

Needs Assessment Study on Strengthening People's Actions for Food and Livelihood Security at Pirgachha, Rangpur, Bangladesh

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Abstract

Original Research Article

The aim of this study was to see the outcomes of the needs assessment of a poverty alleviation programme named STRENGTHENING PEOPLE'S ACTIONS FOR FOOD AND LIVELIHOOD SECURITY (SAFOLLO) at Pirgachha, Rangpur, Bangladesh. The study facilitates to understand community's demands and create scope to take demand-driven activities for socio-economic advancement of target groups. The results of the study showed that the needs-based services were more appropriate to lift communities out of poverty and suffering. Practical data & information of the study were collected from 218 respondents of six villages at two unions under Pirgachha upazilla of Rangpur district, Bangladesh by four different study instruments developed for conducting Individual's interviews, KII, FGD & Self Assessment. This paper concludes that the results can assist the practitioners, policy makers, GO and NGO workers towards to invent an effective needs assessment tool for poverty alleviation programmes.

Keywords: Strengthening People's, SAFOLLO, policy makers, poverty alleviation programmes.

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INTRODUCTION

Need assessment is a critical precondition of designing any project. The need assessment process identifies top priorities of needs of targeted people in a particular community.

Islamic Relief, Bangladesh (IRB) believes on such collective action in order to enhance livelihood options and opportunities of vulnerable people.

There was consensus from field staffs and fundraisers that we needed to move away from the pressures of being donor and sector-led to having the means to tackling poverty through programmes which integrated various sectors within an overall opportunity-

led analysis of what is really needed to lift communities out of poverty and suffering. Regarding above statement IRB team has got the opportunity to conduct need assessment study on *Strengthening Peoples' Actions for Food and Livelihood Security* (SAFOLLO) project for developing Project plan. So, a team studied on Koikuri and Kandi Union under Pirgachha Upazila (sub-district) of Rangpur district, Bangladesh to identify major needs of vulnerable community of the area.

Considering demographic situation of the area, total population of Rangpur district is- 2,534,365 (male are 50.92% and female 49.08%) where male headed 90% and female headed- 7% families. Moreover the density of the population is 109.1/km² (282.5/sq mi).



Source: <http://bangladeshtalks.com/2011/04/rangpur-district-information/>

Pirgachha Upazila (RANGPUR district) with an area of 265.32 sq km, is bounded by KAUNIA and RAJARHAT upazilas on the north, SUNDARGANJ upazila on the south, ULIPUR and Sundarganj upazilas on the east, RANGPUR SADAR and MITHAPUKUR upazilas on the west. Main rivers are Tista and Ghagat; Kholar Dore, Paglarkura, Tachhibhanga and Hardanga Beels and Devi Chowdhurani Dighi are notable.

Pirgachha (Town) consists of 5 mouzas. It has an area of 14.29 sq km. The town has a population of 19864; male 51.38%, female 48.62%. The density of population is 1390 per sq km. Literacy rate among the town people is 28.8%.

S.I	Sector(s)	Pirgachha Upazila, Rangpur District
1	Administration	Pirgachha thana was established in 1873 and was turned into an upazila in 1983. The upazila consists of 9 union parishads, 170 mouzas and 189 villages.
2	Population	Population 256573; male 50.59%, female 49.41%; Muslim 95.67%, Hindu 3.79%, Christian 0.24% and others 0.30%.
3	Literacy rate	Literacy and educational institutions Average literacy 21.5%; male 28.8% and female 14%.
4	Educational institutions	College 3, high school 23, junior high school 5, madrasa 33, primary school 85.
5	Main occupations	Agriculture 45.22%, agricultural labourer 30.82%, wage labourer 2.5%, commerce 7.44%, service 2.81% and others 11.21%.
6	Land use Pattern	Total cultivable land 11157 hectares; fallow land 1240 hectares; single crop 15%, double crop 70% and treble crop land 15%; land under irrigation 90%.
7	Land control Among the peasants	38% are landless, 32% small, 24% intermediate and 6% rich; cultivable land per head 0.18 hectare.
8	Value of land	First grade is Tk 7500 per 0.01 hectare.
9	Main crops	Paddy, jute, wheat, potato, onion, garlic, ground nut, mustard seed, chilli, brinjal, <i>patal</i> , sugarcane, betel leaf.
10	Main fruit	Mango, jackfruit, black berry, papaya, litchi, pineapple, betel nut and banana.
11	Communication facilities	pucca 73 km, semi pucca 27; railway 17.5 km.
12	Manufactories	Flour mill 9, printing press 3, rice mill 57, <i>chira</i> mill 5, ice cream factory 3, biscuit factory 15 and welding 17.
13	Cottage industries	Bamboo work 183, weaving 13, goldsmith 41, blacksmith 83, potteries 203, tailoring 305.
14	Health centers	Upazila health complex 1, family planning centre 9, satellite clinic 4.
15	Important NGOs	BRAC, ASA, THENGAMARA MAHILA SABUJ SANGHA, RDRS, Seba.

