

# ***STAKEHOLDERS REFLECTION OF AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN PROJECT IN BANGLADESH***





Internship report

On

**STAKEHOLDERS REFLECTION OF AGRICULTURAL  
VALUE CHAIN PROJECT IN BANGLADESH**

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**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 11.05.2017**

## Letter of Transmittal

Dr. Khan Md. Raziuddin Taufique  
BRAC Business School  
BRAC University  
66, Mohakhali,  
Dhaka 1212.

Subject: Submission of Internship Report

Dear Sir,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be able to hand over the result of three months long hardship, Internship Report on **Stakeholders Reflection of Agricultural Value Chain Project in Bangladesh**. This report was assigned as a partial requirement of Internship Program, a prerequisite for the completion of Bachelor of Business Administration.

I tried my level best to avoid any deficiencies while preparing this report. The information of this report is mainly based on Departmental Manuals and Questionnaire survey. Some other details were gathered from the Office Personnel of AVC and CDCS.

The USAID Agricultural Value Chains (AVC) Project in Bangladesh is working to address many agricultural challenges by improving Bangladesh's economic stability through enhanced food security in the impoverished Southern Delta region. I am privileged to be a part of this project.

I inserted all my efforts to make this report matches with the level of expectation. Therefore, I passionately hope that you will find this report worth reading.

Sincerely,

Md. Nashimul Islam  
ID#11204071  
BRAC Business School

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I feel immensely pleased to have an opportunity, on the very occasion of submitting my report, to thank a number of individuals for their unprecedented support, cordial co operation, objective direction and endless encouragement that have significantly contributed to the preparation of the report. First and foremost, I would like to thank almighty Allah, the omniscient and omnipotent, who bestowed me the capability of successful completion of my internship report.

I would like to express my gratitude to my distinguished supervisor, **Dr. Khan Md. Raziuddin Taufique, Assistant Professor BRAC Business School**, whose cordial supervision and guidelines enable me to complete my internship report properly.

And last but not the least; I would like to thank all official and Staff of Both USAID-AVC and Center for Development and Competitive Strategies Ltd. for creating a sound and helpful environment to collect necessary information, to get advice and finally to prepare the report. Without their assistance and co-operation, this report might not have seen the light of day.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a pre-requisite of completion of the BBA Program. I conducted my internship program with the duration of 3 months in Center for Development and Competitive Strategies LTD. For this time being I got the opportunity to work in USAID\_AVC project as a part of AVC team. In this phase of my education I received the practical knowledge related with my education. I achieved a commendable knowledge on value chain and market development process. The report emphasize on the “Stakeholders Reflection of Agricultural Value Chain Project in Bangladesh.” services offered by AVC to the value chain stakeholders, present condition of value chain in Bangladesh, its different crops, opportunities and way forward. For this stakeholder feedback survey 18 questions have been asked to 30 different stakeholders of the value chain. AVC tries to improve Bangladesh’s economic stability by strengthening the agricultural value chains in the impoverished Southern Delta region. The project geographic focus is twenty districts in Barisal, Dhaka and Khulna Divisions. The project identified six food and two non food agricultural value chains with the potential for value added processing leading to import substitution and export promotion. According to my observation and understanding, it is very difficult on my part to introduce the stakeholders feedback in this short period of time. Although they are doing a good job but according to my perception they need to focus more on the overall management and communication system with the farmers and traders and behavioral change of farmers which should be much cooperative with the development process. I express my observation and personal experience towards the project. I made necessary recommendations to be adjusted to maintain the organizations journey to the excellence according to my viewpoint. To summarize the whole situation, I would like to say that, this organization is trying their best and putting a lot of efforts to develop the value chain system.

## 2.Organizational Part:

### 2.1 Overview of Center for Development and Competitive Strategies Ltd:



The Center for Development and Competitive Strategies Ltd. (CDCS<sup>®</sup>) is a knowledge machine of business competitiveness and social development driven by an innovative fusion of market and development. The knowledge machine, CDCS<sup>®</sup>, is designed to blend global good practices, indigenous wisdom and expert insights in crafting innovative home-grown knowledge solutions.



CDCS<sup>®</sup> consultants and professionals strive to excel in business and social research, strategy formulation, capacity building and intervention management demands of both private sector and development organizations. A uniquely positioned research and consulting firm, CDCS<sup>®</sup> has been operating since 2005 with rigorous attention to creativity, quality, and customization.

CDCS<sup>®</sup> is incorporated under the Companies Act 1994 with the Registrar of the Joint Stock Companies and Firms, Government of Bangladesh in 2005. Since then, it is operating as an independent private sector research and consulting firm offering its customized knowledge solutions to business enterprises and associations, development organizations, and other market and non-market entities.

### **2.1.1 Mission**

Contributing to economic growth and social development through environmentally and socially responsive solutions to business and development challenges.



