Livelihood Monitoring for Southeast Bangladesh. CARE.

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Livelihood Monitoring Project (LMP)

Southeast Bangladesh

Baseline Study Report

Prepared for CARE Bangladesh by

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&
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TANGO International, Inc.

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Acknowledgements

This baseline is a joint initiative carried out by the Livelihood Monitoring Project (LMP) in collaboration with the SHABGE project. To the more than 800 households that have taken the time to participate in this livelihood study, it is our hope that the information generated will help improve programmes and policies that impact their lives.

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# Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations ........................................................................................................... iv  
Glossary of Terms ......................................................................................................................................... v  
1. INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................................... 1  
   1.1 Background ........................................................................................................................................ 1  
   1.2 The Livelihood Monitoring Project ................................................................................................ 2  
2. METHODOLOGY ...................................................................................................................................... 5  
   2.1 Analytical Framework .......................................................................................................................... 5  
   2.2 Design of the baseline survey ........................................................................................................... 6  
   2.3 Potential Program Areas (PPAs) .................................................................................................... 8  
   2.4 Sampling .......................................................................................................................................... 8  
   2.5 Limitation of the sample design ...................................................................................................... 8  
   2.6 Survey Teams & Training ................................................................................................................ 9  
   2.7 Quality Control ............................................................................................................................... 9  
   2.8 Data Management & Analysis ...................................................................................................... 10  
   2.9 Constructing a Wealth Index .......................................................................................................... 10  
   2.10 Livelihood Profiles ....................................................................................................................... 12  
3. GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ................................................................................ 15  
   3.1 Population ....................................................................................................................................... 15  
   3.2 Household size ............................................................................................................................... 15  
4. ROLE OF SOCIAL AND HUMAN CAPITAL IN DETERMINING LIVELIHOODS ....................... 17  
   4.1 Membership in local institutions ................................................................................................. 17  
   4.2 Use of Common Property Resources ...................................................................................... 19  
   4.3 Education and Literacy ................................................................................................................. 20  
   4.4 Health ............................................................................................................................................ 22  
5. HOUSEHOLD LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY ......................................................................................... 25  
   5.1 Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Livelihood Activities .............................................................. 25  
   5.2 Primary Occupation and Income sources of the Household Heads ........................................... 26  
   5.3 Secondary Occupation .................................................................................................................. 29  
   5.4 Migration Strategies ...................................................................................................................... 31  
   5.5 Household Expenditure .................................................................................................................. 32  
   5.6 Comparison of Expenditures between Always Poor and Non Poor Households .................. 36  
   5.7 Savings, Credit and Assets .......................................................................................................... 37  
   5.8 Assets ........................................................................................................................................... 44  
   5.9 Agricultural Practices ..................................................................................................................... 54  
   5.10 Tree Plantation ............................................................................................................................ 63  
   5.11 Pond Holdings and Fish Cultivation ......................................................................................... 70  
   5.12 Animal Husbandry ..................................................................................................................... 73  
   5.13 Cooking Fuel ............................................................................................................................. 75  
6. ACCESS TO SERVICES, HEALTH CARE and MARKETS .................................................. 78  
   6.1 Use of Services ............................................................................................................................. 78  
   6.2 Access to Health Care Facilities .................................................................................................. 79  
   6.3 Access to Markets ........................................................................................................................ 80  
7. GENDER, RELIGION & ETHNICITY .................................................................................. 82  
   7.1 Women’s Involvement in Outside Activities ............................................................................... 82  
   7.2 Women’s Mobility ........................................................................................................................ 84  
   7.3 Women’s Ownership over Assets ............................................................................................... 86  
   7.4 Women’s Decision Making Authority ...................................................................................... 87  
   7.5 Investment in women’s human capital ..................................................................................... 88  
8. VULNERABILITY, PHYSICAL SECURITY AND COPING STRATEGIES .................. 91
8.1 Crisis ................................................................................................................................................. 91
8.2 Coping Strategies ................................................................................................................................. 92

