



A study to assess the sustainability of CLP-1 activities

Background

The first phase of the *Chars Livelihoods Programme* (CLP) began in 2004 and officially came to an end at the end of March 2010. The GBP 50 million Programme worked to improve the livelihoods of extremely poor households living on erosion-prone islands in the Jamuna river basin. The Programme worked in the districts of Bogra, Jamalpur, Sirajganj, Kurigram and Gaibandha.

CLP sought to reduce extreme poverty by providing a sizeable and integrated package of support to 55,000 Core Participant Households (CPHHs). CPHHs received income-generating assets (IGA), an earthen plinth raised above recent record high flood levels, a latrine and access to a safe water supply. They also received a monthly stipend for 18 months, training and inputs to develop a homestead garden and a series of social awareness support sessions, also lasting for 18 months. During the social awareness sessions that took place during participants' weekly group meetings, emphasis was placed on teaching a series of modules including hygiene, nutrition, respect for women, and rights and responsibilities. The wider island *char* community also benefited from CLP activities through projects such as the infrastructure employment project (IEP), the health project and the services offered by livestock services providers (LSPs).

CLP is now in its second phase which seeks to help lift an additional 67,000 extreme poor households out of poverty by the end of the programme, currently set as 2016. The core package of support under CLP-2 essentially remains the same as in CLP-1 but the programme's geographical focus has shifted. Initially CLP-2 will work in the districts of Rangpur, Nilphamari and Lalmonirhat, as well as the 'old' CLP districts of Kurigram and Gaibandha, before moving to Pabna and Tangail.

Objectives of the study

Although CLP-2 will focus on supporting island *char* dwellers in five new districts, the Programme is fortunate in that it still operates in close proximity to CPHHs supported during the first phase. Whilst the Innovation, Monitoring and Learning (IML) Division continues to monitor progress of a sample of CLP-1 households against key impact indicators including income, expenditure, nutrition status, food security status etc. there is also the opportunity to revisit CLP-1 households and explore other issues, in this case the sustainability of some core activities. The findings can potentially influence CLP-2.

The sustainability study comprises different modules. This particular module focused on collecting data from CPHHs and answering the following questions:

Plinth occupancy

- Are households (core and non core) that were raised on a plinth still residing there?
- Have households paid, or are they paying the land claimant for the right to reside on the raised plinth?

Water and Sanitation

- Do CLP-1 households have access to a CLP latrine and is it still considered sanitary?
- Do CLP-1 households have access to clean drinking water?
- Are CLP-1 households demonstrating improved hygiene practices i.e. hand washing practice and not practicing open defecation?

Livelihoods

- Are CLP-1 households practicing improved homestead gardening (cultivating bed crops, pit crops, fruit and wood trees)?
- Are CLP-1 households practicing composting?
- Have CLP-1 households been able to sustain and grow their assets provided by the CLP?
- If CLP-1 households have cattle are they maintaining them adequately (deworming, immunisation, food).

Human Development

- Have knowledge, attitudes and practices improved in connection with dowry, domestic violence, early marriage and disaster preparedness

Other separate studies (or modules), also related to sustainability, have been or are being undertaken. A study to assess sustainability issues of Livestock Services Providers (LSPs) has been completed. A study to look at the sustainability of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) is scheduled to take place between May and June 2011.

Methodology

This study focused on collecting data from a sample of CPHHs from each of the four asset transfer phases (ATP) of CLP-1 with the primary respondent being the core participant. It was felt that two key factors likely to influence levels of sustainability were geography (i.e. district) and the asset transfer phase.

During CLP-1, assets were transferred through four phases across five districts. This would have meant drawing a separate sample from twenty domains (so that comparisons



could be made by phase and district.) Having twenty different domains proved costly and therefore IML combined ATP 1 and 2 into a single domain termed 'earlier phases' and ATP 3 and 4 into another single domain termed 'later phases.' This reduced the number of domains to ten.

Table 1: Asset Transfer Phases

ATP	1	2	3	4
Dates	Jan – Jun '06	Nov '06 – May '07	Oct '07 – May '08	Aug '08 – May '09
# CPHHs	3,174 (6%)	8,246 (15%)	18,850 (34%)	24,730 (45%)
Districts	Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Kurigram	Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Bogra, Jamalpur, Kurigram		



A cluster of homesteads on a CLP raised plinth

The IML Division determined that an overall sample size of 3,375 households was required¹. Out of the original sample of 3,375 core participants 24% (804) were unavailable for interview (largely either because the household had been eroded or the respondent was unavailable for other reasons e.g. visiting relative.) Attempts were made to replace those samples that were not available for reasons other than erosion. 250 samples were replaced bringing the total sample size to 2,821.

