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28 Project Management Arrangements

From Blue Gold Program Wiki

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Introduction[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

This section of the report aims to set out the arrangements for implementing the Blue Gold Program, covering a range of issues:

28	project management	formal agreements, project committees, review missions, coordination meetings, progress reports and work plans
29	technical assistance	TA contractual arrangements and services
30	evolution of the TA organisation	organisational arrangements from program document to redrafted theory of change, decentralisation, exit strategy
31	capacity building	large-scale capacity building, the move to customised training, refocused TA FFSs, vocational training
32	agricultural extension methods and communication	approaches and instruments
33	horizontal learning	farmer-to-farmer learning and its evolution
34	monitoring and evaluation	Baseline and endline surveys, WMG surveys, DAE data, remote sensed imagery, WMG tracker
35	management information system	polder dashboard and post-project data management, trend watcher
36	environmental due diligence	environmental impact assessments and modalities

Whilst the technical content of these subjects is covered elsewhere in the report, the purpose of this section is to set out the managerial and organisational arrangements for delivering the project.

Implementing Modalities[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

The Administrative Arrangement signed on 20th February 2013 between the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Economic Relations Division (ERD) for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) sets out the broad arrangements for the implementation of the Blue Gold Program. The following amendments were agreed:

- 11 Feb 2014 First Amendment to Administrative Arrangement
- 29 Dec 2016 Second Amendment to Administrative Arrangement (extend to 31 Dec 2020, increase financial contributions to BWDB (to €27.32 million) and DAE (to € 1.495 million)
- 21 Oct 2020 Third Amendment to Administrative Arrangement (extend to 31 Dec 2021, no payments after 30 Jun 2021, final reports by 31 Mar 2022)

A further Arrangement (known as the 'Contribution Arrangement') - signed on 4th December 2013 by the same two parties - expands on the Administrative Arrangement to provide specific start and end dates, responsibilities of BWDB and DAE, details of arrangements for transfers of funds by instalments, requirements for progress and financial reports, final reports, and annual audit reports, arrangements for evaluations of the program. The following amendments were agreed:

- 11 Feb 2014 First Amendment to Contribution Arrangement
- 29 Dec 2016 Second Amendment to Contribution Arrangement

Under both of these Arrangements, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) represents the Kingdom of the Netherlands. And grant funds are contributed by EKN for administration by BWDB, DAE and a technical assistance (TA) team through direct contracting with EKN. Also through TA funding, support is provided to the activities of the Department of Cooperatives (DoC), Department of Fisheries (DoF) and Department of Livestock Services (DLS).

With respect to the GoB implementing organisations, separate Development Project Proposals (DPPs) for BWDB and DAE set out the aims and objectives of the project, its financial and physical scope, intended objectives and benefits, and proposals for monitoring and internal and external audits.

Working arrangements between BWDB and the Department of Livestock Services (DLS) and Department of Fisheries (DoF) were set out in Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). Both DLS and DoF come under the administration of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock.

The Department of Cooperatives (DoC), under the Rural Development and Cooperatives (RDC) Division of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRDC), was an early partner in the formation and registration of water management groups (WMGs). After the publication of the Participatory Water Management Rules (PWMR) of 2014, BWDB was mandated to form and register WMGs, and the arrangement with DoC was discontinued.

The collaboration between MoWR and MoA has been an important ingredient for success, communicating that the overall focus is on increasing agricultural production and empowering WMGs to be the main drivers of development, rather than on the traditional focus on infrastructure alone. But increased agricultural production is only possible when improved infrastructure provides safety from flooding to all polder communities and the main framework for water management to control waterlogging; and only then are farmers prepared to invest in high value crops and higher cropping intensities. Thus, infrastructure and agriculture are inextricably linked and co-dependent.

Although there was no formal agreement in place, the collaboration between the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has been a well understood critical relationship, fostered by a close BWDB/DAE partnerships at District level, and the attendance of BWDB representatives at DAE steering committee meetings and other workshops and conferences.

Local Government Institutions (LGIs) were not formally included in either of the BWDB or DAE DPPs, but – as will have been seen from Section D of this report – it will be important to do so in the future.