## 2.1.2 VISION

The Center for Development and Competitive Strategies (CDCS®) strives to translate the wealth of accumulated knowledge and expert insights into professional practices in the fields of business and development to ultimately contribute towards national and enterprise level competitiveness through winning strategic solutions, meaningful actions and interventions, and improved human and organizational capacities.

## 2.1.2 Goal

- Promoting private sector growth by enhancing enterprise competitiveness
- Assisting market development by advancing pragmatic home grown solutions
- Managing development initiatives by facilitating participation and building partnerships
- Improving market responsiveness by creating value for market players and other stakeholders
- Building organizational capacity by developing human competence

## 2.1.4 Functional Approach

### *RESEARCH & STRATEGY*

Research is the key to decision making – be it for business strategy or for development policy and intervention design. The CDCS® approach to business and social action research, backed by its accomplished experts and dedicated professionals, is sure to unearth and present the hidden realities relevant for a given decision making context.

What makes CDCS® offerings so unique and so demanding is its outstanding competency in providing its clients with research-based strategic guidelines – be it in the form of a set of actionable recommendations or in the form of a strategic roadmap for business competitiveness or in the form of a complete intervention package for sustainable development initiatives.

The research and strategy team at CDCS® not only engages sophisticated qualitative and quantitative (e.g. statistical analyses by using SPSS) methods, it also get engaged in intra-team intellectual debates to explore deeper insights and confirm the utility of the research output in

strategy formulation and/or operational decision making. Some of the 'CDCS®-first' research projects include –

- Analysis of Latent Market Demand for FM Radio in Bangladesh & Strategic Roadmap for Radio Today, the first-ever FM radio station in Bangladesh
- Establishment of Uniform Grading System for Agro-produce in Bangladesh.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING**

When it comes to attaining and sustaining competitive advantage over others, continuous improvement through capacity building is one of the key organizational strategies. CDCS® strives to facilitate individuals and organizations enhance their capability to explore opportunities, understand constraints and to meet and exceed expectations.

To accomplish the goals of any capacity building project of an organization, CDCS® partners with its clients to rigorously assess the true needs and to craft an appropriate approach to best address those needs under the given operational context. CDCS® finds a close collaboration between the parties to be instrumental to success.

When capacity building projects involve a large number of partners, CDCS® resorts to its unique approach to mission-alignment first and then crafts customized solutions to best fit the organizational contexts.

With its very diverse basket of expert and professional panel, CDCS® is well-poised to undertake any capacity building intervention that may involve as audience top-notch corporate professionals or grass-root farmers, opinion leaders and MSMEs.

## **INTERVENTION**

When opportunities are there to make robust improvements or when something does not happen the way it is desirable, needed is a set of well-crafted deliberate interventions. CDCS® has excelled in designing and implementing ground-breaking interventions, exceeding expectations of its clients and stakeholders.

For example, in one of the recently completed market development interventions of CDCS® involved consultations with 40+ corporate and development organizations, active participation of

eight strategic partners, contribution of 240+ grass-root level change ambassadors and a direct reach of 65,000+ farmers and agro-MSMEs. The phenomenal success of the project is attributed to distinctive CDCS® approach to intervention design and implementation.

In short, the unique intervention management approach of CDCS® is based on the core principles of relevance, ownership and sustainability,

### 2.1.5 CDCS Management:

Under its Professional Development Program, CDCS® always looks for qualified, self-driven individuals for hiring and grooming as potential leaders in the field of market and development. CDCS® also welcomes interns. Depending on their interests and abilities, CDCS® professionals may walk either of the following two tracks:

- Knowledge Track
- Management Track

#### Knowledge Track

Professionals of knowledge track usually work on different consulting projects that involve intensive knowledge contents (field surveys and other forms of data collection, qualitative and quantitative analysis, report writing, case writing, public presentations, module development, etc. Usually these professionals have outstanding academic record and possess extraordinary analytical and communication ability (writing and presentation). They may also be specialists from any highly sought-after discipline. The career path for this track involves the following broad categories:

Program Associate

Management Analyst

Project Consultant

Project Leader

Program Director

Partner

### **Management Track**

Professionals of management track usually work in and around the following functional clusters: project implementation, business development, operations and logistics, accounting and finance, HR and admin., and corporate affairs & relationships. These professionals should have relevant academic preparation and work experience (may be except for the entry-level position).

Program Associate

Program Coordinator

Program Manager

Program General Manager

Program Director

Partner

Regardless of the track, career progression and compensation depends on performance measured against many criteria. The broad performance indicators include, but not limited to, the following:

Output volume

Output quality

Integrity & Ownership

Effort/Sincerity

If you are interested to become a CDCS® professional, please send us your updated resume with a cover letter indicating your preferences.

