Overview

- In the northwestern Bangladesh, the extreme poor living beside rivers become landless and lose their household assets to the river flooding in the rainy season.
- Practical Action, an INGO, has been supporting these landless farmer communities (6,000 erosion affected families, or about 22,800 people) since 2004 through its unique innovation, “sandbar cropping”, in the barren riverbeds which appear right after the monsoon season.
- This study is on the sustainability of the project “Pumpkins Against Poverty” which introduced sandbar cropping for pumpkin business and food security to the flood affected communities.

Objectives of the Study

1. Studying the business model of the production and complex web of components associated with the underlying relationships.
2. Identifying the strategies to achieve sustainability through community-driven development.
3. Identifying the market and pricing sustainability for pumpkin production through market analytics.

Methodology

- FGD Business model Systems map Sustainability Strategies within the community Marketing and Pricing Sustainability model

Findings

Business Model

1. Landless farmers are pumpkin producers: 60% female.
2. They produce pumpkins on transitional river islands (riverbed and sand)

Products and Services Exchanged

- Pumpkin is sold mainly through special features:
  1. Women friendly technology
  2. Rain water harvesting and has reduced 50% of the water use level
  3. Village based market, Buyers come to the community to buy pumpkins.
  4. No pesticide, No insecticide

Buyers

- Traders
- Wholesalers
- Exporters

Logistics Mechanism

- Product Transportation: The buyers come the village market and buy in bulk, transport through their own trucks in off peak seasons. In peak season traders inside transport through vans and sell in nearby villages
- Storage Facilities: The community is able to store the pumpkins following indigenous practices.

Challenges

- No CBO
- No contract farming
- No access to market information
- No central storage
- Exploitation

Recommendations

- Backward Linkage with MFI is essential.
- Central storage will allow farmers to sell in bulk amount which will strengthen their negotiation
- Contract Farming is necessary
- CBO or Farmers’ Cooperative leveraging strong social capital
- Exporting overseas to capture seasonal markets should be explored
- Access to market information facilitated through “Agra Call Center”

Average Pricing of Hybrid Pumpkin in Different Markets and Throughout the Year

- Price that Farmers are getting from Wholesale traders (Tk/kg)
- Price in Local Bazar (Tk/kg)
- Price in Capital (Dhaka)

Results from market analytics: 70% of the pumpkins should be sold in the off-peak season. The cost-benefit ratio would be then 1:3.84.