Source: http://www.bpedia.org/P_0177.php

Literature Review on Poverty in regional context

There are many research studies on 'Monga' (lean seasons) issues of northern Bangladesh over the years where few of other issues i.e. Social rights, Gender, Empowerment, IGA etc.

One study findings says about this Monga period. However, Monga is a local Bangla word referring to a perennial period of food insecurity. Monga sustains and is renewed every year though its severity and effect to peoples varies year to year. The concept 'monga' is also sometimes synonymously used with 'aakal' in some areas, but the term monga is commonly used only in the northern region, especially in the greater Rangpur district. This situation lasts from September through November or in Bangla months Aswin and Kartic just between the time period of planting and harvesting the main crop Aman rice.

Extreme poor households in Northwest Bangladesh traditionally include mainly seasonal agricultural labour-dependent households, female-headed households, and elderly people with no family support, child labour dependent households and disabled people. The primary source of income for these households is agricultural operations. During the lean agricultural season their access to employment and income earning greatly reduced. At that time other non-farm activities also become almost absent or severely limited.

So, the intensity of monga varies in year to year and also family to family. Last 20-30 years ago most of the rural people either extreme poor, poor or middle class were affected by monga or seasonal food insecurity, but currently many people have been diversifying their household income opportunity through adopting various livelihood options. But still a considerable number of people especially extreme poor household who were not able to diversify their income opportunities are suffering severe seasonal food insecurity due lack of employment opportunity. The situation becomes even more pronounced if the household earner is female, ill or disable. Previously peoples have very limited coping strategies to face seasonal food insecurity that's why hunger situation was visible among rural community, but now most of the affected people migrate to city or other districts results food insecurity of the affected peoples are as visual among rural community. Monga is still occurring but its visual intensity is reduced due to the development of various coping mechanism among the affected peoples.

Especially in livelihood sector, Cattle-rearing is very common for rural people. Share cattle-rearing is also practiced but a serious problem is the scarcity of cattle feed. Formerly huge amounts of unused land were available all around the villages and peoples use this for

feeding grass of their cattle, which has now been mostly captured by local elites and powerful groups. Unused land has also been covered by roads, tree plantations and other agriculture. Crop trees are the main source of cattle feed which are not own by extreme poor. As a result cattle-rearing become expensive, thus limiting its potential as a livelihood option for the extreme poor people.

Besides the hope there have some natural hazard in north region. The peoples of northwest experience very frequent multiple natural hazards and risk. The most common disasters are river erosion, floods, drought, and excessive rainfall causing flash floods, hail stones, severe cold spell, and dense fog. The intensity of monga is often increased due to severity of disaster as employment opportunities greatly fall. During flood situation all sort of economic activities become stopped and movement become limiting. The extreme poor mostly rely on daily labour; their vulnerability increases since they don't have any stock of food or savings. Further, most of the extreme poor people housing condition become very poor qualities and situated in vulnerable or risky places, lacking the capital to raise their homestead. Many of them are living in embankment or river adjacent arena and supposed to erosion. Flash floods have destroyed and washed away their houses. During severe cold spell they don't go for work due to not have warm cloth and dense fog limiting work hour. So these groups of people face comparatively more challenges which in turn further aggravate their food insecurity. These disasters also bring multiple other consequences such as health hazards, severely affecting the health situation of children and aged peoples and female headed households.

