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SUCCESS STORY

APPARENTLY A HIGH-PRICED INVESTMENT IN AN AGRICULTURAL MACHINE TURNS OUT TO BE MOST ECONOMICAL.



Photo: Ranak/CSISA-MI

“The demand of reaper service will increase in the dry season; and if weather conditions remain favorable, crops of 20.23 hectares of land can be harvested by the machine.”

Mohammad Jahangir Jowarder, 55, reaper machine operator of Local Service Provider Rafiqul Islam

FIRST PERSON REAPING SUCCESS OF A ‘COSTLY’ DEAL



Photo: Sharrin/CSISA-MI

Rafiqul, a 53-year old veteran Agricultural Service Provider in Kalukhali, Rajbari, with his wife Shirin on his right and childhood friend Jahangir on his left

As an experienced agricultural service provider, Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, 53, of Kalukhali Upazila, Rajbari was keen to minimize labor expenses in order to accelerate his business. Months back, he saw a cropping device in a neighboring village which led him to purchase a similar type of machine. Imported and marketed by ACI, the reaper machine allows rapid harvest and subsequent replanting of the next crop within the recommended planting window. The machine is suitable for reaping wheat and Amon and Aush paddy.

In Kalukhali, farmers mostly cultivate paddy, which requires engaging a large labor force in order to harvest

the crop. Previously Rafiqul would hire 10 laborers for around two weeks to harvest 3.57 hectares of land. It cost him around BDT 102,000 (US\$ 1,303). "In the beginning, my family members were against the investment of BDT 185,000 (US\$ 2363) for purchasing this machine" said Rafiqul. "They told me this will be a 'costly deal'" he added.

However, the Reaper allowed him to harvest his 3.57 hectares of land in less than two weeks. He added, "the cost for hiring a machine operator and purchasing fuel was BDT 457 (US\$ 5.84) per day that allowed me to save around BDT 95,602 (US\$ 1234) from cropping only. In addition to this, providing services for around two more hectares of land in one more week brought me BDT 5,928 (US\$ 75.72) from the service charge of BDT 1,200 (US\$ 15.33) per 0.4 hectares of land to harvest with the Reaper."

The benefits extend beyond the farm however, making home life more comfortable. "Earlier, during the harvest season I could not sleep more than three hours a night as I had to prepare at least four meals for ten laborers as well as dry, thresh, pack and store around 80kgs of paddy every day. But this time I was able to rest in the evenings which is the first time in last 30 years!" laughed Rafiqul's wife Shirin Sultana, 42, who originally opposed the decision to invest in the machine.

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Photo: Ranak/CSISA-MI

Funded by USAID, the Cereal Systems Initiative in South Asia – Mechanization and Irrigation (CSISA-MI) Project – part of President Obama's Feed the Future (FtF) Initiative – is facilitating the market promotion of the machine in collaboration with ACI.

