



Interview with farming household in Rajshahi, Bangladesh

### Field work during the pandemic

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the globe, fieldwork in all 5 research sites of the Farmer Behaviour Insights Project (FBIP) is being undertaken in accordance with health and safety protocols. In **Rajshahi, Bangladesh** the team from Rajshahi University (RU) completed the behavioural insights baseline survey among 750



Demonstration of health protocols during the pandemic

farming households. The RU team conducted a field experiment design workshop to test behavioural economics theories in improving the uptake of adoption of Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification (CASI) technologies. The workshop was attended by key farmers, local extension officers from Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Upazilla agriculture officers, and academics from RU.

In **Rangpur, Bangladesh** the pandemic led to some changes to the delivery mode of field work and data collection practices, with the RDRS Bangladesh team shifting to an online format. They adopted the alternative agricultural extension approach of RDRS Bangladesh. When restrictions were eased, they were able to conduct face-to-face interviews with farming households following strict health and safety protocols.

In **West Bengal, India** the Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya (UBKV) team conducted the survey with farming households in Coochbehar and Malda following local guidelines on COVID-19 protocols. The UBKV team is currently conducting a behavioural insights experiment involving machine service providers and farmers.

In **Bihar, India** the Bihar Agricultural University (BAU) team is currently conducting the survey involving farming households. Due to COVID-19 challenges in Bihar, the survey was delayed but is now progressing following strict protocols.

In **Sunsari, Nepal** the Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) team has already interviewed 255 survey respondents. They are scheduled to implement a behavioural insights experiment early in 2021.



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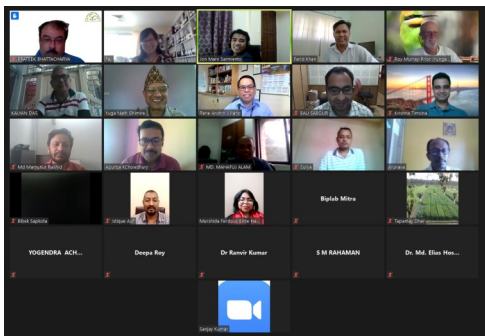




# Project Capacity Building Activities

## Field Experiment Workshops

The internationally spread FBIP Team shifted to online workshops and training due to COVID-19 travel and health restrictions and conducted two team workshops via Zoom during June and October 2020. The goals of the workshops were to design the various interventions that the research partners plan to implement in the field and to discuss and schedule the preparatory work, including training, survey enumerators, logistical arrangements and other activities.



Field experiment workshop via Zoom

These workshops were an important component of the project to ensure smooth project implementation when conducting the field ex-

periments. In total, 86 participants from the research partner organisations attended the two workshops, composed of 16% females and 84% males.

## UNE ACIAR Socioeconomics Moodle

The UNE ACIAR Socioeconomics Moodle training spearheaded by Dr Rene Villano has been ongoing since June 2019. This online training course, which is a part of the capacity building activities for the researchers on the ground, has proved popular during the COVID restrictions. We received 24 enrolments from our research partners across the participating countries.

## AgMOOCS

The Bihar Agricultural University (BAU) team has been conducting an online training course on Conservation Agriculture Sustainable Intensification (CASI). Dr Ram Datt, together with Dr Mahesh K. Gathala and Dr. Sanjay Kumar, delivered the training in cooperation with the Sustainable and Resilient Farming Systems Intensification (SRFSI) project and AgMOOCS. It is a self-paced course available at particular times each

year. To date, it has been attended by 7414 participants across 50 countries.

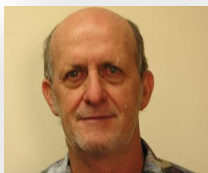
## Farmer leader in focus

In a small village in Boirati, Kaliganj Upazila, Lalmonarhat, Bangladesh, a 60-year-old farmer named Abdul Malek has inspired 65 other farmers to adopt CASI technologies with an estimated adoption covering 10 hectares in total. Mr Malek was introduced to the SRFSI project in 2018 and has been using the technology successfully. When implementing CASI, he experienced lower production cost, less water irrigation, and more time saved. He is now a farmer leader in the community.



Farmer leader Abdul Malek in Bangladesh

## Meet the Project Team



Dr Roy Murray-Prior

Behavioural Economist & Agricultural Extensionist

Dr Roy Murray-Prior was raised on a sugar farm in the wet tropics of Australia. His initial degree in Rural Science led to a job as an Extension Officer. He also completed qualifications in Agricultural Extension and Agricultural Economics. His PhD critiqued economic theories in decision making and used hierarchical decision modelling and personal construct theory to study farmer decisions. He has undertaken research, development and extension projects in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Laos, Philippines, Indonesia, East Timor, Nigeria, Mozambique, South Africa, PNG, and countries of the South Pacific.



Dr Prateek Madhab Bhattacharya

Plant Pathologist & Conservation Agriculture Specialist

Dr Prateek Madhab Bhattacharya is a Professor in Plant Pathology of Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya (UBKV). He is a Conservation Agriculture specialist. Prof. Bhattacharya has more than 18 years of experience and plays one of the key roles in the multiplication of 'service providing models' in the northern parts of West Bengal, India. In this project, he is primarily responsible for the design and conduct of field experiments using randomized control trials with the help of farmers leaders and service providers.

Dr Bijoy Krishna Banik is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi, Bangladesh. He obtained his PhD from the University of New England, Armidale, Australia and his MA from the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), the Hague, the Netherlands. He has been involved in a variety of research over the last two decades. He is working on this project as a Sociologist and plays a key role in understanding the adoption behaviour of farmers.



Dr Bijoy Krishna Banik

Sociologist

Ms Hema Kumari Poudel is a Technical Officer at Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC), an apex body for agricultural research and development in Nepal. She has been involved in the adoption and impact-related research activities in Nepal. In this project she works to ensure gender inclusion during the field experiments and surveys, and to address the gender issues in the field. Ms Poudel is a trained Agricultural Economist.



Ms Hema Kumari Poudel

Gender Specialist & Agricultural Economist