9. FOOD INSECURITY ..................................................................................................................................... 96
9.1 Seasonal Food Insecurity ......................................................................................................................... 96
9.2 Household Food Availability .................................................................................................................... 98
9.3 Oil Consumption as a Proxy for Meat Consumption ................................................................................. 100

10. CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS ................................................................................................. 101
Annex 1. Southeast Livelihood Baseline ......................................................................................................... 103
Annex 2. List of Sampled Villages .................................................................................................................. 130
Annex 3. Wealth Indices Compared (PRA vs. ASSET BASED) ....................................................................... 131
**List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANR</td>
<td>Agriculture &amp; Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BADC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBS</td>
<td>Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BFRI</td>
<td>Bangladesh Forestry Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIDS</td>
<td>Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>Body Mass Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Block Supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>An international NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDL</td>
<td>Community Development Library (national NGO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODEC</td>
<td>Community Development Centre (national NGO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRC</td>
<td>Chronic Poverty Research Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAE</td>
<td>Department of Agricultural Extension</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMA</td>
<td>Data management Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOF</td>
<td>Department of Fisheries</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFS</td>
<td>Farmer Field School</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOB</td>
<td>Government of Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO-INTERFISH</td>
<td>Greater Opportunities for Integrated Rice Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGA</td>
<td>Income Generating Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMP</td>
<td>Livelihoods Monitoring Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBBS</td>
<td>Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>Natural Resources Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Post Larvae (of prawn or shrimp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRA</td>
<td>Participatory Rural Appraisal</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPA</td>
<td>Potential Program Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHABGE</td>
<td>Strengthening Households’ Access to Bari Gardening</td>
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<tr>
<td>TANGO</td>
<td>Technical Assistance to NGOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nation’s Children Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>Union Parishad</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>VGD</td>
<td>Vulnerable Group Development</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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# Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amon</td>
<td>Rice crop sown in the monsoon season and harvested after it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boro</td>
<td>Rice sown, transplanted and maturing in the dry season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chora</td>
<td>Narrow stream flowing from hill-based spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>Decimal (100 decimals is equal to 1 acre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram Daktar</td>
<td>Village doctor who can be trained or untrained usually practice allopathic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homestead</td>
<td>The yard or compound of a household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household</td>
<td>A family unit, who share common resources for cooking and eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabiraj</td>
<td>Herbal medicine practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khas</td>
<td>Government-owned land or water bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean season</td>
<td>This corresponds to particular points in the agricultural calendar: Falgun to Baishakh (mid February to mid May) and Bhadra to Kartik (mid August to mid November)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohajan</td>
<td>Money lender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para</td>
<td>Cluster of households, a neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shalish</td>
<td>Village court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thana</td>
<td>A geo-administrative unit under a district comprising several unions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>Lowest local government unit</td>
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</table>
Executive Summary

Despite decades of ‘development’, poverty in Bangladesh has continued to persist. There is considerable regional variation in poverty. The level of poverty is typically higher for the landless, especially those who depend on agricultural wage labour as their principle occupation. Regional variation in poverty is also influenced by the incidence of natural hazards. For this reason, the LMP project has carried out a livelihood survey in both the Northwest and Southeast areas of Bangladesh to inform development interventions carried out by CARE. This report summarizes the findings of the Southeast baseline.

The CARE/DFID Livelihood Monitoring Project (LMP) was developed to measure the impact on livelihoods for two CARE projects: Greater Opportunities for Integrated Rice Fish (GOINTERFISH) and Strengthening Household Access to Home Gardening (SHABGE) in the Northwest and the Southeast regions of Bangladesh.

Both projects focus on improving household-level production systems: homestead vegetable production in SHABGE and integrated rice-fish production in GOINTERFISH. Despite a few key differences, intervention strategies for the two projects share a farmer field school approach, with more than half of the interventions of each project implemented through local partner Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs).

