



Baseline survey (April 2010) on socio-economic characteristics and nutritional status of CLP2.1 recruited households

Background

The Chars Livelihoods Programme Phase 2 aims to lift over 67,000 extremely poor households out of poverty by the transfer of income generating assets.

The aim of this survey conducted in April 2010 was to provide baseline information on newly recruited phase 2 households, before they receive any asset transfer. The key indicators are:-

1. Income/expenditure & savings
2. Productive and livelihood assets
3. Risk preparedness
4. Infections, health and hygiene
5. Food security and quantity and quality of diet
6. Nutritional status of mother and <5 year old children

Key Findings

- Mean Taka per capita/day income and expenditure were 21.8 and 18.3, respectively; 71.6% of households had cash savings averaging 554 Taka
- Mean value of assets was 1970 Taka, of which productive assets were 871 Taka
- 53% of households reported having 1 or more infections in the 30 days prior to the survey
- Food expenditure accounted for 64% of total expenditure; food diversity was poor
- 68% of mothers were undernourished rising to 82% in children
- Greater expenditure on food was associated with improved child nutritional status

Methodology

A random sample of 405 households took part in the survey. Data on key indicators 1-5 were collected through a pre-tested structured questionnaire, nutritional status was obtained by measurement. Ethical permission for the survey was obtained from the Bangladesh Medical Research Council.

The mother and their < 5 year old children had their height and weight measured by trained staff using standard anthropometric techniques. The haemoglobin level was also obtained from a finger prick of blood and anaemic status determined.

Discussion

1. Background

1.1 Demography and Education

17.5% of the households were female headed and average household size was 3.91. Nearly 80% of household heads had not been to school; 52% of school

aged children attended and there was no gender difference in school attendance.

1.2 Employment

80% of male heads were employed as day labourers (39% in female heads) and 86.2% of male heads (23.6% female heads) had worked for cash in the 30 days prior to the survey. 3.7% were unemployed.

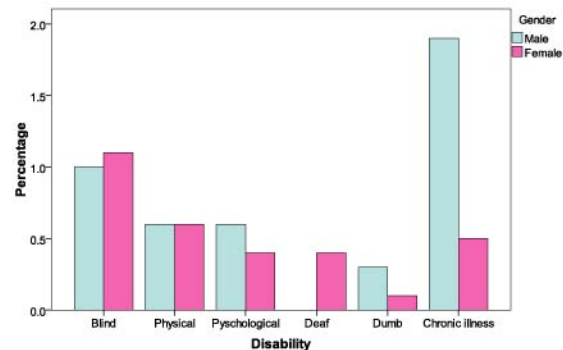
1.3 Household ownership and construction

3% of households did not have their own homestead. On average families had lived in their homestead for 5 years and the homestead land covered 4.8 decimals. Most homesteads were constructed of corrugated iron/tin roof, either jute, straw or tin sheet for walls, and all had a dirt floor.

1.4 Disability

Of the 1583 household members 3.8% were reported as disabled (Figure 1), more so in males (4.5% than females (3.1%).

Figure 1: Disability (%) of family members by gender



2. Key Indicators

2.1 Income, expenditure and cash savings

Calculation of income and expenditure was the same as that in CLP1. 47.9% of households fell below the Rajshahi poverty line income of 18 Taka pppd. Male headed households were more likely to have greater expenditure and cash savings than female headed (Table 1).

Table 1: Taka Income, expenditure and cash savings by head of household

| Variable | Household Head | | Total |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | |
| Mean | | | |
| Income per capita/day | 22.3 | 19.7 | 21.8 |
| Expenditure per capita/day | 19.0 | 15.1 | 18.3 |
| Cash savings (HHs with savings) | 599 | 289 | 554 |
| Cash savings (all HHs) | 445 | 171 | 397 |
| % of households with cash savings | 75% | 59% | 72% |



2.2 Productive and livelihood assets

The mean value of all assets was 1970 Taka of which productive assets accounted for 44%. 24% of households had their own water source and 92% lived within a 10 minutes round trip to a water source. 21% had access to a sanitary latrine and 83.7% of households were on a raised plinth but only 6.1% had access to a tube well with a platform on a raised plinth.

