

ISSUES IN ASSESSING MULTI-SECTOR
FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY PROGRAMMES
CASE STUDY OF TWO SELECTED PROGRAMMES IN BAGNGLADESH

Final Report

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List of Abbreviations

ASA	Association for Social Advancement
ASD	Antar Society for Development
ASOD	Assistance for Social Organization and Development
AusAID	Australian Government Overseas Aid Program
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CC	Community Clinic
CLP	Char Livelihood Programme
CPH	Core Participatory Household
CPP	Cyclone Preparedness Programme
DAE	Department of Agriculture Extension
DAM	Department of Agricultural Marketing
DFID	Department for International Development
DOL	Department Of Labor
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DSK	Dushtha Shasthya Kendra
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDP	External Development Partner
ERG	Economic Research Group
ESDO	Eco-Social Development Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFP	Feed the Future Project
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
FFP	Food for Peace
FSNP	Food Security and Nutrition Projects/Programmes
FSUP	Food Security for the Ultra Poor
GBS	Gram Bikash Sangstha
GIS	Geographic Information Service
GO	Government Organization
GUP	Gono Unnayan Prochesta
ICCO	International Communications Consultancy Organisation
IGA	Income-Generating Activity
IMO	Implementing Organization
IPHN	Institute of Public Health. Nutrition Bangladesh
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JSKS	Jamuna Samaj Kallyan Sangstha
LGRD	Local Government Rural Development
MAM	Moderately Acute Malnutrition
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOFDM	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
NDP	National Development Program
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
PEP	Productive Employment Programme
POPI	People's Oriented Program Implementation

PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RDRS	Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service
RIC	Resource Integration Centre
RSDA	Rural Society Development Association
RUTF	Ready-to-Use Therapeutic food
SAM	Severely Acute Malnutrition
SAP-BD	South Asia Partnership-Bangladesh
SDEF	Social Development Erosion Support Fund
SHED	Society for Health Extension and Development
SKF	Sufia Khatun Foundation
SO	Strategic Objective
SUS	Sabuj Unnayan Sangstha
TMSS	Thengamara Mohila Samobay Samity
TW	Tubewell
UNICEF	United Nations (International) Children's Fund
UP	Union Parishad
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
VERC	Village Education Resource Center
VOCA	Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
WFP	World Food Programme

Issues in Assessing Multi-Sector Food and Nutrition Programmes

I. Introduction¹

The term assessment carries wide range of meanings, which is reflected in the range of synonyms it has - appraisal, rating, valuation, estimation, and evaluation. In the literature dealing with development practices, appraisal, rating and evaluation are more frequently found; with evaluation of project/programme impacts dominating the rest by miles. An obvious limitation of the latter is its *ex post* nature that fails to provide feedbacks into current project. While lessons are learned for future, the focus on impacts limits their relevance in designing future projects; and its susceptibility to biases for sustaining inflows of funds cannot be ignored.

Initial search was for finding a suitable means to tag assessment with monitoring. The intention had been to make use of the monitoring data and regularly appraise on-going projects in robust manner. This however had to be abandoned at the inception stage. Reviews of several project documents revealed that the assessment/outcome variables may not be comparable across projects/programmes. It was also recognized that there had been abundance of literature on project-specific impacts, often driven by internal dynamics. In contrast, lessons learned from efficacy of project design drew little attention. Thus, instead of undertaking assessment of projects based on mapping data (see Footnote 1), it was decided to select two specific multi-sector programmes and undertake case studies. The purpose was to draw lessons on project/ programme design.

In line with the broad agreements reached, the present report delves into the framework of assessing a multi-sector program, outlines the criteria of selecting two programmes and their specific field locations, and presents the findings. It is important to recognize that we are not assessing any specific FSN program - the focus is to understand the workings of multi-sector programmes. In this context, we identify the relevant components of the programme within an analytical framework; identify the desired sequencing of the interventions/ components (if any) and/or influencing factors; and recommend on the relative scales of various components that will bring better outcomes in changing nutritional status of households.

The following section (II) raises a number of conceptual issues before laying out a framework to assess multi-sector programmes. Section III briefs on how the two programmes, Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP) and Shouhardo, were selected for case studies and how the fields for queries were chosen. Section IV introduces the two programmes along with an introduction to the reconstructed impact pathways that underlie the designs. Section V presents the study findings on (i) intervention (component) choice, (ii) sequencing of interventions, (iii) relative size/effort given to various components, and (iv) the institutional space within which the programme had delivered various services. The section also proposes

¹ The present exercise is an outcome of an ERG study titled, “*Food Security and Nutrition Initiatives in Bangladesh: An analytical exercise into mapping and assessment of selected programmes*”. Previously, the ERG research team had developed a framework for appropriate compilation of project-level data, had compiled such data from secondary sources as exhaustively as possible, and had demonstrated the ways to map those data onto GIS platforms. A second broad objective of the study was to undertake assessment of programmes with a view to contribute towards developing a methodology. This report confines to the latter (assessment) task only

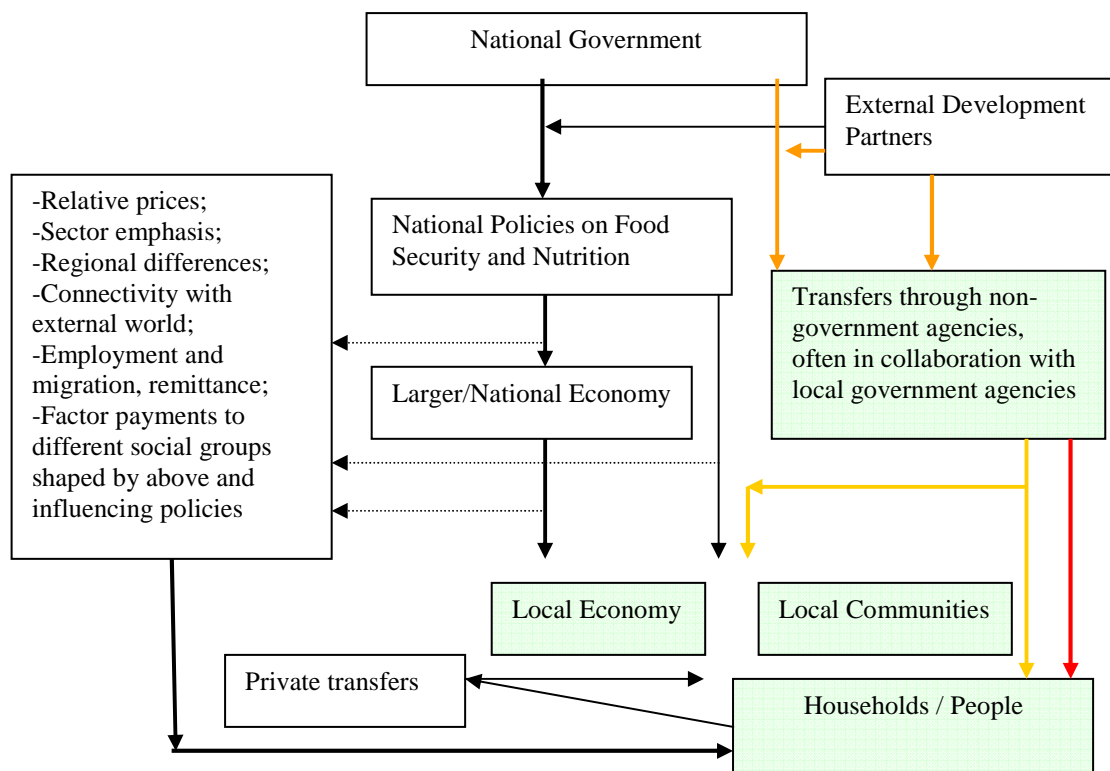
several recommendations for future design of programmes in the fields of food security and nutrition.

II. Conceptual Framework

II.1 Scope: confined only to a subset of FSNPs

National policies on food security and nutrition are effectively realized through project/programmes, some of which are embedded in growth process and in policies that shape inclusiveness in growth. However, the bulk of FSNPs we commonly highlight in development practices involve transfers. The ‘industry’ involving such transfers has burgeoned over the years; and the present exercise focuses on it only. The segment in focus is highlighted with shades and colored (non-black) arrows in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Policies/Programmes to Influence FSN Status of Households/People



II.2 Broad classification of FSNPs and design elements

Policies towards promoting food and nutrition security are realized through implementation of projects and programmes; and the second critical step was to categorize the various types of FSNPs. Another paper on 'Food and Nutrition' (Zohir et al 2013a) dealt with the issue and classified FSN programmes into four in terms of their focus on: (i) Food security only (FS1), (ii) Food security with additional interventions that indirectly support better extraction of nutrition from food (FSN1), (iii) Exclusive focus on micro-nutrients (N2), and (iv) Food security with direct and indirect nutrition programs (FSN2).

The first type of programmes (FS1) has long been in the domain of government agencies; and inadequacy of exclusive focus on macro-nutrients to counter nutritional deficiency has long been recognized. Even though delivery of some of the complementary services surfaced independently as essential utilities (such as, safe drinking water, sanitation, etc.) with increasing role of the INGOs/NGOs, their packaging within food security and nutrition (FSN2) came in much later. Independent focus on nutritional interventions (N2) gained momentum during the 1990s; while more comprehensive programmes with multi-sector approach are more visible over last decade. It is now widely recognized that some forms of synergy exists among components of food, nutrition and environment; and all these need to be taken into consideration for optimal nutrition at the individual level. The synergies among these components are complex and are extremely important for addressing nutritional issues of community.

Programme designs are important in realizing potential 'synergy' amongst food, nutrition and environment components, as well as for effective implementation. It is also necessary to recognize that other supporting activities are no less important in implementation of programmes and successful realization of those synergies. The size of positive achievements from programme implementation is therefore perceived to depend on inclusion of desired components – both in the spheres of direct services rendered and in the modalities of providing those services. Synergies across components to be derived also depend on sequencing of the components as well as on relative efforts and resources allocated to each. All these constitute the key elements of our search for a desired design as well as for assessing existing programmes.

II.3 Programme targets: community, household and individuals

Intended beneficiaries of all FSN programmes are the people who are organized in social units called 'families'; and are operationally reachable through 'households' occupying a physical space with some degree of permanency. The contacts with target beneficiaries are perceived in terms of goods & services that are delivered to these households or to their members - directly or indirectly. When the focus is on households, one may proceed by identifying the factors that influence the choices made by households which have implications for their FNS status. Within an analytical framework of conventional economics, one may identify factors, such as, taste and knowledge; prices effectively paid by the households; income from various sources; and endowments (assets – tangible as well as financial, stock of labor, social networks, etc.), which influence choices.

