



Chronic Poverty
Research Centre

What is Chronic Poverty?

The distinguishing feature of chronic poverty is extended duration in absolute poverty.

Therefore, chronically poor people always, or usually, live below a poverty line, which is normally defined in terms of a money indicator (e.g. consumption, income, etc.), but could also be defined in terms of wider or subjective aspects of deprivation.

This is different from the transitorily poor, who move in and out of poverty, or only occasionally fall below the poverty line.

**Background Paper for the Chronic
Poverty Report 2008-09**

Implementation of Policies for Reducing Chronic Poverty

PRS Country Study: Bangladesh

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List of Abbreviations

ADP	Annual Development Programme
ARISE	Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BKB	Bangladesh Krishi Bank
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board
BSCIC	Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation
CBFM	Community Based Fishery Management
CBN	Cost of Basic Needs
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CFW	Cash-for-Work
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CIDA	Canadian International Agency
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DCI	Direct Calorie Intake Method
DFID	Department for International Development
DFP	Department of Family Planning
DGHS	Directorate General of Health Services
DLG	Department of Local Government
DOF	Department of Fisheries (DOFish)
DOF	Department of Food (DOFood)
DPE	Department of Primary Education
DRR	Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation
DSK	Dustho Shasthya Kendra
DSS	Department of Social Services
DWA	Department of Women Affairs
DYD	Department of Youth Development



EC	European Commission
FFW	Food for Work
FSP	Financial Services for poor (FSP)
FoSHoL	Food Security for Sustainable Household Livelihood
GED	General Economic Division
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GR	Gratuitous Relief (GR)
GS	Gram Sarkar
HCI	Head Count Index
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HKI	Helen Keller International
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMED	Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Department
HPI	Household Poverty Index
IDCOL	Infrastructure Development Company Limited
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group (presently known as Practical Action)
LGD	Local Government Division
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MTBF	Medium Term Budgetary Framework
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NNP	National Nutrition Program
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PIO	Project Implementation Officer



PKSF	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAKUB	Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank
RMC	Rural Mother's Center
RMP	Rural Maintenance Program
RSS	Rural Social Services
SAIP	Small Holder Agricultural Improvement Project
SC-UK	Save the Children UK
SC-USA	Save the Children USA
SDF	Social Development Fund
SLDP	Small-scale Livestock Development Project
SOUHARDO	Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities
SWG	Socially Disadvantaged Women (SWG)
TR	Test Relief
TUP	Targeting Ultra Poor
UCD	Urban Community Development
UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Educational Program
UDCC	Upazila Development Coordination Committee
UGIIP	Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad (the fourth and the lowest level of local government unit having an elected body and headed by an elected Chairman)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UZP	Upazila Parishad
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis Mapping
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development



VGF	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WFC	WorldFish Center
WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary of *Bangla* Words

<i>Char</i>	Newly formed lands surfacing due to silting of the riverbed
<i>MongaMonga</i>	A local Bangla word that means famine-like situation that recurs during months of slack employment, normally associated with the months from September to November, and in the northwest region.
<i>Parishad</i>	Council
<i>Pourashava</i>	Municipality
<i>Union</i>	Sub-division of Upazila, consisting of several villages (there are a total of 4,488 Unions)
<i>Upazila</i>	Sub-district or the lowest administrative unit above Union and below Zila (synonymous to Thana: there are 470 Upazilas in total)
<i>Zila</i>	District (there are 64 Districts in Bangladesh)

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Summary

Bangladesh's IPRSP was finalised in June 2003 and the full PRSP was finalised in January 2006. The broad objective of the Bangladesh study is to assess progresses made in implementation of policies (in PRSP) aimed at reducing chronic poverty. All policies and programs (often not explicitly backed by a written policy), which are deemed either directly or indirectly to have reduced chronic poverty are within the scope of the current study. In the process the study identifies areas where improvements may be made in policy and policy processes relevant for reducing chronic poverty in the country. In realising the broad objective, the study team undertook a mapping exercise, identified policy space meant for the chronic poor, assessed in selected areas if these were implemented, and assessed possible determinants of implementation. The study involved desk reviews and analyses of secondary data. The team also undertook field studies through interviews and FGDs for selected programs/projects in selected areas. The study was undertaken during October 2006 till February 2007, with additional inputs obtained till May 2007. These were difficult times for Bangladesh – the elected government made way for a caretaker government to oversee the parliamentary election in late October 2006, after several changes there is now a caretaker government undertaking major administrative and political reforms with supports from the military. While one would hesitate to predict on any outcome, there is a broad consensus that politics, policymaking and policy implementation will no more be the same in Bangladesh. In such a context, the findings of the study will hopefully be useful inputs to shaping a new future.

Poverty mapping has been done quite extensively in Bangladesh; and the poverty estimates (as well as vulnerability index) for smaller geographical areas have been used as guidelines for the resource allocation across regions. In such allocations, extreme poverty had apparently been the major consideration. The study however suggests that there are biases in such mapping exercise, and therefore in current pattern of resource allocation under food assistance. Disproportionate negligence of the southern coastal regions in the poverty maps drawn from small area estimation exercises had influenced resource allocations in government (and WFP) programs, as well as the spatial distribution of NGO programs. The result has been worsening of poverty situation in the south. It came as a surprise to the study team that none of the important actors registered any awareness of the problem during the numerous interviews undertaken for the study. Extensive engagement on the subject within the scope of the current study had however enticed many stakeholders to look into the matter.

'Programs targeting chronic poor' and 'programs to reduce chronic poverty' may not be viewed synonymously. The former is perceived to include programs directed at chronic poor, and are biased by safety net considerations. In contrast, the second set of programs includes, in addition to those included in the former, pro-poor growth programs that are biased towards reducing chronic poverty. In either case, one needs to have a common working definition of chronic poverty and *a prior*



identification of who the chronic poor are. Unfortunately, there is no common understanding, at the level of policymakers, of a policy category called the 'chronic' (or, extreme or ultra) poor. The PRSP, put together with the assistance of local consultants, has dealt with the terms 'poor', 'extremely poor' and 'pro-poor growth', but the main body of the report never mentioned of 'chronic poor'. The agencies that consider PRSP as guideline for many of their actions are also stuck with similar limitations.

Given that chronic poor as a target group occurs only rarely in the two main national documents – PRSP on policies and MTBF on resource allocation, it is expected that there would be no explicitly articulated policy for reduction of chronic poverty. Interviews of senior officials across all agencies within the government revealed that there is not only no such policy, there is no clear perception on 'policies' either. As noted earlier, senior officials in Dhaka (the capital) perceive policies in terms of 'policy guidelines' or 'policy framework paper', which lay out broad objectives and some strategies. These provide the criteria for choice of programs/ projects in order to attain one or a set of objectives. At district levels and below, no one reflects on policies – rather, as one puts it, 'we carry out the instructions from above to implement the programs and projects as per the rules laid out in the project document and/or government manuals/circulars'. A review of the documents reveals presence of inconsistencies and overlaps of goals, targets and actions.

