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Appreciative Inquiry to Promote Local Innovations among Farmers Adapting to Climate Change

A Facilitator's Guide

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A Taos Institute Publication

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By Shayamal K. Saha

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Acronyms

ACSI	Appreciative Consulting Services International
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
BARC	Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council
BD	Bangladesh
BRRI	Bangladesh Rice Research Institute
CARP	Coastal Area Rehabilitation Project
DG	Director General
GIZ	German Development Cooperation
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISC	Indigenous Soil and Water Conservation
LI	Local Innovations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PFI	Promoting Farmer Innovation
PID	Participatory Innovation Development
PTD	Participatory Technology Development
PS	Problem Solving
R&D	Research & Development
SK	Scientific Knowledge
TAG	Taos Associate Grant
USA	United States of America
VORD	Voluntary Organization for Rural Development

Foreword

I first 'met' Shayamal when I was asked to work with him on his Ph.D. dissertation. He had been working as a facilitator of self-help initiatives - first as an unpaid volunteer - and later through various kinds of association with large and small NGOs. He had become increasingly dissatisfied with the many ways in which attempts to 'help' or 'develop' communities (re)created dependency relations and a sense of deficit and helplessness amongst the locals. Happily, he came in contact with appreciative approaches and the related philosophical-practical stance of relational constructionism. Following this path he came to The Taos Institute - and to me. He had received the 'go ahead' from his NGO to facilitate a process of Appreciative Inquiry in a mountain village in the Philippines. He became a participant and co-constructor of this process whilst at the same time facilitating a more traditional problem-solving approach in another village nearby ("Promotion of Self-help in Development & Social Change: Constructing Non Subject-Object Processes" http://www.taosinstitute.net). His work provided both a valuable contribution to the villages and the NGO. His written thesis provides valuable reading for anyone curious about the potential value of self-help initiatives that are genuinely participatory, make space for multiplicity, and develop a culture of learning, improvisation and creativity. The present document focuses on related work. It is intended to help others who might be interested in facilitating a process of Appreciative Inquiry - in this case the subject is helping rural folks adapt to climate change. He has developed the guide with a good deal of skill. Shayamal's work, together with genuinely participative, multi-voiced, transformative approaches to development and change, deserve to be better known and practiced. I hope very much that this text will contribute to such a purpose.

Dian Marie Hosking
Professor of Development and Change
Utrecht University School of Governance

Acknowledgements

The Taos Institute awarded me a Taos Associate Grant (TAG) which enabled me to do this work. I fervently express my sincere thanks and gratitude to all board members and staff of this esteemed organization. Whenever I sent reports and information of my work to the Taos Institute, then and there I received appreciative and encouraging replies from Professor Dr. Mary Gergen and Dawn Dole of the Taos Institute; my special acknowledgement is accorded to them.

My regards to Dr. M. A. Mazed; former Director General of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute and present Director of Bangladesh Academy for Sciences. As Chairperson of the Executive Committee of VORD he provided me cordial support to my work with VORD.

Including the Executive Director of VORD, all staff provided me their cordial cooperation to undertake this work in Patikabari village. Shajal Kumar Saha and Md. Masud deserve special thanks for their hard work while organizing meetings and activities with the farmers.

Sincere appreciation to the caring male and female members and farmers of Patikabari village; their active participation made it possible to develop this Guide.

As part of the process of developing this Guide, a 4-day training course on "Appreciative Inquiry to Promote Local Innovations among Farmers Adapting to Climate Change" was conducted. A total of 16 participants were sponsored by the Coastal Rehabilitation Project of GIZ-Bangladesh including agricultural scientists of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council. Sincere thanks to Dr. Purnima Chottopadaya Dutta, Principal Adviser of CRAP-GIZ-Bangladesh for sponsoring a group of technical persons as participants for the training course and who visited this approach in Patikabari village.

Dr. Daniel Wulff, from the University of Calgary thoroughly went through the Manuel; edited and provided me valuable guidance to make it presentable to the wider audience and stakeholders in development and social change. My sincere thanks to Dr. Daniel Wulff.

Going through the PhD program of the Taos Institute, I had/have my dream of connecting scholars and the common people and spreading the idea among many grassroots development workers. Through this TAG project sincerely I have tried to connect global level social constructionist scholars, common people of a remote village in Bangladesh, a scholarly educational institution like the Taos Institute, and a small local NGO like VORD. In this endeavor many people contributed, I sincerely acknowledge all of them.

In the context of Bangladesh there are ample workshops, seminars, and writings on the threats of climate change but actions and dialogue at the local level are rare. This small project demonstrated that it is possible to apply an effective bottom-up process of climate change adaptation. I hope that this simple but practical tool will be useful for the grassroots development workers in countries like Bangladesh.

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About the Guide

Users and Purpose of this Guide

This Guide on" *Appreciative Inquiry to Promote Local Innovations among Farmers Adapting to Climate Change"* is prepared for development workers who would like to facilitate a community learning and adaptation process, especially for farmers in agriculture facing challenges of climate change. This guide is not about agricultural technologies which would help farmers to merely adapt but it is about facilitating a process of sharing knowledge and technologies farmers are continuously innovating to overcome challenges in relation to their local situation and mode of life.

The specific and practical objective of this Guide is to enable practitioners involved with government, NGOs, and community-based organizations to apply the Appreciative Inquiry cycle to promote local innovations among farmers adapting to climate change.

How this Guide was Developed

Ideas and tools included in this Guide are drawn from a 17–month (February 2011-May 2012) collaborative learning project supported by the Taos Institute and implemented by the Voluntary Organization for Rural Development (VORD).The main purpose of this project was to:

- Pilot an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) cycle in a rural (agri-livelihood based) community of Bangladesh in relation to the promotion of local innovations and actions towards climate change adaptation in agriculture;
- Develop contextualized AI facilitation tools (useful for the grassroots change workers) in relation to facilitating a farmers' community to promote self-help towards climate change adaptation in their agriculture.

Following the above-stated objectives a 12-month process was applied in Patikabari village, under Pangsa Upazila of Rajabri district. Two staffs of VORD who worked in the community of Patikabari village were given orientation on AI and application of the process in the community. Taos Associate Dr. Shayamal K. Saha regularly visited and had in-depth interactions with VORD's staff and the community of Patikabari village.

With an objective to share the same process with other relevant stakeholders and to advocate the process, a training course was organized (May 9- 12, 2012) through Appreciative Consulting Services International, Bangladesh (ACSIBD). This training course included the following participants and facilitated by Taos Associate Dr. Shayamal K. Saha.

1. Ms. Nahida Begum, Association for Disaster Mitigation and Development (ADMD), Patuakhali, Bangladesh.
2. Md. Faruk Mia, Association for Disaster Mitigation and Development (ADMD), Patuakhali, Bangladesh.
3. Md. Monowar Hossain, Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC), Dhaka, Bangladesh.

4. Dr. Bilas Chandra Roy, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), Joydevpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
5. Mr. Manmatho Pandey, Gonoshataya Kendra (GK), Savar, Dhaka Bangladesh.
6. Md. Mokbul Hossain, Gonoshataya Kendra (GK), Savar, Dhaka Bangladesh.
7. Ms. Nur-A-Mahajabin Khan, INCIDIN Bangladesh, Gazipur, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
8. Mr. ABM Abdullah, Resource Development Foundation (RDF), Barguna, Bangladesh.
9. Md. Golam Azam, Resource Development Foundation (RDF), Barguna, Bangladesh.
10. Ms. Salma Begum, Resource Development Foundation (RDF), Barguna, Bangladesh.
11. Ms. Suprity Chowdhury, WAVE Foundation, Barguna, Bangladesh.
12. Mr. Musfiqur Rahman, WAVE Foundation, Rajshsahi , Bangladesh
13. Ms. Sahana Begun, ACSI, Dhaka, Bangladesh
14. Ms. Zakia Begum, ACSI, Dhaka, Bangladesh

At the opening session of the course:- from the left: (1) Dr. M.A. Majed, former DG of BRRI and present Director of Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, (2) Dr. Purmima Chottopadaya Dutta, Principal Adviser, CRAP-GIZ, and (3) Dr. Shayama K. Saha, Taos Associate

Participants of the training course on "Appreciative Inquiry to Promote Local Innovations among Farmers Adapting to Climate Change" organized by Appreciative Consulting Services International, Bangladesh; held May 9-12, 2012.

