

KRISHI UTSHO

The **overall objective** of Krishi Utsho (KU) is:

Improve food and nutrition security of informal input shop owners and smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, and their families by establishing a sustainable franchise of input shops providing high-quality inputs and services.

Description

In Bangladesh, over 80% of farmland is cultivated by poor smallholder farmers who are either subsistence farmers or small-scale commercial farmers with less than 2.5 acres of land. The ability of these farmers to maximize productivity of their limited land is constrained by limited access to relevant quality inputs purchased from informal input suppliers. Women farmers are further constrained by cultural and religious norms that consider their contributions to the agricultural economy as informal and restrict their mobility, access to resources, and input in decision-making.

Informal input suppliers often operate out of their house or in make-shift shops with a limited range and variety of inputs, most of which are relatively low quality. Most of the products they sell address male agricultural needs rather than the needs of female farmers. These micro-entrepreneurs, particularly those serving remote communities, often lack market information, technical knowledge, business skills, and above all access to working capital, and thus end up offering a limited inventory of low quality inputs. As a result these informal input suppliers struggle to develop linkages with higher order suppliers, limiting their capacity to develop a profitable enterprise capable of expansion. Subsequently, their client farmers cannot produce the food quality demanded by the lower order buyers. The value chain integration remains poor.

CARE's model of a micro-franchise is geared to address these capacity constraints through developing economies of scale by nurturing hundreds of such micro-enterprises into a network of franchisees where each franchisee has access to a standard business model, centralized supply chain, training and ongoing support in business management and customer service, and access to finance through extension of supplier credit by the franchisor: KU/CARE. Gender sensitization in terms of input supply and services is also addressed and female entrepreneurship in the agro-inputs retail sector is supported. Moreover, the franchisee not only sells quality products but provides advisory services to the client farmers.

KU therefore addresses the needs of small farmers and informal input suppliers, strengthening the agricultural value chain to boost incomes and increase the production of nutritious and safe food.

Duration

November 1, 2015 - 31 December, 2018
(3 years)

Program Area



Target Group

65,000 smallholder farmers, including 26,000 women farmers

Partners

Donor:



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN)

Implementing Partner:



CARE Bangladesh

Program Components

KU has three main components with specific implementation strategies:

1. Increase services and inputs provided by KU franchisees: KU franchisees offer a greater variety of inputs and services, particularly to meet women farmers' needs and promote climate-smart agriculture. Analysis of market demand feeds into the development of supply chain relationships in order to establish partnerships between suppliers and franchisees.
2. Expand KU service coverage: A network of 230 franchisees in six districts is established, consisting of 70 existing input shops and the launching of 160 new ones. Franchisees are trained and linked to input suppliers and clients. At least 100,000 smallholder farmers and their households are reached with awareness and marketing campaigns (at least 300 per franchisee).
3. Development of the KU franchise network: KU has developed institutional/organizational capacity to service, manage, and continue to expand the franchise network. Systems are in place to manage input suppliers, franchisees, and monitor customer satisfaction. Standard operating procedures are established and 12 KU staff are trained and operational.

Contribution to National Policy Programs

- National Food Policy
- Country Investment Plan for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition
- National Agriculture Policy

Partner Information

CARE is a leading international humanitarian organization fighting global poverty and injustice, with a special focus on working with women and girls. CARE Bangladesh is one of the organization's oldest and largest country offices, founded in 1949. CARE Bangladesh runs a large food security program and has expertise in establishing sustainable social enterprises and inclusive social businesses.

Program ID

Activity No. Pir 27771

Contract No. RSF0121108

Budget

USD 1,317,000

Further Information

For further information please visit the CARE-website:

<http://www.carebangladesh.org>

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