While the centrality of households in development programmes cannot be ignored, two other dimensions deserve serious attention, particularly in the context of FSNPs. These are communities and individuals. Many of the complementary inputs we mentioned earlier generally involve community level infrastructures, such as, in the forms of health centers, public source of water, education, etc. Thus, importance of community-level intervention has been in the scanner of development practitioners for many decades. In contrast, concerns with intra-household distribution, along with women empowerment, surfaced only over last two to three decades. If intra-household resource allocation was ‘optimal’, one would not have to bother about targeting individuals. Instead, programme-level efforts could more efficiently address the household level concerns. However, biased (or, ‘non-optimal’) distribution amongst members within a household may prevail - in allocation of food as well as in other spheres beyond simple food (meals and their content), e.g., household in supports to meet health and nutrition needs of individual members. Thus, additional effort to influence (household) decision-maker’s taste (such as, through awareness) to change biased intra-household resource allocation is justified. In addition, nutritional interventions aimed at individuals, particularly those identified as SAM and MAM are considered necessary to redress the anomalies; e.g., to mitigate malnutrition problems from public health standpoint.

There is an additional reason for targeting individuals under FSNPs. Food does not always translate fully into nutritious substances readily absorbable in human bodies and requirement varies – important determinants of which are the initial physical and psychological conditions of individuals. Thus, health and nutritional interventions targeting individuals may often be unavoidable.

II.4 Role of markets: demystifying non-market interventions

Historically, development practices at programme levels have generally been biased towards supply side considerations, other than the presumption of knowledge inadequacy on the demand side. That is, absence of markets and/or non-accessibility by target population at market prices, were perceived as immediate causes of F&N insecurity.² With improved economic conditions and improved functioning of markets in a liberalized environment, development initiatives focused increasingly on demand side, improving the purchasing power of otherwise poor households. However, it is important to revisit some of the market/non-market issues for addressing incentive issues and susceptibility of so called ‘non-market’ interventions to the allurements of ‘markets’.

Very often, what is delivered to a household or an individual has a market where many transact. Such examples include food, seed and extension services; health service and medicine; skill development, information and education services; etc. However, reference is made to ‘non-market transaction’ to imply that the transfers are not made through regular players in existing markets. This paper recognizes that the goods & services under transaction have exact or close substitutes in already established markets; and therefore, additional

² Knowledge or lack of it has implication for demand to avail and/or access a service or product, as well as for the extent of utilization of amounts that are availed. Affordability, reflected in effective demand corresponding to a market price, is both a demand and a supply side issue. It may reflect inadequate income to support effective demand for a service, assuming that the price is given. It may also reflect presence of a supply side constraint that causes prices to be high, forcing target population to remain out of the consumer net.

resources and players/actors under the umbrella of development programmes influence the outcomes in those markets and the latter also influence the incentives and nature of engagements in the development industry – both at programme and agency levels.

Agencies entrusted to deliver goods and services within a programme are also construed as ‘market players’ on two counts. First, in a market where services for development programmes are demanded by national governments, external development partners or any other entity, the development agencies (INGOs/NGOs) are ‘suppliers’ of those services. In such roles, they compete with each other to access fund and engage in social activism with (possibly) an additional touch of passion. Secondly, once engaged, they act as suppliers and/or consumers of goods & services in various other markets, including the markets for labor and other services (when outsourcing is involved). Posited this way, one is better able to explain why leakages or mis-targeting may occur, and why programme designs ought to take account of relevant market forces.

There is an additional set of dimensions to the agency issue. Most development programmes are in need of local knowledge – sometimes on a one shot basis, and mostly, on a continuous basis. There is also the urge to deliver the services (project deliverable), which may call for creating new agencies, displace old ones, and strengthen or weaken existing agencies. Since sustenance of primary activities (to ensure FNS) is a major concern, choice of agencies is an important area of concern to account for during programme design. Several dimensions along which agency classifications may be made are:

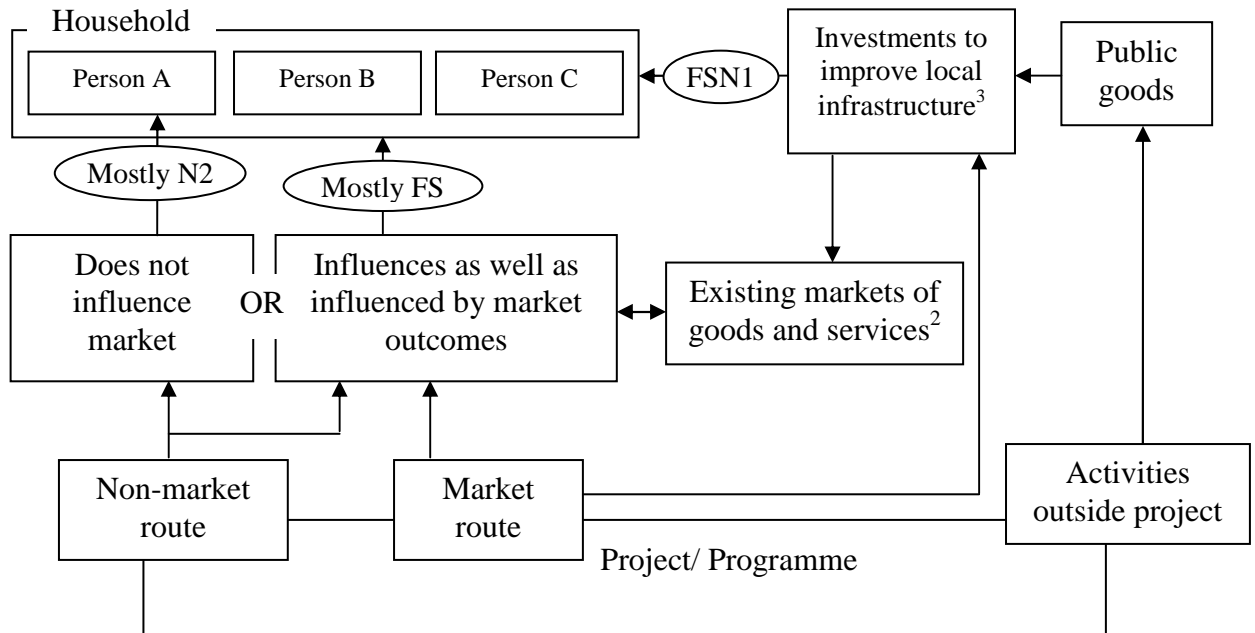
- organization of the beneficiaries (as opposed to non-beneficiaries);
- professional/administrative government agencies - ministry, directorate, departments, etc.;
- professional non-government organizations meant to coordinate and/or undertake programme deliveries to beneficiaries: (i) local NGOs, (ii) national level NGOs, (iii) international NGOs, (iv) fund management and coordinating agency;
- Existing legal business entities – enterprises and associations (trade bodies);
- Newly created trade entities to serve specific purposes of programmes.

Desirability of any one or a mix of the above-mentioned organizational forms in a programme design may be assessed in terms of its implication for sustenance of the programme, and the latter critically depends on ‘ownership’ of programme objectives by the agency (agencies) in concern and sustainability of the agency (agencies) beyond programme supports.

II.5 General framework: putting the pieces together

The various dimensions discussed above are put together in Figure 2 below, which provides the broad guideline for the assessment undertaken. One may note that the proposed framework is an *ex ante* exercise and the research team chose to define the specific queries during review and field consultations of individual programmes. Clearly, there are many public investments that cannot be termed FSNPs; yet those may have direct bearings on FNS outcomes at the three tiers mentioned earlier – community, household and individual. These are included on the right side in Figure 2; and have been considered (mostly) pre-determined that a newly introduced programme ought to take into account at the design stage.

Figure 2: Sketch of Impact Pathway – the broader perspective¹



Notes:

¹Projects – both market and non-market – need to go through implementing agencies. These agencies can be local or external, existing or created under project/programme initiative. These agencies may be departments within the governmental or non-governmental. One may choose to link agency types to address differential achievements on account of organizational variations.

²Markets include labour, cereal, agricultural and non-agricultural/IGA inputs/output, health and education services, training/knowledge, transportation and communication.

³Such investments could involve transport infrastructure, communication, milling and storage (cold, silos), safe water (source, distribution), sanitation (waste disposal), power (electricity, gas) and marketplaces.

⁴The text mentions of four types: Food security only (FS1); Food security with additional interventions that indirectly support better extraction of nutrition from food (FSN1); Exclusive focus on micro-nutrients (N2); and Food security with direct and indirect nutrition programs (FSN2). First three are noted in the Figure.

III. Selection of Programs and Study methods

III.1 Objectives of Assessment Exercise

The assessment makes no attempt to evaluate or assess any individual program. In stead, the exercise is meant to address certain areas of program design and implementation that have hitherto received little or no formal attention. Taking cue from existing literature on development practices and various project documents, it summarizes the impact pathways that are generally presumed in the design, identifying activities meant to impact upon the nutritional status of households in a targeted population (either a population segment within an area or all inclusive in a pre-set geographic area). Thus, the first task involves identifying a list of intervention spheres. Four questions are posed once a common list is identified:

- Which spheres of intervention deserve greater attention under alternative socio-economic and institutional settings?
- What factors need to be considered in sequencing these activities?
- Which factors need to be considered in defining the relative scale of operation for these activities?
- Could there be a better institutional arrangement to ensure greater positive impacts?

III.2 Selection of Programmes for Assessment: Method and Selection Criteria

Given the constraints on resources and scope of the study, an undertaking with primary survey or data collection in line with the above-defined questions was not feasible. In order to get the best out of the effort, case studies of two multi-sector programmes were undertaken. Of the several such programmes, the following criteria were used to select the two:

- Multi-sector with expected nutrition outcomes outlined in the design stage;
- Mature programmes that have been evaluated earlier so that one may have prior information on the extent of nutritional outcomes which may be linked to the various aspects of design and implementation discussed earlier; and
- The programme or its subsequent phase continues to operate in the same area so that the research team may get access to information and consult appropriate stakeholders with knowledge on the subject.
- Select areas that allow one to capture diverse experiences with regards to (i) participation of (and links with) government agencies; (ii) experiences of different external development partners (EDPs); and (iii) wider geographic representation.

While many government programmes involve inter-agency coordination and, by default, are multi-sector in nature, the present study chose to look into those where EDPs are involved as close partners of the government. Ten such programmes were initially identified, information on which are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. In order to fulfill the criteria and do justice to availability and quality of information, the ERG team initially identified four - SHOUHARDO I and II in the northwest; Jibon O Jibika (and Nabo Jibon) in the coastal south; CLP (phases I and II) and CFPR-TUP (phases I and II) in the northwest. In each of these programmes, there has to be one phase (at the least) that ended with an evaluation and a second that is currently being implemented in the same area with similar objectives and mostly by the old set of people/organizations. Given the lack of interest on the south and

differential responses from the implementing agencies in various areas, two programmes were finally selected from the four. These are, CLP in Gaibandha district and SHOUHARDO in Jamalpur districts.