Besides testing tools and methods included in the Guide, this training course also created a great opportunity to take all participants in Patikabari village to observe the outcome and the process through direct interactions with the farmers' community with whom the process was applied.

Chapters of the Guide

The Guide is divided into two chapters:

> ***Chapter 1***: Provides overview of Appreciative Inquiry, some related concepts and principles of social-relational construction and why it is important to apply AI to promote local innovations.
>
> ***Chapter 2:*** Describes the facilitating process and tools with practical experiences generated through field exercises.

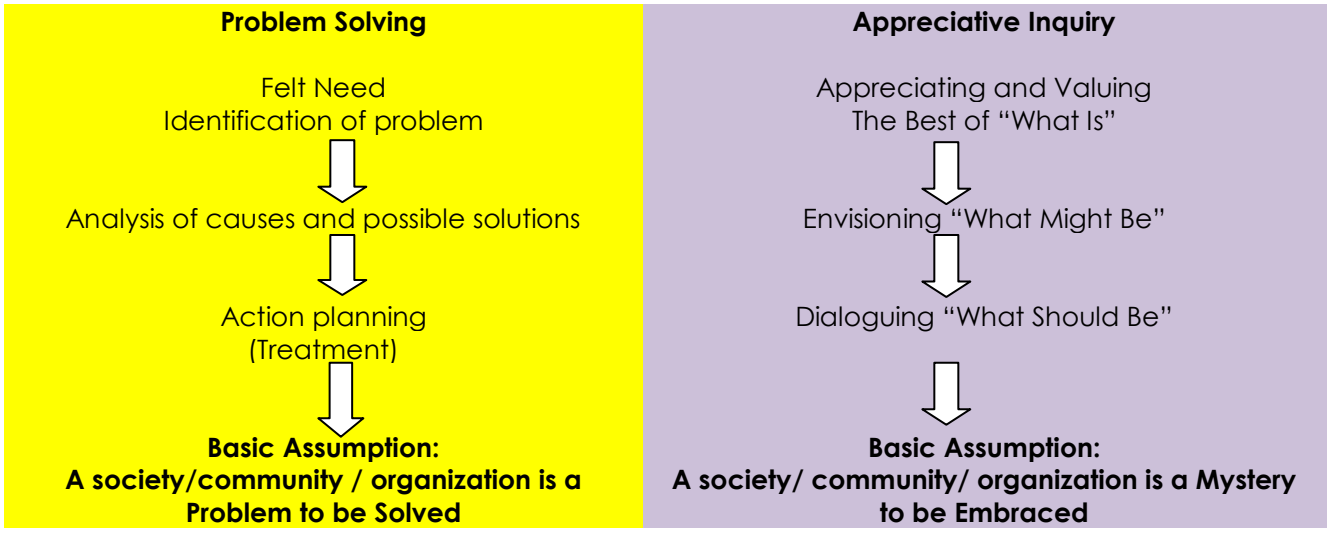
Process and tools included in this Guide are not rigid but flexible. In relation to local context and needs, users can contextualize, skip, or add components. The main principle is "*nobody knows everything but everybody knows something*." Local farmers, scientists and extension workers all have good and useful knowledge; if we have a system and process of creative and appreciative interactions, it would help us to adapt better than acting alone.

Chapter 1: Appreciative Inquiry & Local Innovation

1.1. What and Why Appreciative Inquiry

Probably many of us have already heard these two words, "appreciative inquiry." When a friend has done something good and another friend says "*I really appreciate what you did,*" an interpersonal valuing has occurred. Appreciation means valuing something that we like, something which is positive to us. The 'Inquiry' comes to us as means to find out something. In a basic sense AI is inquiry about something that is positive, not negative; not problem, but rather prospects. One can definitely argue "*If I don't have good food to eat, then how can I suspend talking about that problem*."AI probably does not advocate forgetting that problem but proposes instead of saying "*I don't have food,*" one could be proactive to say "*I want good food*."This approach prefers talking about a positive vision rather than using the vocabularies of deficit. In a relational construction, we acknowledge the existence of the other; seeing relationships give meaning to each other. The moment we talk of prospects rather than problems, we are not forgetting the negative side but choosing to start from the positive side. Our speaking and talking impact our lives. Language is a very important element in our change work – because the way we speak directs the way we construct our life and world. The moment we talk of problems then and there our lives and worlds begin to appear as problematic. On the contrary, the moment we talk of what is best in us then and there we feel happy; a good vision to get better appears. But in development and social change endeavors our usual approach has been "problem solving." In any kind of development work we start with the question 'what is the problem?' We ask people to write their views on 'what is the problem?' and soon the black board or poster paper gets filled in with words creating worlds of "not having." These languages of problems and deficits make us hopeless, reducing our vision to create something new. We fail to recognize there are many things among us which are good, promising, and can be created.

Exhibit 1: Problem Solving (PS) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI): Basic Assumptions



When we talk of problems it does not encourage a conversational climate with joy and an open mind. It does not encourage communities and change workers to learn to improvise and to figure out new ways of going on together. On the contrary, AI is based on the idea that every living system has many untapped, rich and inspiring accounts of the positive. Recognizing the constitutive power of language, AI centers discussion on what is locally viewed as positive, what works, what is energizing.

From the perspective of social/relational constructionism effects of AI and PS stated above divulge that each of the methods contribute to the processes of constructing different realities (see e.g., Dechler & Hosking, 1995; Doreke & Hosking, 2004).

AI Principles

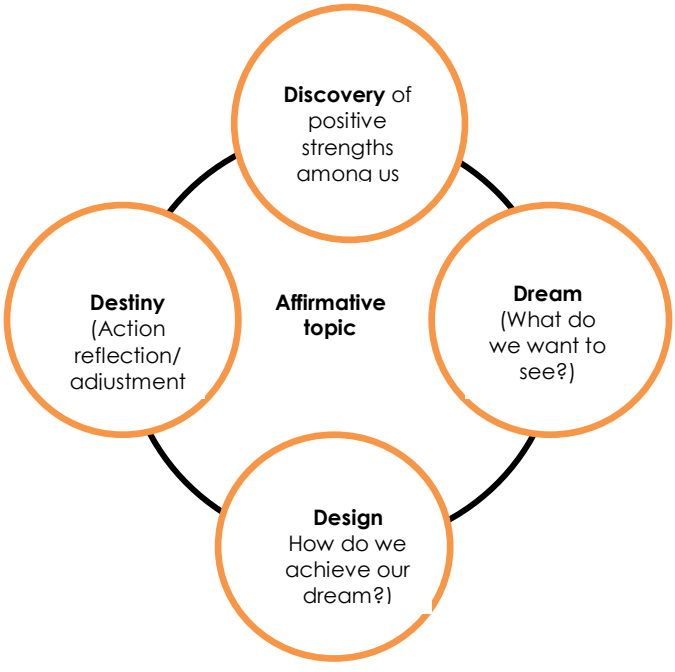
- **The constructionist principle**: All claims of knowledge, truth, identity, objectivity, reality and values are the product of communal relationship and the communal interpretation of meaning. We create our own reality through patterns of communication and storytelling.
- **The principle of simultaneity**: Recognizes that inquiry and change are not separate but are simultaneous movements. Inquiry is intervention. Learning and change happen simultaneously.
- **The poetic principle:** Human systems are stories; open to interpretation by the local culture and context.
- **The anticipatory principle**: Our collective imagination and discourse about the future includes infinite human resources available for generating social change. What we anticipate is what we enact.
- **The positive principle**: Our positive image of the future leads to our positive actions: we focus on what should be, rather than what is wrong.