Thus the victims of monga deserve extensive, sustainable and coordinated effort from government and development partners to protect themselves from seasonal food insecurity. Unfortunately, socioeconomic and political exclusion among monga victims is increasing due to failures in traditional targeting system by government and NGOs. Short term and inadequate support has not brought any meaningful, secured and sustainable change for the real victims.

On the other hand, another study said about women and minority group. Women mobility is significantly lower than the men at northern region. Moreover, the agriculture labor wage of female is not equal to male wage.

"The immediate impact of lean period is on employment, then on household incomes, then on food security, and finally on nutrition levels," Rakhal Chandra Kangshabanik, former deputy director of the Ministry of Agriculture, told IRIN.



Photo: Shamsuddin Ahmed/IRIN

People in northern District brought out their rice bowls demanding immediate food relief

Source: Regional Context Study: Monga Region, Sharif Ahmed, Feb 2010

Women and female-headed households fare the worst, he said, partly because there is already a greater likelihood of them being malnourished and partly because of discrimination.

“When there is an oversupply of day-labour, employers tend to hire men rather than women,” Kangshabanik said.

The impact on local indigenous minorities is also severe. “Relief materials and other safety net assistance are distributed first among those who have the power. We receive only the trickles,” said Dwijen Sharma, president of PanchbibiUpajilaAdibashi (indigenous people) Multipurpose Development Organisation (PUAMDO), an indigenous people’s rights organisation in Joyporhat District.

Flood-Generated Famine

Each year, tens of thousands of people from hundreds of villages along the banks of the Teesta, Dudhkumar, Dhorla and Brahmaputra rivers in Bangladesh’s northern region face *monga*. Natural disasters such as flooding, riverbank erosion and drought exacerbate this annual occurrence, leaving scores vulnerable to hunger and disease, while at the same time fuelling poverty levels.

Because of recent monsoon flooding, thousands of poor families lost their incomes and livelihoods, and the prolonged effect has reduced food security in the area.

Many farmers place all their financial assets into securing tools, seeds and fertiliser for the rice harvest, only to lose it all in the floods, becoming paupers overnight.

In case of an “aman” crop (60 percent of Bangladesh’s rice yield) failure due to floods in July-August means food insecurity intensifies in September-

October until the “boro” crop (40 percent) can be harvested in November-December.

Considering the above issues, the literature on needs assessment in poverty alleviation comes in a variety of enclosures. A poverty alleviation programme focuses individuals’ empowerment towards collective control and responsibility for community-wide issues and needs. The development workers take a partnership approach to facilitate a community’s capacity to determine and address its own needs, goals and solutions to its problems [1]. The need can be a desire to improve current performance or to correct a deficiency [2]. A number of studies covered the application of needs assessment in the development programmes [3].

Needs assessment is the first and critical step to any development process, whether the context is urban or rural community development they are useful tools for academics and practitioners to better understand social development issues [4]. Needs assessment is a form community-based research, which is collaborative inquiry, dedicated primarily to serving the research or information needs of community based organizations [3]. It also disquiets in identifying the gaps in implementation; or an assessment of whether potential services are likely to be effective once they have been implemented [5]. A community level needs assessment succors the practitioner to determine the nature and scope of a problem at which an intervention might be aimed, with the aim of finding out what possible interventions might be successful in alleviating the problem [6].

There are two characteristics, such as ‘bottom-up’ approach and discrepancy or gap analysis, where needs assessment has been used widely in the development programmes. The vast numbers of studies were conducted on these two areas. The significant recent studies in bottom up approach are Overton-de Klerk and Oelofse [7], Lin and De Meulder [8], and in

gap analysis Peiró, Martínez-Tur, and Ramos [9]; Roslyn and Gutheil [10]; Walsh and Schaeffer [11]; Arnstein [12] called it citizen participation. He stated that citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power...participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. This may imply that community participation as a development strategy is based on community resources, needs and decisions. Cohen and Uphoff [13] explained this in similar way.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Area and Tools Selection

The participatory need assessment has been captured by collecting information from the concern communities/households, Agriculture laborer, marginal farmer & share croppers, women group, community leaders/social elites, UP bodies, government line agencies (livestock & agriculture), etc. Moreover team also discussed about the issue with local NGO leaders, local administration, journalist and local elites.