## 2.2 Overview of AVC:



The USAID Bangladesh Agricultural Value Chain Project(AVC) is working to improve Bangladesh’s economic stability by strengthening the agricultural value chains in the impoverished Southern Delta region. The project geographic focus is twenty districts in Barisal,Dhaka and Khulna Divisions. The project identified six food and two non food agricultural value chains with the potential for value added processing leading to import substitution and export promotion.

The AVC project is applying a market systems approach to targeted agricultural value chains to

- Increase rural income
- Support rural employment
- Improve nutrition
- Increase accessibility to finance
- Promote gender equity
- Expand export sale

Activities to meet these Objectives:

- Turn supply chains into value chains
- Support activities that increase productivity and returns to smallholder farmers
- Strengthen local organizations to support and sustain value chain activities in the future
- Upgrading innovation and technology
- Improve the development of end market

## 3. Project Part

### 3.1 Introduction:

The Agricultural Value Chains (AVC) is a five-year project supported by USAID under its Feed the Future activity to enhance the food security situation in Bangladesh by fortifying agricultural value chains. AVC expects to accomplish expansive based monetary development and upgrade long haul nourishment security in 20 districts of the Southern Delta of Bangladesh by applying a market frameworks approach. This will bring about expanded access to and accessibility of assorted and nutritious organic products, vegetables, and heartbeats in nearby, local, and national markets and will contribute fundamentally to enhancing nourishment security in the focused on territory.

Agricultural value chains in Bangladesh are regularly divided, and need speculation and incorporation of defenseless gatherings and basic linkages. Also, Bangladeshi farmers frequently do not have the learning or assets to take part in higher esteem (more aggressive) and more nutritious harvest esteem chains. Therefore, the Agricultural Value Chains project will integrate nutrition, gender, youth participation, and environmental resilience to climate change to ensure sustainable, broad-based growth.. Expanding open doors for women can powerfully affect efficiency and farming drove development. Women are similarly as effective farming makers as men and can accomplish comparative yields when given equivalent access to assets, including preparing and benefits. By accomplishing these goals, the venture will contribute – straightforwardly as well as in a roundabout way – to every one of the three components of enhanced nourishment security: get to, accessibility, and use, while guaranteeing private segment driven, horticultural drove change in the focused on zone.

AVC's geographic concentration is twenty districts in Barisal Division (Barisal, Bhola, Jhalokati, Pirojpur, Barguna, Patuakhali), Dhaka Division (Faridpur, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Rajbari, Shariatpur), and Khulna Division (Jessore, Jhenaidah, Magura, Narail, Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Chuadanga, Meherpur).

The districts were chosen considering the way that the region has a portion of the most astounding neediness and lack of healthy sustenance rates and is likewise to a great degree defenseless against the impacts of environmental change.

The general population of this region routinely encounter challenges like extreme tidal surges, yearly flooding, and expanding soil and water salinization, which hamper agrarian profitability.

AVC has also selected two major sectors under non-food value chains- flower and natural fibres that include jute and coir targeting 60000 beneficiaries in the Southern Delta. The activities under non-food value chains are to increase the capacity of non food procedures to meet domestic and export markets and enhance the demand for non-food products in both national and international markets through improved product quality ,diversity, innovative technology and disseminating information onmarket trends, prices and demand.

The AVC project is applying a market systems approach to targeted agricultural value chains to

- Increase rural income
- Support rural employment
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Activities to meet these Objectives:

- Turn supply chains into value chains
- Support activities that increase productivity and returns to smallholder farmers
- Strengthen local organizations to support and sustain value chain activities in the future
- Upgrading innovation and technology
- Improve the development of end market

**Center for Development and Competitive Strategies Ltd.(CDCS)** works as a consultancy firm in this project to facilitate and give consultancy service to different stakeholders of the value



chain for the growth of the market system. They work on different wings of the project like Storage, P2P and Packaging. In this paper we mainly focus on Packaging.

### 3.2 Problem Statement:

Packaging of agro-produce is a key factor among others that is hindering the acceleration of inclusive growth at the grassroots of the southern delta. All packaging decision makers face a variety of challenges variables when determining what type, size and design of packaging to use to protect, preserve and market their product. Choices in one part of the value chain will certainly affect another.

Against this backdrop, AVC wants to address this issue by organizing a series of dialogues to know the current trend and opportunity to improve packaging for balancing between health and safety issues, cost effectiveness and environment concerns, particularly with regards to food and non-food agriculture product.

Donor organization like USAID invests and donate money to the developing community but a big question is that, does this kind of development program really brings any change to the community? AVC works to develop the packaging system in the value chain to reduce wastage, give the farmers better price to maintain quality. But it will not make any sense the target group of the project don't take it positively and if they don't eagerly participate in this development then it cannot make any change in the value chain. So it is very important to know **the reflection of the value chain stakeholders about the AVC project**. After that we can decide that either this project can make any impact or not.