Initial consultations with relevant government and project officials; and the search for linking real world activities with policies recorded in the PRSP document reveal that activities observed at the implementation stage are not necessarily the fallouts of policies taken (predating the activities). On the contrary, it may often be the case that policies are packaged to accommodate on-going project activities. Given the constraints set by current practices, the study had looked into issues of 'policy implementation' at three tiers: identification of pro-poor programs and projects at policy levels; implementation of policy within each program/project to identify activities; and implementation of activities that are considered pro-poor.

At a national level, chronic poor are addressed within the broader concept of poor; and there are broadly two sets of policies – (i) where resource transfers are made to poor either under safety net programs, or for economic empowerment through asset transfers; and (ii) growth strategies that are perceived to be pro-poor. On the latter, the plan document provides very little linkage between growth strategy and objectives to alleviate poverty. Thus, only the policies under the first category are considered articulate enough for probing into their implementation. Within this set, there are programs, which, by design target the very (chronic) poor.

Respondents at various tiers were asked as to how particular policies and programs/projects were adopted. Other than the various kinds of (cash) allowance programs adopted at the national levels (and inclusive within a pre-defined target population), most programs/projects are perceived to be donor-driven. That is, 'consultants' – national or expatriate - were either borrowing the concept from elsewhere, or had



drawn upon the lessons learnt in previous projects. Unfortunately, such lessons were rarely owned within the government agencies.

There are two important ways through which resources may be allocated at sub-national (district, upazila or union) levels. Large investments on roads, ports, and other infrastructure, as well as projects of soft nature such as those under the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) may often be biased towards particular region. For example, IFAD Country Programme Evaluation undertaken in 2005 mentions of such biases in the selection of project areas, often influenced by the constituency of the civil servants or political leaders having the authority to approve the project. Generally, such biases arise when there are no transparent criteria laid out for making appropriate choice of project areas and location-specific projects. Interestingly, the VAM resource allocation map has influenced many other agencies as well – notably, Brac in targeting areas under its TUP program and PKSF's choice of areas under the Credit for Ultra Poor (and subsequently, the *Monga* eradication initiative).

Actual resource allocation often deviates from the less-than-perfect allocation map; and both WFP and the M/O Food personnel informed that other than political influences, logistics and presence (or absence) of NGO capacity in a locality were important determinants. Thus, the coastal belt in the south had been doubly jeopardised - less attractive to the NGOs and therefore less flow of resources targeted to the poor; and less weights in the official (including WFP supports) allocation of resources. Unfortunately, the PRSP fails to account for the current misallocation of resources arising out of ill-construed spatial poverty mapping.

Fiscal transfers follow a simple formula with weights given to population, physical area and 'backwardness'. Other than the block grant and salary subvention, Union Parishads are given grants in grains for TR, FFW, VGD, VGF, RIMP and also cash transfers on account of old age pension and allowances for widows and freedom fighters. Guidelines on expenditure mention of 60% on communication & transport, 20% on agriculture & irrigation, 10% on education and 10% on physical infrastructure. In reality, there are gross deviations, and upazila level stakeholders unanimously reported of increasing bias in actual expenditure towards projects involving physical infrastructure. There are claims that almost 95 percent of the resources are in such activities even when these are shown under such social sectors as education or health. Generally, there had been allegations that 'soft' part in development expenditure is increasingly marginalised – partly because of the perception that the responsibility is more of the NGOs, and partly because of easy option of 'rent-seeking' in schemes that deal with 'roads & culverts'.

There is an additional dimension to the ways resources are utilised, which relates to relative strength of various agencies. The perception that higher utilisation rate is a desired quality dominates current thinking in development. Such perceptions lend support to strengthening the relative position of these organisations in controlling local resources as well. It is therefore no wonder that LGED has emerged as a major



player in implementing projects at local levels and has a greater voice in actual expenditure compared to their counterpart agencies.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors location of an upazila, particularly its proximity from the centre of power (Dhaka) may have bearings on how resources are utilised. Potentially, lack of monitoring in distant places give way to local forces to dominate the resource allocation, and the deviations from the guidelines are very high. In far-off places, the officers resided permanently. In contrast, places in the mid-ways (say, within 2 hours distance from a major urban centre), there are tendencies to commute and often remain absent. There is however a systematic bias in the quality of government servants stationed in remote areas (other than the outlier cases of good and honest officers being punished by mischievous political authorities).

The study finds that self-targeted programs owned by the government, and involve accountable local bodies as selectors of beneficiaries, have better chances of success. No less important is the choice of consultants involved in initial design and of implementing agencies are important determinants of program success.

The second tier noted earlier is: identification of relevant components/activities that are deemed pro-poor. Of all the projects reviewed under the current study, those housed within government agencies, or, implemented directly by smaller NGOs with direct project/donor supervision were found to have less flexibility. In contrast, some of the pro-poor projects housed within large NGOs (or agencies with sufficiently diversified portfolio) are found to have greater flexibility – not always utilised for better cause.

At the level of implementing agencies, exercising the choice is rare – almost nil in agencies within the government as well as amongst sponsoring donor agencies. Within the society, there is no visible organised group of strength. Thus, it is the conscience nurtured by individuals and/or organisations engaged in social development, which is an important factor influencing the choice in favour of chronic poor. A second aspect is the supply of resources (from donors), which induce various agencies to package programs to avail these resources. Such trends are observed in NGOs as well as in some of the government agencies.

Problems of implementation often arise due to lack of coordination among implementing agencies, as well as due to lack of specialised expertise within an agency. Symptoms of such problems are very much evident in increasing trend towards engaging in multiple activities by a single agency. Each agency chooses to open multiple windows (and thereby widen the net) to maximise its receipt of project fund! Within a regime of limited human capacity that is divided across agencies, this has meant below-average capability within each. This is believed to have added to policy implementation problem in general. Often such practices are associated with wastage of resources in activities in which there is no in-house expertise - one glaring example is toying with crude ideas in the field or pro-poor technology. In the absence of culture of cooperation amongst institutions and/or sourcing expertise from



markets – both arising due to the rent-seeking behaviour embedded in project culture – there has been very little innovation in the ‘pro-poor knowledge industry’. In various sectors, the latter is often the critical entry point for expanding the choice set for pro-poor programs.

