

Abstract

Sustainability is an interesting topic among the policy makers, planners, professionals and researchers working in the field of rural development. The two-tier co-operative is one of the oldest rural institutions in Bangladesh. Since independence, it has been playing a significant role in rural development. The main objective of this study was to assess the sustainability of two-tier co-operative system in Bangladesh. Sustainability of two-tier co-operatives under RD I project was analyzed from managerial, financial and environmental point of view. All the Upazila Central Co-operative Associations and 28 Krishak Samabya Samities in study area were examined. Government officials involved in co-operative movement in the study area were also interviewed. Data and relevant information were collected from BRDB head quarter, Dhaka. Having analyzed the data and other information, the study concluded that from financial and managerial point of view, two-tier co-operatives in the study area were not sustainable. The managing committees of the primary and central societies are not strictly following co-operative rules and regulations for the financial and other management of the societies. The study observed no distinct negative impacts of two-tier co-operatives on environment in the study area. Rural development project had no positive impact on capacity building of two-tier co-operatives to make them sustainable. This study also intended to analyze the problems and prospects of two-tier co-operative in Bangladesh. The two-tier co-operatives have inherent potential in tackling the problems of poverty alleviation, food security and employment generation. This study focuses on several pitfalls and shortcomings of two-tier co-operatives in Bangladesh like: lack of quality management, over-dependence on government, dormant membership, not holding elections, lack of sufficient fund for training etc. This study formulates some compelling recommendations to overcome the existing weaknesses and for boosting growth of the two-tier co-operatives in Bangladesh.