

IMPACT SHEET: Tomato and Mango Value Chain

Improving consumer awareness and access to certified safe tomato and mango products in Bangladesh



This project supports agricultural, handling and manufacturing good practices as an integrated approach towards food safety.



CHALLENGE

Food safety in the Bangladeshi fruit and vegetable sector is an area of increasing concern. Even though the country has a great potential of becoming a major producer and exporter of fresh vegetables, the ineffective supply chain and lack of access to markets is a major concern for farmers to get economic gains from fresh vegetable produces. In addition, consumers have lost confidence in locally produced food, as the country cannot maintain the required safety standards. The current intense political and consumer pressure on the horticultural industry has urged the sector to adhere to food safety levels. With the legal framework for food safety in place and a strong market demand for sustainable and safe produce, there is now a conducive environment for change.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The EU SWITCH-Asia funded project Tomato and Mango Value Chain was implemented by SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), and the Centre of Excellence Agro Food Skills (CEAFS) from January 2016 to December 2019 in Natore and Rajshahi districts, including Dhaka district's 12 million consumers.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the Tomato and Mango Value Chain project was to certify safe at least 50% of the domestically processed tomato and mango products marketed and consumed in Bangladesh.

The specific objectives sought to:

- Build greater consumer confidence in domestically produced processed horticultural products;
- Reduce food safety incidences in the domestically processed horticultural products;
- Promote inclusive business development in the fruit and vegetable processing industry.

TARGET GROUPS

- 5,000 mango farmers and small holding growers.
- 5,000 tomato farmers and small holding growers.
- Agro-food processing companies (PRAN, Kishwan and Sajeeb)
- 12 Million+ Consumers

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Capacity building of beneficiaries and stakeholders

Capacities of target groups have been strengthened through Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes, Farmer Group Trainings, Meetings, Workshops and Seminars. Topics covered include:

- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) with beneficiary farmers (10,018);
- Good Handling Practices (GHP) with Supply Chain Actors;
- Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) with Agro-processors (PRAN, Kishwan and Sajeeb);
- Inclusive Business Development through market linkages among farmers, hub-leaders/suppliers and Agro-processors.

Collaboration and engagement for creating an enabling environment for food safety

Food Safety Certification HACCP was obtained for the farmer groups (10) and Agro-processors (3) through the International Audit Firm Bureau Veritas, namely, Global BRC and HACCP. Food Safety Testing was conducted through the National Food Safety Laboratory (NFSL) in Bangladesh and SGS in India in 2017 and 2018. A Consumer Awareness Campaign was carried out for increasing consumer confidence during January and December 2019. A covenant for creating an enabling environment for food safety in Bangladesh was signed by concerned public-private entities between April and November 2019, including by the Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA), the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), the Bangladesh Agro-Processors' Association (BAPA), the Centre of Excellence Agro Food Skills Foundation (CEAFS) and the Agro-processors (PRAN, Kishwan, Sajeeb and Ahmed).

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

At project completion our objectives were attained. Capacity building of beneficiary farmers, supply chain actors and agro-processors were carried out successfully through ToT, Trainings, Workshops and Seminars:

- 10,018 beneficiary farmers strengthened their capacities on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP);
- Supply chain actors strengthened their capacities on Good Handling Practices (GHP);
- Agro-processors (PRAN, Kishwan and Sajeeb) strengthened their capacities on Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP);

- Inclusive business was developed through market linkage among farmers, hub-leaders/suppliers and Agro-processors.
- Food Safety Certification (13) HACCP was obtained through the International Audit Firm Bureau Veritas.
- Food Safety Testing was conducted through the National Food Safety Laboratory (NFSL) in Bangladesh and SGS in India in 2017 and 2018.
- A Consumer Awareness Campaign was carried out for increasing consumer confidence.
- A covenant for creating an enabling environment for food safety in Bangladesh was signed in 2019 by concerned public-private entities.

LESSONS LEARNED

GAP implementation is challenging due to lack of awareness and low literacy level of farmers; however, more educated farmers and their family members are helping illiterate farmers to keep records and traceability systems for GAP implementation. The benefits gained from GAP by the beneficiary farmers have led non beneficiary farmers to start GAP in their own production process.

Field level activities such as trainings, demonstrations, field trips, learning exchanges, and visits, and proper supervision and follow-up of the project activities can contribute significantly to safe food production through GAP application at farmer's level. But without close supervision and follow-up by field staff, it is ambitious to ensure safe food production.

Value Chain Actors are not proactive and dedicated to identify and remove the causes of unsafety aspects of products. Inputs suppliers are too much inclined to maximization of their profits. As a result, they are indiscriminately recommending pesticides to farmers which ultimately hinder food safety. Therefore, it is necessary to increase shared responsibilities among supply chain actors (input suppliers-farmers-hub leaders-traders-agro processors).