The last tier of query in the study design includes implementations of selected activities. There are several types of projects that the study looked into. Three major categories in case of addressing rural poverty are offering short-term employment, as in Monga eradication program; cash transfers, as in the allowance program for distressed women; and transfer of assets – through community-based organisations as in case of access to water bodies (CBFM), and asset transfers to individuals under Brac’s TUP. Since the programs targeted the very poor, identifying them had been a major challenge in most projects. However, in Monga eradication program the work involved manual labour, and therefore it were the very poor who engaged in the earthwork. The critical element that makes the Cash allowances to Distressed/Widowed Women program a success is the disclosure of full information on eligibility and entitlements – which is not always the case in many programs targeting the poor. Under CBFM, the policy to establish right of fishers on the water body (by leasing out to their associations) may not be perceived as pro-poor because fishing provides only part-time employment and the very poor have to leave their place of residence to seek employment elsewhere. Moreover, there had been failures in procuring lease for the groups due to pressures generated through politically powerful ones. Such practice had increased in great proportion during the past political regime. In Brac’s TUP program, identification of the ‘ultra poor’ followed relatively more rigorous criteria. It had however one bias – leaving out those who are associated with other programs or got benefits from other programs. This exclusion principle applied in Brac TUP program allows smooth functioning due to having greater vertical control, but often tends to segment the poor through organisational affiliations. Brac Committee) is an interesting concept that provides the platform for the very poor to sit with the local elites and resolve the problems they may face in pursuit of their economic empowerment. There are however critics who would argue that creating new institutions by-passing the existing ones further complicate the development process.

Choice of agency has been a thorny issue in project implementation in Bangladesh. At two tiers, the problem normally surfaces. The first involves selection of an agency, which is entrusted to implement a project, normally within the government, but can be otherwise. The second relates to choice of partner organisations, mostly the NGOs, who perform the field-level activities. The latter arises more prominently in implementing pro-poor policies, many of which involve social mobilisation and other micro-level engagements. NGO partnership is generally sought where targeted programs are involved – whether it be resource transfer or delivery of non-financial services. Even if the payment to a participating NGO is for its service, the latter (like any service provider) may provide less than it is paid for; and such responses are often the result of initial move for ‘rent seeking’ by the implementing agency selecting the NGOs. The problem is aggravated in case of pro-poor safety net programs



(where resource transfers are involved) since the poor are less empowered to ensure their rightful share!

Statuses of M&E in all the projects, reviewed under the current study, were looked into. In addition, presence of monitoring within the government agency had also been probed.

Regular monitoring of project activities with separate monitoring cells is observed only in projects funded externally. In contrast, in-house monitoring within the government (other than IMED's involvement at a higher level) is almost absent. Monitoring in case of projects such as in SAIP is effectively located within the power hierarchy of the implementing agency (DAE), fails to generate results even if large volume of data is collected and much effort of consultants had gone into designing detail monitoring schedules. Such data often gets lost with the departure of the responsible agency because of the absence of information sharing (and flows) with agencies within the government.

In general, the higher authority had failed to respond, and the state of monitoring had reached a dismal level when the study was conducted.

The recommendations may be broadly grouped into two – some are relevant for all sorts of policies, while others are more relevant for policies that address the poor or chronic poor. The two groups are distinguished in terms of general and specific recommendations. Among the general recommendations, it is being pointed out that policies are rarely owned within the government and are mostly donor-driven – there is a need to develop agenda of common interest around which ownership may be initiated. A critical examination of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two alternative institutional arrangements – that of multiple activities within an agency and the other of specialised agencies coordinating among themselves is required. It is important to revisit the purposes of monitoring and accordingly develop manageable sets of indicators and processes to monitor. It is also important to institutionalise monitoring agencies independent of (not separated from) implementing agency. Another urge is to provide supports to national governments to institutionalise independent monitoring department with adequate capacity and resources for recurrent expenditure.

There are a number of specific recommendations to address policies, which are exclusively for the chronic poor. It is suggested that regional resource allocation has been biased and there is a need for its immediate revisions. Targeting poor and the process of identifying poor is being a major challenge and a need to innovate new programs that have self-targeting, and have the right balance of operational criteria and process-based identification is felt. There is no homogenous category called the chronic poor; and therefore there is a need to appreciate multiple approaches. There is also a need to define policies that will realise targets in sustained manner. In addition, special emphasis is required to initiate the process of innovating pro-poor technologies. Issues like modifying implementation designs through learning and appropriately designed tenure of staff should be ensured.



1 Introduction

1.1 Introductory Remarks and Study Objectives

Bangladesh's IPRSP was finalised in June 2003 and the full PRSP was finalised in January 2006. As in all other countries, policies for the poor (or, pro-poor policies) predate, by long margin, the introduction of PRSP. It is also to be noted that the segment of very poor got a special connotation arising out of some of the development practices in Bangladesh. By mid-1990s, limitations of the microcredit programs in reaching out to the 'extreme'/'hardcore'/'ultra' poor were pointed out.¹ Some of the earlier programs, which had generally targeted the poor, aimed at incorporating new elements to address this new group. Thus, some of the old policies got repackaged to address the chronic poor; and new programs were put into practice without yet being formally included in the policy matrix. All policies and programs (often not explicitly backed by a written policy), which are deemed either directly or indirectly to reduce chronic poverty are within the scope of the current study looking into problems of policy implementation.

At the PRSP Implementation Forum, held in October 2005, the representative of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) had stated that 'the Government recognises that timely, efficient and effective implementation is a core strategic challenge' (Ahmed 2005). Bangladesh's PRSP, titled *Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction*, finalised in January 2006, made the following observation with regards to implementation:

"It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that implementation problems have proved to be the bane of policy and programme initiatives on poverty reduction. Indeed, implementation failures have become so generic that improving on implementation is now more correctly seen as a core strategic challenge rather than a mere matter of 'administration'." (p. 47)

The four action areas on implementation, identified in the PRSP document, are generally applicable for the overall plan and its implementation, without necessarily having immediate relevance for pro-poor policy implementation.² Moreover, concerns on implementation are biased towards budgetary aspects, rather than policy *per se*. The PRSP however flags the importance of both 'pre-decision' stage of policy and the 'post-decision' phase of policy, which remain relevant for all types of policies. It also recognises that 'successful policy-making may ... depend on a better understanding of where and when policy windows open'. Given the general recognition – both within the government and amongst development partners – the broad area of policy implementation remains a challenging subject of query. Since

¹ All these terms and chronic poor are treated synonymously in this report.

² These include, (i) Guidelines for ADPS to help prioritise projects; (ii) link budgetary process with PRSP through MTBF; (iii) support National Poverty Focal Point (NPFP) in the areas of monitoring and evaluation; and (iv) build effective partnership for implementation.



chronic poor occupies rather an insignificant space within the larger policy canvass, a study on implementation of policies for reduction of chronic poverty raises greater challenges.

The broad objective of the Bangladesh study is to assess progresses made in implementation of policies (in PRSP) aimed at reduction of chronic poverty. In the process the study aims to identify areas of improving policy and policy processes for chronic poverty reduction in the country. The sequential steps identified to realise the objectives are as follows:

- Map out who and where the chronically poor are in Bangladesh;
- Review policies to identify the ones pertinent to chronically poor;
- Assess/Find out if policies that respond to chronic poverty and articulated in Bangladesh's PRS are actually implemented in practice?³
- Identify the determinants of the observed patterns of implementation/non-implementation, and how the latter may be affecting chronic poverty; and
- Identify up to ten key recommendations for what should/could be done to improve policy and policy processes for reducing chronic poverty in Bangladesh.