Once the choice of programmes was agreed upon, selection of upazilas followed certain simple rules – both phases have been in place allowing for contacts with relevant field-level operators, and there is no other major programme working in the same area. The compilation is summarized in Table 3; wherefrom, Madarganj in Jamalpur district was chosen for Shouhardo and Fulchari of Gaibandha district was chosen for CLP. While initial enthusiasm prevailed, the team realized that there were hesitations for lack of time on the part of Programme offices.

Table 1: Summary Information on Sponsors, Implementers and Objectives, Multi-Sector Programmes

Project/ Programme	Period	Sponsor	Lead agency	Technical/strategic partner	Implementing NGOs	Objective
Nobo Jibon	June 2010 - May 2015	USAID/FFP and GoB	Save the Children	IDE, WorldFish Centre, HKI, RIMES	CODEC, SAP-BD, Speed Trust, GUP	Reduce food insecurity and vulnerability.
SHOUHARDO II	June 2010 - May 2015	USAID/FFP and GoB	CARE	RIMES, IUCN	POPI, ASD, BDSC, NDP, JSKS, Solidarity, SKS Foundation, MJSKS, RIC, ESDO, GBS, SUS, DAM, SARA, US, SHED, SCI	Transform the lives of women and men in poor and extreme poor households in 11 of the poorest and most marginalised districts by reducing their vulnerability to food insecurity.
PROSHAR	June 2010 - May 2015	USAID/FFP and GoB	ACDI/VOCA, PCI		CODEC, Muslim Aid UK, Shushilon	Increase Incomes of Poor and Ultra Poor Households; Improve Health and Nutrition of Women and Children; and Increase Resiliency to Shocks and their Long-term Impact.
FSUP	Jan 2009 - Jan 2014	EC and GoB	WFP, ICCO, Care, Islamic Relief		POPI, SUS, ASD, and others	Reduce extreme poverty and food insecurity of the most vulnerable women and their dependants, and ensure household food security. Also, improve disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of beneficiaries falling back into food insecurity in case of disasters
Alive and Thrive	2009 - 2014	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	FHI 360		BRAC, Save the Children	Improve infant and young child feeding practices by reaching households with children under 2 years old through intensive community-based interventions and media campaigns.

Table 1 (continued)

Project/ Programme	Period	Sponsor	Lead agency	Technical/stra tegic partner	Implementing NGOs	Objective
Shiree- Phase II	September 2012- 2015	UK-Aid, GoB	SCI, Netz Bangladesh, Care, Practical Action, Uttaran, DSK, Caritas, Oxfam GB, Concern WorldWide		Prodipan, CODEC, and several others	Provide sustainable pathways out of extreme poverty by generating assets, improving incomes, decreasing dependency and vulnerability, and by increasing food security.
PPFSNFC- MDG-F	March 2010 - June 2013	Spanish Government	WFP, UNICEF & FAO	Save the Children	UK Muslim Aid, Sushilan	Reduce prevalence of acute malnutrition and underweight in children 0-59 months and acute malnutrition in pregnant and lactating women. Reduce rates of anemia in 6 – 23 months children and pregnant and lactating women.
Food and Livelihood Security (FLS) Project	January 2012- June 2014	EU, GoB	Ministry of Women and Child Affairs		VERC, ASOD, ESDO, RIC	Improve food security and livelihoods of ultra- poor marginal farmers and sharecroppers, preferably women or female-headed households in the south-western part of Rajshahi division.
Char Livelihood Programme	April 2010- 2016	DFID, AusAID	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives	Maxwell Stamp PLC in collaboration with LGRD division	RDRS Bangladesh, Zibika, RSDA, BDSC, Aid-Comilla, others (20 NGOs).	Improve the livelihoods, income and food security of extremely poor women, children and men living on island chars in the north west of Bangladesh.
CFPR	2002-06: I 2007-11:II	DFID, EC, AusAid, CIDA, NOVIB	BRAC		BRAC	Improve livelihoods of the ultra poor women and their families; improve access to mainstream development services; and empower ultra poor women

Note: Shiree is not a single programme. Its an umbrella supporting several programmes and they are into second phase of funding.

Table 2: Summary Information on Demographic and Spatial Targeting, Multi-Sector Programmes

Project/ Programme	Target Group	Geographical Area	Intervention Sphere	Coordination with key GOB agency	Other agencies
Nobo Jibon	Pregnant and Lactating Women; Children under 5; poor and extremely poor households.	Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna	Health and nutrition; agriculture.	MOFDM	CPP
SHOUHARDO II	Extreme poor household	North and Mid Chars, the Haor region, and the coastal belt in Cox's Bazaar	Agriculture, health and nutrition, rural development	MOFDM	NILG, UZ thana health complex, UP disaster management committee
PROSHAR	Households; women and children.	3 upazilas in Khulna division (Sarankhola, Lohagara, Batiaghata)	Agriculture, livestock and aquaculture; private sector development	MOFDM	
FSUP	women and their dependents in ultra poor households	Gaibandha, Pabna, Sirajganj, Bogra, Sunamganj, Netrokhona, Kishoreganj, Rangpur	Agriculture and natural resources; food security.	MOFDM	
Alive and Thrive	Infant and young children under 2 years.	50 sub-districts	Health and nutrition.	MOHFW	Community Health Workers

Table 2 (continued)

Project/ Programme	Target Group	Geographical Area	Intervention Sphere	Coordination with key GOB agency	Other agencies
Shiree-Phase II	Extreme poor households	Khulna, Bagerhat, Barisal, Pirojpur, Barguna, Patuakhali, Satkhira, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Dhaka (urban), Sunamganj, Kishoreganj, Habiganj, Banderban	IGA, nutrition, health	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives	
PPFSNFC-MDG-F	SAM and MAM Children and mother, and their households. Some programmes are inclusive in selected unions.	Bhola: Char Fasson, Monpura; Barguna: Bamna	CMAM, TA on agriculture, homestead food production and nutrition training to ensure food security, School feeding and school vegetable gardening, Supplementation of multiple micronutrients powder (MNP), Strengthening the food security and nutrition information system,	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management	Health services and IPHN, DAE, DOL & DO Fisheries under MOA, local schools and DPME
Food and Livelihood Security (FLS) Project	ultra-poor female headed households and marginal farmers and sharecroppers, in south-western Rajshahi	Noagaon Sdar Dhamoirhat, Manda, Mohadebpur, Nematpur, Porsha, Saphar, Potnitola, Atrai, Raninagar, Badalgachi, Chapai Nawabganj Sadar, Bholahat, Gomostpur, Shibganj, Nachole, Natore Sadar, Singra, Gurudaspur, Bagatipara, Boraigram, Lalpur	IGA, nutrition, health, agriculture, livestock, human rights	DWA under Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	
Char Livelihood Programme	Extreme poor households on island chars. Communities targeted for health services, village savings & loans, and cash for work.	Island chars in the districts of Kurigram, Gaibandha, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Pabna, Tangail and Jamalpur.	IGA, health, nutrition, food production, livestock, education	Rural Development and Cooperatives Division	Village Development Committees
CFPR	Poor women	33 poorest districts	Asset transfers: land, cattle, trade; and health & education to target households	Local government agencies	

Table 3: Selection of Programme Areas (Upazilas) for Case Study

Common in two phases of Shouhardo	Presence of either phase of CLP	Common in two phases of CLP	Presence of either phase of Shouhardo
Teknaf	No	Fulchhari	Yes in phase 1
Ukhiya	No	Gaibandha Sadar	Yes in phase 1
Islampur	Yes both	Saghata	Yes in phase 1
Dewanganj	Yes both		
Madarganj	No	Sundarganj	Yes in phase 1
Biswambarpur	No	Dewanganj	Yes in both
Dharmapasha	No	Islampur	Yes in both
Bera	Yes CLP 2	Char Rajibpur	Yes in phase 1
Kazipur	Yes CLP 1	Chilmari	Yes in both
Bhurungamari	Yes CLP 2	Kurigram Sadar	Yes in both
Chilmari	Yes both	Nageshwari	Yes in phase 1
Kurigram Sadar	Yes both	Phulbari	Yes in phase 1
Raumari	Yes both	Raumari	Yes in both
Ulipur	Yes both	Ulipur	Yes in both
Dimla	Yes CLP 2		
Kaunia	Yes CLP 2		

Source: Compiled from information obtained from respective Programme Offices.

III.3 Study Method

The study involved review of project documents – those available in the net as well as ones that could be obtained from offices of implementing agencies; and review of reports on the subject as well as those on the programmes. The study team had several sessions of brainstorming to structure the enquiry to be pursued. A checklist on general queries was prepared to address the four key themes: (i) identify the list of interventions/activities or program components; and make ourselves clear how these may be linked together (within a conceptual framework) to realize the objectives set; (ii) based on past experiences, are there reasons to believe that presence of some other activities (not included) would help in realizing greater benefits, and are there ones that, in retrospect, appear to be redundant. (iii) are there lessons to be learned regarding sequencing of activities, (iv) any lesson to be learned on relative resource (money and effort) allocation to various activities; and (v) insights into institutional spaces within which programme output were/could be delivered.

Field visits followed where consultations were done with beneficiary groups, implementing agencies, staffs of other development practitioners involved in the district, representatives of local elites and government departments working at the upazila or district levels.

Unanticipated events in the political space did not always permit coordinated moves; and on several occasions, consultations had to be followed up through telephone conversations.

IV. Briefs on CLP and Shouhardo and Perceived Impact Pathways

IV.1 Stated Objectives and Geographic Coverage of Shouhardo Programme

Shouhardo Title II programme (phase 1)³ was managed in conjunction with key government partners including Local Government Division, Local Government. The four Strategic Objectives (SOs) were:

1. Improved availability/economic access to food through strengthening livelihoods, entitlements and enhancing accountability of service providers;
2. Sustainable improvement in the health and nutrition of project participants;
3. Enhanced empowerment of 400,000 women and girls from targeted vulnerable households;
4. Targeted communities and institutions are better able to prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural disasters.

Shouhardo-II, Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities, spans from early 2011 till 2015. The objectives remain in line with the first phase, but recast into five SOs:

1. Availability of and access to nutritious foods enhanced and protected for 370,000 PEP households;
2. Improved health, hygiene and nutrition status of 281,000 children under 2 years of age
3. PEP women and adolescent girls empowered in their families, communities, and Union Parishad
4. Local elected bodies and government service providers responsiveness and accountability to the PEP increased
5. Targeted community members and government institutions are better prepared for, mitigate, and respond to disasters and adapt to climate change

Table 4: Geographic Coverage under two phases of Shouhardo

Region	Phase I	Phase II
Rangpur	Rangpur, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram	Rangpur, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Kurigram
Tangail, Kishoreganj, Sirajganj, Mymensingh	Tangail, Pabna, Bogra, Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj, Habiganj, Sunamganj, Mymensingh	Pabna, Bogra, Sirajganj, Sunamganj, Mymensingh, Jamalpur
Chittagong	Urban Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, Noakhali, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar	Cox's Bazar

Source: Compiled from information gathered from Care office.