Development Project Proformas (DPPs)[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)

Through the DPP, GoB organisations set out their intentions to invest in a development project, seeking approval for the investment and, if successful, a budget allocation. The DPP follows a prescribed format, including the project's financial and physical scope, benefits, and proposals for monitoring and internal and external audits. The approval of a development project proposal follows a number of stages:

- **Formation:** a project often starts with preliminary studies of its desirability in terms of national needs, with likely costs and benefits
- **Formulation:** the project scope is developed in greater detail and supported by economic studies so that decision-making bodies can evaluate and then approve, postpone or reject the project.
- **Scrutiny:** executing agencies and concerned ministries scrutinize the DPP, and when convinced that the case is well-argued, submit the DPP to the Planning Commission
- **Appraisal:** Sector Divisions of the Planning Commission appraise the DPP
- **Recommendation for Approval:** If appraisal is successful, a Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) meets to review the DPP and, if positive to recommend it for approval
- **Minister/ECNEC Approval:** Approval of the DPP is made by the Minister for Planning (up to BDT 50 crore, equivalent to €5 million) or the ECNEC (over BDT 50 crore)
- **Inclusion in Annual Development Plan (ADP):** When approved, a budgetary allocation for the project is made through the departmental annual work plans and budgets, centralised in the Annual Development Plan.

BWDB DPP and Revisions[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)

The BWDB Development Project Proposal (DPP) for Blue Gold was prepared in November 2012, recast in March and May 2013 and formally approved in the ECNEC meeting of 30th July 2013. [Table 11.1](#) sets out the budget heads for investments from the original DPP approved on 30th July 2013, the Revised Development Project Proposal (RDPP) approved on 21st June 2018 and the re-adjusted budget heads approved on 1st September 2020.

BWDB RDPP First Revision (June 2018)[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)

The process for revising the DPP started in September 2016, when EKN confirmed to DG BWDB their interest in overcoming the shortfall in the DPP budget, by adding to their funding for Blue Gold. In turn, on 27th October 2016, a letter was sent by the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) to the External Relations Division (ERD) asking them to process EKN's offer. The RDPP was finally approved at a meeting of ECNEC 21st June 2018. The ECNEC approval took 20 months from the MoWR letter dated 27th October 2016 notifying ERD of the additional funding offered by EKN.

BWDB RDPP Extension and Re-Adjustment (September 2020)[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

On 3rd December 2019, a meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (IMSC) agreed that the project should be extended to end-December 2021 to allow for an additional full construction season in 2020/21 and to allow the subsequent processing of final payments to contractors, and also authorised a no-cost re-adjustment between budget heads to maximise the project impact. The readjusted budget and supporting papers were submitted by DG BWDB to MoWR in February 2020, and finally approved by Minister MoWR on 1st September 2020.

DAE DPP and Revision (October 2018)[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

The DAE DPP for Blue Gold was prepared in November 2012 and recast in May 2013. The DPP was revised to incorporate the additional funds provided by EKN and to extend the period to end-December 2020. The DAE RDPP was approved by the Pre-ECNEC Committee (PEC) meeting in the Planning Commission on 16th October 2018.

Project Meetings[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

There was no single committee which provided joint coordination of all project activities. However, steering committees and project management committees (PMCs) were established in BWDB and DAE.

Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (BWDB Component)[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

As per the provisions of the Development Project Proposal (DPP), the MoWR constituted an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee on the Blue Gold Program (BWDB Component) with the following officials:

Chair - Secretary MoWR

Member Secretary - Project Coordinating Director Blue Gold Program

Members include representatives from MoWR, MoA, MFLS, ECNEC Planning Commission, ERD, IMED, BWDB, DAE, with EKN and TA as observers.

Inter-Ministerial Project Steering Committee (DAE Component)[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

The DPP sets out the membership of the PSC as follows:

Chair - Secretary MoA

Member Secretary - Project Director Blue Gold Program

Members include DG DAE, Joint Chief and Deputy Chief Planning MoA, and representatives from Ministry of Finance, MoWR, IMED, ERD, Planning Commission (Crop Wing), and Additional Director Planning and Evaluation Wing DAE.

Project Management Committees[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)]

BWDB Project Management Committee[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)]

As per the provisions of the Development Project Proposal (DPP), a Project Management Committee as the central decision-making body for the implementation of the Blue Gold Program (BWDB Component). The following officials were appointed:

Chair - Project Coordinating Director Blue Gold Program

Member Secretary - TA Team Leader Blue Gold Program

Members include representatives from MoWR, Planning Commission (Irrigation Wing), IMED, DAE, DoF, DLS, DoC, and Executive Engineer DP-3.

