

**Project GCP/BGD/034/MUL**

National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme

Preliminary Intensive Training Programme

**Course 3**  
**ANALYSIS OF POLICY IMPACT**  
**ON FOOD SECURITY**

**MISSION'S REPORT**

*Prepared by*

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## 1. Introduction and acknowledgments

On May 16, 2006 I was offered a contract for a Personal Services Agreement on Integrated Horticulture and Nutrition Development Project BGD/97/041, with Duty station Dhaka, Bangladesh, which I gladly accepted.

The Terms of Reference included:

*“The International Training Consultant in Food Security Analysis, working under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative and the direct supervision of the CTA, will:*

- *Finalize the attached syllabus of the course and design the detailed course program, exercises and course material handout;*
- *Conduct a three-week course (15 training days) for one group of trainees. The course will be tailored to the technical and methodological needs of the professionals from the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit of the Government of Bangladesh and related offices that will attend;*
- *Design and administer an individual test for assessing trainees’ performance and conduct a participatory evaluation of the course achievements;*
- *Based on the tests, prepare a ranked list of participants and their scores;*
- *Provide advice to the Technical Assistance Team in designing and delivering on-the-job training;*
- *Produce a report on training, including an evaluation of the training activities for the technical clearance by the Lead Technical Division of the project, ESA.*

This report fulfills the last of the above requirements.

Before detailing the activity conducted and the achieved result, I would like to express my deeply felt gratitude to all people involved in the Project with which I have had the opportunity to interact during my three weeks in Dhaka. Ms Bui Thi Lan, FAO Representative in Bangladesh, Mr. Ciro Fiorillo, CTA, and all personnel at the FAO office in Dhaka with whom I have interacted. A special mention is due to Mr. Qwasar Sarker, who provided invaluable technical and organizational assistance during the course delivery.

To all this people goes my deeply felt gratitude.

Also, I would like to thank each and all of the trainees. I feel blessed of having encountered such a group of motivated professionals, who welcomed me with deep respect and high expectations, which motivated me to try and give my best, which was nevertheless always matched and often surpassed by their own seriousness and commitment to the difficult endeavor. It is their attention, passion and participation to the course which needs to be deemed responsible for the good quality of delivered courses, through which I have learned at least as much as I have taught.

A special thanks goes to Mr. Loreto Novelli, who was on duty as Administrative Consultant in Dhaka during part of the three weeks I was there, and whose wise advices - based on his long experience as an FAO officer and then as a Consultant working abroad - helped me getting through the many small difficulties that a young professional encounters when visiting a Country for the first time. Thanks Loreto.

## **2. Activities performed**

The first week of activities was devoted to finalization of the syllabus to be delivered. It had been preceded by active exchanges of opinions via e-mail with other professionals involved in the same training activity (Mr. Alessandro Corsi, Mr. Mohan Rao and Mr. Donato Romano) in order to coordinate our efforts in trying to achieve a consistent training programme.

### **2.1 Finalization of the syllabus**

As per the terms of references, I spent six days working at home to collect relevant materials and to finalize the syllabus of the course to be delivered.

The main issue I had to tackle and solve was that of selecting the set of topics that ought to be part of a training in policy evaluation methods based on economic principles, training that might prove both useful and adequate to the prospective trainees' needs.

By the time my course began, the trainees had been exposed to a first course on economic methods and to a second one on food security concepts and issue. Their background could thus be expected to be reasonably strong to tackle a quite advanced course on policy evaluation. Given my past experience in teaching economic policy analysis, however, I knew that it would have been surprising to find that the trainees had had the time to digest the subtleties of economic methods that underline policy analysis and therefore decided to devote the first part of the training course to a brief review of such methods, by putting an emphasis on the critical discussion of the methods of so-called welfare economics (See section 1.2 in the notes included here as Annex 2b).

After such a needed introduction, the rest of the course had to be devoted to the analysis of the main policies which might have an impact on food security, conveniently classified in Macroeconomic, Agricultural, and International Trade Policies, the analysis of which would constitute the core of the training course.

The final syllabus proposed for the course is included here as Annex 1, and it roughly correspond to the table of contents of the set of notes (Annex 2b).

## 2.2 Delivery of the course

The course was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Originally five meetings a week, for a total of 15 meetings, were scheduled. Each meeting would start at 9.30am and ended at 1.30pm, for a total of 3 and a half hours of lecturing/discussion and two short tea-breaks of fifteen minutes each, a schedule that proved to be very effective and adequate to the requirements of the course.

The first lecture was held on Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, and the course ended on Thursday, July 6<sup>th</sup> 2006.

During the three week period covered by the mission, there have been cases in which delivery of the course was made somehow difficult because of social unrests in the city and difficulties for International consultants to move freely, but only in one occasion, on Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, the class had to be cancelled, from which no serious consequence on the regular conduction of the training activity has derived anyhow .

The projected syllabus was followed almost entirely, although not all of the material on *International Trade Policy* could be presented, due to time limitations. Also, some specific topics (namely, *Intellectual Property Rights* and *Storage Policies*), originally not included in the detailed syllabus, received a deeper treatment due to the special interest shown by the trainees.