The assessment team has followed the methodologies described below: Sorrowfulness

- Household Economic Ranking map.
- Problem tree analysis.
- Conducted one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Agriculture laborer.

- Conducted one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with marginal farmers and share croppers from two villages.
- Conducted two Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) with women headed group.
- Conducted one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Adibashi (indigenous) group.
- Key Informant Interview with government officials (livestock& agriculture), social elites, UP bodies, etc.
- Meeting with relevant NGOs staff.
- Observation

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Time bounding was a great limitation of the study. Moreover, considering work engagement of primary stockholders, it was hard to conduct in depth discussions with them.

However, considering the limitations, study team was able to collect the authentic data from different stakeholders of the targeted communities and district level government officials.

Respondents of the study

The respondents were found from different heterogeneous groups. Moreover, some individuals, Key persons, and institutions were interviewed during data collection period. They are-

#	Name of the groups/individuals/Key persons/Institutions	Number of respondents
1	Agriculture laborer group	30
2	Women headed group	70
3	Hindu Community group	30
4	Marginal farmers and share croppers	50
5	Adolescent group	30
6	Government officials (livestock& agriculture), social elites, UP bodies, etc.	05
7	NGOs	03
Total		218

Source: Bangladesh: Poor braced for "Monga" (lean) season; www.irinnews.org

Location of the study

The study location was at two unions (sub-upazila) of Pirgachha Upazila under Rangpur district in Bangladesh. The name of visited place are-

#	Name of the Village/Visited Place	Union	Upazila
1	Araji Kandi	Kandi Union	Pirgachha
2	Dadon,		
3	Nijpara		
4	Kutub Bas	Kaikuri Union	
5	Mongla Kuti		
6	Sulli Para		

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Family Size and Headship

The average number of population in the households is 3.43 which are lower than national average-4.07. The pattern of the family was joint living but nuclear in taking meal. It means all family members

stayed together under the same shade but they took meal in small and individual units.

Most of the families were driven by male authority except some ethnic community. On the other hand some families were found as women headed for

those are divorced/separated and widow. Here noted that traditionally women also mention the name of their husbands as 'household head' who are not there for long time or are chronically sick and or physically/mentally disabled, as they still consider the men as the households head.

Main Occupation of the Family

The main occupation of the visited families is- Agriculture 4.12%, agricultural labourer 80.10%, wage laborer 60.00%, rickshaw/van Puller- 10.00%, small business 3.00%, service 1.00% and others 1.60%.

So, it shows a significant engagement with laboring as occupation of the visited area.

Natural/Physical Environment of the Areas

Pirgachha Upazila (rangpur district) with an area of 265.32 sq km, is bounded by kaunia and rajarhat upazilas on the north, sundarganj upazila on the south, ulipur and Sundarganj upazilas on the east, rangpur sadar and mithapukur upazilas on the west. Main rivers are Tista and Ghagat; Kholar Dore, Paglarkura, Tachhibhanga and Hardanga Beels and Devi Chowdhurani Dighi are notable.

The selected area is plain land which is near about 10-15 km. far from the pirgachha Sador. The region is free from water logging rather seasonal flash flood. So, drought is the main problem for the agriculture lands of this area. Thus, this season is (mid-August to mid-October) known as lean season of this area. People use to have no work in this period of time.

Paddy, Wheat, Jute and Potato are the main crops of this nature. People use to cultivate mango, jackfruit, as alternative source of food and income.

The soil was found sandy and poli which is more fertile for any kind of crops. Moreover most of people have tin shade houses in the area.

Community Resources

The study team found some available resources in the community as bellow.

- Agricultural Land
- Grass land near by the rivers
- Goat, Cow, Beef, and hen/duck as livelihood options
- Ponds for fish culture
- Variety of fruit three (esp. Mango and jackfruit)

However, mentioned resources exist in the community. Team found that about 100% people engage with agriculture land where 50% engaged with Goat/ Cow/Beef/duck rearing as source of income. Here most importantly, the respondents mentioned that Cow and Goat rearing have significant impact to their

income and it's very easy for women to rear those animals at household level.

So, it's clear that all community resources are used by the dwellers in regular life.