The 4D Cycle of AI

The principles stated earlier are put to work in a process referred to as a *4-D cycle*.

- **Discovery**: discover our strengths, exceptional/peak moments
- **Dream**: envision what might be if the peak moments were the norm, not the exception; the image of the future that emerges is grounded in the "positive present"
- **Design**: develop "provocative propositions" to achieve the vision, and the strategies to implement them
- **Destiny/Delivery**: act on the provocative propositions, established new relationships.

Exhibit 2: 4D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry (AI)



AI emphasizes process rather than content and diversity rather than consensus. The four-D's are viewed as a continuous cycle in which the destiny phase leads to new discovery of community strengthening, thereby beginning the process anew (see e.g., Doreke & Hosking, 2004) Complementary to the fact, a collation from relevant literature (see e.g., Bushe, 2000; Cooperrider, 2000; Cooperrider & Diana Whitney, 2000; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2000; Gergen, McNamee & Barrett, 2001; Cottor et. al., 2004; Ludema, 2000; Sandra , 2003 ; Thatchenkery, 1999, 2005) also convey that for the people's centered development and social change choice for AI is much more justifiable than PS.

Exhibit 3: Enhancing and Reducing Participation: Functions of PS & AI

PS	AI
Works for fixing what went wrong and what is going to be wrong	Works on 'what should be' constructed; focuses on a positive image of the future
Creates a worldview of "not having"; starts with what the community doesn't have; solutions are in the hands of outsiders	Creates a worldview of "having"; starts with what the community has; solutions are in the hands of the community
Generates vocabularies of deficit and the "blame game"; makes people embarrassed and defensive to participate	Generates vocabularies of hope and avoids the "blame game"; makes people proud and encouraged to participate
Analysis of causes of failure/problem and solutions usually locates individuals as contributors, thus promoting individual identity and individualism	Analysis of causes of success usually locate strengths in the collective relationship thus promotes collectivism
Pursues people to see life as full of problems and many of those are	Pursues people to see life as full of potentials and progress possibilities; develops "learnt

PS	AI
uncontrollable (leading to feelings of helplessness)	optimism"
Talks of problems that discourages a conversational climate	Talks of prospects and success generates enthusiasm; encourages a conversational climate
Instead of a narrative story-telling approach, uses technical data, statistics, forms; see things in parts; establishes change workers as technocrats (sees subject-object relationships)	Uses narrative/storytelling; see things in relation to the whole; establishes a sense of co-construction of change among workers and the community; (does not see subject-object relationships)
Does not encourage communities and change workers to learn to improvise and to figure out new ways of going forward together	Encourages communities and change workers to learn to improvise and to figure out new ways of going forward together
Just reactive to solving problems so does not open up possibilities	Proactive to achieve better situations
Assumes that talk and communication are representations of reality	Assumes that talk and communication are not just representations of reality; they constitute realty
Tends to ignore the power of imagination as a driving force for movement	Fully recognizes the power of imagination as a driving force for movement
Retrospective (what went wrong) knowledge sharing creates defensive attitudes among stakeholders involved to prevent embarrassment, threat, and awkward situations, thereby maintaining the status quo	Prospective or appreciative knowledge sharing focuses on harmony that allows flow or open sharing. It releases the empowering potential of vocabularies of hope - which act as a source of social and organizational transformation
Criticisms foster a sense of regret, discourages dialogue and participation among the community thus generating de-motivational effects for common good	Appreciation fosters a sense of being valued, encourages active dialogue and participation among community thus generating motivational effects for the common good
Generates feeling of isolation which discourages formation of cooperative morals; makes persons self-centered	Affirmations of each others' positive aspects generates feelings of reward which contributes to foster cooperative morals; increases feelings of solidarity and makes persons altruistic

1.2. Promotion of Local Innovation: What and Why

In relation to this study and guide '*local'* is thought of something which is within the community; living in a village, or neighbouring villages; which shares a common culture and mode of life and 'Innovation' is the application of new solutions that meet new requirements of life. A GIZ issue paper defines Local Innovation as the process by which local people, on their own initiative, develop new and better ways of doing things. Out of this process

emerge local innovations, which may be technical or socio-institutional (such as making new rules for resource use) and are tailored to the needs of the local farm families and communities. Similarly PROLINNOVA defines "Local innovation refers to a process whereby men and women in a given locality, individually or collectively, develop new or better ways of doing things – using their own resources, on their own initiative and without support from external service providers. Local innovation often occurs in the face of new challenges or opportunities and involves informal experimentation by the resource users.' In this study context innovation refers to the application of new solutions that meet new requirements of farmers adapting to climate change in their agriculture; - it can be both leaving something old and doing something new for the wellbeing of agriculture and life of farmers. Here the researchers and innovators are the farmers themselves and they develop ideas and actions through their regular practices of life and livelihoods. However, farmer innovation may arise from indigenous knowledge of farmers or their learning form others such as scientific knowledge. In this connection the innovation process is the effort made by farmers to make the technology fit to their own reality. The following equation may help to explain farmer innovation in a very comprehensive way. It should however not be considered as a model that exclusively explains what farmer innovation is.

Farmer Innovation (FI) = Farmers Wisdom (FW) + [-] Indigenous knowledge (IK) + [-] Scientific knowledge (SK) + Value Addition (VA)

FI= FW+ [-] IK+ [-] SK+VA

The sign + [-] indicates that farmers are making changes on the IK or SK and these changes could be explained in terms of eliminating some ideas/practices or putting new elements to the body of knowledge under consideration. Value addition is indeed the emergent property of the innovation process. In this process, completely new values could be created or added to the pre-existing ones. This may depend on the type and complexity of the innovation.

It is now pertinent to have reflection on promotion. The word 'promotion' comes to us as deliberate efforts to make something more familiar with many others; sharing good practices among others by which usefulness and utilities of those good things spread for the wellbeing of people. Not to discourage but encourage creation and sharing of local innovation. This encouragement unavoidably requires appreciation to the local people's ability and creation of supportive conditions.

A closer look at local innovation in agriculture and natural resource management (NRM) has revealed that those innovations go beyond 'hard' technologies to 'soft' innovations such as in marketing, farmer organization, and co-management mechanisms.

Promotion of local innovation is not only an approach to research but rather an approach to combine learning, sharing and actions towards development. Local innovation by farmers must is a never-ending process and promotion is needed to foster this process, which can be facilitated by relevant government organizations and NGOs.

The local-innovation towards climate change adaptation in agriculture starts with looking at what farmers are already trying in their own efforts to solve problems or grasp opportunities

they have already identified. In relation to farmers adapting to climate change the approach duly recognizes the wisdom of farmers to adopt technologies through putting it into a transformational process so that it fits their own realities. From the perspective of technology adoption, this approach is therefore an alternative to help extension workers and researchers overcome the limitation of the transfer of technology model, which is most often blamed for being not responsive to the reality of farmers living in diverse and complex environments. Therefore, though it recognizes farmers who are keen to learn from extension workers and adopt technologies (often few in number), the main thrust of the approach is to focus on farmers who are consciously experimenting with agriculture processes to come up with something new or testing the incoming technologies using their own wisdom and experiences to make it better fit their own realities.