### 3.3 Objectives

General Objective:

- ❖ To identify and understand value chain stakeholders reflection about the AVC project.
- ❖ To explore the Stakeholders suggestion on AVC Project .

Specific Objective:

- To find out that people think AVC can add value to the market development or not.

- To explore why people take part in the AVC project
- To find out that people are conscious about value chain development or not.
- To find out what percentage of people Participate regularly.

## 3.4 Methodology of the Study

### 3.4.1 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

#### Sampling Method

*The Population:* As the population size is so big, it represents the whole Southern Delta. The survey is a value chain **stakeholders** survey so, the respondents are mix of income group but they represent the whole agricultural value chain. Most of the people are of mid-income group. As instant agriculture is not the only occupation for all of them, so a certain disposable income is needed and the target population of instant have a financial impact in the value chain. The population of the survey is of mainly middle to upper income group.

Sampling Area: This research has covered four specific areas of Southern Delta and those are:

- Barisal
- Jessore
- Jhenaidah
- Bagerghat

Though the research has been conducted in these areas, this is to be supposed that it represents the condition and feedback of the Southern Delta. The survey conducted is a stakeholders survey and represents the opinion of one stakeholder per questionnaire.

**Sampling Size and Method:** The sample size was 45. Some of the questionnaires have not been counted because of their unacceptable condition. **30** questionnaires have been counted in the research.

A **convenience** sample is simply one in which the researcher uses any

subjects that are available to participate in the research study. There are some limitations of the study so; it is not possible to use a descriptive type of sampling method. Convenience sampling method has been used here.

### 3.4.2 Data Collection:

The survey conducted during the stakeholder engagement session and the questionnaire includes 18 questions. The questionnaire has both qualitative and quantitative questions. The farmers and traders and other chains have been interviewed with some basic questions so that they can give the real answer. This portion gives some extraordinary findings. The findings also give a base for new study.

**Interpretation:** Data have been interpreted with Microsoft excel, Microsoft word. Data have been analyzed and presented by using charts and tables.

### 3.4.3 Data Analysis:

**Interpretation:** Data have been interpreted with Microsoft excel, Microsoft word. Data have been analyzed and presented by using charts and tables.

From the survey, the collected opinions and analysis were as follows:

Based on the question 4, there are young to aged people are involve in this project. Two most number age group ia 28 and 50 both represents 10% each of the total population.

Based on the question 5, 30% of the respondent are women and 70% are men. So the participation of women are in a satisfactory number.

Based on the questions from 6, it is found this survey represents people from 4 different districts and 10 different upozilla. Most of the stakeholders are from Jessore.

Based on the questions 7, 43.3% respondent involve with AVC from 1-2 years long and 26.7% involve from less than a year and another 26.7% involve from 2-3years. Only 3.3% inlove more than 3 years.

Based on the question 8, 23.3% are involve in flower sector and another 23.3% involve with vegetable sector, they are the two biggest group and the third biggest group is mango which represents 10%.

Based on the questions from 9, 50% of the respondent think that present condition of the value chain is not up to the mark, 33.3% think it is developing and 16.7% think condition is disaster. NO one think current situation is impressive.

Based on the questions from 10, 50% attended 2-5 stakeholder session and 36% attended only 2 stakeholder session.

Based on the questions from 11, 56.7% had both negative and positive outcome and 26.7% had positive outcome and rest had negative outcome.

Based on the questions from 12, 90% agreed that they made positive change in their business from this Project.

Based on the questions from 13, 40% of them think that this project made some positive behavioral change to the community, 30% think that AVC helped them to increase their technical knowledge, 20% think that now they have better business idea which provided by AVC and rest 10% think that they improved in post harvest management.

Based on the questions from 14, 46.7% think that the main problem of the current packaging system id mismanagement and 30% think lack of awareness.

Based on the questions from 15, 90% think farmers will be benefited after closing this project.

Based on the questions from 16, Everyone is interested to involve with this kind of project again.

Based on the questions from 17, 46.7% think that main problem of this project is gap between planning and implementation, 33.3% think lack of cooperation from AVC and rest think communication gap.

Based on the questions from 15, 31% suggest more field program,24.1% suggest increase the project timeline and another 24.1% think AVC need to increase grants.

### **3.5 Findings & Discussion:**

1. Participants are hopeful about the positive change from this project. They think that this initiative can change way of thinking of the stakeholders and they also believe that AVC

project already show them the path of improvement. That is positive achievement of this project because it is only the stakeholders who can change the value chain so the changes of thinking and behavior of the stakeholders can make a positive impact.