Data collection was outsourced to a local company (Grameen Bikash Foundation) that has vast experience in data collection for the CLP. Data were collected between December 2010 and January 2011 and IML analysed the data.

Data collection tools comprised questionnaires for core participant respondents as well as focus group discussions (FGD) in which the CLP's Community Development Organisers (CDO) were the respondents. The FGDs and questionnaires were administered by trained enumerators.

Results

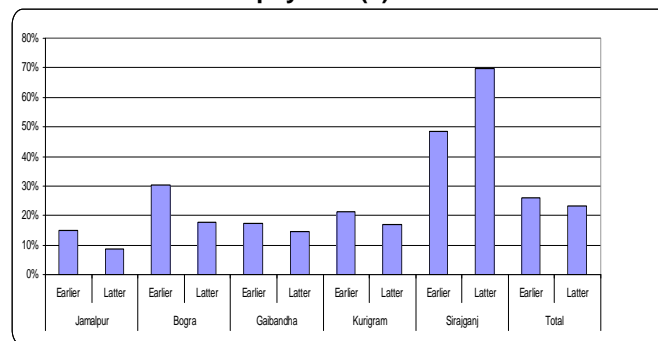
Plinth Occupancy

Flooding of the low-lying *chars* is a near annual occurrence in Bangladesh, usually starting with the monsoon rains in late June. Floodwater traditionally forced people to either migrate or live on the roof of their submerged house. To mitigate this, the CLP-1 raised 90,600 households, both core and non core, on plinths approximately 60 cm above the highest known flood level. Even during the flood season, households on a plinth still have a safe place for their cattle, can continue vegetable cultivation and, most importantly can continue to live in their own homes.

Across all Districts, 74% of CLP-1 CPHHs are residing on their raised plinth.² A number of factors will determine how long households remain on their CLP raised plinth. Some households may choose to leave for personal reasons, others may be forced to leave due to factors such as erosion or eviction.

26% of CPHHs from earlier cohorts (ATP 1 & 2) and 23% from later cohorts (ATP 3 & 4) reported the person claiming the land upon which their raised plinth was sited had at one time or more demanded a cash payment. This was particularly evident in Sirajganj. Demands for non-cash payments from land claimants are reportedly minimal. A previous study has shown that of those households no longer residing on their raised plinth, at least 12% have been evicted across all districts³ which may have been linked to an inability to pay 'rent.'

Figure 1: Proportion of CPHHs reporting land claimant had demanded cash payment(s)



Base: All respondents raised on a plinth

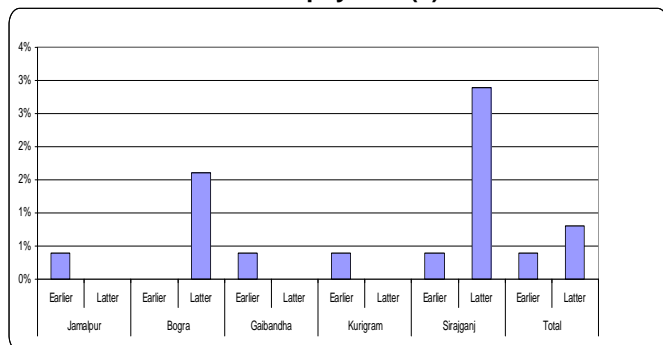
¹ See methodology paper

² Kenward and Islam, A study to assess the life span and occupancy status of raised plinths

³ Ibid



Figure 2: Proportion of CPHHs reporting land claimant had demanded non cash payment(s)



Base: All respondents raised on a plinth

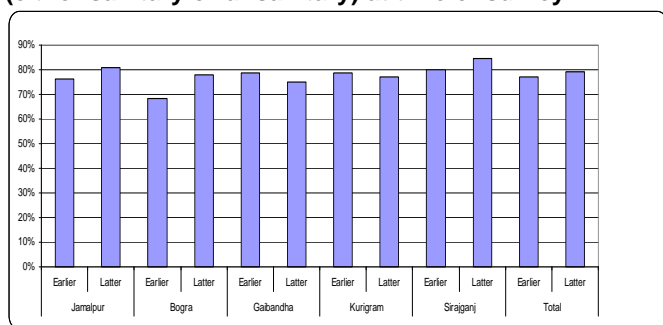
Sanitation, Water and Hygiene

Sanitation

At baseline, only 10% and 6% of ATP 1 and ATP 2 respectively had access to a sanitary latrine whilst 14% and 10.6% of ATP 3 and ATP 4 had access to a sanitary latrine. CLP-1 defined sanitary latrines as having five cement rings, a superstructure providing adequate privacy and an unbroken water seal.