Synthesizing practice generated lessons on Promotion of Local Innovation in the arena of Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, scholars and practitioners (see e.g., Veldhuizen. et. al. , 2010; Assefa. et.al. 2005; Wettasinha. C. and Waters B, A eds. 2010) put forward following points which favor promotion of local innovation:

- From the outset, value is given to local people's knowledge and creativity. They are seen as partners with something to offer, not just to receive. A positive approach that starts from (but is not confined to) local ideas, that focuses on local people's strengths and explore the particular opportunities open to them—rather than dwelling on their weaknesses and problems—is key to stimulating innovation.
- This approach involves discovering and recognizing what local resource users are trying to do in their own development and experimentation efforts, and building on these initiatives.
- They promote participatory action learning by resource users and supporting agencies in order to develop the local innovations and complementary techniques further.
- The impact of a local-innovation approach to R&D improves the livelihoods of rural people and strengthening their organizational and self-help capacities
- It changes the way formal researchers and development workers regard farmers and interact with them.
- Local innovations are locally developed thus fit to local biophysical and socio-economic setting.

Chapter2: AI Process towards Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture

2.1. Climate Change Adaptation & Sharing of Local Innovations

Global surface temperatures rose by over 0.7 °C during the 20th century – making it the warmest period in at least the past 1,300 years. And climate change is accelerating: 14 out of the 15 last years (1995–2009) rank among the warmest years since records began.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) most of the warming observed since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentration. These greenhouse gases act as a blanket over the earth, keeping it warmer; they are emitted when we burn fossil fuels such as coal, oil, or gas, or when we cut down and burn trees. The current concentrations of greenhouse gases exceed the natural range that has existed for over 650,000 years. It is clear that climate change is happening, and that it is due to emissions of greenhouse gases produced largely by industrialized countries (IPCC, 2007).

It is not difficult for all of us to understand the paradox of industrial economy growth and reduction of greenhouse gases emission. It is crucial that civil society actors and organizations remain active and continuously act for achieving global policy to reduce carbon emission. However, at the same time it is also important to initiate local processes of education and action for adaptation.

Extreme events of climate change affect the livelihoods of communities that depend on agriculture. Talks concerning climate change, its effects on agriculture, and ways to adapt are largely dominated by the thoughts of external scholars and professionals; rarely do experts pay attention to the ways that farmers themselves address these significant problems, nor do these professional people work together with farmers to improve their responses to climate changes. Yet, relational interactions of farmers, their agriculture, and climate variability continuously generates learning and innovations of adaptation; how farmers develop adaptive measures can be seen as one of the life-giving forces to climate change adaptation. Facilitating the promotion of horizontal sharing of knowledge and innovations among farmers and stakeholders will be beneficial for climate change adaptation in agriculture.

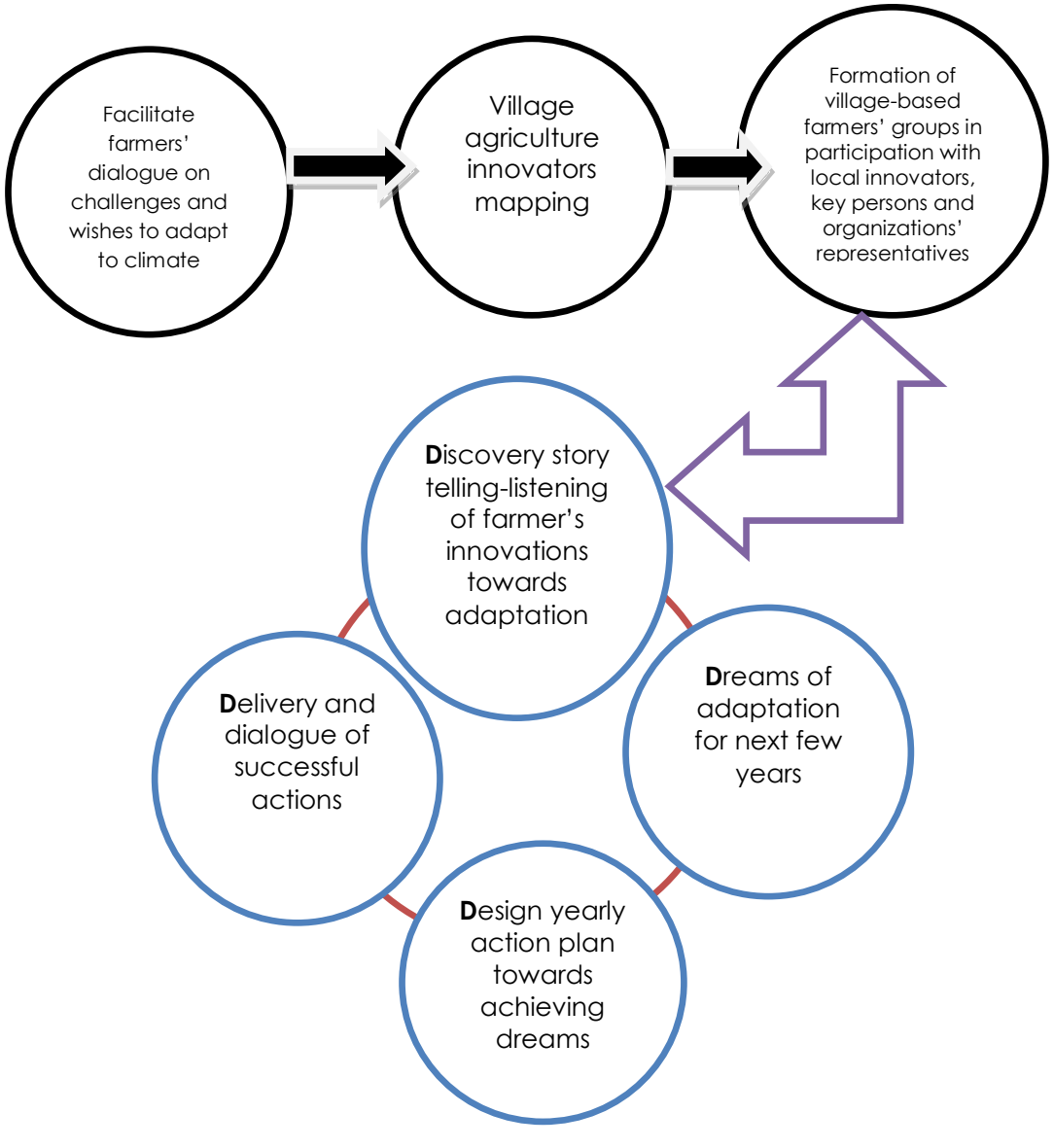
2.2. Local Innovation (LI) + Appreciative Inquiry (AI): How They Form Meaningful Relationship

Aspects of LI and AI supplement each other in terms of concepts, principles and process; shown as follows.