DAE Project Management Committee Technology Transfer for Agricultural Production (TTAP)[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)]

The DAE DPP sets out the membership of the PMC as follows:

Chair - Director General DAE

Member Secretary - Project Director Blue Gold Program

Members include Director Field Services DAE, MoA, and representatives from IMED, Planning Commission (Crop Wing), Additional Director Planning and Evaluation Wing DAE, Additional Director Barisal Region DAE, Additional Director Jessore Region DAE, Assistant Director Finance DAE, and M&E Officer Blue Gold Program.

Coordination Meetings[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)]

From 2016 onwards - although not officially mandated - informal project coordination meetings were held regularly between project-level representatives of the main implementing agencies: EKN, BWDB, DAE and TA team. These provided an excellent forum for discussing progress, identifying constraints to implementation, and suggested mitigating actions.

Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)]

Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between BWDB and the Department of Livestock Services on 30th April 2014, and between BWDB and the Department of Fisheries on 25th November 2014. These MoUs set out the scope for collaboration and mandated the appointment of a focal point in each organisation to coordinate activities with Blue Gold.

Review Missions[\[edit\]](#) | [edit source](#)]

Five review missions took place over the eight-year lifetime of the project. The broad objective of each of the missions was to secure and where possible further enhance the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project. The third mission was designated as a mid-term review mission and resulted in a significant revision to the TA budget.

[ARM 2014](#) 23 August to 4 September 2014

[ARM 2015](#) 27 September to 12 October 2015

[MTR 2016](#) 18 to 29 September 2016

[ARM 2017](#) 24 November to 4 December 2017

[ARM 2018](#) 9 to 19 November 2018

ARM: Annual Review Mission
MTR: Mid-Term Review Mission

Given that the project was due to end in December 2020, and that the main focus in 2019 would be on arrangements for the completion of water management infrastructure, a single-focus review was planned after the results of the 2018/19 construction season were available. After internal discussions with BWDB, EKN agreed with BWDB that planning for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 seasons would be better served by engaging BWDB and TA teams in setting ambitious targets aiming to complete as much infrastructure as possible by the revised end of construction at end-June 2021.

Copies of the Aide Memoires of the five missions are available in the File Library, along with three collections of position papers prepared by the TA team for [MTR 2016](#), [ARM 2017](#) and [ARM 2018](#).

Annual Work Plans[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

Annual Work Plans (AWPs) set out the activities planned for the year ahead and the associated budget requirements. The first two AWPs covered the calendar years 2014 and 2015. So that the documents could be aligned with the Government of Bangladesh planning cycle, AWPs were reformulated to cover the Financial Year (July to June) from July 2015. AWPs were prepared and submitted to EKN: [2014](#) (24 June 2014); [2015](#) (24 December 2014); [2015/16](#) (14 July 2015); [2016/17](#) (30 September 2016); [2017/18](#) (15 June 2017); [2018/19](#) (1 August 2018); [2019/20](#) (10 July 2019) and 2020/21 (18 September 2020).

Polder Development Plans[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

Polder Development Plans (PDPs) present an integrated analysis and planning for a specific polder covering community mobilization, water management, agriculture, business development, environment, gender and institutions. PDPs for all 22 polders are available through the File Library (keyword [PDP](#)).

Progress Reports[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

Progress reports were prepared by all three implementing organisations. For the TA team, the first progress report covered the six-month period from April to September 2013. Thereafter, from October 2013 to June 2015, quarterly progress reports were prepared by the TA team. At the request of EKN, half yearly progress reports covering the GoB financial year (July to June) commenced from July 2015 and continued throughout the remaining life of the project. TA Progress Reports are available in the File Library (keyword [PR](#)).

See more[[edit](#) | [edit source](#)]

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[Chapter 27: Sustainability](#)

[Blue Gold Lessons Learnt Wiki Section G: Project Management](#)

Next chapter:
[Chapter 29: Technical Assistance: Context, Scope, Contractual Arrangements and External Service Contracts](#)

Section G: Project Management

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Executive summary: A Call for Action

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Technical Assistance

Farmer Field School - A group-based learning process through which farmers carry out experiential learning activities that help them to understand the ecology of their fields, based on simple experiments, regular field observations and group analysis. The knowledge gained from these activities enables participants to make their own locally specific decisions about crop management practices. This approach represents a radical departure from earlier agricultural extension programmes, in which farmers were expected to adopt generalized recommendations that are formulated by specialists from outside the community.

Water Management Group - The basic organizational unit in Blue Gold representing local stakeholders from a hydrological or social unit (para/village). Through Blue Gold, 511 WMGs have been formed and registered. The average WMG covers an area of around 230 ha has 365 households or a population of just over 1,500.