³ Phase I operated during October 2004 to May 2010 with supports from USAID.

IV.2 Stated Objectives and Geographic Coverage of CLP

Char Livelihoods Programme (CLP) was initiated by Rural Development and Cooperatives Division and is currently jointly funded by the UKAid through the Department for International Development and the Australian Government (through AusAID). The programme is implemented by commissioning the services of Maxwell Stamp Plc.

The outputs of the programme were defined to include the followings⁴:

1. To reduce vulnerability of char dwellers through targeted provision of infrastructure and services
2. Poor char dwellers able to effectively sustain their livelihoods and engage in the local and national economy
3. Poor char-dwellers effectively influence local and national policy and service provision as citizens.

The first phase of the CLP (CLP-1) ran between 2004 and 2010, and worked on the chars of the Jamuna River in the districts of Kurigram, Bogra, Gaibandha, Sirajganj and Jamalpur, spread over 150 char Unions in 28 Upazilas. CLP-2 began in April 2010 and follows on from CLP-1, but with a redefined working area. It continues to work in Kurigram, Gaibandha and Jampalpur where CLP-1 was implemented (though the unions may differ), and covers the additional districts of Lalmonhirat, Nilpharmari, Rangpur, Pabna and Tangail. CLP-2 will run until 2016.

IV.3 Perceived Impact Pathways

Tables 2 and 3 summarize the major interventions reportedly made by the two programmes. Corresponding to each component, target beneficiaries and expected outcomes are also mentioned. Move towards multi-sector programmes had been associated with transfer of (income-generating) asset to households/individuals considered as the central component. In both cases, major assets transferred include cattle and poultry. In addition, emphasis has been on crop/horticulture production on homesteads and/or leased land to influence intake of nutritious food. A second set of assets transferred aimed to improve living conditions having direct bearings on health and nutrition of household members. CLP puts greater emphasis on improving the health system compared to what one observes under Shouhardo. Generally groups act more as vehicles/platforms to perform such other functions as awareness raising or training. However, Village Development Committees (VDCs) are reported to play primary role in planning resource allocations.

⁴ See Annex 3 for details.

Table 5: Major Shouhardo Interventions and expected outcomes

Intervention type/Component	Target	Expected Outcome
1. Asset transfers		
1A. Promote livestock sector		<i>Food Security (FSI)/ Access & availability:</i> - Increased production leads to increased income enabling the household to access more and better food and nutrition. - Increased domestic production of nutritious food is expected to encourage relatively more intake of nutritious food
- transfer Goat/Cow	Household- procured from market	
- support cattle health services (vet services), alleged – not found	Household	
1B. Poultry raising/farming (hen/duck)	Household- procured from market	
1C. Agriculture production by promoting access to land lease	Community	
1C. Fishery – fingerlings	Household- procured from market	
2. Food transfer: a package of rice, lentil and edible oil - meant for the target individuals	Pregnant and lactating mothers and children under age of 5 years	Meant to improve nutritional status of target population
3. Homestead gardening (seed, fertilizer, sapling)	Household	[Same as (1)]
4. Diversified crop cultivations	Household	
5. Skill training on food processing and handicrafts	Individuals. Households	Expands opportunities in non-crop and non-agriculture sectors – enhances income and diversity reduces vulnerability
6. Cash support for grocery shops	Individuals, households	
7. Construction of market places	Community	Better prices (and income) to producers
8. Asset transfers for use of all household members		
- Sanitary latrine	Household/community	Creating enabling environment (including flood protection) to enhance utilization of food – improved extraction of nutrition from food. The wage for employment in case plinth raising interlinks FS1 with FSN1.
- Hand Tubewell with platforms (if necessary)	Household/community	
- Plinth raising	Household	
9. Girls and women empowerment through EKATA	Individuals	Awareness/ knowledge; Groups as vehicles for planning in poor neighborhood/clusters.
10. Awareness raising program on HHN through courtyard session	clusters	
11. Formation of Village Development Committees	community	

Source: Compiled from various project documents and from consultations.

Table 6: Major CLP Interventions and expected outcomes

Intervention type/Component	Target	Expected Outcome
1. Asset transfers		<i>Food Security (FSI)/ Access & availability:</i> - Increased production leads to increased income enabling the household to access more and better food and nutrition. - Increased domestic production of nutritious food is expected to encourage relatively more intake of nutritious food - Supporting services are addressed to sustain the newly introduced production regime. -Skill development for vet services in communities [Choice set expanded with increased income. Relative prices of nutritious food made favorable with increase in domestic production.]
1A. Promote livestock (Cattle/Bull/cow) sector		
- transfer Cattle/Bull/cow (+ stipend)	Individuals/household	
- support cattle health services (vet services)	community + service market	
- artificial insemination	+ service market	
- milk marketing	+ service market	
- fodder cultivation	cattle owner + farmers + private service	
1B. Poultry raising/farming	Individuals/household	
1C. Agriculture production by promoting access to land lease	Households	
2. Homestead gardening	Households	FS1: (Same as above, with emphasis on domestic availability leading to)
3. Supports to agriculture - extension, seed and Compost	Households + service market	
4. Asset transfers for use of all household members		Creating enabling environment (including flood protection) to enhance utilization of food – improved extraction of nutrition from food. The wage for employment in case plinth-raising interlinks FS1 with FSN1. [Labor and expenditure saving expanding choices.]
- Sanitary latrine	Household	
- Hand Tubewell with platforms (if necessary)	household + neighbors	
- Plinth raising (providing wage employment to members of beneficiary and non-beneficiary households)	Households	
5. Establish independent health and family planning service network (paramedics, <i>Shasthya Karmi</i> and <i>Shastyha Kendra</i>)	Community + service market	Have strong feedback positives on food & nutrition status of individuals and households. Skill development for sustenance of service market. [Expenditure saving – thus expanding choice set.]
6. Group-based activities (beneficiary training, savings)	Individuals	Awareness/knowledge; interlinks savings with expenditure on food & nutrition

Source: Compiled from various project documents and from consultations.

V. An Assessment of Programme Designs and Recommendations

V.1 General Observations

Most of the discussions on the two programmes so far were based on review of documents and reports. However, stated objectives and activities may often differ from actual practices. Field observations on the two programmes are detailed in Annexes 3 and 4. This section addresses specific questions raised at the beginning, primarily dealing with choice of activities, their sequencing, relative emphasis and the institutional arrangement of delivering services to target population. The discussion below also makes recommendations where applicable.

Given the perspective on assessment, it was not expected that appropriate data would be available. Moreover, where such data possibly exist⁵, getting access was a problem. Since limited cooperation was extended to the research team on the understanding that none was obliged to share data, the assessment largely draws upon consultations and reviews.

There is one pre-design element that we found non-conducive to internal learning. Increasingly the accumulation of knowledge and its continuity lay with few individuals and agencies involved in delivering ‘development goods’, though many of whom rarely owned it. Along with it, as noted in field notes summarized in Annex 3, the relations across vertical tiers amongst fund management/lead agencies and operational heads/implementing agencies lack trusts; with each (possibly) having independently defined interests and lack of convergence impacts negatively on the realization of the common purpose that brought the parties together. This was reported by representatives of several implementing partner NGOs as well as by professionals having experiences working with the management agencies. All these meant, information gathering by consultations provides fragmented understanding; which normally bias the lessons drawn from past to design new projects (or, an extension). It is generally recognized that prevalence of fragmented knowledge not tied to a holistic perspective may lead to multiple inferences, particularly in the absence of a unique triangulation method. In spite of the limitation, the broad observations of the study team are summarized in this section.

V.2 Intervention choice/ Choice of Activities

It appears that a multi-sector programme ought to have monitoring and systematic analysis of data to feed into decisions at all tiers. This is found to be less than adequately addressed. It is true that data are collected, either by the center or through independent agencies – more so under CLP than under Shouhardo. Unfortunately, a mechanism to involve players at all tiers and to provide regular (if real time is not feasible) feedback to programme implementation is missing. Decades back, there had been excessive data collection in the name of monitoring. Currently, there seems to be more data collection for academic purposes and for exchange of knowledge in distant territories – having little contribution to qualitatively change development practices in Bangladesh and the ground-level institutional capacity to enrich

⁵ In some cases, the study team felt that the data that should have been collected and maintained were either not collected or not systematically retained.

development practices. Added to the above setting is the absence of baseline (objective) data in cases of some outcome variables, such as, health of livestock transferred to/owned by beneficiaries. In the absence of such data, it is not possible to know the impact of vaccination and veterinary services on livestock health⁶.

Central to both the programmes is asset transfer; and cattle of some form and size surfaces prominently. A pertinent question is: would it matter if this was replaced by cash transfers leaving it to the beneficiaries to decide on its best use. While there are ample evidence of monetization of cattle received by poor (particularly, extreme poor) households, it is also true that the local economy gets endowed with large stock of cattle due to tied funds disbursed during the programme period. The latter subsequently lays the ground for opening up of chilling plants for milk collection adding value to local produce.

One may however note that there are ample instances of closing down such plants in other parts of the country (including one in Balashighat, Gaibandha)⁷; and transfers of cattle to households in a locality reportedly drive the prices up by almost 20 to 25%. The windfall gains may temporarily attract many to engage in cow fattening activities. Generally speaking, the transfers distort market prices and induce regional biases in investments.⁸ If the locality is considered suitable for raising cattle and the comparative advantage is assumed to prevail over a long period, there is every justification for such transfers. Such claims would be akin to infant industry argument, where programme designers are able to see the long term benefits that private traders and investors are unable to see.⁹ There is insufficient data to reach a firm conclusion – however, the ERG team feels that future programme designs ought to look deeper into the pros and cons of cattle-centric asset transfers.

Through a prolong exposure to external assistance, people in the north-northwestern region with river erosion have come to appreciate the needs of better living. We found matching of their demands with stated willingness of programme managers to supply in one particular case – household and community-level supports to infrastructure for WASH – safe water, sanitation and hygiene. Unfortunately, actual resource supply is found to have fallen short. Given the positive contributions of these interventions to nutritional security of people in the programme area, there is a need to upscale these activities. These services have certain

⁶ Refers to CLP programme and claims. It is also felt that the baseline survey could have collected data on anthropometric, food security, nutrient intake, and dietary behavior to enable proper impact assessment of CLP interventions.

⁷ Data on closure of chilling plant is not available in any one place; and could not be compiled for the study. However, the anecdote evidence got registered during field visits to Satkhira and parts of northwest by members of the research team.

