

Project Update: September 2006

In August 2006 four different stakeholder groups - farmers, fishers, landless poor men and women participated in a Participatory Action Plan Development Workshop. The number and categories of stakeholder groups were chosen from the earlier census. In each group 15 participants were selected on the basis of their available time, interest to participate and finally commitment to represent the groups. Each of the groups separately made a problem census, ranked those problems, and recommended solutions and responsible authorities/people. The problems from each group were then consolidated by the project leader and presented in a plenary where local elites and local government representatives attended along with 20 group representatives, 5 from each group. The major problems identified were: water logging, saline water intrusion at the end of dry season, excessive water hyacinth in the beel, lack of knowledge and initiatives for conservation measures, use of different harmful gears to catch fish, and catching fish and other aquatic resources during the breeding period. These problems were presented to the local elites and local elected representatives in the plenary. After their endorsement those problems along with suggested solutions and action plan were presented to the local level officials in a second plenary. The local level officials appreciated the process, took note of the problems and assured assistance wherever possible. An 11-member general body committee with an executive body was formed during a wider community meeting for management of the resources where the action plan was endorsed.