Income and Expenditure Status

The average monthly income of the visited areas is – about 2500 BDT for Ultra-poor group, 3200 BDT for Poor group, 3800 BDT for Lower middle group, 5100 BDT for middle group and 8500 for upper middle group. Moreover, team found that most of the ultra poor people earned money from agriculture laboring. On the other hand, Middle class and Upper Middle class people earned money from small business and livelihood assets.

The bellow graph shows the monthly average income Vs expenditure of the study location.

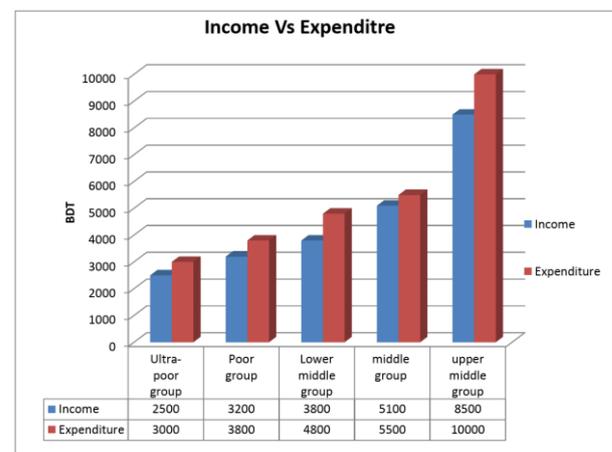


Fig shows the monthly avg. Income Vs Expenditure of the study area

So, it was found that all class of people has unequal matching between income and expenditure. Most importantly, above charts indicates that people were not able to save their money after expenditure.

Here also noted that most of the agriculture labor could not earn money in the lean period (mid-August to mid-October). In the lean period, labor could not find labor selling opportunity at agriculture land. Considering this issue some of the labors migrates to city for selling labor.

On the other hand, the people who are engaged with small business and cow/goat rearing, they could able to earn money in the lean period. So, the lower income indicates the income from day laboring.

Regarding monthly average expenditure, people expended their money to fulfill their basic need purchase food rather other cost i.e. education cost, house repairing and health treatment.

Financial access and loaning status of the respondents

Thus people could not able to earn enough money for fulfilling the basic need well, they had to take loan from different sources. In the study location, team found different loan source like NGOs, Banks and Mohajon (individuals).

Most interestingly team found that most of the people take loan from the Mohajon (individuals) rather NGOs and Banks. After a brief discussion it was found that people did like to receive loan from Mohajon due to low interest and refunding flexibility of the loan amount rather others sources.

Rabeya khatun (38) said, “... the interest rate from MOHAJON is lower than the NGOs micro credit and Banks. On the other hand, revolving system is pretty flexible that others options. And that’s why we liked to take small loan from MOHAJON in regular basis.”

The respondent discussed that most of the micro credit loan has more than 25% interest against loan amount which is very hard to carry for the ultra-poor. Conversely, Banks have limited and sometimes no access for the ultra-poor people.