The study was undertaken amidst difficult times – the elected government made way for a caretaker government to oversee the parliamentary election in late October 2006, following which there had been a prolong period of political uncertainty. While the situation is more stable since mid-January 2007, the transition to a newly elected government is yet to materialise. For obvious reasons, certain segments of the stakeholders in policymaking could only be marginally touched upon. Barring this limitation, the study had covered a wide number of issues; and some of these could not be tied together for inclusion in the final story narrated in this report.

1.2 Study Methodology

At two planes, the issues of methodology are dealt with – (i) conceptual framework to identify required information and to guide processing of the information, and (ii) the design for collecting relevant information. The sequencing of steps identified under objectives partly outline the broad reasoning to follow in arriving at a set of recommendations for improving policy and policy processes. This section gets into details involved in each of the steps.

³ Implementation of policies may be realised through specific legislation, through insertion into sector policy frameworks, expenditure frameworks, sector programmes, or through special provisions within the national budget. When policies remain inadequately articulated, legal enactments requiring precise operational language are less likely to surface. Other than in the context of fishers' rights to water bodies (Annex 9), the issues around legal enactments have not been addressed in this study.



1.2.1 *Linking Policy with Reduction of Chronic Poverty*

At the outset it is important to note that ‘programs targeting chronic poor’ and ‘programs to reduce chronic poverty’ may not be viewed synonymously. The former normally includes programs directed at chronic poor, and are biased by safety net considerations. In contrast, the second set of programs includes, in addition to those included in the former, pro-poor growth programs that are biased towards reducing chronic poverty. In either case, one needs to have a common working definition of chronic poverty and a *prior* identification of who the chronic poor are.

Defining Poor and Poverty. National level statistics on poverty and poor normally distinguish between ‘absolute poverty’ and ‘extreme poverty’, and do not address chronic poverty and poor. The traditional practice of measuring incidence of poverty had been the Direct Calorie Intake Method (DCI). Based on cut-offs in Kilo calorie per capita per day, based on which three measures were defined – **absolute poverty** with the threshold of ≤ 2122 Kc/capita/day; **hardcore poverty** with the threshold of ≤ 1805 Kc/capita/day; and **ultra poverty** with the threshold of ≤ 1600 Kc/capita/day.⁴ Recent estimates reported in the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2005 make use of Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) method, which calls for estimating the cost of a fixed food bundle providing minimal nutritional requirements corresponding to 2,122 kcal per day per person. Using two separate estimates for non-food allowances, two measures of poverty are arrived at. The upper poverty line using the ‘upper non-food allowance’ provides the threshold for estimating ‘**absolute poverty**’, while the lower poverty line using the ‘lower non-food allowance’ provides the threshold for ‘**extreme poverty**’.⁵

None of the poverty statistics referred to above corresponds exactly with a notion of ‘chronic poverty’ or ‘chronic poor’; and the recent BIDS-CPRC report on Chronic Poverty in Bangladesh (Sen and Hume, 2006) avoids suggesting a rigorous definition. The latter instead cites the work of J.C. Jack on East Bengal in 1910, and appears to draw analogy between ‘chronic need’ (in Jack’s illustration) and ‘chronic poverty’ of the current discourse; and to suggest that the 1800 Kcal/day cut-off point may be the appropriate one to measure the extent of chronic poverty.⁶ The background BIDS study based on a panel of rural households over 1987-2000 however defines chronic poverty as a ‘long-duration poverty’. The latter is in line with the description of ‘chronically poor’ in the Chronic Poverty Report 2004-05, that is the union of ‘always poor’ and ‘transitory poor’, both having mean scores below the poverty line.⁷

⁴ See BBS 2006.

⁵ The fixed food bundle considered under the CBN method of BBS consists of eleven items: rice, wheat, pulses, milk, oil, meat, fish, potato, other vegetables, sugar and fruits, as recommended by Ravallion and Sen (1996), based on Alamgir (1974). Median non-food expenditure of the two groups – those above 2,122 Kcal and those below – are considered to identify the upper non-food allowance and lower non-food allowance.

⁶ See Box 1.1, in p. 18, Sen and Hume (2006).

⁷ See Figure 1.1, p. 5, CPRC 2005.



Concerns for chronic poor remains largely rooted in pervasive prevalence of hunger, and therefore, our perception of who the poor (or, chronic poor) are remains largely defined in the income scale – an equivalence of purchasing power to avoid hunger. Yet, for practical policy targeting, chronic poor are generally identified as individuals and/or households with certain characteristics; that enable policies to target them and implementing agencies to locate and reach them in various spaces. The latter includes geographic location (such as, areas with certain characteristics, or certain administrative units – wards, unions, upasilas or districts); specific occupational spaces (such as, daily laborers, domestic service providers, etc.); particular demographic spaces (such as, old-aged people or widowed/separated women with no assets); or certain endowment spaces (such as, no land asset or education).⁸ Mapping of (chronic) poverty and (chronic) poor across these spaces also provide the basis for assessing pro-poor orientation of policies.

Defining Policy Space: Almost by tautology, policy for chronically poor is one that aims at improving the livelihood of the chronic poor.⁹ The Framework of Plausible Policies suggests of three broad policy areas: preventing descent, addressing maintainers, and facilitating escape. There are several reasons why the Bangladesh study does not adhere to the suggested typology. While policies aimed at people less unfortunate than the chronic poor may attempt to ‘prevent descent’ and maintain status quo, the same do not hold for the chronic poor.¹⁰ The latter may only aim at ‘escaping poverty’, or alleviate out of the current status (of remaining chronically poor), which is expectedly the central focus of specific policies for chronic poor!¹¹ In order to account for the broader concerns, we propose three policy types, as may be identified in the country’s PRSP, and illustrated in Figure 1 below.

At two ends of the flows depicted in Figure 1, two sets of policy types are noted. The first (right column) may be grouped into three: (i) those designed and directed to a target group either through service and product space or through non-market transfers to target groups; (ii) policies aimed at promoting growth that are perceived pro-poor and/or contribute towards poverty reduction; and (iii) supports provided

⁸ The lowest unit with elected representatives to local government is the ward; and the Ward Commissioners form the local body called the Union Parishad, headed by an elected Chairman. Other than some police stations in selected areas, the lowest unit where administration of the national government exists is the upazila, even though health and agriculture extension services have their outreaches at lower tiers. Similar to the Union Parishad, structure of local governance was once introduced at upazila and district (zila) levels. Thus, national government administration at upazila level (headed by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer) coordinates with the elected Union Parishad body in matters related to resource allocation and other service delivery.

⁹ It is common to classify policies in terms of their stated intentions, which is not asserted here. Since the history of policy making predates their formal association with one or the other type of poverty-alleviation program, we have applied judgment on choice of ‘pro-chronic poor’ policies, which is a subset of all the policies that are claimed to be ‘pro-poor’. For clarity in communication, the text often uses the term ‘pro-poor’ even though the reference is primarily to chronic poor.

¹⁰ Current policies to prevent descent help in reducing the potential size of chronic poverty in future, and are included in policies addressing the poor and poverty reduction in general.