During CLP-1, over 62,000 slab latrines⁴ were installed however not all CPHHs received a sanitary latrine. 80% and 70% of earlier and later cohorts respectively reported they had received a sanitary latrine from the CLP.

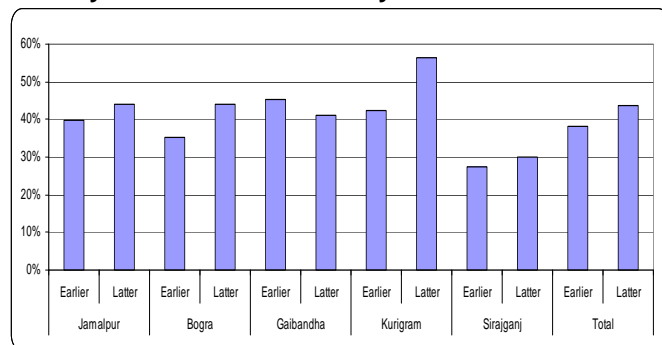
Figure 3: Proportion of CPHHs with access to a latrine (either sanitary or unsanitary) at time of survey



Base: All respondents

Figure 3 shows that high proportions of CPHHs do have access to a latrine, whether sanitary or unsanitary (77% of earlier and 79% of later cohorts respectively). However, only 38% of CPHHs from earlier cohorts (ATP 1 & 2) and 44% from later cohorts (ATP 3 & 4) have access to a sanitary latrine as per the CLP's definition (Figure 4). This is however a considerable improvement in access to a sanitary latrine.

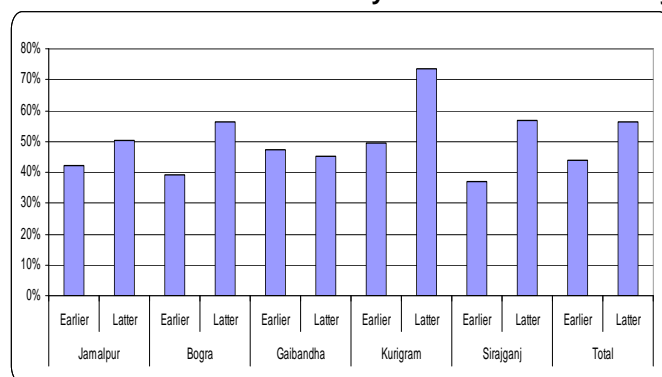
Figure 4: Proportion of all CPHHs with access to a sanitary latrine at time of survey



Base: All respondents

If we just look at those households who received a CLP latrine then 44% and 56% of them from earlier and later cohorts respectively currently have access to a sanitary latrine.

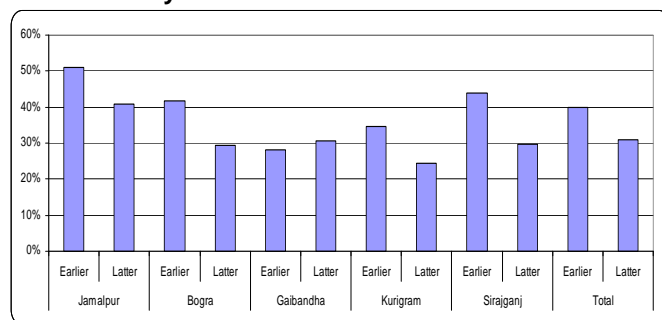
Figure 5: Proportion of CPHHs that received a CLP latrine with access to a sanitary latrine at time of survey



Base: Respondents that received a CLP latrine

Figure 6 shows that high proportions of households no longer have sanitary latrines because the water seal and/or the plastic pan is broken (40% for earlier and 31% of later cohorts) i.e. largely modified by the household.

