



A typical CLP (2.1) first tier core participant at baseline

The story of Rekha

Background

As a core participant of CLP 2.1 Rekha received a cow during the first phase of the CLP2 Asset Transfer Project (ATP). This is the first cohort of six, which will gradually rollout CLP's package of support to core participating households between 2010 and 2016.

The Story of Rekha

Rekha (30), her husband (30) and their primary school going son (12), live in West-Nischintapur (Fulchari Upazila, Gaibandha district). Rekha is a housewife and her husband a day labourer. Before coming to this village, the family lived in East-Nischintapur with Rekha's husband's family, who owned just over 8 decimals of land. Rekha said that they "lost everything" when river erosion forced them to move. Today they live rent-free on land that is owned by a relative. Recently the family suffered another tragedy; due to reasons still unknown, their 3 year old daughter suddenly died.

Socio-economic Status

- The household has no access to their own tubewell or latrine.
- The household is raised during CLP 1.
- The house is made of thin bamboo fence (*chatai*) and has a tin roof. They received a tin shed from Lifeboy Soap Company, in which they keep domestic animals (CLP cow, chickens, a goat and sheep).
- During the last flood (2007) the floor of the house was submerged and the household moved to temporary accommodation. Now living on a CLP raised plinth, the household is confident that it will remain safely on the char during the flood period.
- Before joining CLP, the total value of household assets (1 bed, 1 trunk, some blankets, clothes and jewellery) was 1600 Taka (excluding poultry and domestic animals, Rekha had no poultry or animals that time).
- In May 2010, household income and expenditure was 3280 and 3245 Taka respectively. The household has no savings.

In May 2010, Rekha received a cow from CLP, at the value of 15,000 Taka. The household also received vegetable seeds for their homestead garden. For the first time in her life, Rekha earns her own income by selling vegetables

(400 Taka between May and September). With this money she bought books and pens for her son. Whilst Rekha has no savings, she expects that she will be able to begin saving for her family's future soon.



Rekha with the cow she received under ATP 2.1

Nutritional Status

- Rekha's BMI* is 20.3, which means that she has a healthy height and weight balance, as the normal BMI is 18.5+.
- At 114 g/litre Rekha's hemoglobin level is less than the anaemic threshold 120 g/l, which means that she is suffering from anaemia**.
- The asset transfer baseline survey found that the household members cope with food shortages by eating less than twice a day and consuming lower quality food than normal once a week.
- As reported in the asset transfer baseline survey household members regularly eat rice or wheat, oil, potatoes and leafy vegetables for three days and fish twice a week (if available).
- During food crises Rekha is the first one in her household to eat less. She believes that her husband needs more food than her, as he usually works long hours in the field.

* Body Mass Index (BMI): Calculated as weight (kg) divided by height (m²)

**anaemia is an iron deficiency, measured from the haemoglobin levels in a blood sample in grams per litre.

As a result of CLP, Rekha feels more confident about the future. "When CLP tested my blood, I came to know that I suffer from a lack of nutrients. They told me to consume eggs, fish, meat, different kinds of vegetables and milk. However, at that time we couldn't even have three meals a day, let alone buy these types of food. As a result of CLP, we started producing our own vegetables and eat at least three meals a day. In the future, our cow will give us milk, which we will drink as well as sell".



Empowerment Status

- The household knows how to access and have accessed government primary education services, primary school allowance, the village doctor and birth registration. However, Rekha and her family do not know how to access private high school education, death registration, college allowance or government livestock and agriculture extension services.
- No one in the household belongs to any social or community group.
- Most household decisions are made by Rekha and her husband jointly. However Rekha makes decisions regarding buying small non-food items for the household.
- Rekha and her husband are aware that there exists a law against dowry and violence against women and girls, but do not know the legal age of marriage for boys and girls.
- Rekha feels 'quite respected' by her family-in-law and community and her household feels 'very much respected' by the family and 'quite respected' by the community.
- Rekha lacks confidence in taking out loans, participating in the village *Shafish**, or influencing her husband's decisions over buying/leasing large assets (like livestock or land).

* *Shafish* is an informal village level judicial system in which village elders and the concerned parties gather to resolve local disputes.



Rekha in front of her vegetable garden.

In addition to the cow from CLP, Rekha now has shared ownership of three sheep, one goat and one hen. With these assets and opportunities Rekha is optimistic that her capabilities will continue to increase, enabling her to have a greater influence within her household. For the first time in their lives, Rekha and her husband are making plans for the future. They both intend to rear two or three calves, then sell the mother cow, for which they expect to receive at least 30,000 Taka. With that money they plan to buy land, as *'land provides security. If we have our own land, we can plant trees and earn an income by selling them. Everybody wants to progress. We have received the opportunity from CLP to do so and will work hard to succeed'*.

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This case study is the first in a series of longitudinal case studies, which will follow the same households' progress under CLP2 until 2016. The information draws upon baseline data collected in April/ May 2010, in addition to an interview conducted in September 2010. The interview took place shortly after the first asset transfer and the commencement of CLP activities.