LI	AI
• Refers to the dynamics of knowledge creation	• AI cycle refers to a continuous process of learning
• Speaks of knowledge that grows within a social group; also knowledge gained from other sources but has been completely internalized within the local ways of thinking and doing	• Relational constructionist principles maintain that meaning is created in relation to local context
• The process through which individuals or groups discover or develop new and better ways of managing resources	• Discovery of what is best is the first step of the AI cycle
• The agenda for research and development (R&D) grows out of the ways in which rural people are already trying to improve their	• Principle of simultaneity refers to seeing research and intervention together

LI	AI
livelihood systems.	
• Identifying local innovations is a first step toward changing practices	• On an affirmative topic, discovering what is best in us is a first step toward changing practices
• Environments are highly diverse	• Realities are multiple, local and ongoing
• A positive approach that starts from (but is not confined to) local ideas, that focuses on local people's strengths and explores the particular opportunities open to them	• The principle of positive also suggests starting with what communities have rather than what they don't have

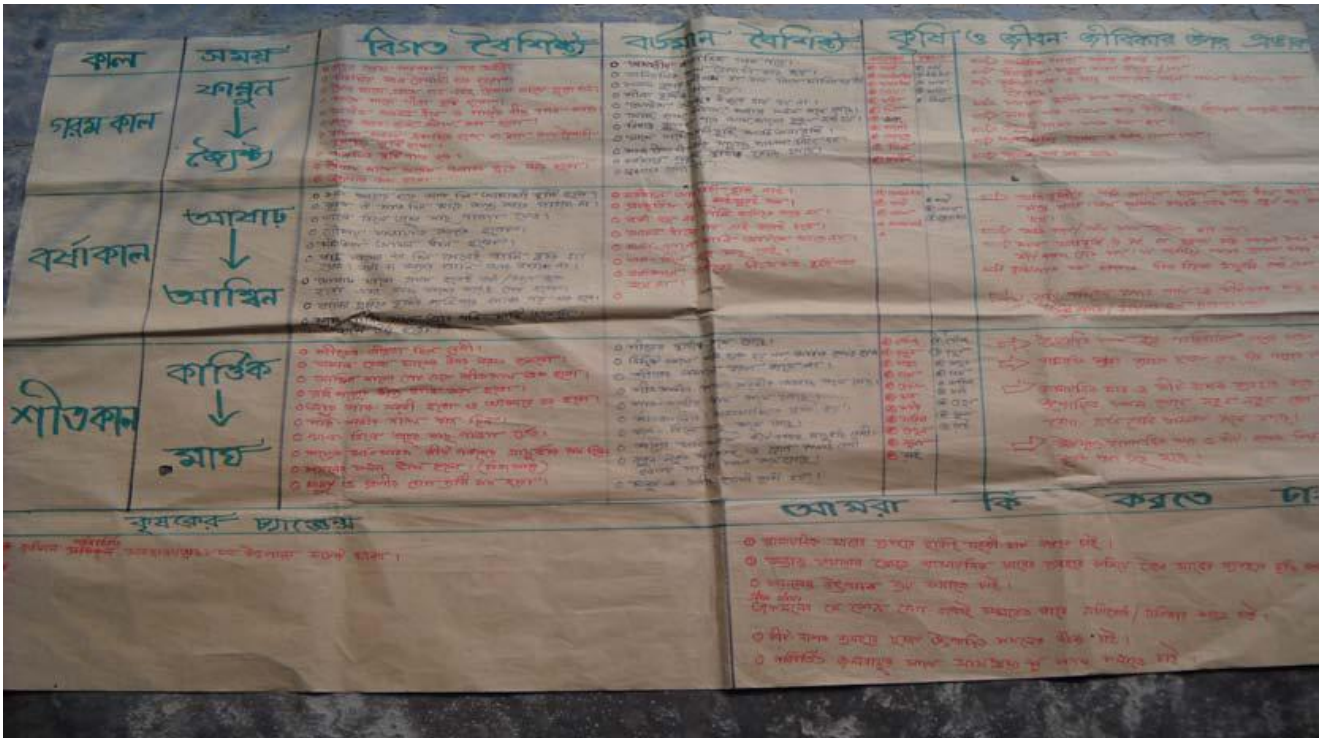
2.3. AI for Promotion of Local Innovation towards Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture



2.3.1.
Tool 1: Time Line Seasonal Characteristics: Challenges & Farmers' Wishes to Climate Change Adaptation

This tool is applied in relation to the Step 1 of the approach. The specific objective of this tool is to facilitate farmers' participatory dialogue on:

- What kinds of characteristic seasonal changes are farmers experiencing?
- How are those seasonal changes affecting agriculture and livelihoods?
- What challenges are farmers facing in relation to the generated effects of characteristic seasonal changes?
- What are farmers' wishes regarding overcoming those challenges (leading to determining affirmative topics)?
-



Example: Time Line Seasonal Characteristics; Challenges and Farmers' Wishes to Climate Change Adaptation
(Local Meaning of Patikabari Village Community)

Season	Timing	Characteristics of the Past	Emerging Characteristics	Crops		Effects on Agriculture and Livelihoods
				Past	Present	
Summer	(February-May) Bengali Month Falgun-Joishto	• High temperature but tolerable • Regular storm during the period last part of March or first part of April (KalBoishakhi) • Regular rain during the period of last part of March and first part of April (Bain-er-bristi) • Time to time there was hailstone rain. (Shilabristi) • Farmers used to sow seeds of aus & aman paddy and jute • Plenty of Mango, black berry, jack fruit and Banana used to grow • Wind used to flow from the south resulting in rain • Less thunder • Large area coverage by the Kal Baishakhi storm	• Extreme/intolerable heat • Irregular storm during the period of last part of March or first part of April (KalBoishakhi) • Irregular rain during the period last part of March and first part of April (Bain-er-bristi)) • No hailstone rain (shilabristi) • excessive rain while some times drought • In the month of April storm occurs in a small place • Period of summer season has extended	1. Jute 2. Aus paddy 3. Aman Paddy 4. Sugar cane 5. Chili 6. China 7. Vuro 8. Kaun 9. Cantaloupe 10. Water melon 11. Til (oil seeds)	1. Jute 2. IRRI paddy 3. Sugar cane 4. Chili 5.Til (oil seeds)	• Excessive heat/ temperature make us tired. • Increase of heat stroke • Increase of farming expenditure due to increased demand for irrigation, chemical fertilizer, and pesticide • Nutrition value of food crops has reduced • Due to excessive rain, drought and rain water flooding – cannot harvest crops in time • Yield of seasonal fruit has reduced; increased and new types of pest attacks on fruits • Farmers becoming more and more indebted by taking loans • No cropping of Aus and Aman paddy • Production of mango, black berry, jackfruit and banana has reduced • Sometimes formation of toxicity in fog resulting in destruction of flowers of mango
Rainy	June-September (Bengali month Ashar-Ashmin)	• In the month of June there were 7 days of continuous regular rain called Amaboti, farmers could not work in the field during those 7 days • We used to get a lot of fish in the ditch and bill[1] • Usual mode of communication was by boat • Corps field full of aman paddy • Just at the beginning of Asar month (June) rain and gradual	• No amaboti rain • Little natural fish • No natural and gradual flooding , thus no alluvial contribution to land • No cultivation of aman paddy • There is no regular rain in the rainy season	1. Aman paddy 2. Jute 3. Sugar cane 4. Bins (mas kolai)	1. Jute 2. Sugar cane 3. Boro paddy	• Damage of sugar cane, paddy and chili plant due to excessive rain • Due to less natural flooding by the river water pests increased and crop destruction was worsened

[1] Large area of low land and water body

Season	Timing	Characteristics of the Past	Emerging Characteristics	Crops		Effects on Agriculture and Livelihoods
				Past	Present	
		natural flood used to happen just after 20 days of Vadra water used to recede • Fall of rain water in the cow dung piles made fertilizer • Flood water use to carry alluvial resulting in increased fertility of the land				
Winter	October-January Bengali month Kartik - Magh)	• Severity of cold was high • In the morning grasses uses to get wet with fog • At the end of the month of September, cold weather used to start • Farmers used to sow seeds of rabi crops • Plant of vegetable use to grow with good taste	• Duration of winter period has reduced • Cold weather do not start at the end of September and end in delay • No fog in the morning • Reduction of taste of winter vegetables	1. Onion 2. Garlic 3. Masur 4. Wheat 5. Sola 6. Jab 7. Mator 8. Mastered 9. Egg plant 10. Radish 11. Rai-mastered	1. Onion 2. Garlic 3. Masur 4. Wheat 5. Mastered 6. Mator 7. Egg plant 8. Radish 9. Rai- mastered	• Cannot address needs of food in family from the produced crops • Cannot grow crops without application of chemical fertilizer • Intake of food produce by the application of pesticides and chemical fertilizer causing new diseases and reducing body immune capacity • Farmers becoming indebted with buying more and more chemical fertilizers and pesticides