Figure 6: Proportion of households with a latrine that has either a broken water seal and/ or plastic pan at time of survey



Base: All respondents with a latrine

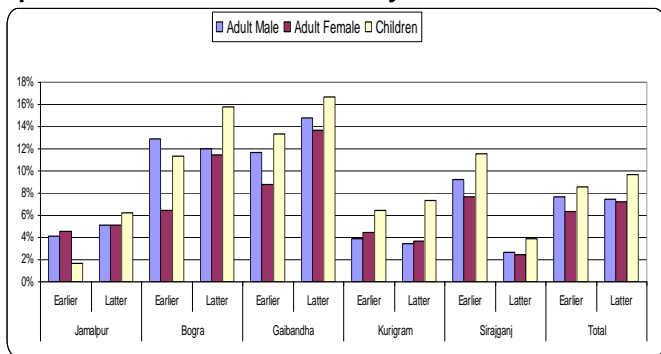
⁴ MSP, September 2010, CLP-1 Final Report, p.69



Reasons given during FGDs with CDOs as to why water seals are broken include:

- Lack of awareness about the importance of water seals;
- More water is required to 'flush' if there is a water seal.

Figure 7: Proportion of CPHHs reporting practice of open defecation at time of survey

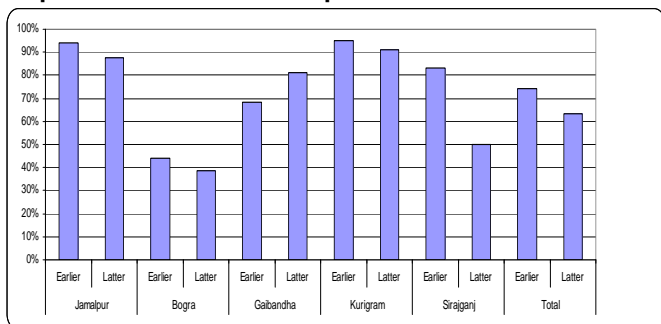


Base: All respondents

Because high proportions of CPHHs do have access to a latrine, the practice of open defecation is encouragingly low amongst adult male and female members of CPHHs (between 6% and 7% for both earlier and later phases). In relative terms more children practice open defecation than adults.

The baseline study for cohort 2.2⁵ indicates that 22% and 19% of adult males and females respectively and 52% of children report they practice open defecation. CLP-1 significantly contributed to reducing open defecation.

Figure 8: Proportion of households reporting to have emptied their latrine in the past



Base: Respondents that received a CLP latrine

Of those respondents indicating they had received a latrine, 74% and 63% of earlier and later cohorts respectively

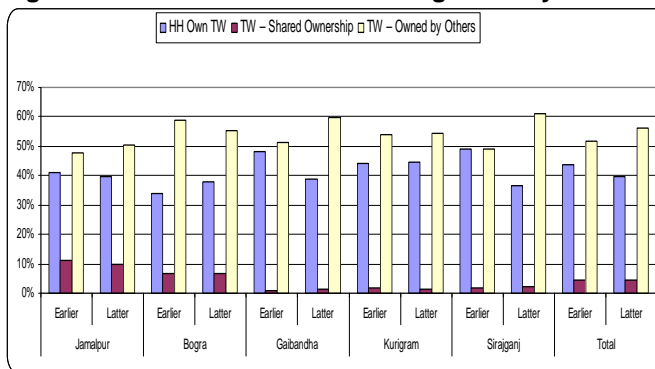
reported they had emptied the latrine because it was too full.

Water

During the first phase, the CLP provided some grants for the direct construction of shallow tube wells. However the main emphasis of providing access to clean water centered on the social mobilisation process during which households were encouraged to share the cost of tube wells. The CLP would however contribute around 30% of the 5,000 Tk required, by installing the concrete platform, but only after installation of the bore hole and the hand-pump by users. By the end of the first phase the CLP had provided 1,469 shared tube wells with platforms and had provided platforms to 2,000 tube wells already in place.⁶ The CLP-1 logical framework stated that the CLP would ensure year round access to clean water for 100,000 island char households.

Figure 9 shows that CPHHs main source of drinking water is from tube wells owned by others (52% and 56% of earlier and later cohorts respectively). The second principal source is from the respondent's own tube well (44% and 40% of earlier and later cohorts respectively). Around 39% of cohort 2.2 households had access (either own or share) to a tube well at baseline.

Figure 9: Current sources of drinking water by CPHHs



Base: All respondents

The CLP defines access to clean water as coming from a tube well that is raised on a plinth, is protected by a cement platform and is within a 10 minute round trip. As per this definition, 17% of earlier cohort and 16% of later cohort CPHHs have access to clean water (Figure 10).

