

Feature

Focus on a Grameen Bank Project

A New Approach to Fish Culture: Based on Chinese Model

by Tatsuya Watanabe

MACHE brate bangal - fish and rice make a Bangladeshi. This popular phrase should be a reflection of Bangali life...

How could it happen in the country most endowed with water resources in the world? Among several contributing factors, the extraction and revenue-oriented policy of the government...

There was an attempt by the government to address the issue. The Neemgachi Fish Culture Project in Rajshahi Division, the precursor of Grameen Bank's Joysagar Fish Farm...

be known precisely, but a record of a closely monitored pond revealed a sudden drop in the number of fish just as they grew up to the marketable size of 1/2 kg.

Towards the end of the project, 83 ponds were hastily disinvested to local 'landless' cooperatives.



Photographs showing part of the daily routine in the Grameen Bank's Joysagar Fish Farm.

The project ended as a financial 'disaster' (British evaluation report): It never produced net profits in any year. The helpless state of the project prompted the government to invite Grameen Bank...

asm, believing technology was not the problem. Its immediate objectives were to learn the trick of fish culture and establish production base so that landless poor could participate in fish farming on the firm ground.

Joysagar Fish Farm (JFF) staff learned the art of induced breeding, the most technical part of fish culture, very quick to the surprise of British experts.



Watanabe is seen holding up a big catch in picture on left.

area of 675 ha) transferred to JFF were in disputes over their ownership. Through persuasions and litigations, JFF established possession painstakingly and today 583 ponds (72%) are fully possessed by JFF.

A volunteer from Japan takes a close look at a project as a participant and sees tremendous prospect of reviving water resources of Bangladesh with the help of the landless.

sics of fish culture and established production base, it was time to involve the landless poor and to improve on fish farming techniques.

The involvement of the landless has made intensive fish culture, popularly known as a Chinese system, feasible. Intensive culture is in short a multi-stocking multi-harvesting and high-input culture system.

With the help of FFGs, JFF has successfully adopted the Chinese system and developed a Bangladeshi model of fish culture. Instead of wishing floods away, JFF has devised various anti-flood measures...

and remained at the same level as the DoF (due mainly to exceptional floods of 1987 and 1988). But in the second stage, total as well as per ha fish yield increased three-fold while direct input costs and cultured water area remained fairly constant.

and relief programmes can afford to offer. JFF has its share of benefits as well. It has been able to reduce the number of staff. Poaching has decreased substantially.

and diversification. It is leasing in production ponds, further increasing culture intensity and venturing into new activities for the benefits of landless members.

and JFF/Grameen Bank demonstrations and rallies in which local people were made to believe JFF/Grameen Bank was a foreign organization who came to exploit the poor.

and remained at the same level as the DoF (due mainly to exceptional floods of 1987 and 1988). But in the second stage, total as well as per ha fish yield increased three-fold while direct input costs and cultured water area remained fairly constant.

and relief programmes can afford to offer. JFF has its share of benefits as well. It has been able to reduce the number of staff.

and diversification. It is leasing in production ponds, further increasing culture intensity and venturing into new activities for the benefits of landless members.

and JFF/Grameen Bank demonstrations and rallies in which local people were made to believe JFF/Grameen Bank was a foreign organization who came to exploit the poor.

and relief programmes can afford to offer. JFF has its share of benefits as well. It has been able to reduce the number of staff. Poaching has decreased substantially.

and diversification. It is leasing in production ponds, further increasing culture intensity and venturing into new activities for the benefits of landless members.

and JFF/Grameen Bank demonstrations and rallies in which local people were made to believe JFF/Grameen Bank was a foreign organization who came to exploit the poor.

and relief programmes can afford to offer. JFF has its share of benefits as well. It has been able to reduce the number of staff. Poaching has decreased substantially.

landless poor - have been successfully combined and their productive potentials realized thereby. Having found responsible stewards in the landless, once-derelict ponds have regained their productivity.

Why People Grow Drugs Narcotics and Development in the Third World

Michael Smith with Charunee N. Thongtham, Najma Sadeque, Alfredo Molano Bravo, Roger Rumrill, Amanda Davila Publisher: Panos: 9 White Lion St. London NI 9PD, England: 114 pages

ALTHOUGH the fight against drug addiction has featured prominently (especially in the US and Western Europe where it has afflicted a frightening proportion of the young people) in recent times, the problem is nothing new or a particularly 20th century phenomenon.

BOOK REVIEW



book shows clearly that the humble grower is in a different boat altogether. Case studies of each country with its special set of circumstances ranging from socio-economic to political are presented, in terms which they make easy reading and targets the lay audience.

A Tragic Story, but with Some Silver-linings

Out of the despair of failed development projects comes a ray of sunshine. One sees it in the case study of Thailand which has cut its production of opium by 75 per cent since mid-1960. For this success, credit goes to international development agencies - and, indeed, to the King of Thailand.

as the Inter-American Development Bank, they ran afoul because of politics and the government's lack of commitment. One specific example is seen in Peru during the 1960s when President Fernando Belaunde made it the hallmark of his first term in office to build a highway along the Hualgala River to unite settlements along the eastern side of the Andes; hoping to open new frontiers to lure set-



In the journey from growers to consumers, the price of drugs multiplies

ters to this part of the country. Inter-American bank funded this settlement project and large numbers flocked to it with hopes of growing tobacco, tea, coffee, rice and corn.

Quite apart from government inertia, another factor (in Latin America especially) which drove farmers into coca cultivation was the presence of fearsome terrorists who saw the profits inherent in 'white gold' and used them ruthlessly to fund their own insurgencies.

While the farmer's profits from coca growing may not be anywhere near those of the drug lord, nevertheless it exceeds those of other cash crops; and the temptation of 'quick money' is as irresistible to them as anyone else.

sumption flowed in abundance at night... it also increased when a style of drinking took hold that became a local expression of elegance and good manners: the drinker swallowed a mouthful from a glass and then tossed the rest of the contents onto the dusty ground.

Out of the despair of failed development projects and government ineptitude to provide growers of drugs a viable alternative, comes a ray of sunshine.

This is embodied in the case study of Thailand, which has managed to cut its production of opium by 75 per cent since the mid-1960s. This success story is owed to the

fine efforts of five international development agencies and the personal initiative and interest of the Thai King. Through the 'fruit trees for opium' venture, those involved have managed to reduce the hill tribes' financial dependence on opium and guided them to more 'social friendly' crops like flowers and fruit.

'Why People Grow Drugs' is well researched and concisely written. The writers have viewed the problem from the right perspective and demonstrated convincingly that in order to eradicate the monstrous effects of drug addiction, sustainable development has to be provided to the growers of coca and opium.

Bangladesh Boats Provide an Engine of Growth

SPONTANEOUS water-borne revolution has occurred in Bangladesh in the last decade with the mechanisation of a majority of the country's estimated 700,000 passenger and cargo boats - using water-pump motors.