¹¹ It is presumed that ‘policies for a group’ are meant to benefit the group; and therefore, policies with potential negative impact on the group are not addressed.



(occasionally by remaining silent) to non-PRSP initiatives aimed at benefiting the chronic poor. The second policy types arise at the level of implementing a policy for chronic poor (lower part of the left column) - targeting may be *exclusively* for the chronic poor, or, may be *inclusive* to include chronic poor.

Whether direct transfers of resources are made through non-market means, or market conditions are altered to make these conducive for pro-poor growth and development, all kinds of policies may be grouped in terms of the product/service spaces they intervene in (see Figure 2). Designing policies for the latter spaces to reach a 'chronic poor group' applies even when broad targeting is undertaken in terms of areas and social groups (such as, ethnic minority). Thus, in addition to spatial mapping to assess correspondence between policy initiative and prevalence of chronic poverty, one needs to map poverty on the factor and output markets (of goods & services). The latter provides additional dimension to group policies that may be located within line ministries.¹²

¹² One may associate certain factor markets with endowments (transfer of productive resources or human capital) and view 'transformative' policies as those aimed at the endowment space, while certain output markets may be associated with 'non-transformative' policies aimed at reaching out to the poor with supports – either in bad times, or on a regular basis. There are however exceptions in both cases.



Figure 1: From Policies to Target Groups

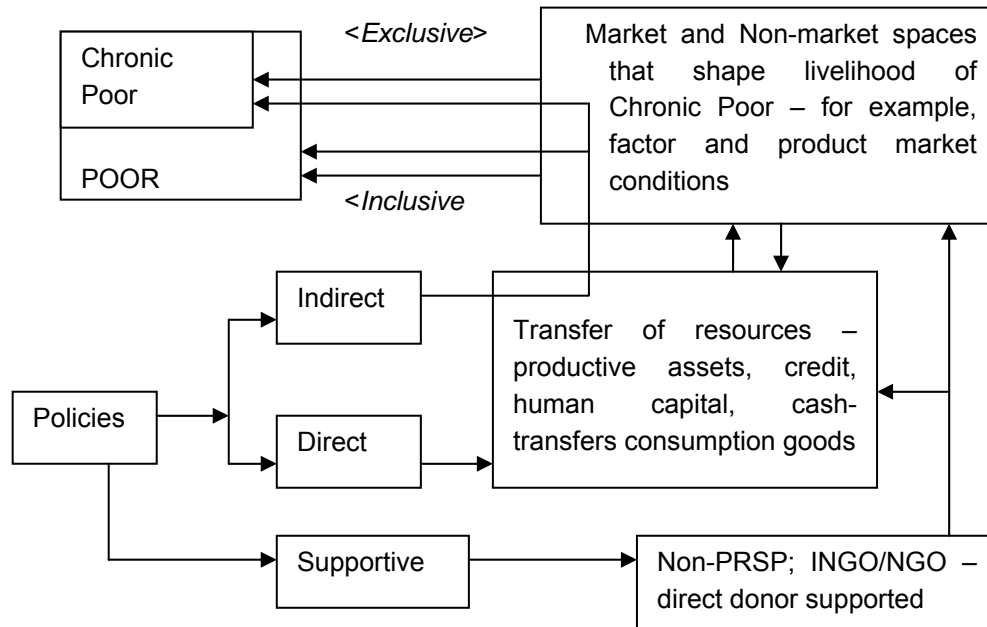
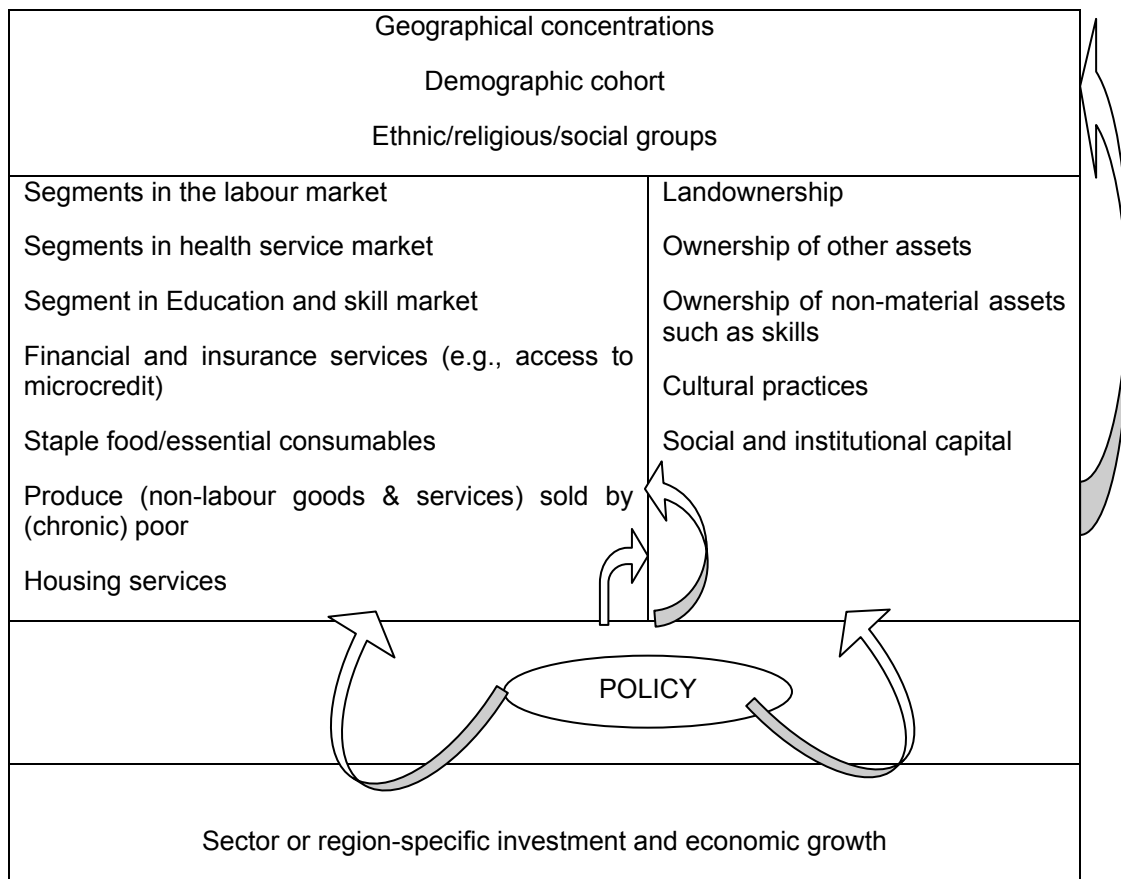


Figure 2: Non-Income Dimensions of Poverty Mapping and Policies for Poverty Reduction



Note: The arrows represent impact pathways leading to dimensions where poverty may be mapped.