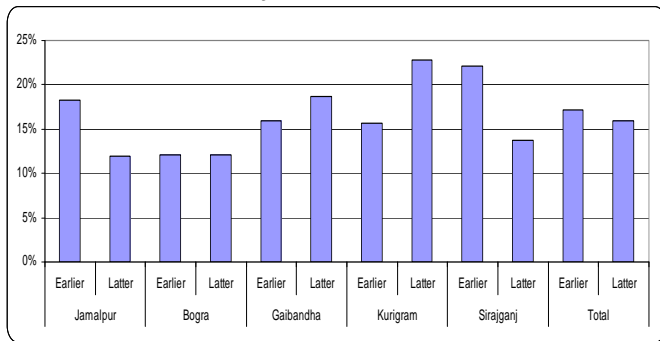
The baseline report for cohort 2.2 indicates that 12% of CPHHs have access to clean water. Improvements in access to clean water have therefore not been significant.

⁵ The CLP uses a 'rolling baseline' in which the socio-economic status of CLP-1 CPHHs can be compared against the baseline status of newly recruited CPHHs (in this case the second cohort of the CLP-2, also known as cohort 2.2)

⁶ MSP, September 2010, CLP-1 Final Report, p.25



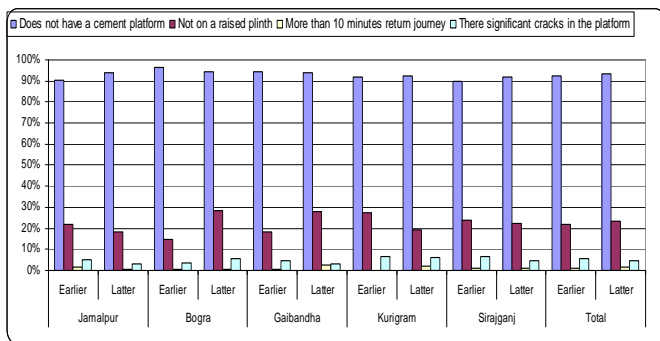
Figure 10: Proportion of CPHHs with access to clean water at time of survey



Base: All respondents

Figure 11 shows that the main reason why households do not have access to clean water is because the tube well is not protected by a concrete platform.

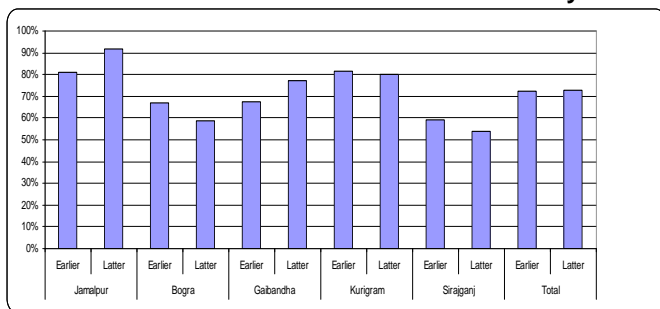
Figure 11: Reasons why households do not have access to clean water



Base: Households without access to clean water

Hygiene

Figure 12: Proportion of CPHHs in which soap/ ash was close to latrine or water source at time of survey



Base: All respondents

Evidence of soap or ash was found in 72% of sampled households. Soap/ ash was most evident in CPHHs living in Jamalpur. This is a significant improvement when compared to the baseline status of cohort 2.2 where only 33% have soap or ash close to the latrine or water source.

Livelihoods

Vegetable production and composting

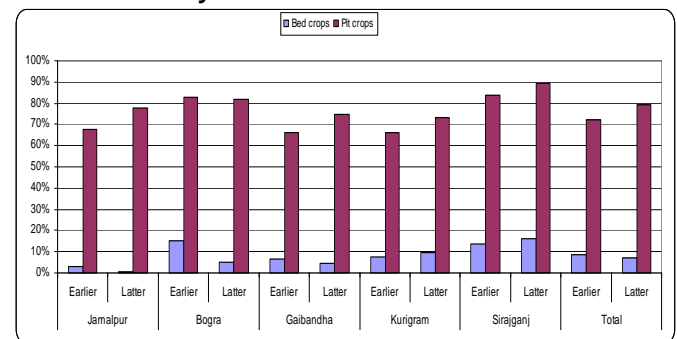
According to FGDs in which the CDOs were the respondents, the relatively less sustainable activities of CLP-1 include homestead gardening and composting (as well as milk marketing.)