2. Most of the stakeholders have some good leaning from AVC and they already benefited from those. Like, some of them get professional consultancy service which is very costly and they could not get this service to improve their business but AVC hire consultants to improve their business from that they learn modern strategies of business.
3. AVC operates from Dhaka and their regional offices and they have several field mobilization programs but that's not enough to satisfy the stakeholders as 45% respondents feel that more field programs are needed.
4. Value chain is an interconnected process so communication is the most vital factor here but in this survey 57% respondents think that increase of communication with them is highly needed. So the communication and networking of AVC is not good at this moment.
5. AVC have 30% women participants in their program so it is a promising number if we consider the overall value chain scenario of Bangladesh.
6. Most of the participants are not regular. It shows that people don't have regular interest in this project.
7. Lack of communication and less cooperation are the main concern for this project as the frequency of participation and reflections shown.
8. Majority of the respondents are very much interested about the project and demanded AVC should increase the timeline.

## Limitations of the Study

By conducting the research carefully the following limitations are:

- Many of the analyses on the obtained data are based upon my sole interpretation. This in result might bring some biases, as lack of knowledge and depth of

understanding might hinder me to produce an absolute authentic and meaningful report.

- Stakeholders are not well educated so they could not understand the deeper meanings of the questions.
- Location far from Dhaka so respondent were not available for longer time.
- Time constraint was another limitation restricting this report from being more detailed or analytical.

## 3.6 Conclusion & Recommendations:

### Conclusion:

AVC is an iconic development throughout the beginning with a very specific vision and vast target group and product line. Though donor like USAID and consultancy firms like CDCS, LCP support this project but it is a very critical task to improve a value chain. Nestle is changing value chain practices of food in this country with a limited timeline. Among all the major functions of AVC, packaging is the only function that has crossed the first stage of its goal. Already traders and farmers are using flowers cap, crate for vegetable and fruits and practices hot water treatment in Southern Delta. These shows the impact of this project and value chain should be the most organized and successful function, meeting target of Agricultural-economy in Bangladesh. Moreover, both CDCS and AVC ensures outstanding working environment for its employees. There is no bossy attitude among these Personnel. Everyone here work as a team having the same objective of ensuring continuous excellence. However, a company cannot be free from any hardship. USAID and CDCS has strong reputation in this country sometimes it is difficult for them continue with their good work for political decisions and lack of support from the Government and other parties. This is high time for all to contribute and make this project successful.

### Recommendations:

Although the AVC is performing very well in our country, but as per my observation and understanding, I think they need a little modification in their procedures to make the project successful. Such as-

- They need to maintain an upgraded guideline for the stakeholders to avoid any kind of confusion.
- According to my observation, there is a lack of communication between the stakeholders and the AVC officials which they need to reduce for the betterment and they can easily do that by instructing the employees about how to communicate in a proper way.
- Although they are giving the world-class consultancy services and community grants, but they should support promising members by giving loan.

- The timing of the stakeholder engagement session should be set according to the stakeholders prior time not according to the appointment of the consultant.
- They should specify some basic training course in some specified sector to make clear understanding about each stakeholder's job for the development.
- There is a need to establish service and learning center for the farmers.
- AVC should organize more market linkage program for the farmers.
- AVC should set their operation in the rural points.
- 

## 4. Supplementary Part:

### 4.1 Appendix-A

#### Questionnaire

#### Stakeholders Feedback (AVC)

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Gender: Male/Female
6. Address: \_\_\_\_\_
7. How long you are involved with AVC project?
  - Less than 1 Year
  - 1-2 Years

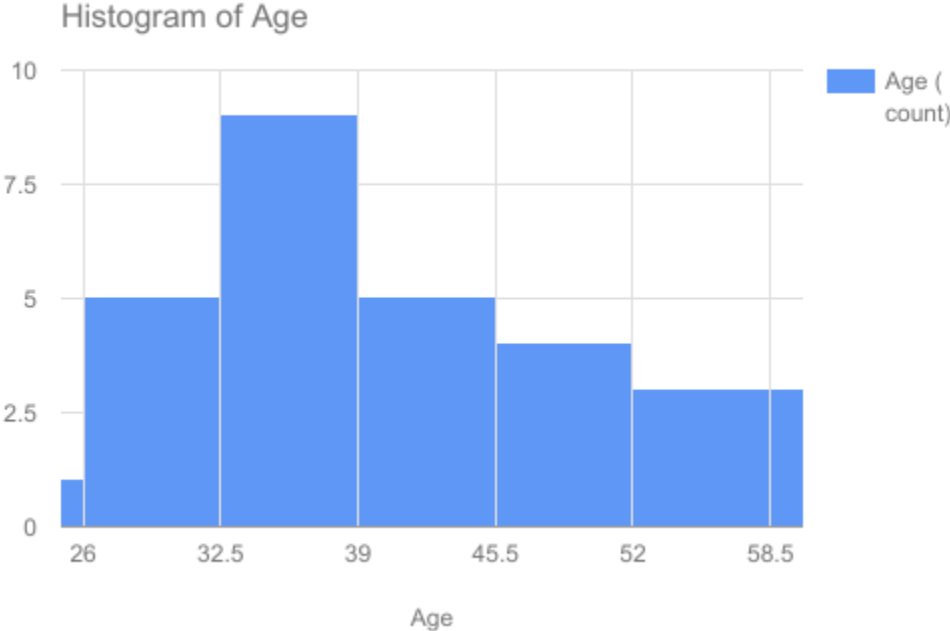
- 2-3 Years
  - More than 3 Years
8. What are your core farming products? \*
- Potato
  - Tomatoes
  - Mangos
  - Groundnuts
  - Pulses
  - Vegetables
  - Flowers
9. What do you think about the current agricultural value chain in Bangladesh? \*
- Impressive
  - Developing
  - Not up to the mark
  - Disaster
10. How many stakeholder session you attended till now? \*
- 1
  - 2
  - 2-5
  - More than 5
11. What is the outcome from it? \*
- Possitive
  - Negetive
  - Both
  - Nothing just waste of time
12. Is there any positive change you notice? \*
- Yes
  - No
13. What is your best learning from this project? \*
- Business Idea
  - Technical Knowledge
  - Behavioral Change
  - Post harvest management
14. What do you think about the current packaging sector in Bangladesh? \*
- Going well
  - Need to be improved
  - Huge mismanagement
  - Lack of awareness