Discussions & Lessons

Changes in Climate

• There is no longer 6 seasons, but only 3, there are no more Early Autumn, Autumn and Spring seasons they have been absorbed into three seasons (summer, rainy and winter)
• Period of summer season has extended
• Extreme heat in the summer season
• Extreme rain and extreme drought in the summer season
• Changes in rain period (particularly KalBaishaki and Amaboti do not happen regularly)

Effects on Life and Livelihood

• In all seasons, crop diversity has been reduced
• Fish resources have been reduced
• Fruits have been reduced
• Amaon and aush paddy replaced by IRRI
• Jeopardy of nutrition value and taste of fruits, vegetable and rice
• Loss of soil fertility
• Increase of pests and pest attacks
• Reduction of organic fertilizer use
• Incremental use of chemical fertilizer and pesticides
• Increase of agriculture production cost
• Less crop production and family level food insecurity
• Increase of indebtedness of farmers' family due to incremental borrowing of money

Farmer's Challenges	What Do We Want?
In this climate, circumstances to be able to do agriculture	• Cultivate and grow vegetables without use of chemical fertilizers • For other crops, cultivation and production reduce the use of chemical fertilizers but increase the use of biological fertilizers • Reduce expenditures on agriculture and agri-products • Prevent and cure pest attacks of crops though collective efforts in the village • Get seeds from the plant prepared without application of pesticides

	• Cultivate and grow climate change adaptive crops

NOTE FOR THE FACILITATOR

Story of Lessons

Historical relationships encouraged farmers to express what their deficits were rather than what they wanted; it was important to ask, 'What Do We Want?'

Shayamal K. Saha; Taos Associate

On July 3, 2011, I, with VORD staff, went to Patikabari village and talked with some farmers. Our main purpose of this informal dialogue with the farmers was to listen and learn from them about whether they were experiencing and observing climate changes, and if so, its effects on the agriculture. We met about 20 farmers at a primary school ground of Patikabari. We began by asking "How are you all? How is your agriculture going?"After just a few minutes, the farmers of Patikabari started to speak about the difficulties of their lives and with their agriculture. They said:

- Nowadays, nothing grows without use of chemical fertilizer and pesticides; we cannot afford to buy them
- Doing agriculture has become so expensive due to buying costly fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides and paying for irrigation, we don't get adequate monetary return
- Land is no longer fertile without excessive use of chemical fertilizer; nothing grows well
- Some vegetables (such as eggplants) and trees grow well but flowers do not; we have no idea why this is.
- Our jute plants are destroyed by unbelievable pest attacks (Bisa)
- Before it was share cropping system thus risks of crop failure were shared by both the land owner and farmers but now it has converted into land leasing; land owner just leas out the land for a year and farmer has to take full risk of crop failure.
- If all farmers of our village could work together at the beginning, we could kill all Bisa, and then our jute plants could be saved

All these talks were deficit-based. Year after year village people used to talk about their problems when external change/development workers asked them. This problem/deficit-based discussion is contrary to the principles of AI but seem impossible to avoid at beginning.

In order to transform this vocabulary of deficit into discussions of vision we asked the farmers (present in the meeting), "What do we want? What is our wish?"
Discourse began to change from deficit into the positive; farmers added:

- We want to do agriculture without buying/using any chemical fertilizer and pesticide.
- We want to do agriculture with little chemical fertilizer and pesticide, but largely using organic fertilizer and pesticide
- Went want to reduce the cost of farming
- We want fewer pest attacks on our crops and we know how to control pests
- We want our land to be fertile and to have little need of using chemical fertilizer
- We want our crops to not be destroyed by natural calamity and pests
- We want to have good seeds
- We want to make collective decisions and actions needed to do good agriculture and protect our crops

Often there is a misunderstanding about AI that it does not relate to problems. Through this story we can easily see that the purpose of AI is not to forget about problems of life but, rather, to convert problem-centered deficit-based sessions and discussions to transform into a positive vision-based discourse. Economically poor and marginalized people/farmers like Patikabari village of Bangladesh, who lead their daily life in struggle, cannot suspend talks of struggle. However, if the journey is to create wellbeing, then just thinking and dialoguing on deficits/problems does not help; thus we need to talk and act to reach what we desire. There is no need to force people to stop talking about their problems of life; let them share but work to convert them into a positive vision by simply asking "What do we want? What is our wish?"

2.3.2.

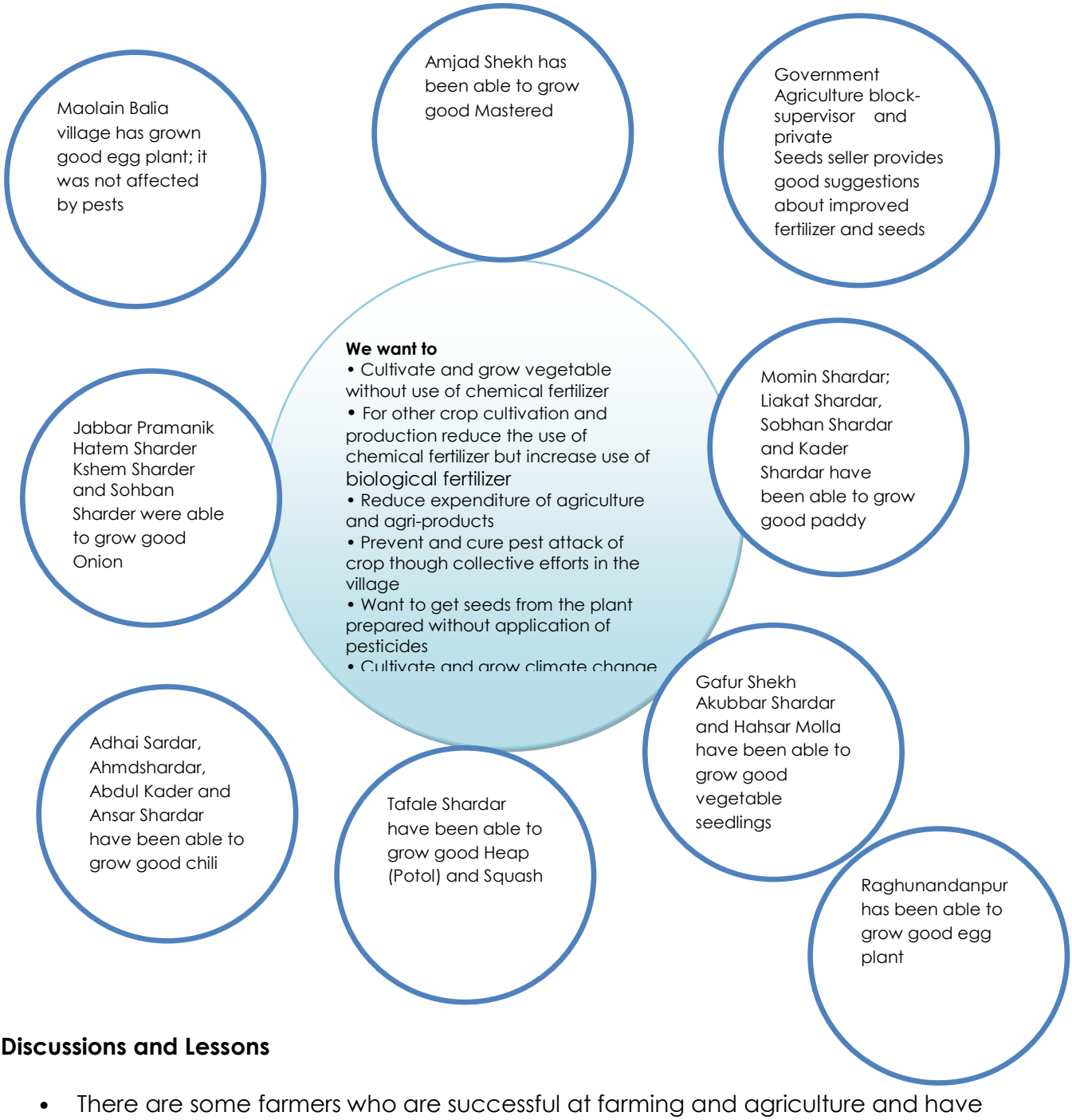
Tool 2: Village Agriculture Innovators Mapping