Upper class consumers are aware of food safety and they are willing to pay higher prices for safe processed products. On the other hand, low and middle income consumers prefer to pay lower prices and are not concerned much about food safety (they represent 85% of consumers). Therefore, we recognized the importance of raising their awareness and knowledge about food safety through consumer awareness campaigns, informational materials, a video documentary and seminars.

Beneficiary and stakeholders' capacities have been strengthened throughout the project's duration. Knowledge sharing must continuously take place.

There is a lack of planning and coordination among respective government agencies on food safety issues. Lack of enforcement and monitoring capacity of concerned government agencies due to inadequate technical and supervisory human resources are other bottlenecks for the implementation of food safety standards in Bangladesh.





Mahbub Ullah
Project Coordinator, SNV



The results attained from this project were unique in the context of Bangladesh. For the first time, beneficiary farmer groups attained food safety certification HACCP and a Covenant on Food Safety was signed by public-private entities in the country.



Long-term project sustainability

The sustainability of the action was ensured through the implemented capacity building approach which enabled beneficiaries and project partners to continue their activities without external support after project's completion. Furthermore, favourable market-economic conditions have also been created. The covenant signed by public-private entities was also a key milestone for creating an enabling environment for food safety in Bangladesh.

Project contributions to Climate Change Mitigation and SDGs



By engaging with issues such as personal safety, seasonal challenges, hygiene and decent work conditions, disseminating climate information on safe cultivation and harvesting, providing resistance varieties seeds, promoting judicious use of pesticides, properly using sex-pheromone traps and ripening materials, the project directly contributed to the achievement of [SDG12: Responsible Consumption and Production](#), as well as [SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being](#), [SDG 5: Gender Equality](#), [SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth](#) and [SDG 10: Reduced Inequality](#). Personal protection equipment (PPE) was also provided to Spray Service Providers (SSPs), 50 sets and safety materials were provided to Supply Chain Actors, as well as 341 sets of aprons, caps, masks, hand gloves etc. for protection against food contamination. SNV created a linkage among farmers' leaders (334), spray service providers (50), input suppliers (25), hub-leaders (18) and agro-processing companies (3-PRAN, Kishwan and Sajeeb) to promote inclusive business development and capacity building to produce safe and quality fresh produce in order to get safe processed products of tomato and mango.

Impacts at a Glance

Economic Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practices (GAP, GHP and GMP) increased quality, quantity and safety of fresh produces and processed products of tomato and mango. Reduction in wastage (up to 35%) increased profitability of farmers and supply chain actors. • Farmer groups obtained food safety certification HACCP. In order to attain certification, farmers and supply chain actors practiced GAPs, GHP, Spray Service, market linkage and engaged women in the supply chain. The project carried out the activities effectively and succeeded to attain project objectives, including: greater consumer confidence, food safety certification, inclusive business development.
Environmental Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced use of fertiliser and pesticides.
Social Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project worked with Agro-processors in Natore and Rajshahi. Emphasis was placed on personal safety, seasonal issues, hygiene and decent work, climate information on safe cultivation and harvesting providing resistance varieties seeds, judicious use of pesticide, use of sex-pheromone trap and proper use of ripening materials. • The project provided Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) to Spray Service Providers (SSPs); 50 sets of safety materials to Supply Chain Actors: 341 sets apron, cap, mask, hand gloves etc. for protection against food contamination. • SNV created a linkage among farmers' leaders (334), spray service providers (50), input suppliers (25), hub-leaders (18) and agro-processing companies (3-PRAN, Kishwan and Sajeeb) as to the good practices, inclusive business development and capacity building to produce safe and quality fresh produce in order to get safe processed products of tomato and mango. • A gender gap assessment and capacity building workshop was organised in 2018 and carried out by the Gender and Water Alliance-Bangladesh (GWA-B). A Gender Impact Study was also carried out in November-December 2019 and found that women farmers participation has increased from 0% to 12%. • 373 tomato and mango farmers involved in the project are less than 30 years old.
Target Group Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted ToTs on GAP, GHP and GMP training, Workshops, Seminars; Training for farmers groups on GAP. • Covenant with agro-processors and their Association BAPA. • 2 consumer awareness campaigns with Rabbit, TV Talk show @ RTV.
Policy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covenant for non-binding commitment towards food safety aspect has been signed between April and November 2019 with concerned public-private entities such as BFSA, CAB, BAPA, Agro-processors (PRAN, Kishwan, Sajeeb and Ahmed). • Food safety certification HACCP has been attained through International Audit Farms Bureau Veritas.



FUNDING

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(EU Contribution: 90%)



DURATION

January 2016 - December 2019



PARTNERS



SNV Netherlands
Development Organisation



Consumers Association of
Bangladesh (CAB)



Centre of Excellence Agro
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