15. Are you think that farmers will be benefited after closing this project? \*
- Yes
  - No
16. Are you really interested to involve with this kind of project in future? \*
- Yes
  - No
17. Which kind of problem you faced during this project? \*
- Communication gap
  - Lack of cooperation
  - Gap between planning and implementation
18. Suggestions for improvement
- Increase grants
  - Increase timeline
  - More field program
  - More training sessions

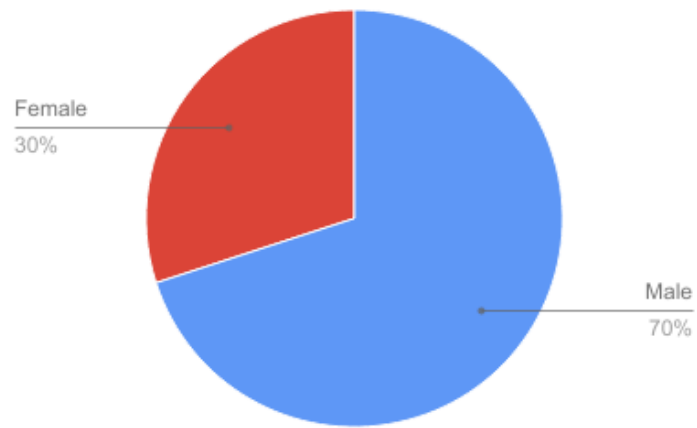
# 4.2 Appendix-B

## 1.Respondent Age group Profile:



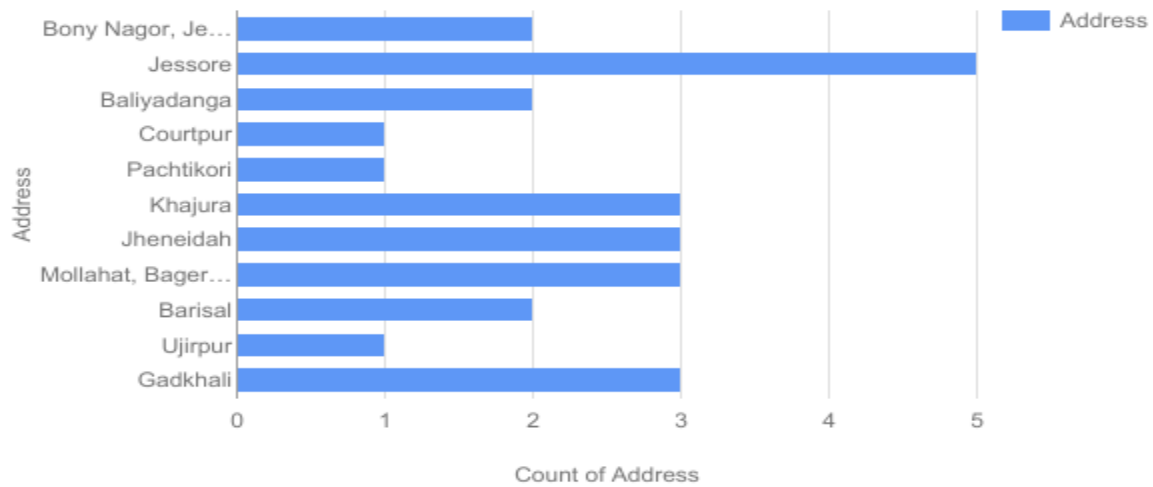