1.2.2 *Demystifying Policies*

When the study was initiated, ‘policies’ were perceived as in ‘policy instruments’ that are designed and implemented in a way to influence outcomes favouring one or the other target population – either directly or indirectly. The preceding section upholds such view as well. As the study progressed, with reviews and interviews getting dissected in group-level reflections, heterogeneity in the use of the term ‘policy’ got evident. National policy guidelines, policy framework, sectoral policy; and under all these, action plans, programs /projects, and many such terms create sufficient confusions making it difficult to locate ‘policy’ in the whole design. The study team chose to make a short detour to clarify the context in which the term ‘policy’ is used in this study so that questions around its implementation may be commonly understood.

In interviews conducted under the study, senior government officials were asked (several times) to reveal their interpretation of the term ‘policy’. In one such interview, in the context of policies undertaken by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the answer was: ‘the Government policy is women advancement’. Responses also included such other objectives as, ‘ensure welfare of the general mass and/or distressed people’. To most of the respondents, the goals and objectives were the policies; and the programs, projects and activities were means to implement those ‘policies’! Thus, ‘providing old age pension allowance to elderly people’, is an action to implement government ‘policy’ to ensure welfare of distressed people.¹³ As more interviews were administered, the research team realised that the above perspective is dominant among those who process government undertakings including resource allocation for those undertakings.

One may identify three different perspectives on ‘policy’ that are currently in vogue: (i) a textbook view; (ii) that implicit in the formulation of a ‘national policy’ on a certain theme or sector; and (iii) that implicit in a plan document, such as the PRSP. Rest of this section illustrates the differences and attempts to identify ‘policies’ at an empirical level, whose implementation is the subject of query in the present study.

Such subjects as public management would identify policy making cycles that embody various sequentially linked steps – identification of goals and objectives, drawing up (and design of) policies to realise these objectives, implementation of these policies and monitoring & evaluation of implementation. Economists would distinguish between policy objectives and policy instruments; and associate policies with the latter and use comparative static analysis to compare merits of alternative policies to realise a common objective. Obviously, policies are distinct from the purposes for which these are designed, even though efficacy of policies as well as progress in policy implementation may be assessed only with reference to the objectives that these policies are expected to realise.

¹³ Within such a perspective, one may argue that there is only one ‘chronic poor policy’ that aims at improving the lots of chronic poor; and there may be several actions to realise the ‘policy’.

**Box 1: Programs and Projects: Alternative Perspectives**

Programs and projects are often mentioned in this report at the same breadth. There are several perceptions on the two concepts. Amongst government officials, 'projects' are financed from development budget, while a 'program' includes activities that are supported out of revenue budget. This view is commonly shared across line ministries who implement programs/projects, Ministry of Planning who gives the initial nod to a project document, and the Ministry of Finance who allocates resources.

For many development assistance providers, programs are long term undertakings, often involving several horizontally or sequentially linked projects, and parts or whole of a program may be financed out of development budget. In contrast, projects are short-term, often pilot-level precursor to long-term program development. This view is reflected in one of the donor supported training programs (Gender as Focal Point of IWRM Programs and Project, Module Three, Mainstreaming Gender in the Project Cycle), wherefrom the following is quoted:

"A program refers to the organization of activities, projects, processes or services brought together to achieve specific policies. It usually consists of several projects. Programs may refer to sectoral efforts, have a functional focus and consist of several projects supporting a broader effort.

A project encompasses a specific range of resources and activities which are brought together to generate clearly defined outputs within a given budget and a specified period of time. Compared to a program, a project is more specific and has more defined targets and timeframes. A project can be best understood as a 'solution to a problem'.

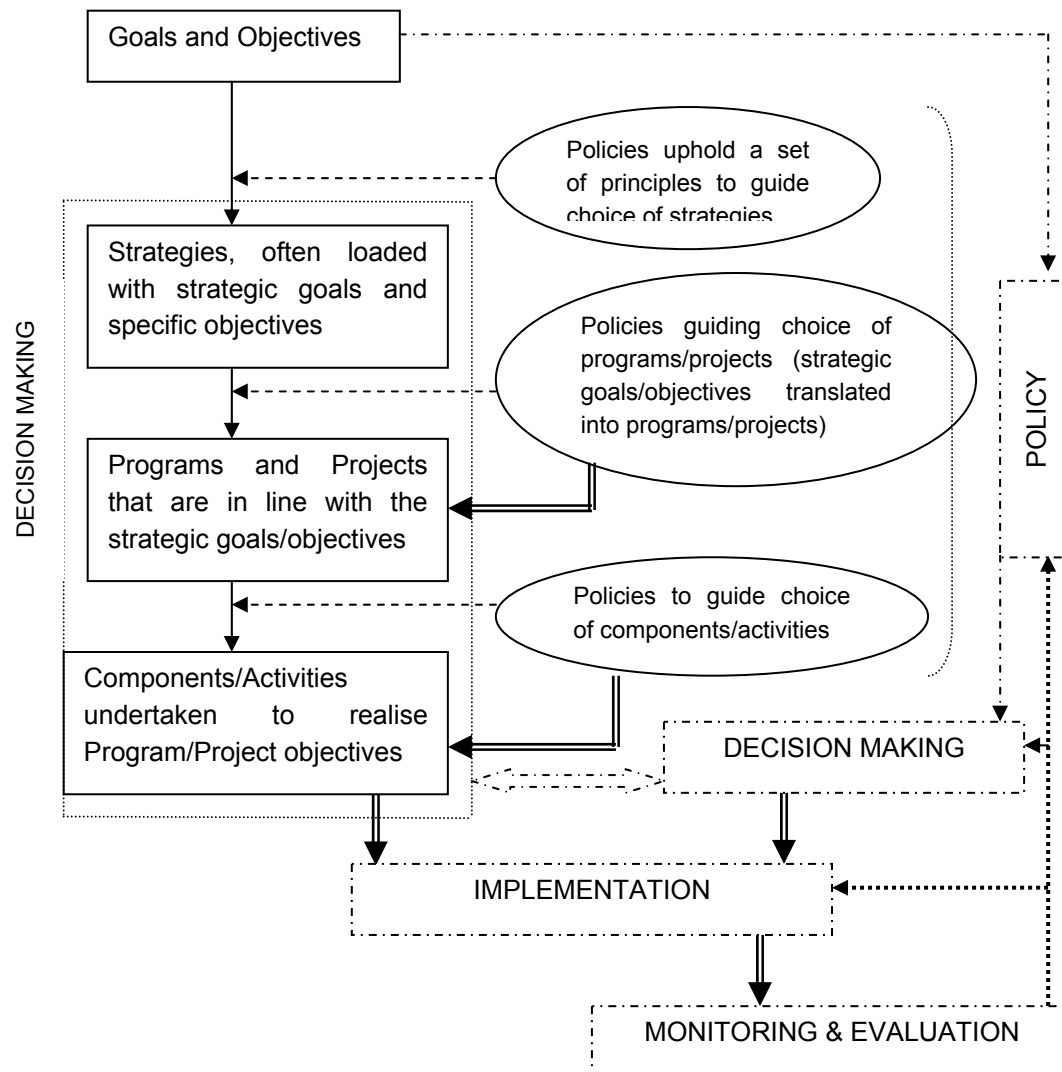
The business world dealing with governance as well as project planning mentions of a 'policy paper', 'policy guideline' or a 'policy framework', which lays out the broad policy agenda (a wish list of objectives) and a set of strategies to realise these objectives. The document is considered to have an important functional use by providing guidelines for program and project formulations. Thus, a national policy document, once approved by the Cabinet, provides legitimacy to program/project undertakings and resource allocations to programs/projects that are justified to be in line with the approved document. At a very aggregate level, strategies involve elements of 'policies' – for example, there are mentions of strategies for pro-poor development.¹⁴ Elements of 'policies' also appear at lower tiers – reflected in