LMP covers a wider range of indicators than have been considered in project monitoring in the past. The purpose of the project is to identify the indicators which can most effectively track livelihoods strategies and outcome level changes. These indicators can be utilized by other programmes in the country and be used to inform the debate on the monitoring of national poverty levels. The proposed outputs of the LMP are:

- To quantify changes in livelihoods among project participants;
- To understand the causes behind these livelihood changes;
- To analyse the wider context of the project area; and
- To analyse project processes as well as the impact of the project on other actors, including partners and government

The project started in January 2001. A livelihood baseline was carried out in the project’s northwest working districts later that year. Baseline survey work was undertaken in SHABGE’s southeast working area in January-February 2002. The baseline survey design was similar to that in the northwest, which captures the variability between different agro-ecological zones and between project participant and non-participants with a view to quantifying changes in key livelihood indicators.

It is intended that experience from this exercise will feed into livelihoods monitoring and impact assessment in CARE/DFID programs in Bangladesh and elsewhere. In addition, findings from this exploratory livelihood analysis may also be useful for program developments and targeting in specific areas.

Creating a Wealth Index

The surveys were based on PRA wealth rankings constructed using the communities’ own indicators. These wealth rankings were based less on any quantitative measure of assets or
income and more on the perceived stratification of wealth using locally defined indicators. For
the purposes of a quantitative analysis, this method presents several problems. First, there is an
inability to compare across villages because of the subjective nature of the entire exercise.
Second, there is a lack of any quantitative foundation from which to compare objectively across
the sample.

As a means of addressing the issues, a second new wealth index was constructed for the sole
purpose of this analysis. This index is likely to cover more aspects of poverty than traditional
indices of income, food security or land holdings and can also be more easily monitored than
nutritional status or consumption measures. This index, however, does not take into account
investment into and the value of good human and social capital.

Based on experience from the Northwest baseline survey, LMP adjusted aspects of the wealth
index to improve the capacity of the index to accurately assess wealth. First, the wealth index was
adjusted from the NW survey to assign values to each asset, approximated by sample households.
In this way, the index captures differences between the value of assets across locations. Second,
professional tools, such as carpenter tools or sewing machines were added to the index during the
SE baseline.

In this survey, the households were categorised as – non poor (10%), occasionally poor (15%),
cyclical poor (20%), usually poor (25%), and always poor (30%). These categories have been
adapted from the terminology used by the Chronic Poverty Research Centre1.

The terms were aggregated into the chronic poor (always poor and usually poor), the transient
poor (cyclical or churning poor and occasionally poor), and finally the non-poor to classify the
never poor, continuing through to the always wealthy.

Population Profile

The population profile fits well with national data (BBS and UNICEF). Forty-seven percent of
household members are children aged 14 years and under, 24% of whom are infants aged 12
months or less. The overall ratio of men to women is almost equal.

The vast majority of households are Muslim (91.9%), a few are Hindu (7.5%) and only five are
Buddhist (0.6%).

Of 85 (10.6%) female-headed households, only 30 have males of productive age (15-44). Most
female-headed households are always poor (52.9%) or usually poor (16.5%), whereas 30.8% of
male-headed households are always poor and 33.4% are usually poor.

There are 258 (32%) households in hilly areas, 41 (5%) in shore/coast areas, 80 (10%) in islands,
and 421 (53%) in flat areas.

There are 180 (23%) households whose primary occupation is agriculture, 94 (12%) agriculture
labour, 247 (31%) non agriculture wage labours, 46 (6%) fishing households, 194 (24%) business
households, and 34 (4%) households depend on remittances.

1 The Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) is a group of universities, research institutes, consultancies and NGOs
from Bangladesh, India, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and the United Kingdom.
The mean household size of the survey population is 6.2. Non poor households have the largest household size with a mean size of 7.4 members, while always poor households have a mean size of 5.2.