⁸ Issues around resource transfer and technology transfer associated with asset transfer (such as, giving away cattle) has received little attention. It is generally recognized that all areas in Bangladesh are not equally suitable for cattle fattening and/or cattle raising for milk production. Resource allocation may be further distorted if free (or, subsidized) cattle transfers lead to investments on milk processing (such as the chilling) plants and the milk supply is not sustained in the long term.

⁹ Some of the programme designs clearly acknowledged the fact that the potential can be better harnessed only if all related activities are addressed simultaneously. The efforts thus extended to marketing as well as to ensure adequate supply of inputs, for example, by promoting fodder cultivation. In some instances, such initiatives failed due to reliance on external specie marginalizing the local variety grass. During field visits, the ERG team also noticed a general failure in promoting local knowledge on better fodder management, i.e. treating paddy grass with molasses and storing it through silage system.

characteristics and require certain endowments that provide an extra edge to government agencies on the supply side; and failures in such deliveries have resulted in unmet demand. One may therefore probe into the obstacles and potential entry points for private agencies to contribute towards expanding the availability of these services. If the optimism holds, programme designs during transitional phase ought to address ways to encourage competitive non-government/private sector players in the market.

Rather quietly, conditions have been created to open up retailing services in the health sector and also in agriculture extension and vet services. However, the current expectations of rural poor go beyond the coverage and quality of services provided by community health centers; and group members demand more. In addition, the retailers (individuals operating in various service fields) may not be able to sustain beyond programme period unless natural organic entities emerge in the forms of either private health initiatives and/or more robust and pro-poor health care system. This work towards sustenance may be an important component in areas where the basics have been achieved.¹⁰

One observes inertias in programme designs in several areas. Three are worth mentioning: supply-driven training for awareness and skill development; groups and group formations; and sticking to the old emphasis on women. No one will possibly debate that all these had immensely contributed towards social development in rural areas of Bangladesh. However, their merits in changing economic, social and political environment in future need scrutiny. It appears that the group activities have not tried to (or, could not) reach the youth/young generation, nor are there programmes to prepare them for improving livelihood of their parents and families. There is a new generation with basic education, but lacks proper linkage with markets for remunerative employment. This was particularly felt in areas with limited tangible investments to generate off-farm employment; and the research team feels that undertaking programmes on computer literacy to connect with urban service sector, orientation to connect with industrial work force and overseas employment; etc. are worth pursuing.¹¹

The experiment with groups of the poor finds rationale in past failures to target deliveries. It is commonly recognized that the rich and powerful members in a group accrue most (i.e., disproportionately higher) benefits, especially when such groups act as conduits of delivering resources to a target population. It is also evident that having groups of only poor households fails to push forward development agenda in local society. Both the programmes are found to suffer from this dilemma; and needs to do the homework on experimental designs, that possibly will have dynamic roadmap on the roles and composition of groups. The last point draws attention to the gender-specific roles played by members, both through direct

¹⁰ It is found that commercial and viable innovation in government livestock project (e.g. Brahmin Cow Extension Project) was not explored in CLP areas. This means that CLP was not able to portray its programme area as potential extension area for the viable projects. It also appears that CLP missed the opportunity of market linkages with private organizations and NGOs (Maize to poultry feed producers)

¹¹ As already noted, the programmes generally failed to keep pace with the inter-generational dynamics. In most cases, children of the beneficiary groups confront a different set of problems with increased exposure to education; which their parents are not always able to appreciate and are mostly unable to provide guidance. Thus, the designs ought to seek out-of-box processes to update information on needs; and not fully rely on the PRA feedbacks from group members.

involvements and indirect participation. It is speculated that some of the political extremism may be rooted in our failures to integrate rural males in development processes!

V3. Sequencing of Interventions and their Relative Importance

Generally, implementation of an asset transfer model kicks off with a resource mapping which covers physical, human, institutional and social capital/resources. It is commonly acknowledged that programmes of one or the other kind have been in operation for decades; and discussion on sequencing of activities cannot ignore the past. It was felt that there is a lack of continuity of knowledge at institutional levels and where there are information, it is not updated on a regular basis. There are instances where an old list of beneficiaries is passed on to the next project to guide the allocations and delivery, often for a different purpose. The practice is akin to the old practice with ration cards (and the BPL cards in various states in India), where the purpose is to deliver relief goods to a pre-identified group. Since the programmes seek to transform the lives of poor people in an area, regular updating of resource maps is necessary, particularly when non-tangible resources (that are more susceptible to changes) provide greater opportunities for transformation.

With regards to CLP 1, following suggestions were made by the team visiting the fields:

- Pilot of Primary Health Care and Family Planning project (PHC-FP) could have been introduced earlier;
- Nutrition related awareness could be given earlier in Social Development Group Meetings;
- Need assessment and feasibility of market of products such as, milk, fodder, etc could have been done before introducing these in the programme; and
- Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) could have been introduced earlier (later part of 1st phase) to encourage savings among the beneficiaries

Interviews with various stakeholders in Jamalpur and Madarganj (in particular, NGO staffs and beneficiaries) revealed the need to place a given programme (or a phase of a programme) in the historical context and in continuity of past developments, synchronized with other activities under way. It also revealed the limitation of the methodology initially proposed. An illustration may be cited. A group that the team met has been reportedly formed since 2008. Most of the CAPs with hand-written lists of projects proposed are with the group leader. Members have aged and so have their priorities. The children have grown up and are now ready to enter (or already have entered) the labor market. The programme is still operating with the old set of members and there is apparently a severe lack of understanding of the new needs of the community. A fresh mapping would have to account for the demographic shift, assess the size of social capital that binds members across generations, major shifts in educational endowments of erstwhile poor, uneven prosperity (or lack of it) achieved by families of different members within the group, etc. The research team got the impression that no attempt was made to revise the old mapping – and new information, based on colors, pertain to nutritional status.

V.4 Institutional space

Several observations are made below:

- Relative strength of the NGOs (local and international) as change agents has declined over the years. While civil administration remains the conduit of enforcements, compared to the 1990's, political representatives and network of corporate interests are more important in resource allocation. Thus programme initiators/sponsors and implementing agencies ought to design taking due cognizance of the changed scenario.
- Elsewhere it was noted that the hierarchies within a vertically structured 'development industry' suffer from cost inefficiencies arising out of lack of trust. In this regard the principal actor(s) need to revisit the purposes of spending and critically review the current institutional arrangements to remove inefficiencies.
- Long term sustenance of development initiatives ought to identify local stakeholders who are willing to own the agenda for their self-interest. In case of multi-sector programme covering large area, one obvious stakeholder is the local government – both elected and government employees. There has generally been a failure to realize transfer of ownership. On the contrary, the past tradition of using government resources at the margin continues. The blame is not necessarily on the programme personnel. On the contrary, local bodies may often be willing to own anything and be happy to only extract benefits ('rents'). Unfortunately, both programmes have failed to address the issue. Nor were they able to create CBOs or strengthen the local NGOs to ensure continuation of initiatives. Possibly the best option remains strengthening local government in terms of professional ability and nurturing of values that are pro-people.
- The experiment with fund management agencies is already a decade old and need critical review. From donor's perspective, it has merits on account of reduced workload for the donor bureaucracy. However, on the negatives, a high cost has to be paid and knowledge does not accumulate locally. Thus, the alternative route through trusting and strengthening local organizations deserve a fresh look.
- The above is also linked with the process of institutional level obligation to generate pro-poor employment, that may have faltered due to a change in the way of 'doing business' in the 'development industry'. At the least, potential private sector agencies need to be identified if the transformative process has to continue – of course, with regular revision of course.

V.5 Miscellaneous

This final section lists several other observations from the field that may be addressed in future revisions of programmes:

- Accountability across different tiers appear to be lacking – beneficiaries, local partner/ implementing NGO, project office (management agency/INGO), etc.
- Current practice of imparting training with too many subjects conveyed to a group of trainees over a short time span may fail to transfer knowledge in effective manner.¹²

¹² Social Development Group meetings consisted session of 52 weeks which seemed to be too lengthy for a beneficiary to attend carefully and practice accordingly in their own and family lives.

An alternative could be through participatory review with more time spent on a single member. This would however call for qualified field staff with ability to acquire knowledge on several subjects. It is suggested that the alternatives be revisited.

- Areas chosen for multi-sector programmes are generally disaster-prone areas. Disaster Risk Reduction activities in geographically vulnerable areas ought to be integrated adequately with the broader components – this was found to be lacking. Thus, asset loss remains significant.
- Measure of food security with indicators of “access to food” only fails to account for the complexities and seasonality. Food utilization (consumed food) is also important and needs to be taken into account for measuring nutritional impact on people.
- CLP 1 did not regularly monitor children under 5 and mother’s nutritional status using both anthropometry and by measuring hemoglobin concentration.
- Local and indigenous variety of vegetables and fruits could be included in nutrition awareness and group meetings on nutrition.

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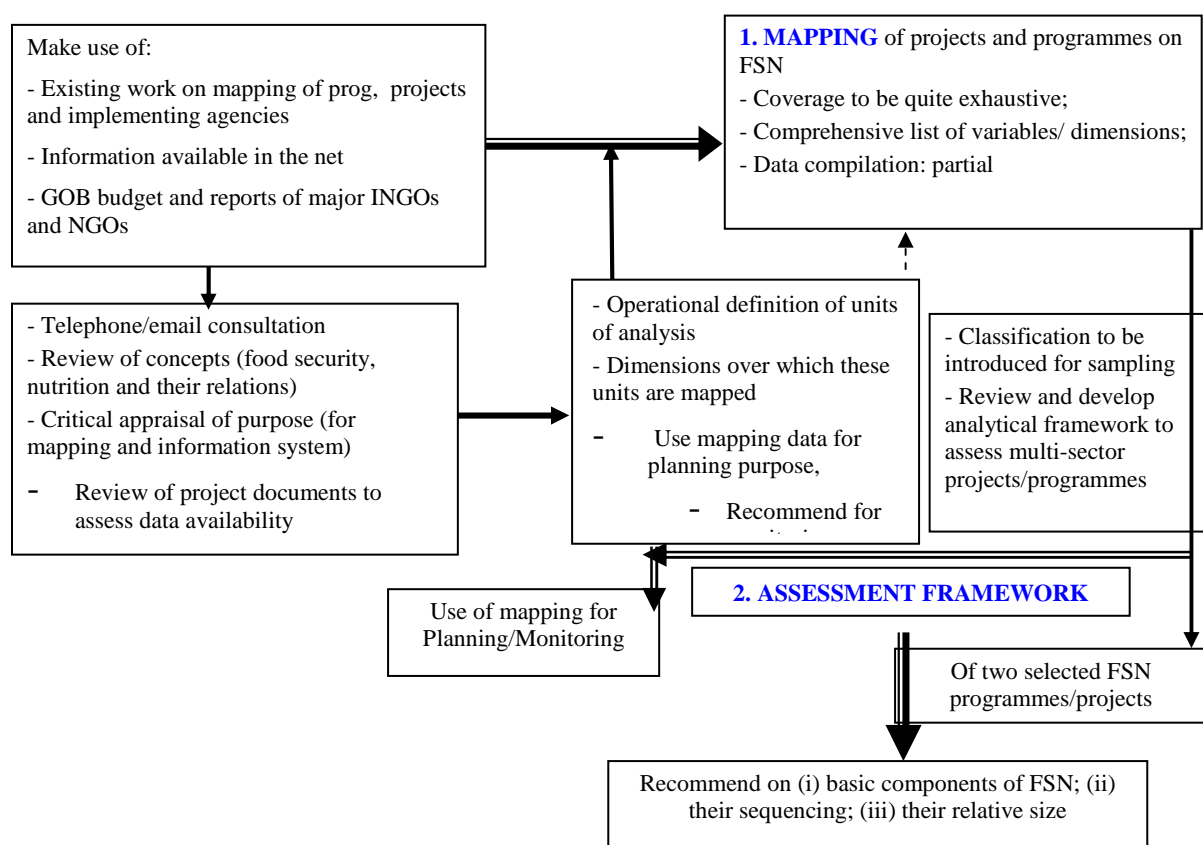
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Annex 1: Brief on Study Objectives and Scope of the Assessment Component