According to CDOs homestead gardening is relatively unsustainable for the following reasons:

- Limited space on the raised plinth;
- CPHHs do not perceive the benefits of homestead gardening to outweigh the costs i.e. time and effort;
- The quality of the soil is poor;
- Water is in limited supply;
- Access to inputs (e.g. seeds and fertilisers) is limited post CLP;

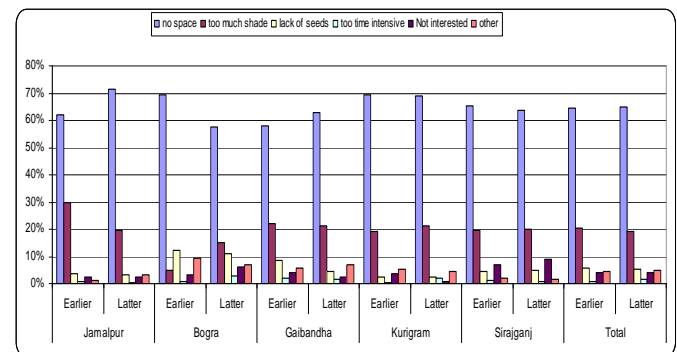
These findings from the FGDs support the survey results that high proportions of households are cultivating pit crops (i.e. 72% and 79% of earlier and later cohorts respectively) but low proportions of CPHHs were cultivating bed crops at the time of data collection (December to January). The principal reasons given by CPHHs for not cultivating bed crops were limited area available and the fact there was too much shade.

Figure 13: Proportion of CPHHs cultivating vegetables at time of survey



Base: All respondents

Figure 14: Reasons why bed crops are not being cultivated



Base: Respondent not cultivating

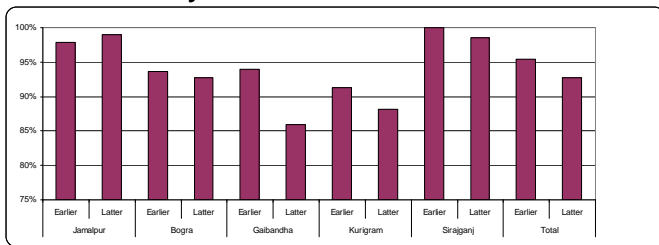


FGDs in each district, in which CDOs were the respondents, found that homestead composting is relatively unsustainable for the following reasons:

- CPHHs do not perceive the benefits of composting as they are generally not cultivating homestead bed crops;
- CPHHs would prefer to use cow dung for fuel rather than for composting;
- Limited space on the raised plinth;
- Shading materials for compost pits costs money;

These findings from the FGDs support the survey results that show very few CPHHs were composting at the time of data collection.

Figure 15: Proportion of CPHHs without a compost pit at time of survey

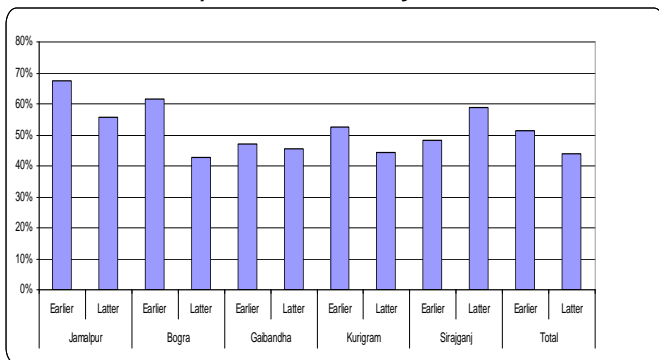


Base: All respondents

Sustaining and Growing Assets

Upon entry to the CLP, CPHHs are not cultivating crops and do not have any significant assets (i.e. they have assets less than Taka 5,000). Figures 16 and 17 show that CPHHs are clearly increasing their asset base and are diversifying into land (51% and 44% of earlier and later cohorts respectively have land (purchased or leased in).

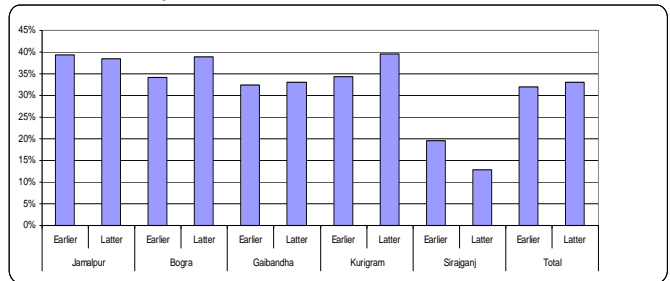
Figure 16: Proportion of CPHHs with land (purchased and/ or leased in) at time of survey



Base: All respondents

Figure 17 shows that 32% and 33% of earlier and later cohorts respectively have both cattle⁷ and land (purchased and/ or leased in).