This tool is applied in relation to Step 2 of the approach: 'Map out village agriculture innovators'. The specific objective of this tool is to facilitate farmers in identifying:

- Individual actors and groups/organizations in the village (and out of the village) who have either created innovations or are perceived as having potential by the community
- Perceived effectiveness, influence, and relationships of those actors

Example

Besides mapping out innovators, farmers of Patikabari Village began to visit corps in those fields grown well and asked successful farmers how they could be



Discussions and Lessons

- There are some farmers who are successful at farming and agriculture and have useful knowledge—we must listen to them
- We need to do some practices together

- We now know most of the innovators in our village and some innovators outside our villages
- We can develop a farmers' organization in our village with those innovators
- We can visit innovators who are outside of our village and hear their ideas

Feedback from the VORD staff

We like the tools because they were easy to apply. Lots of discussions were generated; farmers know many things about the changes in climate. We were surprised to hear that they explained; "now we have no more 6 seasons but only 3 seasons." They could clearly explain how they are affected by the climate change. They said this was the first time they discussed together with each other about climate change and its effects on their lives and livelihoods. There was lots of enthusiasm among them to listen and share when they were finding out about those farmers who were successful in growing various crops and vegetables.

They identified the farmers who were successful in growing crops and vegetables. Drawings of crops and vegetables were more interesting because some of the illiterate farmers were able to see and discuss farming this way. This exercise already created thoughts and action among the farmers to form their groups with a realization that they need to share with, and listen to, each other. We as facilitators also now learnt that there are farmers in Patikabari village and neighboring villages who are great assets for the whole farming community to gain knowledge and technologies about how to do agriculture. During the last few years we have been listening to talk about climate change but through these few months of work, I could now understand the impact of those changes; how rural people are being affected and they are trying to adapt. However, we think agriculture is not only cereal crops but also includes livestock, poultry, homestead gardens, orchards, and trees. Two VORD staff added that they thought that this process should also be applied with women because they take care of goats and poultry, take care of fruit trees, and homestead vegetable garden.

2.3.3

Formation of Farmers' Group

There are no fixed and pre-determined rules for the formation of farmers' groups other than to say that the way it emerges is through dialogue and discussions among farmers. Depending on the local situation and needs, the farmers' organization can be formed. A facilitator has to allow a natural process of interactions among farmers and emergence of their organizations in the village.

In case of Patikabari Village, within 3 months a male and female farmers' group emerged and those are continuing. First the male group emerged consisting of 25 farmers then during dialogue and discussions mail members came up with an idea of having a women's group too; accordingly a women's group was formed that included 22 members.

Feedback from the Farmers' Group Members

We like this process because before these meetings we used to observe the changes of seasonal characteristics and changes in our agriculture but we did not share these observations with each other by sitting together. We like very much that we have identified some farmers have been able to do better crops—and we believe they have good knowledge to share with us. We like these meetings and discussions. They directly benefit us by developing our knowledge because farmers who grow better crops must have new (mantra) knowledge; we have some people to share their good ideas which are directly applicable and beneficial for us. However, in our village, farmers we have organized into a group are all male—what about the females of our village? Females take care of goats, cows, and poultry in our homes and grow plants and take care of homestead crops and fruit trees—why should we not have another women's organization? Women can share their good knowledge of homestead agriculture and poultry rearing that would be beneficial for all of us.

Women in Patikabari doing homestead gardening

Listening from each other, farmers of Patikabari have started to prepare a bio-fertilizer compost pit. Chemical fertilizer almost drove it out for many years. There are already 13 such pits in the village

This women farmer used ash to prevent pest attack to her tomato garden

All organizations were formed in a village meeting by the presence of all members. The positions were decided flexibly by the farmers: usually a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Organizing Secretary and the others are members.

The main purpose of the organization is to plan and implement actions to learn from each other and practice adaptation.

2.3.4
Tool 3: Discovery Story Telling-Listening of Farmer's Innovations towards Adaptation

This tool is applied in relation to the step 4 & 5 of the approach. The specific objectives of this tool are to facilitate farmers:

- To listen to the local innovators about how they could do better.
- Listen to the stories of success; dreaming of doing things the way the innovators did.

There is no need to have any extra activities to create hopes and dreams among farmers because when they listen to the success of another farmer then the dream of doing the same success emerges in other farmers.

The success of this Discovery story telling-listening of other farmer's innovations towards adaptation depends on the participation of all innovators with the other farmers serving as listeners. A facilitator has to organize activities whereby farmers of the villages can gather in the village and have a congenial atmosphere of having these story telling-listening sessions. In this session it is better to invite and have participation of other persons such as Agriculture Block Supervisors.

Before the Session: Preparation of Story Subject

Before this session a facilitator has to prepare a story subject. The basis of preparation of a story subject is the outcome of Tool 2 where farmers answered the question, 'What Do You Want?'

We want to

- Cultivate and grow vegetables without the use of chemical fertilizers
- For other crop cultivation and production, reduce the use of chemical fertilizer but increase use of biological fertilizer
- Reduce expenditure of agriculture and agri-products
- Prevent and cure pest attacks of crop though collective efforts in the village
- Get seeds from the plant prepared without application of pesticides
- Cultivate and grow climate change adaptive crops

Above cited box shows what the farmers of Patikabari village wanted. Based on these wants now a facilitator can easily make subjects of story as follows:

Tell a Story

- Tell a story of a farmer in our village or a neighboring village who could grow good vegetables without the use of chemical fertilizers
- Tell a story of a farmer who could reduce the use of chemical fertilizers but increase the use of biological fertilizers
- Tell a story of preventing and curing pest attacks of crop though collective efforts in the village
- Tell a story of a farmer in our village who could prepare vary good quality seeds
- Tell a story about a farmer in our village or neighboring village who could grow new types of crops

During the Session: How to Facilitate

Step 1: Clarify the objectives of the session
Step 2: Introduce Local Innovators and external stakeholders (if any)
Step 3: Facilitate innovators (one by one) to tell their stories of success
Step 4: Have open discussions and dialogue including external stakeholders
Step 5: List out dreams

While facilitating an innovator to tell a story (such as how he/she could make good crops without or little use of chemical fertilizer) guide him/her to tell his/her experience in a story form. After one story told; facilitate discussions, draw lessons and dreams.