Department of Agricultural Extension, a department of the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for disseminating scientific research and new knowledge on agricultural practices through communication and learning activities for farmers in agriculture, agricultural marketing, nutrition and business studies.

An area of low-lying land surrounded by an earthen embankment to prevent flooding by river or seawater, with associated structures which are provided to either drain excess rainwater within the polder or to admit freshwater to be stored in a khal for subsequent use for irrigation.

Government of Bangladesh; a donor to the Blue Gold Program

Bangladesh Water Development Board, government agency which is responsible for surface water and groundwater management in Bangladesh, and lead implementing agency for the Blue Gold Program

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the contractual representative of the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and signatory to the agreement for the Blue Gold Program with the External Resources Division of the Ministry of Finance as the signatory for the Government of Bangladesh

Department of Cooperatives

Department of Fisheries, a government department under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock responsible for regulating the fisheries industry in Bangladesh

Department of Livestock Services, a government department under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock responsible for the livestock industry in Bangladesh

Development Project Proforma: a formal document which sets out the intention of a GoB organisation to invest in a development project, seeking approval for the investment and, if successful, a budget allocation. The DPP follows a prescribed format, including the project's financial and physical scope, benefits, and proposals for monitoring and internal and external audits. The approval of a development project proposal follows a number of stages: formation with preliminary studies, formulation to develop greater detail and with additional information to make the economic case for the project, scrutiny by the executing agencies and concerned ministries, appraisal by the Planning Commission, recommendation for approval by Project Evaluation Committee (PEC), Minister/ECNEC approval, and inclusion of a budgetary allocation in the Annual Development Plan (ADP).

Memorandum of Understanding

Water Management Group - The basic organizational unit in Blue Gold representing local stakeholders from a hydrological or social unit (para/village). Through Blue Gold, 511 WMGs have been formed and registered. The average WMG covers an area of around 230 ha has 365 households or a population of just over 1,500.

A process by which the local stakeholders are directly and actively involved in identification, planning, design, implementation, operation & maintenance and evaluation of a water management project.

Participatory Water Management Rules (2014)

Ministry of Water Resources

Ministry of Agriculture

Soil is regarded as waterlogged when it is nearly saturated with water much of the time such that its air phase is restricted and anaerobic conditions prevail. In agriculture, various crops need air (specifically, oxygen) to a greater or lesser depth in the soil. Waterlogging of the soil stops air getting in. How near the water table must be to the surface for the ground to be classed as waterlogged, varies with the purpose in view. A crop's demand for freedom from waterlogging may vary between seasons of the year.

Local Government Institutions - Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad etc

Development Project Proforma: a formal document which sets out the intention of a GoB organisation to invest in a development project, seeking approval for the investment and, if successful, a budget allocation. The DPP follows a prescribed format, including the project's financial and physical scope, benefits, and proposals for monitoring and internal and external audits. The approval of a development project proposal follows a number of stages: formation with preliminary studies, formulation to develop greater detail and with additional information to make the economic case for the project, scrutiny by the executing agencies and concerned ministries, appraisal by the Planning Commission, recommendation for approval by Project Evaluation

Committee (PEC), Minister/ECNEC approval, and inclusion of a budgetary allocation in the Annual Development Plan (ADP).

Bangladesh Taka

Annual Development Plan

Revised Development Project Proforma

Director General

Program Steering Committee

Technology Transfer for Agricultural Production (DAE)

Project Management Committee

Monitoring and Evaluation

Annual Review Mission, the broad objective of which was to secure and where possible further enhance the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project. ARM members were individuals who were appointed by, and reported directly to, EKN and BWDB/DAE

Mid - Term Review Mission

Community mobilization is a process that brings together different societal factions to undertake development activities. Within BGP this especially refers to organizing the community members into Water Management Groups

human intervention in the capture, conveyance, utilisation and drainage of surface and/or ground water in a certain area: a process of social interaction between stakeholders around the issue of water control.

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Variants

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Blue Gold Program Wiki

The wiki version of the Lessons Learnt Report of the Blue Gold program, documents the experiences of a technical assistance (TA) team working in a development project implemented by the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) over an eight+ year period from March 2013 to December 2021. The wiki lessons learnt report (LLR) is intended to complement the BWDB and DAE project completion reports (PCRs), with the aim of recording lessons learnt for use in the design and implementation of future interventions in the coastal zone.

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