

## EFFECTIVENESS OF REHABILITATION PROJECT UNDER SOCIAL SAFETY NETS PROGRAMMES IN THE CONTEXT OF BANGLADESH

Md. Aftabuzzaman<sup>1</sup> and Md. Sohag\*<sup>2</sup>

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### Abstract

Social safety net is especially designed and implemented for the poor and the vulnerable groups of the society. Safety net programs in Bangladesh are more than a necessary element in fighting poverty as an increasing number of populations being added below the lower poverty line. Among the various safety net programmes, Rehabilitation Project is a combination of direct and indirect safety net programmes for poverty eradication addressing both human and income poverty. It is a comprehensive program to provide shelter, training, credit, healthcare, family planning facilities, income-generating activities, safe drinking water, electricity facility and other facilities to homeless, landless and distressed people. All these things help the landless and distressed people to be stable in a specific place and involve in a particular job and thus help in poverty reduction and the whole process leads to increase the living standard of the people.

**Key words:** Safety Net, Rehabilitation Project, Landless People, Poverty, Income

### Introduction

Bangladesh has had two and a half decades of development efforts at lifting the economy out of its abject poverty. Here there are other problems too such as over population, unemployment problem, political instability, frequent occurrences of natural disasters and so on. Poverty is still deep and widespread, although Bangladesh has made progress in reducing poverty at national level from 48.9 percent in 2000 to 40 percent in 2005 (GOB 2006). In 2005-06 GDP growth rate at constant price is 6.71 percent, but poor people do not get the benefits of it (GOB 2006). Poverty is the number one problem of Bangladesh and reduction of poverty within the shortest possible time is the priority goal of the government. Social Safety Net is a measure taken by the government in order to prevent the vulnerable section of its population to fall beyond a certain level of poverty. Social Safety net programmes (SSNPs) are designed with the aim to provide support for the vulnerable section of the society. Under the social safety-net for the poor, various targeted programmes are cash transfers programmes, food transfers programmes, special poverty alleviation programmes, micro credit programmes for self employment and other special poverty alleviation activities.

The country is vulnerable to flood, cyclones and the effects of climate change. Again the problem of river erosion is increasing day by day. As a result,

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\*Corresponding Author, Email: [msohag@yahoo.com](mailto:msohag@yahoo.com)

<sup>1</sup> Lecturer, Institute of Business Studies, Darul Ihsan University, Bangladesh

<sup>2</sup> Student, Master of Development Studies (MDS), Khulna University, Bangladesh.

the number of landless and homeless is increasing at alarming rate. It may be mentioned here that more than 50 percent of Bangladesh's population are landless and they depend exclusively for their sustenance on wage that they earn from their unskilled labor (Mannan and Protima, 2003). During the last two decades, the government has been pursuing a number of Social Safety Net Programs to protect the poor from adverse socio-economic situation and to enhance earning capability of the poor. Among the various Social Safety Net Programmes the Rehabilitation Project is a shelter program, which aims at alleviating poverty by providing land, accommodation, training, credit, education, health service, family planning, income generating activities, pure drinking water, electricity, improve transportation system and tree plantation facility to 65000 landless, homeless and destitute families (GOB 2007). As a result, they can easily engage themselves in income generating activities through their acquired skilled from training by investing capital that they receive as credit. They can cultivate vegetables on cultivable land and fish within the ponds. These fish and vegetables meet their nutritional needs and side-by-side they can earn money by selling those if there is any surplus amount. All these things help the landless and distressed poor people to be stabled in a specific place and involve in a particular job and thus help in poverty reduction and the whole process leads to increase the living standard of the people. This study mainly focuses and evaluates the impact of Rehabilitation Project as a Social Safety Net Programme of the Government.