## 2. Gender Participation Prof

Count of Gender



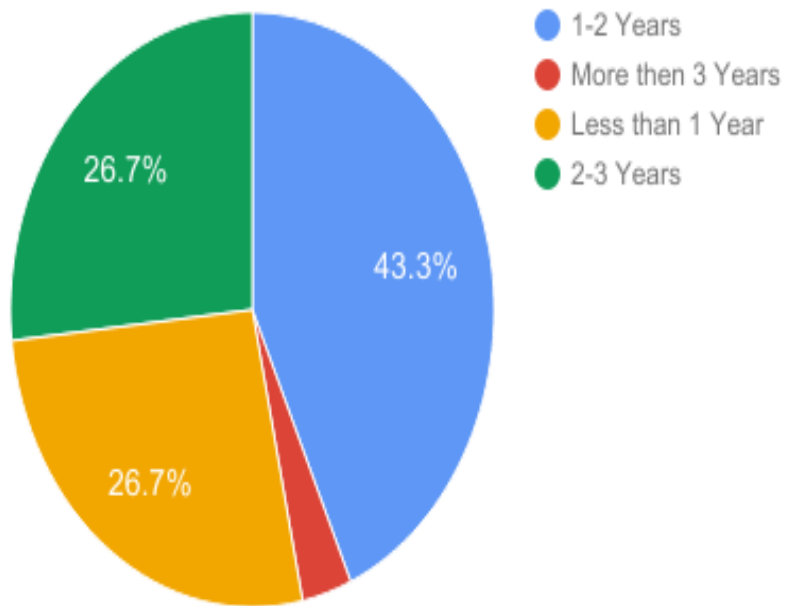
## 3. Respondent Address Profile:

Count of Address



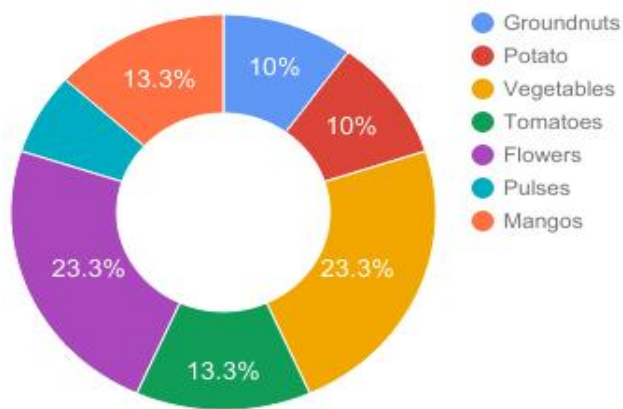
#### 4. Stakeholder Engagement Duration:

Count of How long you are involved with AVC project?



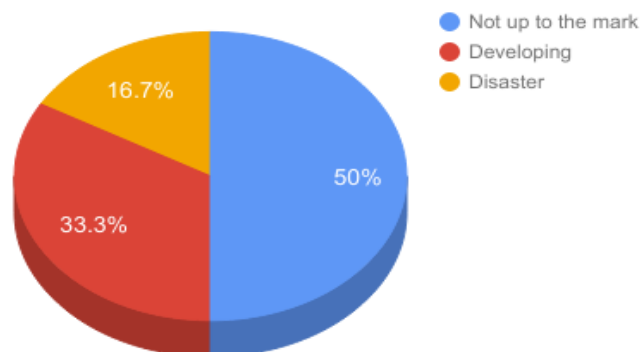
## 5. Farming Product Profile:

Count of What are your core farming products?



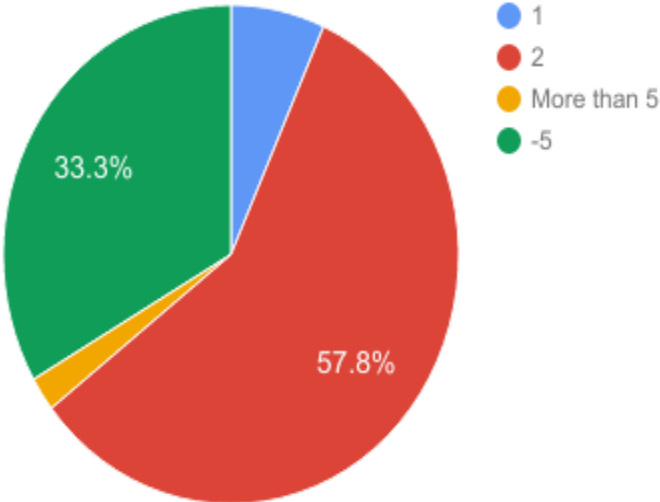
## 6. Opinion about present condition:

Count of What do you think about the current agricultural value chain in Bangladesh?