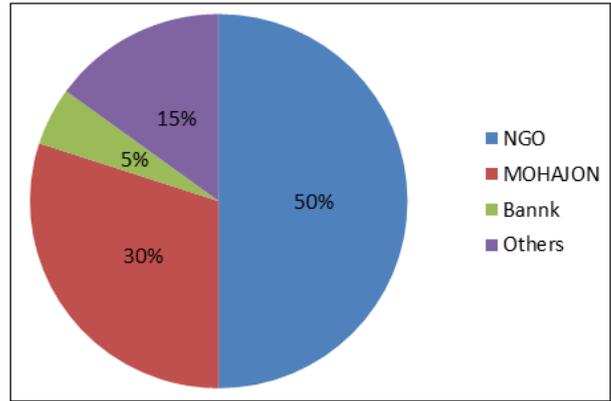


Fig shows the loan receiving status of the respondents

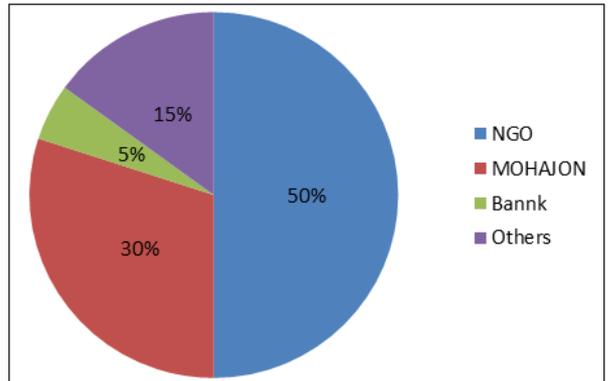


Fig shows the loan receiving status of the respondents

Annex-1

5.1 Economy Map of the visited area

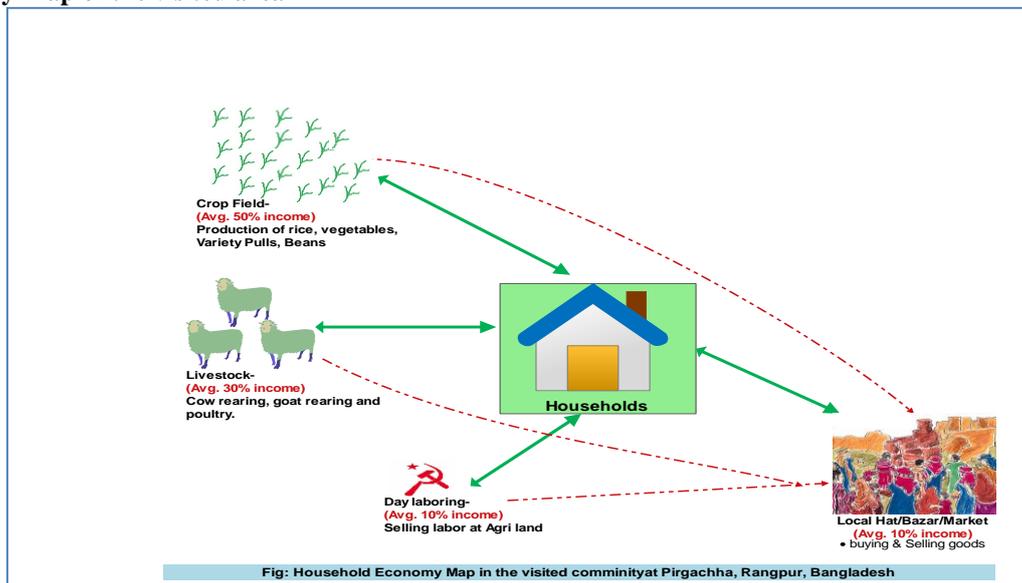
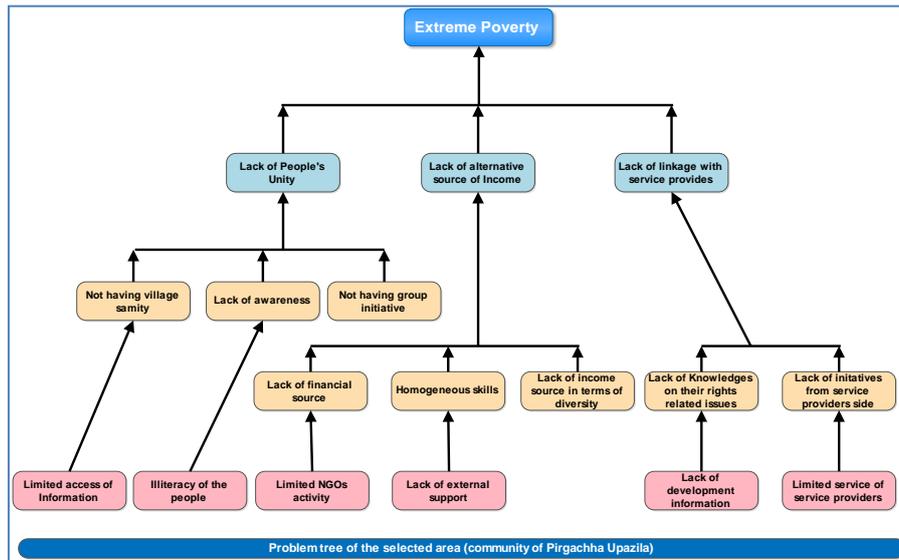


Fig: Household Economy Map in the visited communityat Pargachha, Rangpur, Bangladesh

5.2 Problem tree of the visited area



Agriculture Sector Crops Production

The main crop (Aman & IRRI) in the study area is rice (above 95% farmers are involved with rice production). Other major crops are potato and vegetables, etc. Usually rice is produced in two seasons in the area a year. Cultivation period of Aman rice is July-August and harvesting period is December to January. For IRRI, cultivation period is mid December and harvesting period is May-June. During the gap of rice production in two season most of the farmers cultivate 'Rabi crop'. A number of farmers cultivate Robi Crop instead of cultivation IRRI rice. IRRI production is limited.

