



# Environmental Degradation in Rural Bangladesh

Its Nature and Extent

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## Preface

The present study is an attempt to analyze various phenomena affecting environment in rural Bangladesh. With this view in mind, the study tried to find out the nature and causes of environmental degradation. The perception of the people towards controlling environmental pollution was also given due importance. To reach the goal, the author went into the details in the treatment of the problem. The report has been divided into three chapters highlighting mostly the nature, causes and solutions of the problems of environmental degradation found in the rural areas.

The study was conducted during April-June 2001 in four villages of Bogra, Kushtia and Jhenaidah districts- two villages from Bogra and one each from Kushtia and Jhenaidah. A total of 60 villagers were brought under the study including both landless and landed people. Apart from this, six brick-field owners and twelve boiler owners along with a total of 72 labourers were interviewed. In addition, local UP chairmen and members and concerned government officials were asked to provide information. Four focus-group discussions were held in the study villages. Thus, data were collected from a variety of respondents through a set of structured questionnaire. Some books and reports were also consulted.

Findings show that ashes and smoke emitted from brick-field and boilers, random use of polythene bags, imbalanced dosing of fertilizer and pesticides used in crop land, poor defecation and drainage system and disposal of domestic garbage and wastes were found crucial factors of environmental degradation in the rural areas. These factors brought about adverse effects on soil fertility, crop production and animal health including human and fisheries.

All these created public sufferings and bothering in their livelihood. Though the rural dwellers seemed to be more vulnerable to the bad consequences of pollution, these misdeeds were done by themselves either knowing or without knowing its bad impacts on their daily life. The legal actions towards controlling the pollution were found insufficient. Of course, the environmental pollution could not be fully razed out in a day or a year, but it could be minimized through undertaking training programme on pest and fertilizer management for the farmers, brick-field and boiler owners on operational and management aspects of their enterprises and launching massive awareness building programmes for the general masses. Application of Environmental Protection Law should be given due importance.

The author expresses his deep sense of gratitude to Mr. Md. Abdur Rahim, Director General of the Academy for providing administrative support to the completion of the study. He is grateful to Mr. A T M Altaf Husain, Additional Director (Training) for taking the troubles of reviewing and editing the report. He also acknowledges the contribution of Dr. Habibur Rahman, Joint Director who has kindly extended his cooperation in enriching the quality of the report.

The author expresses his sincere thanks to Mr. Abdur Razzaque, Research Supervisor and Mr. Hemayet Hossain, Research Investigator for taking the trouble of data collection. Finally, the services of Mr. Md. Abdul Bakey and Ms. Sabina Yesmin, Typist of RDA and CVDP are thankfully acknowledged.

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