**Role of Social & Human Capital in Livelihoods**

**Social capital plays a vital role in deciding who gets access to common property resources.** It also influences access to sharecropping of land, to animals, and even access to safety net opportunities – for example, the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) card.

Membership in local institutions is positively correlated with wealth across all membership categories, with the exception of the Grameen Bank. However, female-headed households consistently have lower rates of participation than male households. Male participation is most dominant in local institutions and committees.

Non poor and occasionally poor households have more resources and time that allow them to participate in Union Parsihad activities, different committees, access services, and establish connections to government authorities.

Participation in community festivals is the most common way in which households interact with local institutions and is not determined by wealth ranking. However, households from areas classified as coastal/islands were significantly less involved in community festivals (67.5%).

Women from usually poor households in the sample report the highest levels of membership in the Grameen Bank (14%) and NGOs/CBOs (30%).

The chronic poor households are less involved in Union Parishads, village courts, and schools, markets and mosque committees.

Only one fifth of the always poor households can read and write. This is quite low compared to most parts of the country. Higher literacy levels are strongly correlated with the ability to utilize an increased number of services. It also indicates an element of empowerment and awareness. Literacy can possibly be associated with better living conditions and higher status as well. In female-headed households, where only 24% of female-headed households are literate and 53% of these households are in the always poor category, the relationship between poverty and literacy appears valid. The adult literacy programs seem fails to attract adults in the school as only eight among eight hundred households reported participating in adult literacy classes.

**Always poor households have low levels of education.** More than one third of the non poor household heads completed their Secondary School Certificate (SSC) while only ten percent of always poor households completed grade five. The disparity between boys and girls has also decreased. Enrolment in primary school increased significantly with the food for education and stipends provided by the government for children’s attendance. However, beyond primary school, the stipends do not help the always poor households, who need their children’s labour.

**Illness is mentioned as the most common crises by all households.** Approximately 19% to 24% of all households had a member suffering from diarrhoea in any one month, although the incidence is slightly higher in poorer households. This is probably because the poorer households suffer from malnutrition and poor and unhygienic living conditions. Diarrhoeal incidence is significantly associated with levels of literacy.
Livelihood Strategies and Productive Assets

Income & Expenditure

Primary income sources in the southeast are diversified while agriculture based income sources are still dominant: 30% of all households depend on agriculture based sources while a greater percent of non poor households mostly depend on income from field crops (40%), always poor households depend on agricultural labour (15%). Non agricultural labour includes Rickshaw pedalling, fuel wood marketing, classified occupations, petty business and poultry rearing. While these are the main alternatives for the poor, non poor complement agricultural income with business, international remittance, shrimp farming (gher), service, and salt production.

Twenty-five percent of the female headed households depend on international remittances. These households seem to be doing relatively better compared to other female headed households, as they have a higher income than the rest of the group.

Agriculture labour households are the most vulnerable households in the study area. These households have a lower level of education, poor asset bases, weak social networks, severe food insecurity, and often miss workdays because of sickness.

Secondary income sources for non poor are still farming while the always poor depend on agriculture and selling non agriculture labour. The demand for agricultural labour does not remain constant. There is a seasonal fluctuation, which sometimes turns abruptly downward, pushing down labour demand. The wage rate varies from Tk 50 to Tk 100. Women get a lower wage rate than their male counterparts for the same amount of work.

Sharecropping is declining in the southeast. Only 4% of all households reported sharecropping as the primary source of income and another 6% mentioned this as a secondary source of income.

After food, health is the largest expenditure where most of a household’s income, savings and credit are spent. This highlights households’ concerns about vulnerability to disease that might affect human capital. Based on their net asset value, the always poor households spend more than they were worth on healthcare. The third highest expenditure for both of chronic and transient poor households is a loan repayment. Always poor households spend 146% of their worth repaying loans.