¹⁴ Sometimes, it is difficult to separate out the rhetoric from content. Bangladesh's PRSP mentions of four strategic blocks and four supporting strategies. The first strategic block mentions of 'Macroeconomic environment for pro-poor economic growth', and yet, other than a general intention (strategic goal!) expressed to 'increase funding for pro-poor growth', no specific 'pro-poor policy' could be identified.

program/project design and in identification of components and activities under a single program or project.

An illustration of the inconsistencies in policymaking cycle laid out in PRSP and national policy document (of a particular sector) is given in Annex 4. The schema proposed below in Figure 3 highlights the approach adopted in identifying policies in this exercise.

Figure 3: In search of Policies



The schema presented above touches upon three perspectives. The first is that reflected in current policy design (policy framework), represented by the left-most column – strategies reportedly drawn from goals and objectives, and defining the perimeter for choosing programs/projects and their components/activities. The second is the policymaking cycle often reproduced in management textbooks with more pragmatic reflection that lays out the sequentially linked steps – goals/objectives, policy, decision making, implementation and monitoring & evaluation that provide feedback to preceding steps in the cycle. This is captured in



the right-most column in Figure 3. The third is an attempt to bridge the two. In it, the decision-making component is disaggregated into three to bring correspondence with the current practice (as in the PRSP); and policy is perceived to emerge in linking objectives and the choice of actions in each of these three steps. Thus, policy implementation ideally occurs in all those steps, and it includes implementation of the (micro) activities as well. The fact that improved implementation is facilitated by the presence of monitoring & evaluation and feedbacks of the latter into the cycle, is also accommodated in Figure 3.

1.2.3 Implementation of Policy – identifying the sampling frame

The study aims at improving the policy and policy processes for reduction of chronic poverty in Bangladesh by suggesting ways to improve implementation of policies adopted in the country's PRSP to address chronic poverty. Since implementation of only a select set of policies/programs will be looked into, it is important to draw this sample from an acceptable sampling frame and upon setting transparent criteria for such selection.

Initial consultations with relevant government and project officials; and the search for linking real world activities with policies recorded in the PRSP document reveal that activities observed at the implementation stage are not necessarily the fallouts of policies taken (predating the activities). On the contrary, it may often be the case that policies are packaged to accommodate on-going project activities. As noted previously, the issue of 'policy implementation' may be perceived at three tiers.¹⁵ These are;

- Implementation of relevant (pro-poor) policies to identify programs and projects;
- Implementation of policy within each program/project to identify activities; and
- Implementation of activities that are considered pro-poor.
- Information on policies for chronic poor (and for reducing chronic poverty) was sought simultaneously from four tiers in order to arrive at a comprehensive frame.

The tier-specific activities included (in addition to DAPs) the followings:

- PRSP was reviewed to identify policies and programs perceived to have implication for chronic poor and poverty;
- Ministry-level sector plans/policies were reviewed to match recorded policies and programs with those in PRSP and having implication for chronic poor and poverty;

¹⁵ We ignore the stage where strategies are identified.



- Information collected from implementing agencies, project offices, and partner NGOs; and
- Limited visits to selected *pourasavas* and localities with higher concentration of chronic poor in order to identify currently on-going activities.

Figure 4: Policies, Agencies and Sources of Information

Tiers in implementing policies	Agencies involved	Sources of information
National Policy Guideline, Policy Framework, which also includes strategies	National Government (GED, MOFin and others)	PRSP, CAS or similar document of DAPs, review and consultation
Sector-specific Policy framework – often a mixture of objectives, strategies and actions	Ministries	Sector Plans/ Policies, MTBF, LCGs, review and consultations
Programs/Projects	Implementing Agency/ Directorates/ Project offices	Project document, brochures, DAP-supported projects, review and consultations
Activities	GO/NGO/CBO agencies involved in project area	Field visits, administering checklists, consultations and review of reports/studies

Information obtained from all the above sources were put together into a consistent whole that links relevant ‘policies in PRSP’ with programs, projects and activities undertaken in various spaces (particularly, sectors and geographical areas). Mapping of poverty prevalence in those spaces allowed us to have an initial assessment of policy targeting for reducing chronic poverty, and to have a frame to choose sample policies and implementation areas for closer scrutiny of the latter.¹⁶ Poverty mapping presented in this paper summarises existing published information from BBS and other research institutions.

Policies stated as a wish list of objectives and policies that are effectively supported with financial allocation and expenditure are two different things. The first two groups of sources (rows in Figure 4) listed above reflect the former while the last two reflects post-allocation activities actually being undertaken with budgetary supports or financed from non-budget sources. In the process of our query, it was deemed necessary to bridge the two tiers. MTBF is an obvious source for such information, even though it is currently available for only ten ministries. Independently, field research was undertaken in selected upazilas to place implementation of pro-poor policies in the context of actual financial allocation and expenditure.

¹⁶ We had to seek additional information on implementation status of various projects.



2 Mapping of Poverty and Policies

2.1 Mapping of Chronic Poverty

There are several sources of poverty data, the most acclaimed one being the Household Income & Expenditure Survey (HIES) undertaken at regular intervals by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). We use the two most recent survey data/results, 2000 and 2005, and various exercises based on these data. One set of exercise relates to small area estimation based on a small subset of population census (2001) and HEIS 2000, which generated upazila and district level measures of poverty incidence. The latter estimates have been used by the WFP for area-wise allocation of their country program assistance. Poverty monitoring data collected by BBS and BIDS provide additional information. Analytical studies on these and those using HEIS provide further insights into correlates of poverty other than those geographically defined.

Several observations may be drawn from the estimates on 'extreme poverty' in HIES 2000 and HIES 2005:

- Incidence of extreme poverty has increased (or remained stagnant) in Barisal (and Khulna) division over the period while the incidence had declined in all other regions in the country (see Map 2 in Annex 2),
- Even though incidence of poverty declined significantly in the north-west (largely attributed to the improved communication following the construction of Jamuna Bridge), its level still remains high and certain pockets in the region still attract passion and attention,
- Poverty incidence remains very high in the CHT area inhabited by indigenous people (considered minority in Bangladesh context),
- Incidence of extreme poverty is also quite high in certain pockets of central north region (Dhaka division), which is not considered affected by river erosion,
- There are discrepancies in resource allocation map of WFP and regional poverty mapping based on HIES data. The latter is discussed at length in a later section dealing with policy bias at a regional level.