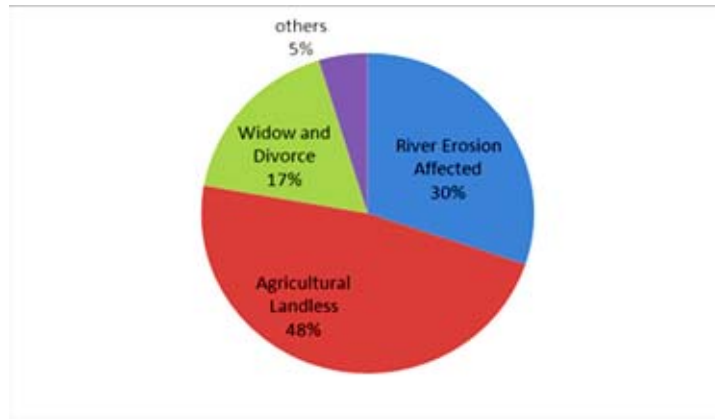
## Materials and Methods

To conduct this research *Kumirmara* Rehabilitation Project was purposively selected as study area which is situated in *Pirozpur upazilla* under *Pirozpur District* in *Barishal* Division. The *Kumirmara* Rehabilitation Project is placed on the bank of river spreaded over 6.18 acres of land. The study was conducted during December 2008 to February 2009. This study is mainly based on primary data which is collected from *Kumirmara* Rehabilitation Project in *Pirozpur District* to address the research question through incorporating relevant indicators and variables in the questionnaire. The most important part of data collection in key location consisted of conversation in the form of open and close-ended interviewing of respondents. In doing so both cluster sampling, and convenience sampling methods are adopted. To compare the present condition of the rehabilitates data were also collected from *Nazirghat* slum, assuming same socio-economic status, situated in *Khulna* City. The collected data was analyzed and interpreted using descriptive techniques and quantitative analytical techniques. The study also used secondary data. Secondary data were collected from *Pirozpur upozilla* office, *Khulna* District Controller (DC) Office, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) of Planning Ministry. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted by using different statistical tools such as mean, regression with the help of software's like SPSS, Excel etc. The findings are presented in tables and graphs.

## Analysis and Discussion

### Reasons for Which Landless People Get Preference

About 80 percent people are directly or indirectly related to agriculture (Islam, 2000) and 51.69 percent of the total labor force is engaged in agriculture (GOB 2007). Most of the farmers of Bangladesh are landless. These agricultural landless people are given preference to live in Rehabilitation Project which accounts for 48% in this study (Fig.1).



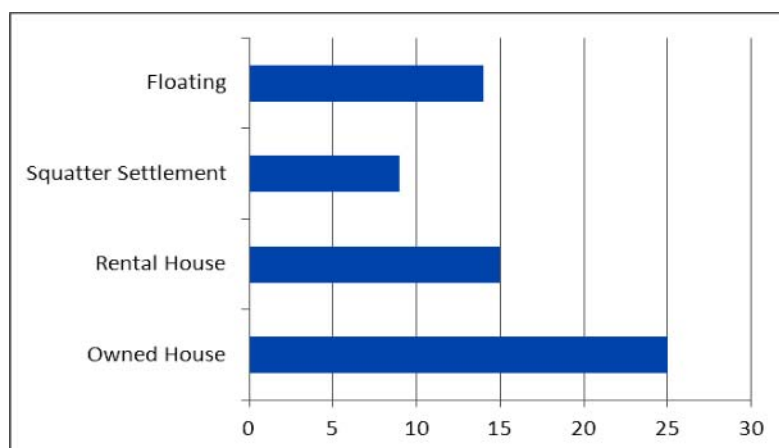
**Figure 1.** Reason to Come in Rehabilitation Project

*Source: Field Survey, June 2009*

The country is vulnerable to floods, cyclones and the effects of climatic change. During flood, bank erosion occurs enormously in Bangladesh. In study area about 32 percent (20) rehabilitated households lost their land due to river erosion. Most of the Women in this country are deprived from education, medical facility and even their human rights. Among them widow and divorce section cannot involve in any productive work and remain poor which occupies 17 percent (11) in this project (Fig. 1).

#### Homestead Ownership Prior to Settlement

It is seen that not all of the households settled in the Rehabilitation Project were landless and homeless which is contradictory with the overall objectives of Rehabilitation Project. Few respondents are interested to get the facility of Rehabilitation Project because of insufficiency of their own land. About 40 percent (or 25) of the households had houses of their own, 24 percent (or 15) lived in rental house, 14 percent (or 9) squatter settlement and rest 22 percent (or 14) were floating (Fig: 2).



**Figure 2.** Homestead Ownership Prior to Settlement

*Source: Field Survey, June 2009.*

#### Household Members and Barrack Houses

There is no single member household in study area. Irrespective of family size each house is allotted to an equal size of unit. As a result, the size of room and piece of land of a two member's household is equal to that household which has more members. This has put pressure on large households to accommodate their growing up children and/or married daughters in a small room. Besides lack of

available accommodation, relatives of the residents face difficulties to stay overnight at any occasion.

**Table 1.** Households Size of the Respondents

Household Size	Frequency	Percent
2-4	26	41.27
4-6	35	55.56
6-8	2	3.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Range:</b>		2-8
<b>Average</b>		4.25

Source: Field Survey, June 2009.