The ERG research team was expected to develop a framework for appropriate compilation of project-level data, compile such data from secondary sources as exhaustively as possible, use those to provide insights into best practices related to policies and practices pertaining to FSN, and undertake assessment of two selected programmes of multi-sector nature based on consultations with relevant stakeholders. It is only the last part which the current report deals with. The figure below, borrowed from the Inception Report, places the task in the overall context of the assignment.

Figure A.1: Interlinked components – revised proposal



Annex 2: Shouhardo Activities

Table xx: Shouhardo I

	Interventions	Community	Household	Institutional modality
SO 1	Support to Core Occupational Group ('start up grant', Input, training)	VDC	-Increased income leads to increased availability and accessibility of food -Increased non-food expenditures	-CAP by VDC under project staff -Resource person training by government staff/NGO staffs - Private vendors contracted to through tenders for input delivery or marketing of inputs. (Local NGOs, government, private sector, community people, VDC)
	Homestead gardening (input supply, training)		-Increased own production increased availability and accessibility -Increased income leading to potential increase in availability and accessibility	Local NGOs, private sector
SO 2	Food ration (package: 12 kg wheat, ½ kg lentil and 1½ liter edible oil)	UP	-Increased nutrient intake of pregnant & lactating mother -Increased intake of food by other household members	Direct (Care Regional office)
	Food counseling and caring practices, hygiene & health education		-Improved knowledge leading to improved food expenditure/choice of food items -Improved utilization of knowledge	Local NGOs/ DPH
	Sanitation and water supply (provision of tube well and latrine)	VDC	Increased utilization through increased practices	Local NGOs
	Linkage with health providers		Increased utilization as a result of improved practices	Government, local NGOs
SO 3	Awareness, entitlements - Information dissemination - legal counseling -health & nutrition education	VDC as platform to engage	Increased utilization of knowledge	Government, local NGOs (training)
SO 4	Plinth raising, GIS mapping, etc	VDC, UP		Government, local NGOs
	Construction of roads and hat bazaar	VDC, UP	Enhanced received from sell of produce	
	ECD	VDC, UP		

SO1: Improved availability / economic access to food through strengthening livelihoods, entitlements and enhancing accountability of service providers

SO2: Sustainable improvement in the health and nutrition of project participants; SO3: Enhanced empowerment of 400,000 women and girls from targeted vulnerable HHs; SO4:

Targeted communities and institutions are better able to prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural disasters

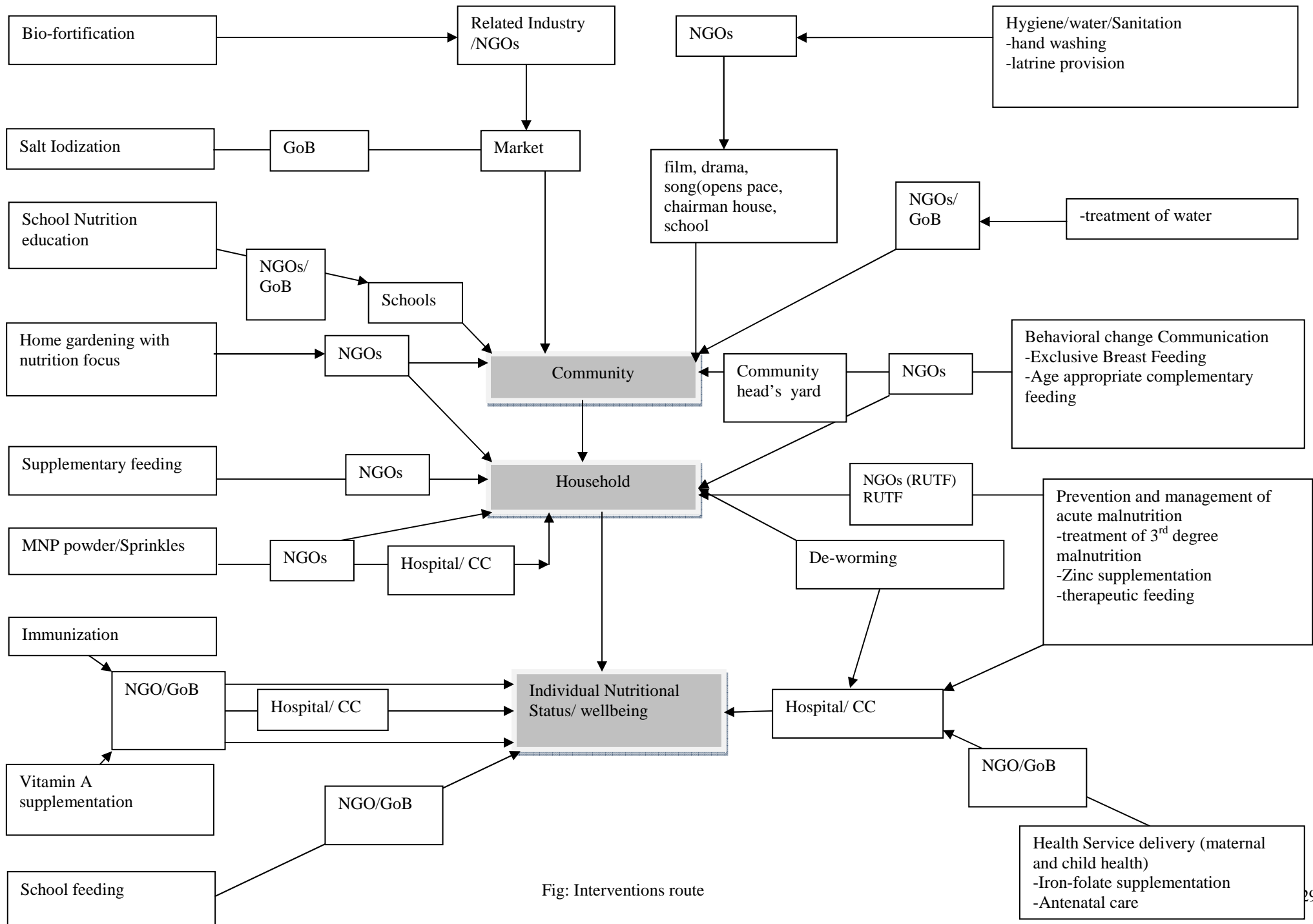


Fig: Interventions route

Annex 3: Field Notes on Shouhardo Activities in Madarganj, Jamalpur

1. Coverage

Initial information suggested that Madarganj is one upazila where CLP has not been in operation. The research team however faced difficulties since the implementing NGO changed and activity areas in terms of unions within the upazila had also undergone changes. The major challenge was the high turnover in the position of chief executive to run the programme on behalf of CARE – there were five Project Directors in four years! With supports from Dhaka CARE office and active cooperation from the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (who were the previous implementing NGO) and local offices of ESDO and Unnayan Sangho; the team was able to undertake limited consultations in the fields – at Jamalpur and Madarganj upazila.

There are seven unions in Madarganj upazila, and Shouhardo reportedly works in six of those: Adarbhita, Balijuri, Char Pakerdaha, Gunaritola, Karaichura, and Jorekhali unions. Once in the field, we realized that CLP operated in three unions, with (union-level) overlaps in Balijuri and Gunaritola.

2. Initial Activities

The first and foremost task in the CARE model for Shouhardo was the beneficiary selection that followed advocacy campaigns during CARE's first year of involvement. The team was unable to get lists of beneficiaries from the project or CARE offices. At the VDC level, the village plans along with list of members could be seen, but not for all past years. During long interviews on the issue, the team got the impression that there is an original list that may be in circulation over several projects, and systematic record-keeping may be absent. There are however nodal points in individuals (women in the locality) who liaison with project staffs as and when activities or resource transfers are done.

Village Development Committees (VDCs)¹³ play pivotal role within the CARE model – though, for all practical purposes, these are committees with members hailing from poor households in a cluster/neighborhood, which is normally a part of a village. The mapping and planning exercises that are undertaken every year identify a list of demands at the community level and desires of members to undertake income generating activities. The resource mapping that iterates through revisions across the beneficiary members, NGO staffs and the CARE office converge to a set of items that, for obvious reasons, ought to be tailored to conform with the distribution available from the source. One should not forget the importance of the local bodies (such as the Union and Upazila Parishads), which may also claim a portion of the resources, often for the right reason. For the latter, however, the partner NGO and CARE engage in consultations at UP levels.

3. Major Components/Interventions

Shouhardo in Madarganj claim to organize their activities under six broad heads: MCHN, IGA, Comprehensive Homestead Development, Infrastructure, Risk & Resource Map for Union Parishad, and ECD. The activities are further elaborated below.

¹³ There are 24 VDCs in Madarganj. Local population (households) are grouped into five; extreme poor, poor, lower-middle, middle and rich. Poor are those owning 30 decimals or less land and whose major source earning is from labor activities. Of the poor, those with no land, no proper housing and/or depend on begging, are considered extreme poor. VDCs are said to be formed by the latter two groups only.