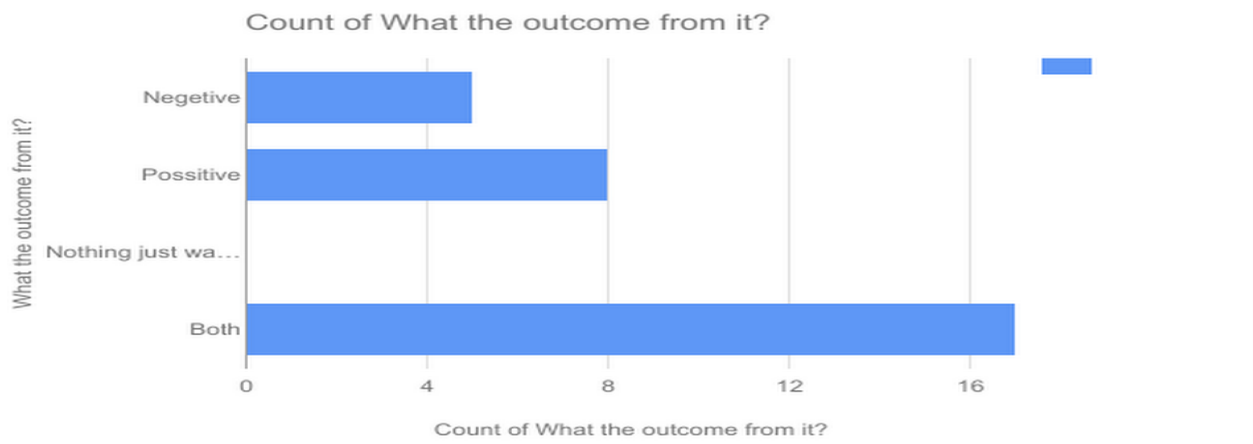


7.Attendance of Participants

Count of How many stakeholder session you attended till now?



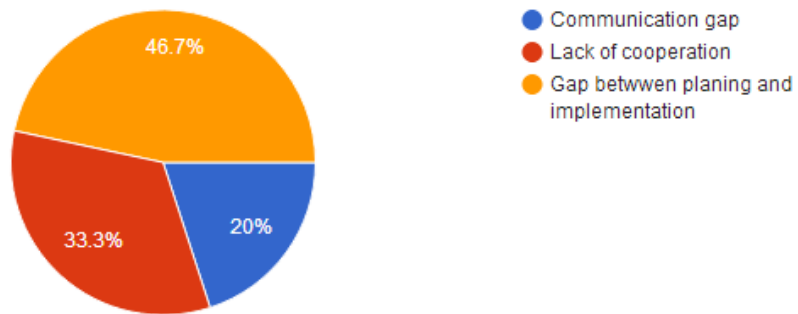
## 8.Reaction about Stakeholder Session:



## 9.Reaction about faced problem

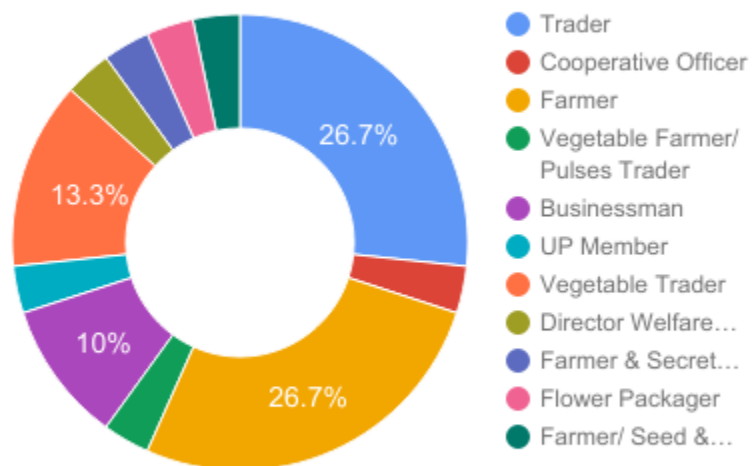
### Which kind of problem you faced during this project?

30 responses



## 10.Profession of the Respondents:

### Count of Occupation

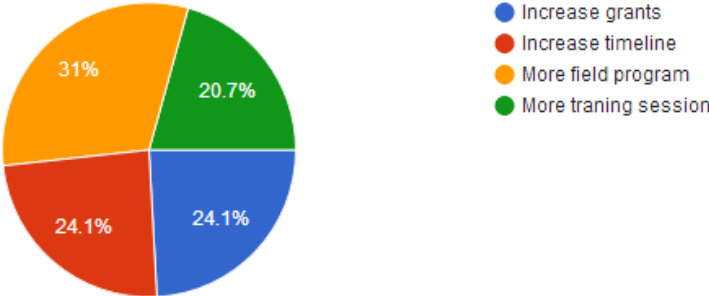




11.Suggestions for improvement:

Suggestions for improvement

29 responses



## 4.3Bibliography

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