Access to Savings & Credit

About 58% of households have savings. Access to savings increases with wealth. For chronic poor households, having savings is associated with membership with NGOs or the Grameen Bank. The chronic poor households have to rely on savings to meet their consumption needs in the lean period due to serious food shortages or limited opportunities to sell labour.

About three quarters of households use credit. The most common source of loans are from friends and relatives followed by NGOs and money lenders. The usually poor households use NGO credit the most (over thirty three percent). This is more than the always poor households because NGOs target the poor that are more likely to repay. The use of Mohajans or moneylenders is the third most common practice. Despite of the high interest rate charge by the Mohajans, they play a major role in the rural capital market since they offer loans based on individual’s need and they are easy to access.
The chronic poor households use most of their credit on basic needs: food (46-63%) and healthcare (56-58%). The non poor households use it mostly for agricultural investments (39%). Only 14-23% of loans are used for off-farm IGAs.

**The poor pay higher interest rates.** The interest rate depends on who the lender of the credit is: The always poor households pay 45% interest while the non poor pay only 11%. This is mainly because always poor mostly depend on money lenders who charges higher interest rates.

**Chronic poor households carry a huge debt burden.** The always poor households owe 167% of their net asset value while the non poor owe only 15% of their worth. The chronic poor households are often forced to borrow from one lending source in order to repay another.

**Productive assets**

**Size of holding varies greatly within wealth indices.** Sixty eight percent of the always poor households own homestead land, but 30% of these own less than five decimals. Sixty six percent of non poor households own agricultural land, while 87% of the always poor do not own any agricultural land. Landowners tend to cultivate more land during the Amon season. This means that there is little land available for sharecropping in the less risky season.

Households that practice agricultural production and fishing own the most land, whereas agricultural wage labour households own the least Agriculture production and fishing. Farmers tend to apply more chemical fertiliser and pesticides in Boro than Amon, thus the input cost for Boro is much higher.

**Three quarters of all households grow vegetables.** Traditional practices of vegetable cultivation are used. Sixty one percent of always poor households grow vegetables compared with 86% of non poor households. The diversity of crops increases with wealth index probably because of the space available and the resources needed to grow the crops. Fencing and using fruit and timber trees for climbing vegetable plants (24-33%) has been a popular practice. Use of synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides increases with wealth index and are widely used. Different kinds of gourds are the most popular in the southeast, followed by beans.

**Majority of the households preserve seed but they follow traditional methods.** 95% households mentioned that they preserve seed following traditional methods while only 5% reported improved practices. This suggests a need of the majority of the households to be learning improve preservation techniques.

**Trees owned by poorer household have a higher survival rate because they receive better care.** About half of the survey households planted trees within the last twelve months. Male headed households, households located in hilly zones, those primarily engaged in agricultural production, and those households receiving services from an NGO have been found to have the most active tree management practices.

**Pond fish culture is not common in the southeast.** Only 15% of all households own a homestead pond. These are owned mostly by non poor households. Based upon the survey results, it appears that many individuals in the southeast are not interested in fish culture. Unlike other parts of the country, fish from inland areas have a lower demand in the local market and thus have a lower price. This may be a reason for why fish culture is not a popular economic activity.
Poultry rearing is a popular income generating activity for supplementing primary income. 69% of all households rear poultry as a source of income. The number of poultry birds increases with wealth index. The always poor households collect 44 eggs per week while the non poor households collect 152 eggs a week. The poorer households tend to sell chicken eggs in the market while the non poor tend to consume them. Households also sell poultry to the market in order to meet cash needs. Selling poultry is mentioned as the third most common coping strategy in the event of crisis.

Approximately one quarter of all households own cattle. 39% non poor households own cattle compared to 12% always poor households. For always poor households, ownership of cattle is mostly associated with an IGA loan from an NGO or Grameen. Goat rearing is not a very popular activity in the southeast (11%). The agriculture production households own the greatest number of cattle.