A farmer: "When I go to buy fertilizer, I just look on the packet and cannot recognize if they are bad or good—but now I have learnt how to get the right one." The moment he finished another farmer began…

"How do you know better quality sand to dig in that will produce better crops? I will tell you what I know. Take several samples and place them separately in a glass of water; the cleaner the water, the better the sand."

Involvement of External Stakeholders: Began Just from Here: Experience of Patikabari Village

It was stated earlier that one of the principles of AI is the simultaneity of actions and inquiry. In Patikabari village during the period of Discovery story telling-listening, the discourse of involving the Block Supervisor of Government Agriculture Department emerged. Farmers of Patikabari village thought it would add value to their discussions if the Block Supervisor of Government Agriculture Department were present. Accordingly, in two sessions the Block Supervisor was invited. His participation added value in the discussions and learning.

- How to make paddy sapling
- Proper use of Gutiurea fertilizer
- How to reduce chemical pesticide
- Increasing use of bio-fertilizer
- Seeds collection and preservation
- Pest control of paddy
- Vegetable cultivation

This discussion that involved the Block Supervisor also gave birth to an idea that instead of individual farmers being counselled (which is absolutely impossible for a Block Supervisor of a Union), village-wide regular farmers' meetings are much more beneficial (many farmers can attend and participate in discussions). This was a win-win discovery in which farmers got their wish of the Block Supervisor's presence in their village meeting while the Block Supervisor's view and preference of discussing issues in a group rather than with individual farmers was respected. VORD thought this was a good program because each of the Union Government Agriculture Departments has a Block supervisor who can share his/her technical know-how while VORD can organize farmers' meetings.

2.3.5

Tool 4: Action Planning

This tool is applied in relation to the Step 3 of the approach. The specific objectives of this tool are to facilitate farmers' organizations to prepare an action plan to translate their dreams into action:

The basis of this action planning is the list of "What Do We Want?" The time frame of the action plan should be decided by the Farmers' group.

Action plan for the period of _____

Want to achieve	Activity	With whom and how	When
• Grow vegetable without use of chemical fertilizer • Reduce use of chemical fertilizer in cropping • Reduce expenditure of agriculture • Prevent and mitigate pest attacks on crops • Get good quality of seeds • Cultivate and grow climate disaster-resilient crops • Reduce death of poultry birds			

2.3.6

Tool 5: Telling-Listening Stories of Success/Successful Actions and Results

This activity is linked to the 4th step of the AI cycle. In the regular (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly) meeting of Farmers Organization apply the following steps:

- **Step 1**: Ask & list- out successful actions/results of the month/bi-monthly/quarterly and successful actors
- **Step2:**Ask each farmer to tell success stories, draw lessons and principles (for the documentation purpose one can write a simple story)
- **Step3:** Facilitate farmers to plan specific activities they would do for next month/bi-monthly/quarterly meeting.

2.4. What was/is the Effectiveness and Potential of the Process as Applied in Patikabari Village?

This process created surprising positive result in Patikabari village. It is just fabulous that how a simple idea of sharing can be so profound for learning and generating positive action. Farmers practice adaptation to climate change in agriculture every day. Within a very short period of time, the following results have been realized in Patikabari village without any financial or material support from VORD:

- A male farmers organization consisting of 25 members has been established
- A female farmers organization consisting of 22 members has been established
- 13 farmers' households have already started growing organic fertilizer which was not in practice before
- Through regular meetings and dialogue and sharing they have learnt the following from each other

  - ✓ How to prepare organic fertilizer at home and why it is important in terms of cost reduction and soil fertility
  - ✓ When to cultivate various vegetables due to changes in seasonal characteristics
  - ✓ How to examine seeds for the best quality
  - ✓ What to do to prevent poultry diseases
  - ✓ How to examine jute seeds within two hours
  - ✓ How to reduce chemical pesticides
  - ✓ How to increase use of bio-fertilizer
  - ✓ How to collect and preserve seeds
  - ✓ What leaves to use for preventing poultry diseases

Regularly farmers of Patikabari together with other relevant stakeholders share their successes among each other and practice. They get immediate benefit which encourages them to participate more and more with dialogues and meetings. It's really amazing. On May 11, 2012 all participants of the training course visited Patikabari village and interacted with the farmers engaged in the process and made the following comments about the potential of the process:

On May 11, 2012, 14 external development professional agriculture experts and scientists conducted a dialogue and with farmers in Patikabari Village.

I am really surprised to see the simple but profound approach of AI to climate change adaptation in agriculture. This approach is very effective for us; agriculture scientist and researcher to select 'topic of our research'. I can see enormous value of this approach towards climate change adaptation in agriculture. We need to extend this process in all villages in Bangladesh.

Md. Monowar Hossain, Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council (BARC), Dhaka, Bangladesh

This approach can make revolution in agriculture development and farmers adapting climate change, I am going to apply this in my project.

Md. Mokbul Hossain, Gonoshataya Kendra (GK), Savar, Dhaka

The coastal belt we work has a huge problem of salinity which is a big problem of agriculture. After going back to my organization I am going to try this approach.

Ms. Nahida Begum, Association for Disaster Mitigation and Development (ADMD), Patuakahai, Bangladesh

In my professional Life as a Rice Researcher, I never knew the germination capacity of Jute seeds can be tested putting those in boiling rice, but the framer –Khorsed did it. This approach is very interesting. Needs to be extended and replicated in many villages.

Dr. Bilas Chandra Roy, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), Joydevpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh

In our organization and development projects we always began with the farmer's problem but joining this training course and especially visiting Patikabari, I see the value of starting with what the local people have –those are so valuable.

Ms. Salma Begum, Resource Development Foundation (RDF), Barguna, Bangladesh

3. About the Taos Institute and VORD

The Taos Institute

The Taos Institute is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the development of social constructionist theory and practices for purposes of world benefit. With over two hundred Associates around the world, we achieve our educational ends through conferences, workshops, publications, a Ph.D. program, distance learning programs, newsletters, learning networks, and web-based offerings. We also engage in collaborative partnerships with other national and international organizations. Constructionist theory and practice locates the source of meaning, value, and action in relational process. Through our shared constructions of the real, the rational and the good, communities are formed and ways of life secured. New ways of life can also be envisioned and created through relational processes. And when communities conflict, it is also through such process that peace may best be restored. The Taos Institute is committed to:

- Exploring, developing and disseminating ideas and practices that promote creative, appreciative and collaborative processes in all aspects of society and throughout the world.

- Working at the interface between scholarly communities and societal practitioners from fields such as education, organizational development, community building, mediation, peace-building, social work, counselling, psychotherapy, gerontology, law, medicine and healthcare.
- Developing ways in which scholarly research and professional practices can significantly enrich each other.

To know more about the Taos Institute please visit www.taosinstitute.net

VORD

Voluntary Organization for Rural Development (VORD) is a Local NGO established in 1989 as an outgrowth of traditional social work implemented by a band of dedicated youth. VORD is registered with the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Health and Family Planning and Foreign Donation Registration under the NGO Affairs Bureau of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. VORD emphasizes a participatory self-help approach in development with a strong focus on social and organizational learning. Since its inception, with the help of Swiss Red Cross, Asia Partnership for Human Development, BRAC-Bangladesh, Bangladesh Population and Health Consortium (BPHC), VORD implemented several projects related to community mobilization and organization development, disaster management, primary health care, water and sanitation, non-formal primary education, family planning and reproductive health care. At present VORD has total 23 staff members implementing projects, including small scale credit, non-formal primary education, community health clinics, and a self-help organization. VORD continues its active membership with several national and international development networks for learning and sharing. VORD has a well-established office and training center located in Habashpur village of Pangsa Upazila under Rajbari District. For more detail about VORD visithttp://vord-habashpur.blogspot.com/

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