Here average size of studied households studied is 4.25 and the number of household varies from two to eight. More than half (55.56 percent) of total households belong to the households' size 4-6 (table 1).

### Training Pattern

Rehabilitation Project facilitates various training to the rehabilitated people for their skill development and after completion of training authority provides micro credit to the trained people. Most of the rehabilitees have taken more than one training in different subject according to their educational qualification, past experience and local necessities. From Table 2 it is seen that people are more interested to take training in poultry farming and agriculture.

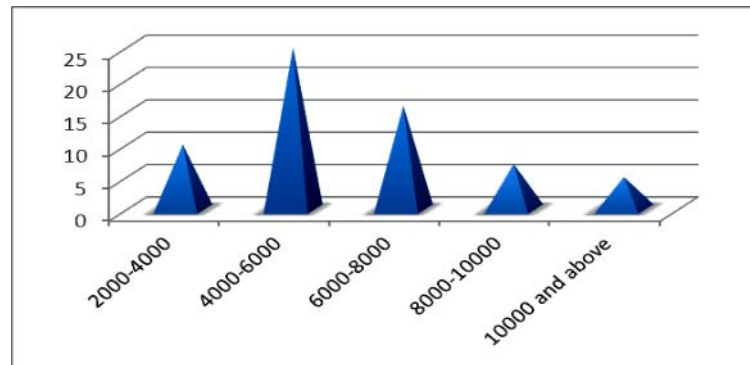
**Table 2.** Training Received by the Residents

Training Type	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	34	21.66
Fish Farming	22	14.01
Goat Rearing	17	10.83
Sewing	18	11.46
Poultry farming	35	22.29
Rickshaw, Bicycle and Van		
Repairing	13	8.28
Tailoring	18	11.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, June 2009

### Loan Received by the Households

Loan disbursement varies from Tk. 2000-Tk.15000 and an individual is not allowed to withdraw more than Tk. 15000 but in special consideration that may be withdrawn by two or more members of a family (GOB 2004). The amount of loan is determined on the basis of the objective for which loan is used and also income sector where beneficiaries invest. In this study area about a total of Tk. 7, 00,000 has been distributed to the 153 rehabilitated individuals in Kumirmara Rehabilitation Project and average loan disbursement is Tk. 4575.16 (Field Survey).



**Figure 3.** Amount of Loan Received by Beneficiaries *Source: Field Survey, June 2009.*

The study also finds that highest about 39.68 percent (or 25) beneficiaries have taken loan in the range of Tk. 4000-6000 (Fig 3).

### Sources of Households Income

It is difficult to classify the income earning activities of the poor households because in some cases, one person is engaged in more than one activity in a day. Again, there are members who engaged in a particular activity helps other members in their work. Sources of households' income has classified here at two points of time.

**Table 3.** Sources of Households Income

Items	Present		Previous	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Day Labor	18	18.75	10	15.15
Fishing	10	10.42	5	7.58
Small Business	20	20.83	12	18.18
Rickshaw puller	16	16.67	16	24.24
Van Puller	10	10.42	10	15.15
Tailor	3	3.12	3	4.55
Service Man	2	2.08	2	3.02
Goat Rearing	1	1.04	0	0
Carpenter	1	1.04	2	3.03
Maid Servant	2	2.08	3	4.55
Farming	13	13.54	3	4.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>96* N (63)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66* (N=63)</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field Survey, June 2009. (\* Represent Multiple Responses)*

At present frequency of sources of income are 96 that was 66 in the previous period but the actual number of households are 63 in both period. This is due to the cause of increasing earning members in many families and many persons engage in more than one occupation (i.e. multiple response which is denoted in table 3 by the symbol \*). It appears that the highest number, about 20.83% people of this project is engaged in small business activities at present. At present the percentages of some professions have increased and some decreased than that of before. At present the percentage of small business (20.83), day labor (18.75), farming (13.54), fishing (10.42) and goat rearing (1.04) has increased and the percentage of van (10.42) and rickshaw pulling (16.67), tailoring (3.12), carpenter (1.04), servicing (2.08) and maid servant (2.08) have decreased than that of before (Table 3).

### Income Pattern of Rehabilitated Family

It is found that a significant portion of beneficiary households have been able to increase household income compared to their previous situation. The

overall present average income of households is Tk. 2971.21 while it was Tk. 2708 in previous period that reflects a substantial increase of average income by an amount of Tk. 263.21 at present times. At present period 47.62 percent households belong to the income range Tk. 2500-4500 while in previous period 49.20 percent households belong to the least income range Tk. 500-2500 which implies that the households under Rehabilitation Project improve their income level in comparison of their previous period. Analyzing table 4 it can be concluded that people in all categories of income levels have steadily increased their current income.