Access to Institutions

Private health care is the most commonly used service in the survey area. More than 90% of all households, regardless of their wealth category and occupation group, use private health care services. This may indicate that the government-run health clinics are of poor quality or inaccessible, particularly for the chronic poor households.

The second most common service that households use is government immunization services. Households reported that the immunization service used most were those given during national immunization events.

The private agriculture companies are the third most used services. Eighty-five percent of non poor households utilized services from private agricultural input vendors, compared to only 55% of the usually poor and 42% of the always poor. Because agriculture extension workers are inaccessible, households tend to depend on agricultural input vendors for technical support. This leads to the utilization of more chemicals.

NGOs and CBOs are the seventh most common service providers. NGOs target more of the households who can pay back loans. They also have a better coverage of Hindus households because Hindu women are more mobile. Only 30 to 35% households have access to NGOs or CBOs.

Members of female-headed households have particularly low membership in village institutions.

The Union Parishad’s services are the eighth most used services. About 30% of all households receive services from Union Parishads. The services provided are not considered ideal, although always poor households depend on the UPs for Cash for Work, Food for Work, Vulnerable Group Development cards, Old Age Pensions and pensions for widows. Access to the Union Parishad increases if there is a member from the village. Due to the current restructuring of Union Parishads, access has increased.

Government departments primarily provide services to the non poor households. Only nine percent of the households receive services from the Department of Agriculture Extension and two percent from the Department of Fisheries.
Households with literacy skills have increased accessibility to service providers. The literate households used government family planning institutions (48% compared to 39% non literate), government health care facilities (23% vs. 17%), private agricultural companies (67% vs. 59%), banks (39% vs. 11%), veterinary offices (18% vs. 12%) and land registration offices (13% vs. 5%).

Fish markets are essentially localized. Usually fish and shrimp are being marketed just after landing on the open beach. The catch are sold on a wholesale basis to middleman or on a retail basis to traders at the landing centers. Middlemen sell to retailers, who in turn sell the fish at the local market.

Poorer households tend to market locally at a relatively lower price while the non poor also use urban markets. The limited quantity and the scarce time do not allow poor households to use urban markets.

Gender

Mobility of women is limited in the survey area compared to the other parts of the country. The mobility of women is negatively related to wealth. Chronic poor women have more mobility, but this is due to lack of choice rather than empowerment. Women from always poor households are more mobile, with 9% visiting the local market. Women involved in NGOs can attend the meetings within the villages, but fewer are able to attend a meeting elsewhere. Most women are able to visit the village shop to make small purchases, to go to fetch water and fuel, although again more of the poorer women do so.

Always poor women also go out to sell their labour (15%) and work as maids (13%). Usually poor and Cyclical poor households are most likely to work in agriculture, as they have more land but, unlike the non poor households, cannot afford much paid labour. Muslim women have the least mobility.

Women from female-headed households are more likely to be involved in outside activities because of their lack of choice. Women that live in either hilly or flat areas are more mobile than women in shore, island, and coastal areas.

Women do not generally own assets. After marriage, most assets become their husbands’. Even if the assets are still considered theirs, women cannot dispose of them without their husband’s permission.

Women have modest decision making authority and this varies little between household categories. Overall there is very little empowerment for women.

The incidence of early marriage in the study area is quite high. Although the situation has been improving slowly, the mean age of marriage in the study area is still quite low (15.4 years).

Dowry is one of the major reasons for early marriage and domestic violence. Parents are encouraged to arrange for their daughters to marry at an early age to keep the dowry amount low. Girls’ education beyond primary level was also mentioned as an influencing factor in the inflation of dowries. Parents of educated girls have to find educated bridegrooms, increasing the dowry price.
Shocks, Stresses & Coping

The region is extremely vulnerable to natural disaster, particularly cyclonic storms and high tidal waves. Under the impact of severe storms, houses get destroyed, and people and livestock get killed. The entire coastal area is exposed to this threat.\footnote{Khan. M.I., Livelihood Context of the South-eastern Region of Bangladesh.} From 1794 to 1994 as many as 62 major cyclones and tidal surges hit Cox’s Bazar. There are two particular times of the year that cyclones hit the coastal belt (UNHCR 1999). However, this survey didn’t mention natural disaster as a major crisis. This is probably because for the last several years the region did not experience any significant storm or tidal surge and the preparedness of the households improved significantly. The survey also did not capture salinity as a major household crisis. However, this could be important, because of the scale of shrimp and prawn operations.