Figure 17: Proportion of CPHHs with land and cattle at time of survey



Base: All respondents

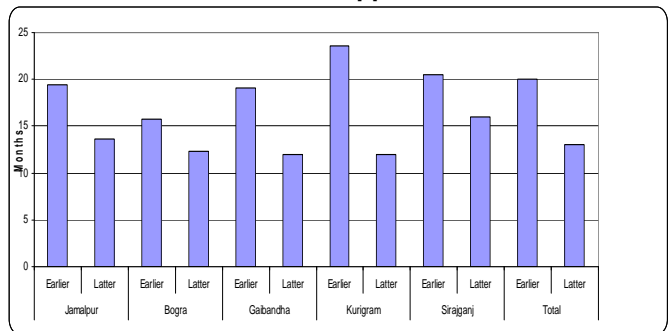
Maintenance of Livestock

CLP-1 trained 387 Livestock Services Providers (LSP) to maintain the health of the core and non-core participants' cattle and strengthen livestock productivity on the chars.

According to the study looking at the sustainability of LSPs⁸, approximately 75% of households served by LSPs are non-core participant households as reported by LSPs themselves.

Figure 18 shows that CPHHs with cattle, received support from an LSP on average 20 months (earlier cohorts) and 13 months (later cohorts) prior to the survey. CPHHs are likely to be getting support from other LSPs (not trained by the CLP) operating on the chars.

Figure 18: Mean number of months prior to the survey when CPHHs last received support from a LSP



Base: Respondents with cattle

Social Development

All core participants attended a series of regular social development meetings facilitated by CDOs over an 18 month period. During these meetings core participants were made aware of issues such as health and hygiene, disaster preparedness and social ills such as dowry and early marriage.

⁷ Shared or owned

⁸ McIvor, A study to assess the sustainability of LSPs under CLP-1, March 2011



Table 2 shows the proportion of core participants from earlier and later cohorts with correct knowledge about key social ills. Comparisons are made against the baseline status of cohort 2.2. Large improvements in knowledge are evident.

Table 2: Knowledge of CPHHs of select issues

CPHH knowledge	Earlier (%)	Later (%)	Cohort 2.2 at baseline (%)
Correct legal age of marriage for boys	40	43	11
Correct legal age of marriage for girls	94	93	54
There exists a law against dowry	98	98	57
There exists a law against violence against women and girls	98	99	57

Base: All respondent

Table three shows that more key household decisions are made jointly between male and female adults as compared to core participants at baseline for cohort 2.2.

Table 3: Decision making by both male and female adult members

Decision made by both male and female	Earlier (%)	Later (%)	Cohort 2.2 at baseline (%)
Use of contraceptives	85	84	69
When to have a child	95	96	74
Marriage age of children	82	87	53
Use of household savings	67	71	51
Spend money on education of children	74	74	49
Buying clothes for hh members	57	63	32
Spending on health care for hh members	58	65	39

Source: All respondents



Core Participants attend a social development group meeting

Other Findings

Enterprise and livelihoods activities

The sustainability of enterprises supported by CLP-1 such as the milk marketing, fodder cultivation and poultry rearing projects were not reviewed during this study. This was intentional partly to avoid duplication with the independent impact assessment conducted by HTSPE Ltd. Issues of sustainability of enterprise projects were however raised by CDOs during FGDs:

- The milk marketing project has issues of sustainability because of the time required to transport milk to the mainland. The milk is often spoiled therefore discouraging the milk collectors.
- In many *chars*, households are disinterested in cultivating fodder because the germination rate of seeds in sandy soils is poor and because they don't understand the benefits of fodder above other grasses that can be used instead and that are abundant on some *chars*. They are also less interested to grow fodder on their raised plinth because the plinth does not belong to them.

Improved Poultry Rearing

According to the CDOs, households are using the improved poultry house provided by the CLP but do not always follow the correct practice. The exact reasons are unknown but could be explored through a follow up study. Also, vaccines are apparently available but they are often out of date. If chicks die after having been vaccinated then this leads to frustration and a loss of faith in vaccinating.

Village Savings and Loans Associations

According to CDOs during FGDs in Sirajganj particularly, the VSLAs have limited sustainability despite community wishes for the associations to continue. The groups come to an end due to the lack of leadership, conflict and river erosion causing members to migrate.



Reasons why some households perform less well

According to CDOs during FGDs, apart from the more obvious reasons of health shocks, dowry payments and migration due to river erosion meaning they have to 'start their livelihoods almost from zero,' other reasons why some households perform less well than others include:

- In some cases the core participants' husband has unsocial habits such as drug addiction for which he borrows money and/ or sells household assets.
- Limited knowledge of profitable reinvestment options (after selling their primary asset) as well having a lack of ownership of what they call a 'CLP cow.'