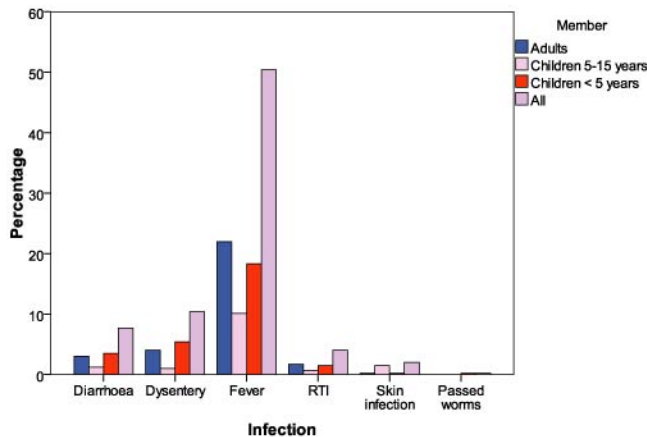
2.3 Risk Preparedness

Of the houses that existed at the last flood about 23.3% had their floor submerged. In the 2007 flood nearly half (48.4%) the houses were flooded and of these 25.2% had to move to another area.

2.4 Infections, health and hygiene

53.1% of households reported having 1 or more infections in the 30 days prior to the survey, with fever being the most common ailment (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Infections of family members (%)



Nearly a quarter of adults practiced open defecation rising to two-thirds in children. Soap or ash was available in only 28.5% of households with access to a latrine and 45.9% of households with a tubewell. Only 11.4% of females reported washing their hands with soap or ash before food preparation and 66.5% did not wash at all after cleaning a child's anus.

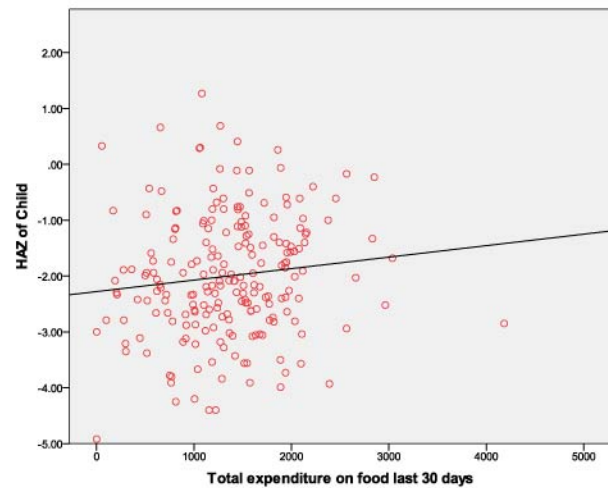
2.5 Food security and quantity and quality of diet

The mean household expenditure on food in the 30 day prior to the survey was 1295 Taka, more in male than female headed households (1427 versus 677 Taka, respectively). Food expenditure accounted for 63% of total expenditure (10% more in female headed). The diet was poor with very little animal protein and the number of different foods eaten in the 7 days prior to the survey was only 5.7 (maximum 13). 85% of households ate smaller food portions and 76% ate fewer meals. On average 3.1 food coping strategies were used.

2.6 Nutritional status of mother and <5 year old children

Nutritional status of the mother was poor and 40.3% had Chronic Energy Deficiency (CED) defined by a Body Mass Index $< 18.5 \text{ kgm}^{-2}$ and 47.1% were anaemic. 67.7% of mothers had CED or were anaemic. Nutritional status of < 5 year old children was worse. 53.6% were stunted (indicative of chronic undernutrition), 45.8% were underweight (both acute and chronic) and 20.0% were wasted (acute); 52% were anaemic and 81.7% were either stunted, underweight, wasted or anaemic.

Figure 3: Plot of child's height-for-age and food expenditure



There was a positive association between the mother and child nutritional status and between food expenditure in the last 30 days and child nutritional status (Figure 3).

Conclusion

The newly recruited CLP households have very low income and expenditure, very few assets, live on an extremely poor diet and both mothers and their children are very undernourished

All analyses and report writing were undertaken by Professor Nick Mascie-Taylor (University of Cambridge, UK).