Other than awareness through training (often engaging resource persons of wide range of quality from government offices) and monitoring (through VDCs and CARE's outsourcing), two important assets, noted in the text, are transferred to beneficiary households. The first is the supplementary food for lactating and pregnant women – a food ration of 12 kg wheat flour, ½ kg lentil and 1½ liter USAID sealed fortified edible oil. Though no independent figure on cost of delivery could be obtained for the area, it was alleged that quite a bit of fuss is made over its distribution and the cost of ensuring non-leakage is not insignificant. There is clearly a 'mistrust' prevailing between various tiers in the hierarchy – the EDP, INGO, local NGO, UP and VDC, and the members of the poor households! And such mistrust provided the rationale for incurring greater cost on monitoring. In spite of all the checks and balance, it is commonly recognized that the nutrition meant for pregnant and lactating women are shared by all members of the household, thus, failing to achieve the targets originally set. Interestingly, food supports/ration does not show up in the list of demands placed in CAP; it is more supply-driven. In contrast, demand for sanitary latrine, the second important asset transfer under MCHN, has increased over the years – but mostly remain unfulfilled due to lack of resources allocated by the center to that head.

Several alternative livelihood options (IGAs) have been supported in Madarganj under Shouhardo. The list includes, corner shops, vegetable vendors, handicrafts, dry fish, cow rearing and fish net. Resources are also transferred to VDCs, such as boats, meant to strengthen their capacity. The members revealed their preference for cattle during a consultation session with a VDC. Two possible reasons were later raised by the organizers – first, it was too easily fungible; and on the positive side, a milk collection chilling point was being set up and the members were anticipating new opportunities. As a matter of fact, there is great deal of demand for goats under the third component, comprehensive homestead development (CHD). Under the latter, distribution of seeds and saplings (fruits and timber) is included. Normally, a package of CHD extended to poor households is worth Tk. 1500 – Tk. 400 for sapling, Tk. 100 for seeds and Tk. 1000 for a kid. While the amount for goat rearing as an IGA goes up to Tk. 3000; the amount is inadequate even for an EP (extreme poor) household; and the likelihood of treating it as a 'treat' is high.

Promoting IGA in field agriculture through accessing land lease market could not be pursued in Madarganj since landowners are not keen on leasing out land and there is not much land at the disposal of local authority. Initiatives to access 'khas' land from local administration were reported in a neighboring upazila (Melandah). However, no probing could be done on the subject.

Infrastructure accounts for the fourth major component of Shauhardo interventions; and includes tubewell platform, bridge & culverts, earthen roads, plinth-raising and school/flood shelters. Several members of a local group reported that the CAP included many items amongst which the ones under infrastructure received the least financial supports from the sponsors. The major casualties were roads, electricity, bridge and housing. There were however resources spent on tubewell platforms, few small culverts and plinth-raising. Quite a substantial amount of resources on infrastructure however went to build UP Complex at Adarbhita union. One hears similar story for Melandah where the money was spent on building school-cum flood shelter.

A fifth component was on Risk and Resource map for UP. Under it, the local disaster management committee was equipped with megaphones, torch lights, life jackets and tracers. In addition, supports were extended to test for arsenic presence in drinking water; and for latrines. The sixth component promoted establishment of ECD and Community Resource Centers – there are respectively 14 and 4 of these in Madarganj.

4. Observations on Processes and Outcomes

Without substantive elaboration, several observations may be made:

- There are differences between what the beneficiaries demand and what the project people are willing to offer. The mismatch has two contrary elements. In some instances, allocations are pre-determined within which the parameters of consultations get defined. There are however others who may object to populist positioning on certain critical decisions. This view presumes that the limited exposure restricts many target beneficiaries from perceiving the wider opportunities and from choosing the appropriate actions. Thus, justifications are sought in favor of top-down approach. Both have merits and demerits; and it appears that the limited visions coupled with each tier of executives pretending to be a philanthropist with others' money, have led to attracting the negatives of both. Beneficiaries have often their own game plans and demand resources that have high short-term payoffs. The higher management, getting caught between various social and political forces, and having the urge to disburse at a faster pace, end up choosing projects that neither satisfy the short term demands of beneficiaries nor ensure a long term environment for improved opportunities.
- There has been a disruption of mutual trusts across different tiers in the vertical line-up. Thus, knowledge acquired at the bottom is not in demand while higher-ups plan for future. For obvious reason, there is therefore no urge to invest to strengthen the bottom.
- There has been fast erosion in both professionalism and human values within the government agencies at local levels where one expects the enhanced capacity to own and sustain development agendas. Apparently, ownership does not lie with any agency – each operates and delivers ensuring formal obligations stipulated in a contract, rarely does the spirit flare. On the contrary, programme activities often accommodate many in trainings as 'experts' only to appease the system.
- There is another instance which revealed lack of coordination. It was found during the field visit that a chilling plant was being set up by Milk Vita in the same compound where the partner NGO had its office. While political interests may influence such resource allocation, one would expect the investment to concur with availability of milk. Interestingly, the NGOs were not aware of the investment; and the Milk Vita representative never felt the need to contact the local NGOs while forming and enlisting different cooperative groups and collectors. One may conjecture two possibilities: (i) in case the Shauharido beneficiaries are among many owners of milking cows, they are likely to get marginalized in marketing; and (ii) most of the beneficiaries may no more be owning the asset to gain from the entry of Milk Vita in the market; and those who do, may be large enough to connect with the marketing agencies independent of any intermediation through NGOs/project offices.
- Choice of income-earning activities is rather limited in Madarganj. Many mentioned of handicrafts and stitching, but soon acknowledged that those activities paid very little. There was also a frustration amongst beneficiary parents whose children successfully graduated out of schools and did not know what to do next. Unfortunately, neither the organizers nor the beneficiaries appear to know the ways out; and the ones designing a new phase of the project for funding may find it convenient to maintain status quo.
- With increasing encroachment of colors to differentiate individuals and households, more relevant information is no more on demand. And the colors are only meant to guide the 'mechanically-driven' grassroot agents to know the destinations of their deliverables, depriving any knowledge accumulation at local levels. No wonder, it also deprives the higher-ups from knowing the local level dynamics.

Annex 4: CLP Activities in Gozaria Union, Fulchari Upazila, Gaibandha district

1 Introduction of CLP

The Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP) works with extreme poor households living on island chars in north western Bangladesh, and aims to improve the livelihoods of over one million people. The CLP is jointly funded by UKaid through the Department for International Development and the Australian Government (AusAID), sponsored by the Rural Development and Co-operatives Division of the Government of Bangladesh's Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, and implemented through Maxwell Stamp Plc.

The outputs of the programme were defined to include:

1. To reduce vulnerability of char dwellers through targeted provision of infrastructure and services
2. Poor char dwellers able to effectively sustain their livelihoods and engage in the local and national economy
3. Poor char-dwellers effectively influence local and national policy and service provision as citizens

The first phase of the CLP (CLP-1) ran between 2004 and 2010, and worked on the chars of the Jamuna River in the districts of Kurigram, Bogra, Gaibandha, Sirajgonj and Jamalpur (150 char unions in 28 upazilas). CLP-1 targeted 55,000 of the poorest households and is estimated to have benefitted more than 900,000 people. The households received a package which included:

1. An income generating asset of their own choice valued at Tk. 16,000 (approximately equivalent to GBP 140);
2. Access to clean water and a sanitary latrine;
3. Homestead raised on a plinth above the highest known flood level;
4. Stipend payments for 18 months for cattle raising;
5. Access to a village savings and loans group;
6. Access to a social development group (between 20 and 25 other female core participants) comprising a modular course lasting 18 months;
7. Various livelihoods training and inputs;
8. Vouchers to access the CLP's health services

The selection criteria to be eligible for the programme households must:

1. Have been living for at least six months on island char;
2. Have no ownership or access to land;
3. Have no regular source of income;
4. Must not own more than two goats/sheep, or 10 fowl or one shared cow;
5. Not have an outstanding loan from a micro-finance institute;
6. Not be receiving cash/asset grants from another programme;
7. Be willing to attend weekly group meetings for 18 months.

2 Profile of Gazaria Union, Fulchhari

Total population of the union is 25659 and number of households are 4437 (among these, extreme poor: 3120; middle income: 750; and rick: 367¹⁴). Main crop is paddy and most of households are farmer. There are 18 primary schools and 11 non-formal schools. In the union, six NGOs (ASA, Brac, SDEF, Sreejoni Bangladesh, and TMSS) operate. There are three weekly markets held regularly in different villages of the union.

¹⁴ Based on wealth ranking of the GUK project staff

3 Sequence of activities of CLP at Gozaria Union

3.1 Selection of Core Participant households (CPHs)

Methods of identification included PRA, wealth ranking, and telling the criteria to the char dwellers. Beneficiaries were selected based on 6 criteria by the implementing organization. Selected participant list was shared with CLP Bogra through email. The CLP office, Bogra, verified 5% of the selected beneficiaries randomly, and sent recommendations where necessary. IMO took necessary steps accordingly. A third party (research firm) also verified the list randomly.

After verification, the final list of beneficiaries was approved by CLP Bogra. Total number of beneficiaries in Gajaria union was 524 (1.1: 187; 1.2: 198; 1.3: 41; 1.4: 98). If any beneficiary leaves the programme for different reasons, such as, migration or death of beneficiary, new beneficiary was not included in that area.

3.2 Baseline survey of Households

IMO collected a 5 page baseline questionnaire data from the core participants of CLP. Questionnaire included demographic, socio-economic (land, assets, monthly income and expenditure, last month income of the households, savings, credit) variables. Baseline data were entered into the computerized data base system using Access, and then transferred to the CLP Office, Bogra. No other variables regarding food intake was found in the baseline questionnaire.

IMO has no recorded monitoring or follow up data of these CLP beneficiaries. They had internal monitoring system for measuring performance of their progress of CLP

3.3 Group formation and group meeting

The CLP group consisted of 15-20 participants who lived in nearby areas. In 7 villages of Gozaria Union, 524 core beneficiaries were included among 2145 households. As soon as groups were formed for different phases of CLP, group meetings started. The CLP beneficiaries had to attend 52 group meetings over a period of 18 months of engagement with CLP programme. During these group sessions, several issues of social, environmental, health, disaster, and social security were addressed.

3.4 Asset transfer

Several group meetings were held before delivering the asset to core beneficiary. In the initial meeting, a list of IGAs had been discussed in details. Pros and cons of every item were told to CPHs, and they were asked to choose IGA asset. Social development and livelihood supervisor were present in the meeting. Before asset transfer two more orientations and one training session related to that was held. During that training session, Livestock Officer and Upazilla Livestock Officer were present. Before asset transfer two more orientations and one training session related to that were held.

After the training session the beneficiary was asked to bring her husband or relatives with her at the *haat* (weekly market) to buy cattle of their own choice within the budget of Tk. 16000. If they wanted to buy cattle priced over Tk.16000, they would have to pay the additional money, and if they bought cattle below Tk.16000, they could buy other assets (goat/ hen) with the rest. In the *haat*, *LDO*, *LO*, *supervisors*, *CDO*, and *PM* were present. Stipend was

also given for eighteen months—Tk.600 per month for the first six months and Tk.300 per month for the rest 12 months. Of the Tk. 600, Tk.350 was for the fodder, and the remaining for house management cost. Not necessarily, the beneficiary households bought the fodder, rather in most instances, they collected fodder from char.

