

Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL) project

Sandy Saline Soil Becomes Green

Cultivating vegetables in high-salinity and sandy soil is an immense challenge, particularly in coastal regions of Bangladesh. The excessive salt content in the soil hinders seed germination, stunts plant growth, and often leads to premature wilting and death of crops. Additionally, sandy soil has poor water retention capacity, causing essential nutrients to wash away quickly, making it unsuitable for traditional farming. Due to these harsh conditions, most farmers in these regions had abandoned vegetable cultivation, believing it to be impractical.

To address this challenge, the “Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL)” project of PKSF initiated to test the feasibility of growing vegetables in saline and sandy soil. The project selected beneficiaries for vegetable cultivation, providing them with training, salt-tolerant seeds, and continuous technical support. Agricultural experts guided them on soil preparation, organic fertilization, and efficient irrigation techniques, ensuring the plants received adequate nutrients despite the adverse conditions.

With dedicated effort and expert supervision, almost all of the vegetable growers successfully started harvesting crops from their homestead gardens, proving that vegetable cultivation is possible even in challenging coastal soils. This initiative has not only improved their food security and income but has also paved the way for widespread adoption of climate-resilient farming in Bangladesh’s coastal regions.

Sufia Elevates Livelihood through Saline-Tolerant Vegetable Cultivation

Sufia Begum, a 26-year-old housewife from Bahar Chhara village in Moheshkhali, lived in poverty and struggled to feed her family. Her husband, Md. Nazir Hossain, a fisherman, spent most of his time at sea, leaving their family with an irregular and insufficient income. Despite their efforts, providing nutritious food for their two young daughters remained a constant concern. She tried to cultivate vegetable in the small piece of land at her courtyard. But due to high-salinity and sandy soil, she could not cultivate.

The turning point came when Sufia joined the Bahar Chhara CCAG group under the RHL Project. The project provided her training in growing vegetables in high-salinity soil, including land preparation, organic fertilization, and efficient



*Sufia Begum after harvesting vegetable.
Photo: BASTOB*

irrigation techniques. It also helped her with seeds and constant guiding to grow healthy vegetables.



Sufia Begum, watering her vegetables.
Photo: BASTOB

With this newfound knowledge, Sufia used organic fertilizers, ash, and controlled irrigation to

successfully cultivate eggplants, chilies, tomatoes, spinach, and radishes in her homestead yard. She earned over 1,500 BDT by selling the vegetables while meeting her family's nutritional needs. On the merge of her success she explained, "In our village, vegetable seedlings used to die within days due to the high salinity and sandy nature of the soil. Most people lost interest in farming." She added, "With the training and motivation we decided to start cultivating vegetable again. Finally, we succeed as we get seed and constant guidance from the RHL project."

Today, Sufia's success not only provides for her family but also inspires others in the village to try growing vegetables in sandy and saline soil. She now dreams of expanding her garden and become a change maker in her community.

To reduce the climate-induced vulnerability of the most vulnerable coastal communities and to enhance their resilience, PKSF is implementing the RHL project in seven coastal districts in Bangladesh. The adaptation practices are climate-resilient homesteads, saline-resilient livelihood practices including integrated fruit-fish-fibre (crab farming) farming, slatted houses for goats or sheep rearing, saline-tolerant vegetable cultivation, and storm-resilient tree plantations.

Contact:

Project Management Unit (PMU),
Resilient Homestead and Livelihood Support to the Vulnerable Coastal People of Bangladesh (RHL)
Project, PKSF



PALLI KARMA-SHAYAK FOUNDATION (PKSF)

PKSF Bhaban, Plot: E-4/B,
Agargaon Administrative Area,
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
Tel: +88-02-222218331-33, Fax: +88-02-222218341
E-mail: pkSF@pkSF.org.bd, Website: www.pkSF.org.bd
Facebook: www.facebook.com/pkSF.org