Conclusions

Around three quarters of CPHHs are still residing on their raised plinth. Around one quarter of CPHHs state that the claimant of the land on which their raised plinth is located has at one time or more demanded a cash payment.

As per the CLP's strict definition of a sanitary latrine, 44% of CPHHs from earlier cohorts (ATP 1 & 2) and 56% from later cohorts (ATP 3 & 4) who received a CLP latrine still have access to a sanitary latrine. High proportions of households do not have sanitary latrines because the water seal and/ or the plastic pan have been broken. The practice of open defecation is encouragingly low amongst adult male and female members of CPHHs (between 6% and 7% for both earlier and later phases) as well as children however, relative to their parents more children practice open defecation than adults. Households are emptying their latrine when full.

The main source of drinking water for CPHHs is from tube wells owned by others (52% and 56% of earlier and later cohorts respectively) followed by their own tube well (44% and 40% of earlier and later cohorts respectively). As per the CLP's strict definition of access to clean water, 17% of earlier cohort and 16% of later cohort CPHHs have access to clean water. The principal reason that the water is not clean is because tube wells do not have a platform.

According to CDOs the relatively more unsustainable activities of CLP-1 included homestead gardening and composting as well as milk marketing.

Findings indicate that households are particularly diversifying into cultivable land which is either purchased and/ or leased in.

Key Findings of the study

- 26% of CPHHs from earlier cohorts and 23% from later cohorts reported the person claiming the land upon which their raised plinth was sited had at one time or more demanded a cash payment.
- 38% of CPHHs from earlier cohorts and 44% from later cohorts have access to a sanitary latrine as per the CLP's definition (an improvement on baseline).

- High proportions of households do not have sanitary latrines because the water seal and/ or the plastic pan is broken.
- The practice of open defecation is encouragingly low amongst adult male and female members of CPHHs.
- 17% of earlier cohort and 16% of later cohort CPHHs have access to clean water as per the CLP's definition
- The main reason why households do not have access to clean water is because the tube well is not protected by a concrete platform.
- Low proportions of CPHHs were cultivating bed crops or composting at the time of the survey.
- Evidence of soap or ash was found in 72% of sampled households, a significant improvement when compared to the baseline status of cohort 2.2.
- CPHHs are increasing their asset base and are diversifying into land (51% and 44% of earlier and later cohorts respectively have land [purchased or leased in]).
- Large improvements in knowledge about social 'ills' such as early marriage and dowry is evident.
- Joint decision making has increased.

Recommendations

Monitoring and learning

- Build into the workplans of Unit Managers (UM) a one week 'learning' session when they revisit previous cohorts and hold FGDs with CDOs, their respective unit staff and community to draw out issues and identify where improvements can be made. This needs to be structured and undertaken on an annual basis. UMs would then feed back their findings to the Operations Director;
- Undertake studies/ modules to look at the sustainability of enterprise activities e.g. improved poultry project, milk marketing, fodder production.

WATSAN

- Improve quality of water seals and strengthen the message of their benefits;
- If tube well platforms have proven to reduce bacteria then ensure that all future CPHHs have access to a tube well that has a platform and improve monitoring to ensure this is happening.

Plinth occupancy

- Where feasible, locate CPHHs on raised plinths in large household clusters;
- Ensure CPHHs understand there is no obligation to move onto a raised plinth and that they will not be penalised if they choose not to take up occupancy;
- Try and forge a written agreement (legal) between the land claimant and CPHHs;
- Ensure IMO staff have capacity to: locate plinths in an appropriate location (i.e. physically and socially) and that the views of CPHHs are taken into account; and to

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broker agreements between land claimants and CPHHs;

- Ensure that targets are realistic to allow IMO staff to undertake the more 'social' aspects of plinth raising e.g. location of plinth and liaison with land claimants.

Other

- Build in to the SD curriculum a session on investment options and their relative strengths.
- Provide 'light' follow up support to CPHHs in villages where CLP no longer operates. This could be a CDO working across 5 -10 island *chars* for example.
- Consider asking CPHHs to contribute a token amount to the asset they decide to purchase thereby reducing the feeling of having a 'CLP cow'.
- Emphasise the importance of vaccinating and deworming cattle.

Stuart Kenward and Rafiqul Islam

April 2011



MAXWELL
STAMP | P L C



Australian Government
Aid Program



For more information about CLP please visit our website: www.clp-bangladesh.org or email us at info@clp-bangladesh.org