During the time of the field visit (January-February 2013), milk price per liter was Tk 25 if the client collected milk from the shed, and Tk 30 per liter if delivered by the owner of the cow. At least 30 % of pregnancies are infused through artificial insemination (AI). Majority of the CLP 1 core participant beneficiaries preferred cattle rearing, of whom approximately 40% chose bull cow and the rest chose milking cow. In the union, 492 cattle were distributed (bull: 173; heifer: 311; cow: 8) and 15 artificial insemination were done and 3 were cross breed.

3.5 Plinth raising, latrine, TW

The act of plinth-raising serves three purposes: improve land for vegetable gardening, better access to sanitation facilities, and access to safe drinking water. In addition, the project generates temporary (often, slack-season) wage employment for members of both beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. The cost of constructing plinth in a regular homestead ranged from Tk. 9000 to Tk.16000. It created employment among CLP beneficiaries during *Monga* period; they could work 5 days a week. No tubewell¹⁵ was provided in Gazaria. Price of latrine was Tk.4000-7000. Cost of platform is Tk.200. In the union, 584 plinths were raised, 562 latrines and 20 tubewells were installed with 125 platforms' support for other tubewells during different phases of CLP 1.

3.6 Homestead gardening support

Homestead gardening was mandatory for all core participants of CLP. For this, plinth was raised during dry season. The area for homestead gardening was about 1200-1400 square foot. Usually two types of crops—bed crops and pit crops—were cultivated. In addition, vegetables were cultivated on the slope of plinth¹⁶. The beneficiaries consumed most of the produce, and gave some to relatives or neighbor; small amount of produce was sold in the market. Fencing was provided to them and the average cost was Tk.165 or net worth of Tk. 300-500 (although beneficiary also contributed). Compost fertilizer was also used. All beneficiary households received supports for homestead gardening and compost fertilizer.

3.7 Char Shashthya Kendra

A number of healthcare components have been incorporated into the CLP package since June 2010. In Gazaria Union, the programme used to run two free fortnightly clinics (known as Char Shashthya Kendra), staffed by paramedics, which provided *char* residents primary diagnosis and treatment. The GUK also recruited Char Shashthya Kormees who were local women with secondary school education. The CLP provided 6 days training¹⁷ for basic health services as small, sustainable

¹⁵ CLP assists in the installation of tube well as well. They took a token amount of money from CPHs who had no tube well. Sometimes CPHs with tube well without platform was assisted in building concrete platform. Price of tube well was Tk.4000-7000,

¹⁶ Saplings that were provided to beneficiaries were: Neem, Plum (baukul), papaya, and guava. Vegetables seeds (pumpkin, corolla, mula, lal sak, napa sak) were provided during summer and winter seasons. GUK used to determine the beneficiary's need of seeds, and place requirement to local vendor following their procurement policy. GUK procured seed from Lal Tir and ACI.

¹⁷ The training was held at Kumudini hospital of Mirzapur. Char Shashthya Kormee received 6 days' basic health training and 6 days IMCI training from CLP project (with PHD-CLP partnership project). She had a box which contains medicine and family planning materials, and toiletries of Tk. 1500 from which she used to earn Tk. 300-400 from 10tk/consultation fee of non-beneficiaries. She covered 75 CPHs. The payment system was operated through health voucher system. Beneficiary households had voucher of Tk. 1000 and they received

businesses, supporting them with finance and medicines. The most prevalent problems were diarrhea, dysentery and skin diseases such as scabies, hepatitis and parasites.

3.8 Training of Paravets

In Gazaria union, three persons were recruited; all of whom received four days training on paravet and one received training on vaccination. They were local people with minimum educational qualification of class VIII. They received fridge, materials and equipments for artificial insemination, de-worming, and vaccinations from CLP Bogra at the initial stage. Later they used to collect those from livestock office in Upazila/District. The beneficiary used to pay the paravets through voucher system – each beneficiary received coupons worth Tk 1000 of service expenses. The paravets submitted the voucher to GUK accounts and received the money.

3.9 Village Savings and Loan Association

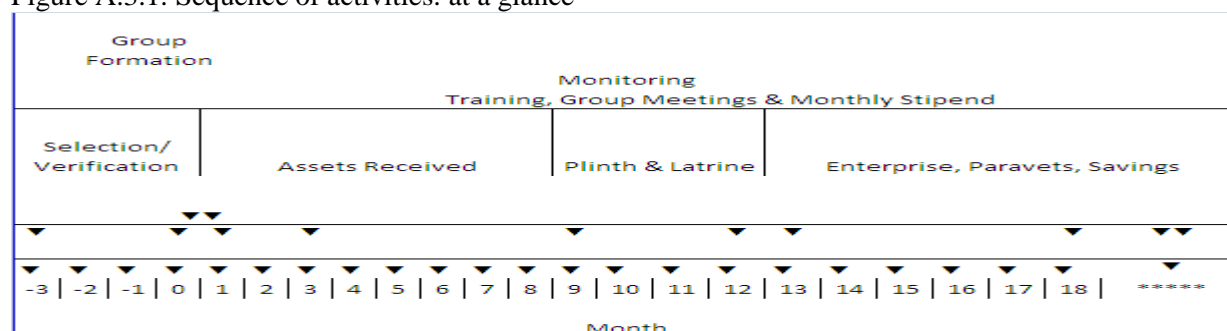
This component was introduced in the last phase of CLP1 (Third year, 2008). One beneficiary used to save Tk. 100 per month in a locked box. Three members of a group (number of the members usually was 25) had the key. In the third month (when the total savings became Tk 5000), the loan was given among the members and the amount depends on the beneficiary’s demand and need; and the amount is to be paid off in 9 installments. In Gazaria union, 18 such groups operated under CLP 1.

3.10 Fodder cultivation

This was introduced at a later stage of phase 1 with an aim to develop fodder market in the area. The market was based on dealership of the seeds of Jumbo, shorgum, and napier grass in Gaibandha. The price of grass seed was Tk 260/kg and the beneficiaries received Tk. 100 from the programme for this purpose¹⁸. The grass seed was not limited to beneficiaries only, non-beneficiaries were also entitled to buy from the dealers. In Gazaria union, there was only one model farmer on fodder cultivation.

Basic education service of CLP was not implemented in Gazaria Union. Moreover, in Balashighat, Pran Group tried with a chilling point for milk marketing in first phase. Milk Vita also tried in nearby union. These did not work out because of different reasons, for example, companies rejected the milk when the collectors brought to the point, inadequate supply of quality milk. Under the market development component (MDP) of CLP 1, there were 275 participants in poultry, 100 for milk production and 120 for fodder cultivation in Gazaria union.

Figure A.3.1: Sequence of activities: at a glance



medicine with voucher, but non-beneficiaries had to buy service with their own expenses. Moreover, the char residents bought toiletries and iodized salt with cash from Char Shashthya Kormee.

¹⁸ The beneficiaries were encouraged to cultivate the grass on the plinth slope and they preferred napier grass because it grows well on Chars.

4. Impact of components

The impact of the components is described below:

Components/activities	Impact
Asset transfers – individual/household which includes transfer of cattle/bull/cow, stipend for raising, veterinary services, fodder cultivation, poultry, latrine, tubewell with platform, plinth raising through cash for work,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ownership of asset (cattle) and increase number of cattle¹ - Increased asset values² - Increased average income (reinvested into land)³ - Empowerment : education, marriage, coping (source: consultation with project staff) - More time involvement of women in cattle raising (source: consultation with project staff and beneficiaries) - Competitive local livestock market (source: consultation with project staff) - Supply of milk in the project area increased (source: consultation with project staff) - Establishment of paravet and vaccinator services in the project area² - Income generation of paravets (3000 tk / month)⁴ - Establishment of linkage with government livestock services (source: consultation with project staff) - Increased seed marketing (source: consultation with project staff) - Ownership of tubewell and access to safe drinking water (source: consultation with project staff and beneficiaries) - Low proportion of CLP1 households accessed to sanitary latrine⁵ - Ownership of cattle - Protection from flood for plinth raising (source: consultation with project staff and beneficiaries) - Providing place for cultivation of fruits, vegetables on yard⁶ -Vegetables and fodder cultivation on plinth (source: consultation with project staff and beneficiaries)⁶
Homestead gardening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased production of vegetables⁷ - Increased consumption and selling of vegetables (small amount) or giving the neighbours⁷ - Contribute 9-10% of households' monthly food expenditure, and total yearly production is equivalent to households' one month monthly expenditure⁷
Establishment of independent health service network (establishment of Char Shashthya Kendra, paramedics, Char Shashthya Karmee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of primary health care and family planning services in the char village for CLP beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries⁸ - Increased income for paramedics and Char Shashthya Karmee (source: consultation with project staff)
Group based activities which includes training, village savings and loan association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased awareness about social capital, responsibilities of citizens, disaster preparedness and management, health, nutrition and environment, and social safety net, savings and loan management - Expectation of dowry dropped, legal age of marriage rose, feeling more confident and better respected in the community⁹ - Reduced vulnerability to water and excreta-borne diseases⁹ - Establishment of community savings and loan groups¹⁰ - Increased opportunity for microfinance from within the community¹⁰ - Increased community empowerment¹⁰

Note on sources:

1= Mascie-Taylor (2010), 2= Scott and Islam (2010a), 3= Scott and Islam (2010b), 4= Mclover and Hussain (2011), 5= Cordier, L. *et al* (2012), 6= CLP (2011a), 7= Conroy, K., Islam, R. (2009), 8= Fitzwarryne, Caroline (2010), 9= CLP (2010), 10= CLP (2011b).

5. Few Issues/Summary

- Majority of the Chars dweller are agricultural labor while few are engaged in fishing, but during monsoon they catch fish or migrate to cities.
- Chars differ by regions; some are very sandy; over the years quality of soil in some chars improved and better for agriculture
- The main problems of working with char people are: limited government health and education infrastructure, and annual flooding.
- Three factors—river erosion, migration, and eviction by land lord—are attributed to the loss of a quarter of CLP 1 beneficiaries according to project staff.
- Eighteen month was not enough to reach the understanding level
- During consultation with project staff, it was revealed that homestead gardening was not suitable for all participants, especially for people with small or no land. It was seen that after project completion, care for home gardening was absent. It implies that it was imposed rather than owned by beneficiaries although pit crops cultivation was successful.
- Paravets/LSPs are still in the community serving people.
- The communication during implementation of the Project between project staff with CLP Bogra office, DfID was limited to report sharing and field visits including identification of beneficiary households. There was not much consultation on challenges and lessons learned during different phases of CLP 1 among the implementing NGO and CLP and DfID.