**Table 4.** Income Pattern of Rehabilitated Family

Income Per Month (Tk.)	Present		Previous	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
500-2500	25	39.68	31	49.20
2500-4500	30	47.62	24	38.09
4500-6500	6	9.52	7	11.11
6500 and above	2	3.17	1	1.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>Tk. 2971.21</b>		<b>Tk. 2708</b>	

Source: Field Survey, June 2009.

#### Income Expended on Some Major Food and Non-Food Items

Total average proportion of income is 74.81 percent that expended on some major food items at present while it was only 67.22 percent in previous period. There may be two reasons behind that positive change (7.59) in the average proportion of income expended on the respective sectors, such as due to the increase in their monthly average income in present period than previous period and the increase in price level. A large proportion of their income is expended on rice purpose (43.07 percent) is positively changed by 1.75 percent. The implication of the positive change in proportion for rice is the households were hardcore poor before the settlement in Rehabilitation Project. But in case of fish the average proportion is reduced by 0.07 percent due to increase in price level but meat consumption is positive because they get the chance of duck and hen rearing. The households get a small land for vegetation and it is converted into monetary term and consider as their income as well as their expenditure that means if they had to purchase the amount of vegetables that they consume from their own production. So, the average proportion of their income expended on vegetables is increased by 6.51 percent at present period.

**Table 5.** Income Expended on Some Major Food and Non Food Items (Monthly)

Major Food Items			
Items	Present (Proportion)	Previous (Proportion)	Change in Proportion
Rice	43.07 (1115.68)	41.32 (990.64)	1.75 (125.04)
Fish	11.08 (325)	11.78 (332.32)	-0.07 (-7.32)
Meat	4.42 (122.25)	4.39 (120.91)	0.03 (1.34)
Vegetables	16.24 (420.86)	9.73 (250.21)	6.51 (170.65)
Total	74.81 (1983.79)	67.22 (1694)	7.59 (289.71)
Major Non-Food Items			
Cloth	6.26 (174.44)	6.53 (178.43)	-.27 (-3.99)
Education	4.15 (141.29)	5.25 (114.97)	-1.10 (26.32)
Health Care	6.30 (160.64)	6.36 (174.30)	-.06 (-13.66)

Fuel wood	4.56 (108.18)	3.00 (70.64)	1.56 (37.54)
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.27 (584.55)</b>	<b>21.14 (538.34)</b>	<b>.13 (46.21)</b>

Source: Field Survey, June 2009.

Note: Figure in parentheses indicate average Taka of income expended on some major food items

The overall change in proportion of income expended on the respective non-food items is positive by 13 percent (Table 5). The expended proportion of income on cloth is decreased at present period before previous period because due to increase in price level their proportion of income goes to other important food items. The expended proportion of income on education is decreased. The main reason behind this is due to get free education and educational instrument from World Vision. The Kumirmara Rehabilitation Project is situated on the bank of river which is an open place than densely populated area. So, they have got the chance to reside in hygienic, calm and quite environment. As a result, health condition of the households has improved and it is evident from the negative change in proportion of income expended on health care. In case of fuel wood consumption they had a chance to it without any cost but that is not possible at present time because the place is away from the populated area to some extent.

### Sources of Deficit Financing

The sources of deficit financing are support from family, relative, neighbor, gardening and fishing, collection of fuel wood and Government/ NGO support. Table 6 shows that the family support and gardening is increasing to a great extent and reducing relative and neighbor support than that of before.

**Table 6:** Sources of Deficit Financing

Sources	Present		Previous	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Family Support	15	8.20	5	2.93
Neighbor Support	12	6.55	35	20.59
Relative Support	17	9.28	25	14.71
Gardening	60	32.79	35	20.59
Fishing	11	6.01	10	5.88
Collection of Fuel Wood	35	19.13	30	17.65
NGO/Govt. Support	33	18.03	30	17.65
Total	183	100	170	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2009.

### The Model: Income Of Household And Slum Dwellers

The impact of Rehabilitation Project on the households is judged by comparing the households of non-rehabilitatee. To do this another group of households are selected who live in slum as well as they also belong to similar socio-economic condition like households under Rehabilitation Project. Here a regression model is used to compare the income of the stated two groups.