Selling labor in Agriculture Sector

Most of the respondents were engaged of selling labor in agriculture land. Here team found a huge number of discrimination on wage rate between male and female labor. It was found that female get 100-120 BDT for per day wage where male get 200-250 BDT.

So, female wage rights are not count here on wage rate of agriculture labor. In depth analysis, team found that female labor is more expected on the harvesting time of potato season where male labor is for paddy cultivation. Thus the labor works in own area, land owner does not pay their wage day to day. So it means irregular payment system exists at the visited area.

Market Linkage of Agricultural Group

Farmers usually sell their crops from their home. Traders come to their home and collect crops. Sometimes farmers visit to the market for selling the crops. Farmers usually bring crops over their head and van. For storing crops they use grainer (Kula) made of soil. Pesticide, fertilizer and other necessary goods for crop cultivation are available in the local market.

Risk/Challenges in Agriculture Sector

- Unequal wage rate of male & female
- Landlessness of the marginal farmer
- Lack of labour during agriculture peak season
- Unstable market price and low price at the time of harvesting

People's Needs/Recommendations

- Interest free/less interest loan from different sources.
- Small business/Livelihood engagement should be introduced
- Wage rate should be increased.
- Develop healthy local market where have no middle men among farmers, labors and buyers.

Livelihood Sector General Information

For livestock and poultry rearing, the study area is very much feasible. There is available livestock and poultry and livestock food is also available. Almost all the families adopt chicken and duck in their home. About 45% families adopt cow/bull, 40% families adopt hen/duck and 10% families adopt goat.

Challenges of the sector

- Insufficient man power in government livestock office to provide necessary support for the all livestock.
- Ultra-poor people are not able to buy livelihood assets.
- For goat rearing, there have not enough grass land in the study location. Besides goats are more sensitive animal regarding different diseases.
- Farmers do maintain traditional practice on livelihood activities.
- Lack of marketing facilities of cow/goat milk.

Needs/ Recommendations

- Appoint technical person so that door to door services could be ensured
- Arrange training/awareness sessions about rearing the cattle, hen & ducks. There is no alternative without training
- Allocate budget for trainers

Opportunity

- There is a opportunity to beef fattening cycle for 6 month
- It is possible to purchase a Hyper cow Tk.13000 with household contribution
- Livestock department is maintain cold chain from Dhaka to district level
- Reregister and ice box are available at upazila level for preservation of vaccination
- Upazila and district office are capable to provide skill training to community and beneficiary level
- District and Upazilla livestock office have visualize training material
- Livestock department are capable to provide technical support and seedling support for supplying fodder
- There is a opportunity to Para vet development

Advocacy

- Mass vaccination for livestock and poultry
- Linkage with district livestock officer for providing mobile livestock health services through boat/taller

Small Business Sector

There have huge scope for small business development in the study area. The village dwellers live near of the Union Markets. So, there have great opportunity to continue any small business from their village.

Team found some small business in practice. They are- vegetable shops, and small stationeries.

Needs/Recommendations

- Interest free/low interest small loan
- Market linkage for the business of vegetable shop
- Healthy road communications

WATSAN situation

The source of safe drinking water is available but not sufficient for the community. There have one tube-well for about 5-08 families in the community and most of the cases it's about 20-50 yards far from the house.

Nevertheless Sanitation condition is poor; open defecation was found often here and there in the area. According to local representative (i.e. UP chairmen, Ward Members) govt. allocation is very poor considering the improvement of situation. Moreover,

awareness level about demerits of not using healthy toilet is very poor.

And after defecation, they usually do not use soap to clean their hands. So, stomach disease is very common in this area.

Needs/Recommendations

- Awareness raising activity should be taken

Health Situation

Malnutrition is the main problem of this area. People take average two time meals in everyday where they able to manage one time meal in the lean season. Moreover, they took less protein food in daily life. So, it carried malnutrition for them.

