Kalidash Bachar	Male	Land Business	
12	Neuton Roy	Male	Land Business	
13	Radhakanto Roy	Male	Agriculture	
14	Sujit *Roy	Male	Fish Farmer	

15	Prosanto Roy	Male	Agriculture	
16	Nimai Mandal	Male	Land Business	
17	Nitai Roy	Male	Fish Farmer	
18	Dulal Roy	Male	Agriculture	
19	Bijoy Roy	Male	Fish Farmer	
20	Sanjit Dhali	Male	Agriculture	
21	Latika Roy	Female	Fish Farmer	8801731980474
22	Rumpa Roy	Female	Agriculture	8801558589847
23	Champa Roy	Female	Agriculture	8801756567756
24	Birupama Roy	Female	Agriculture	8801826568388
25	Aroti Roy	Female	Fish Farmer	8801759181045
26	Lopa Roy	Female	Agriculture	8801725174710
27	Sumita Roy	Female	Fish Farmer	8801712336667
28	Mithu Roy	Female	Agriculture	8801916213067
29	Debika Roy	Female	Agriculture	
30	Swarmila Roy	Female	Fish Farmer	
31	HelenaBegum	Female	Agriculture	
32	NizamSheikh	Male	Land Business	
33	Md. Saokat Hossain	Male	Agriculture	
34	Ruma Akhter	Female	Agriculture	
35	Kanika Bala	Female	Agriculture	
36	Wil Thissen	Male	Professor	
37	LeonHermans	Male	Professor	
38	SharleneGomes	Female	PhD Candidate	
39	Poulomi Banerjee	Female	Senior Fellow	
40	Samir Bhattacharya	Male	Associate Fellow	
41	Partha Sarathi Banerjee	Male	Project coordinator	
42	Binoy Majumdar	Male	Field Operation Cooperator	
43	Soma Majumdar	Female	Field Operation Assistant	
44	Vijay Paranjpe	Male	Director	
45	Masfuqus Salehin	Male	Professor	
46	Resaul Hassan	Male	PhD Fellow	
47	ATM ZakirHossain	Male	Executive Director	8801711828833
48	Sheikh NazmulHuda	Male	Coordinator	8801712862115
49	Abdul Baki	Male	Associate Coordinator	8801712862112
50	Sheikh Monirul Huda	Male	Project Officer	
51	Md. Riadhossain	Male	Research Officer	8801726740577

52	Apurba Roy	Male	Rapporteur	8801911123258
53	Mainuddin PatwaryRaju	Male	Rapporteur	8801945501787
54	Syed Muktadurul Islam	Male	Photographer	8801717796018