The model is represented by,  $Y_i = a + \beta D_i + \epsilon_i$ ..... (1)

Mean income of household in slum:  $E(Y_i | D_i = 0) = a$ , and

Mean income of household in Rehabilitation Project:  $E(Y_i | D_i = 1) = a + \beta$

Where,  $Y$  = monthly income of a household,  $D_i = 1$ , if the household is in *Abashan Prokalpa*,  $D_i = 0$ , if the household is in slum,  $D$  is a dummy variable and  $\epsilon$  = error term

Null hypothesis  $H_0: \beta = 0$  that means there is no difference between the income of slum dwellers and households in Rehabilitation Project and alternative hypothesis  $H_A: \beta \neq 0$  that means there is difference between the income of slum dwellers and households in Rehabilitation Project.

### Result of Hypothesis

Using the survey data, equation (2) is constructed following the basic procedure of (Gujrati, 2003).

$$Y_i = 2052.44 + 918.77D_i \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

$$(237.31) \quad (304.91)$$

$$t = (8.65) \quad (3.01)$$

**Table 7.** Showing income of slum dwellers and a Rehabilitation Project.

Characteristic	$\beta$	$H_A: \beta \neq 0$
Households income	918.77	***

Note: \*\*\* indicates that  $H_A$  is accepted at 1% significant level.

Table 7 shows the acceptance of alternative hypothesis that income of slum dwellers and households in Rehabilitation Project significantly differs. Now, from equation (2) slum dwellers estimated average income is Tk. 2052.44 (=  $\alpha$ ) and households of Rehabilitation Project is Tk. 2971.21 ( $\alpha + \beta = 2052 + 918.77$ ). So, average income of households in Rehabilitation Project is significantly higher (by taka 918.77) than the average income of households in slum.

### Problems and Recommendations

- Cultivable land provided to the rehabilitated families is not sufficient. If the amount of cultivable land can be raised they are able to increase their vegetable production which in turn reduce their nutritional demand and also able to raise their income.
- There is no extra land for livestock and poultry farming in this *Project*. In this situation government should provide common cowshed and poultry shed so that they can use it co-operatively for the purpose of livestock and poultry farming.
- Infrastructural facilities are the prime consideration in selecting the place of the project but in case of selecting this project *area* it is not followed. In order to ensure sustainable development of the families, the authority should increase the infrastructural facilities like, road, school, mosque, temple, bazaar, health complex, electricity and so on.
- It is found that the purpose of credit is partially fulfilled in the grass root level. The concerned authority should supervise intensively in order to ensure the function and purpose of training and credit.
- The availability of pure and safe water should be ensured all over the year. In most of the cases it is found that in dry season there is lack of water in both ponds and tube- well. To avoid this problem, the authority can provide here deep tube- well in lieu of shallow tube- well or pump.
- The latrines of this place are not adequate and properly taken care of. Moreover, bathrooms are hardly used. So, constructing a latrine for every family should be considered by reducing the number of bathrooms.
- The size of the unit of two-members has equal to that of a joint family with seven or more members. This has put pressure on large house hold to

accommodate their grown-up children and / or married son in a small unit. Very often, it has been found that due to lack of accommodation, relatives visiting the residence can not stay overnight. So space of the unit should be taken into consideration for large family size.

- There is no provision of graveyard in this rehabilitation project and if any one dies it is not possible for them to take the dead body to their previous residence. The allocation of graveyard has included in the plan but not implemented yet. So, specific land should be allocated for it as soon as possible.

## Conclusion

Social Safety Net Programs (SSNPs) are those programs which are taken to protect the poor so that their position does not worsen than at present. There are many programs under Social Safety Net and 'Rehabilitation Project' is one of them. This project is undertaken to rehabilitate the extreme poor or absolute poor and provide them shelter, training, credit so that they are able to be self employed. A small piece of land and ponds have been provided to them so that they can produce vegetables and fishes in those respective areas. They also use those ponds for bathing and other purposes. Poor people get shelter from this project and feel secured that protect them from disaster. After getting training and credit facilities, they engage in some income generating activities to increase income for better livelihood. Besides this, rehabilitation project provides them some other facilities such as community center. But in case of selecting poor landless, there is some corruption i.e. in some cases it is found that people who have good relation with the local authority were settled. After settling in rehabilitation project most of the households' income has increased to a substantial amount and their living standard also in comparison with non-rehabilitates. Finally, the project acts directly on the civil and human rights of the target population and intervene in order to improve their living conditions, education, health and earning opportunities. The project aims at the distribution of title deeds of ownership of the land and as a result of this the poor become visible, registered, and able to express political preference and become reachable by services provided by the Government.

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