Nevertheless, different stomach problems, cold fevers, skin diseases etc are the main diseases of this area. Moreover absence of doctor in remote areas, less medicine and equipment, high cost of treatment are making the community reluctant to go to the hospital and health care center. Delivery process is completely dependent on local mid wife, but again they are not much skilled to handle critical child birth. Women are not very used to go in maternity clinic/hospital. Malnourishment of the children, adolescent and women can easily be seen in the poor and ultra-poor community.

On the other hand, nutrition level of the children and women are very vulnerable. So, overall health and nutrition situation is not optimum but not worst.

HIV/AIDS

Though the proposed project area is not vulnerable for HIV/AIDS issues but there have chance of transmitting the HIV/AIDS. Thus migration rate of male and female persons is pretty high in lean season (Mid-August to mid-October). People use to migrate in city area for selling labor where they pass nights at pave road. So, there have significant chance of infecting in STD/STI and HIV/AIDS. Considering this issue there should have some awareness activities through mass campaign, meeting, bill board display, and IEC and BCC materials to prevent and sensitize the wider community people.

Women Mobility and Domestic Violence

Women used to do work at the agriculture field beside the men but they were found few in the local market, community hospital, and other service providing institutions. This situation came over the years and it comes from less access/opportunity for the women in home even outside.

Sometimes, men tried to stop their mobility in the name of religious rule. So, team found huge number of discrimination between men and women i.e. wage

rate, health facilities, food taking, work pressure, decision making process, social activities, and etc.

Divorce and polygamy are the main element of violence against women. People often sold their property to give dowry of their daughter's marriage. So, the rights are not introduced in the study area. Women life runs on getting fewer rights from the society in every sector.

Needs/Recommendations

- Should have inclusive awareness raising activity on women rights.
- Operate advocacy program among Men, Elite, UP members and different stakeholders.
- Develop alternative source of income for the women.
- Develop visibility items on Women violence/domestic violence

Situation of Physically disable people

Team found some special people at the study area. These people are socially excluded. The study team found some of them could not able to walk. So, they became a burden for their family. Even they could not able to earn money due to not having disabled friendly working environment around the area.

So, they need confidence through advocacy and awareness program along with direct and financial support to them. Moreover extreme disable people need allowance per month.

CONCLUSION

By using a qualitative & quantitative method, this study presented the findings on the outcomes of the needs assessment of a poverty alleviation programme named *Strengthening Peoples' Actions for Food and Livelihood Security* (SAFOLLO) in Pirgachha, Rangpur, Bangladesh. The study found some major problems of the people of the selected area as bellow-

- Lack of people's unity considering right claiming issues and income generating issues
- Lack of skill on IGA
- Not having access on skill development
- Lack of awareness on Social , domestic and women or gender issues
- Lack of awareness on health related issues (AIDS/HIV, WATSAN)
- Lack of educational knowledge
- Lack of alternative source of Income
- No linkage between Govt. or private service providers
- Lack of modern knowledge on Cow/Goat/Bull/Hen/Duck rearing

The study also found some major needs/recommendations of the people of the selected area as bellow-

- Some agriculture supports should be provided which are: Cash for land purchasing/leasing, cultivation and harvesting support, etc. with livestock support
- Homestead gardening is feasible for those who have homestead land
- Other non-farm IGAs need to be provided to the vulnerable women and poor group such as: auto bike, power tiller, van/rickshaw, sewing machine, small business, etc. It is mentioned that livestock is feasible for all groups
- Organize different awareness session on women rights, human rights and others rights base issues
- Mass vaccination/develop village activist is necessary
- Cash for Work for community development and meet up their need in the lean season
- Monthly Substance Allowance (MSA) for the especial cases can be provided
- Literacy education (sign and counting) is also necessary
- Training/refresher and awareness on different IGAs is necessary
- Community lead Total Sanitation (CLTS) should be introduced
- Awareness on hygiene promotion and climate change need to be addressed.

So, the findings of this study can be considered as important guideline to them who will investigate needs assessment in similar poverty alleviation programme. The most important is to secure people's participation to the development activities at all levels. Thus, a turning point ought to be defined in terms of per capita GDP, poverty incidence as well as poverty alleviation.

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