Illness is the most common crisis and can quickly wipe out any gains in productivity or nutrition a household has managed to achieve. Both men and women lose work days because of illness. Illness includes diarrhoeal diseases, respiratory illness, and other types of illness. In such times, available savings and credit are spent to cover the unanticipated costs of health care. Incremental improvements in productivity and nutrition are unlikely to have a significant impact on livelihood outcomes unless health is addressed.

Next to illness, the loss of livestock and food shortages are most common. Shortage of food is the second most common shock for the always poor, usually poor, and cyclical poor households. Even under favourable conditions, many households across wealth ranks suffer from periodic food shortages (69% of the always-poor households and 51% of the cyclical poor households).

Food Security

The \textit{always poor} households suffer from food insecurity for more than seven months of the year. The agriculture wage labour households suffer from longer lean seasons than the agriculture production households. The business households seems to be the most food secure households followed by fishing households and agriculture production households.

Recommendations

The southeast region where this baseline was conducted presents an array of multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities for the poor. There is an adverse interplay between a vulnerable ecology and chronic social disadvantages, leading to high levels of consumption shortfalls and high livelihood insecurity. To tackle these problems, a comprehensive approach is needed that addresses human investment and risk management simultaneously.

The following investments are recommended:

1. Given the poor state of education, health and nutrition found in the program area, interventions should focus on human capital investments that raise the capabilities of the poor. For example, more could be done to improve access and quality of education (including adult education), nutrition education (improvements in diet associated with consumption of vegetables), and employment-oriented skill training. To ensure that the poorest households send their children to school, special efforts must be taken to address the opportunity costs facing these households due to their dependency upon child labor.
2. Investments should increase in hygiene awareness building and appropriate hygiene infrastructure. Given the amount of lost labour productivity due to illness, especially diarrhoea, such an investment would have a multiplier effect on the local economy.

3. Women’s status in the region is significantly poor. The burden of poverty is biased towards women, given their low literacy rates, poor nutrition, lack of income opportunities due to poor mobility, and discrimination. Efforts should be made to support interventions that increase women’s empowerment and social mobility. NGOs need to target both Hindu and Muslim communities. Emphasis should be given to both social mobilization as well as group savings.

4. To manage income and consumption shocks as well as vulnerabilities to natural disasters, social protection programs need to be continued and expanded into areas that are currently not receiving services. This will involve improved targeting of food assistance programs, such as Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) and the Rural Maintenance Programme (RMP), as well as reaching the poorest and most vulnerable with nutrition support packages.

5. Increase poor household’s participation in NGO activities by expanding NGO coverage, as well as addressing the opportunity costs of the poor. NGOs should act as a catalyst to enable households to build social networks with government and private service providers. Investments should focus on institutional strengthening that supports improvements in participatory governance. Efforts should be made to strengthen capacity of local government to provide better services, such as infrastructure development that improves marketing, service delivery through better local planning, and greater transparency in safety net programmes. This may involve identifying and dismantling the barriers to more inclusive relationships between the poorer households, service providers and the enabling agencies.

6. Agricultural extension activities supported through programs such as SHABGE should invest in interventions for the poor that intensify homestead production, taking time constraints into account. These will involve investments in improved vegetable production and marketing channels that would be necessary for supporting increased production. Interventions aimed at small stock intensification, such as poultry, can also help poorer households. Due to the interconnectedness of households within communities, opportunities need to be provided that increase the potential of all households within a community.