Lecturing has always been supported by the projection of slides and the intense use of the white-board, with trainees receiving a printed copy of the slides and a set of class-notes before each class, on which they would take their notes.

A copy of the projected slides is included here as Annex 2a and a slightly revised version of the comprehensive set of class notes distributed is included as Annex 2b.

During the course, also two presentations have been given by the participants on Bangladesh Agricultural Policy and on the National Food Policy, which have given me the opportunity to stimulate the discussion among the participants and to clarify some of the theoretical points presented in the course while referring to relevant examples.

The last section of the meeting on July 5<sup>th</sup> was devoted to the taking of a test by the trainees, whose text is included here as Annex 3.

Last day, on July 6<sup>th</sup>, was devoted to the discussion of the test results and of the evaluation questionnaire, and it proved also an occasion to summarize the main points presented and the main results achieved in the training activity.

## 2.3 Evaluation of the training activity

There have been two opportunities to evaluate the training activity: the results of the final test taken by the trainees, and the content of the evaluation questionnaire that they filled in.

### 2.3.1 Final test

The test proposed was intended to verify the level of understanding of the most important points raised during the course. The test takers had one hour to respond to a set of multiple-choice questions on the topics covered in the classes. Each question was coupled with three possible answers from which the trainees had to pick the correct one. One point was awarded for each identified correct answer.

The test (see Annex 3) included 17 questions, however, the wording of one of the questions proved to be troublesome to all of the respondents, and therefore I decided not to consider that question in the final grading. Up to a total of 16 valid questions, then, the number of correct answer was on average 9.35, with a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15, as reported in the Table below.

**Table – Test scores**

Trainee	Score
Naser Farid	15
Alauddin Fokir	13
Syed Amdadul Huq	12
Nafisa Anjum	12
Salima Sultana	12
Satya Ranjan Mondal	10
M. Rafiquzzaman	9
Hajiqul Islam	9
Harum or Rashid	9
Nurul Quadir	8
Humajun Kabir	8
Sreenibash Debnath	8
Rashidul Hassan	7
Nirmol Kumar Halder	7
M.Muslehuddin	7
Abdul Khaleque	7
Ruhul Amin	6
Mizanul Haq	6
Siddiqur Rahman	5
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>9.35</b>

Considering the content of the questions, a rate of response of 8 or more correct answers, as achieved by 12 out of the 19 trainees who took the test, is to be considered more than satisfactory, while scores of 12 or more, as achieved by 5 test takers, must be deemed excellent.

In my evaluation of the achievement of the trainees, I have also considered the participation to the class discussions, which has been particularly active and intelligent, showing interest for the material presented and ability to identify the relevant issues. The combined evaluation of test scores and class participation led me to form the following ranking of the participating trainees.

Table 2. Final ranking

Overall Ranking	Name	Total score	Exam_score	Course participation
1	Naser Farid	21	15	5
2	Syed Amdadul Huq	18	12	5
3	Nafisa Anjum	16	12	3
4	Alauddin Fokir	15	13	1
5	Salima Sultana	14	12	1
6	Nurul Quadir	13	8	4
6	M. Rafiquzzaman	13	9	3
8	Mizanul Haq	12	6	5
8	Rashidul Hassan	12	7	4
8	Satya Ranjan Mondal	12	10	1
11	Nirmol Kumar Halder	11	7	3
11	Hajiqul Islam	11	9	1
11	Harum or Rashid	11	9	1
14	Humajun Kabir	10	8	1
14	Sreenibash Debnath	10	8	1
16	M. Muslehuddin	9	7	1
16	Ruhul Amin	9	6	2
16	Abdul Khaleque	9	7	1
19	Siddiqur Rahman	7	5	1

### 2.3.2 Evaluation questionnaire

In the attempt to collect the trainees opinion on the value and merits of the course, an evaluation questionnaire was distributed to the trainees on July 5<sup>th</sup>, and compiled by them before taking the final test.

The questionnaire, assembled according to the directions set forth by the project's CTA, included 20 statements on which the respondents had to express an opinion on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. (See Annex 5)

The results of the evaluation questionnaire that the trainees have compiled is also indicative of a positive reception of the course. (See Annex 6)

No aspect of the course scrutinized by the questions included in the questionnaire received a negative evaluation, and the average score of each aspect has been always in the range from positive to very positive. In particular, question no. 9, asking "In your opinion, will the training activity provide useful conceptual background for your job",

received an average score of 4.22 out of 5, with 50% of the respondents giving the maximum score.

Considering both the result of the test taken by the trainees and of the evaluation they completed, it is my strong opinion that the training activity has fully achieved its intended objectives of providing the trainees with the needed background formation to be involved in analysis of the relevant economic policies with consequences on food security in Bangladesh.

### **3. Conclusions and recommendations**

The general conclusion that I can draw from the activities performed and the results obtained is that the training activity appears, so far, to have been designed and conducted in a very effective way. No special recommendations are called for at this stage, other than to keep up with the same level of efficient organization, which is needed to match the high expectations put on the training activity, fully justified by the quality and motivation of the selected participants.

Rome, Italy, August 2006

## **Annexes**

1. Syllabus
2. Course Materials
  - a. Slides
  - b. Notes
3. Test
4. Test scores and overall ranking
5. Questionnaire
6. Results of the questionnaire