In summary, if one adheres to the HIES 2000 findings and the small area estimates reflected in WFP's resource allocation maps, prevalence of extreme poverty is largely observed in the north-west region of the country, which is also identified as the Monga-affected area. Drawing upon WFP resource allocation map of 1997, WFP Food Insecurity map of 2002, and BIDS mappings of poverty incidence in terms of HCI and HPI, S&A (2003) identified six districts to be characterised by 'very high and high' incidence of poverty. The districts are, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram and Sirajganj in Rajshahi division; and Shariatpur district in Dhaka division.



Perspective on spatial mapping of poverty changes if one accounts for the HIES 2005 summary findings, which unfortunately is available only at an aggregate level. There are reasons to believe that the extent of extreme poverty has significantly increased in the coastal region, which cover the southern districts of Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions.

Other (non-spatial) dimensions on which poverty may be mapped include education, occupation, demographic and endowment (e.g., landownership) spaces. National surveys undertaken by BBS as well as various research findings based on primary sample surveys are summarised below:

- Professional groups identified in HIES fail to capture the real world counterpart in the occupational space as some of the primary surveys do. Table A.3.6 summarises the HIES findings on poverty incidence across professions. There has been significant decline in the incidence of poverty amongst those in agriculture, forestry and fishery during 2000-05. In comparison, the decline has been less amongst fixed income salaried people (clerical and related works). Research studies based on small sample surveys clearly bring out the high prevalence of extreme poverty amongst wage labourers in both urban and rural areas in Bangladesh.¹⁷ Sometimes the choice of profession/occupation is an outcome of extreme poverty, particularly amongst urban population. For example, chronic poor are largely concentrated in such professions as begging, child workers in brick-breaking/construction, rickshaw-pulling (Begum and Sen 2005) and daily wage labour.¹⁸ In case of rural settlements, very often outcome of poverty is rooted in the occupation one is historically tied with, often due to nature of resource endowments. Generally, high incidence of extreme poverty is observed amongst fishing community.¹⁹ Incidence of chronic poverty is very high amongst agricultural wage labourer as well.
- All studies reveal significant inverse relation between education and incidence of chronic poverty; and both-way causality is commonly recognised. Among the not literate household heads the incidence of poverty is very high compared to national average (see Table A.3.7 and World Bank, 2003). Current data map poverty only on the education level of the household heads; and fail to capture the dynamics that could assess if increased access to education reduced poverty.

¹⁷ Incidences of poverty are 67 and 75 per cent respectively in urban and rural areas amongst households where the heads work as casual wage laborer. These may be compared with the reported overall poverty measures of 36.6 and 53.0 per cent respectively for urban and rural areas (World Bank, 2003).

¹⁸ The only exception in urban Bangladesh is possibly the class of genitors who hailed from Bihar (India), and historically engaged in collection of human excreta. The group has largely remained outside the mainstream and reportedly suffers from psychological isolation.

¹⁹ Reference is made to fishing in open water bodies or in large water bodies with common access. This is to be distinguished from fish-farming and aquaculture.



- It is almost a convention to assume that widowed and divorcee/separated women constitute the most vulnerable group in the society. Many of the safety net programs are therefore directed towards them. The statistics generally reveal higher incidence of chronic poverty in this group, even though one may find the incidence to increase significantly when one narrows the focus on female-headed households (with no male earning member) within the group.
- Land is still considered a primary asset whose ownership influences poverty outcome. Findings presented in table A.3.8 however reveal that two separate trends are influencing the nature of this relationship. First, there are other non-land resources (e.g., remittance) whose relative importance has been on rise, and therefore, incidence of chronic poverty may even be lower amongst 'landless' households compared to those owning little land. The second is the increasing productivity of land, which has brought about sharp decline in the incidence of chronic poverty amongst those owning more than 1.5 acres of land. The land-poverty correspondence is not unique for those owning land less than 1.5 acres.

2.2 Mapping of Programs/Projects and Policies

This section has three segments:

- The first defines the canvass of pro-poor activities as compiled from the PRSP document and survey of field-level activities undertaken by various implementing agencies surveyed during this study;
- The second depicts the major routes of resource flows that are critical in understanding effective policy implementation – a part of which is looked into in the study; and
- The third segment draws upon the Medium Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF) of ten line ministries which ideally provide the basis for resource allocation (and expenses) through the routes defined in the second segment.

Since PRSP, which ideally deals with 'policies', remains a document of intents; and MTBF is often deemed as a first step towards operationalising policies (through resource allocations) – both these need to be brought to fore for a meaningful discussion of policy implementation. The other element in the description (second segment) is meant to acquaint readers with the institutional setup within which resources flow and policies are expectedly implemented.



Table 1: Summary of Poverty Trends and Correlates

Correlates of Poverty	Relation/Trend	Remark
<i>Geographical</i>		
South/Coastal	Stagnant or increasing	Had received least attention from GOB, NGOs as well as donors
Northwest	Significant reduction in poverty incidence	Had received the most attention; and major improvements in road and railway links due to Jamuna bridge
<i>Demographic</i>		
Divorced/separated	higher incidence	Focus is on women – the difference is higher within the poor group and in case of female-headed households
Female-headed	higher incidence	(See above)
<i>Occupational Groups</i>		
Agriculture	on decline	
Fishing community	high incidence	
Fixed income salaried	Stagnant	relatively less improvement
Wage labourers	high incidence	
Beggars	high incidence	livelihood chosen to escape hunger
Child labour	high incidence	livelihood chosen to escape hunger
Rickshaw-pullers	high incidence	livelihood chosen to escape hunger
<i>Resource endowments</i>		
Land	Negative relation beyond a threshold level	Relation is unclear at lower end because many households in non-farm activities may own little land
Remittance	Significantly reduces poverty	
Education	Negative relation	The relation is insignificant at lower end

2.2.1 PRSP and the Observed Programs/Projects

Information obtained on programs/projects compiled from PRSP and other sources (implementing agencies) had to be recast and packaged within some broad policy areas. These are summarised in Table 2 below.²⁰

²⁰ Some of the policies and programs considered pro-poor and as articulated in the actual PRSP document, are summarised in Annex 4. One may contrast these with those summarised under MTBF and presented in the following sub-section.



Table 2: Policies for Chronic Poor and Reduction of Chronic Poverty

Policy Area	Programs/Projects	Coverage	Remarks
Undertakings for better targeting of poor	FIVIMS	Not applicable;	Initial work at national level – not completed
	Vulnerability Analysis Mapping (VAM)	Upazila level estimates – less reliable at lower tiers	VAM had greater influence in resource allocation
Short-term employment creation	Food-for-Work (FFW). One of the components is Integrated Food Security (IFS) which addresses community development, education and nutrition of ultra poor households	Nation-wide (1 million beneficiaries per year), but guided by WFP resource allocation map	Exclusive largely due to the design. Often targeted to poor fishers.
	Cash-for-Work (CFW)	Same as above	Exclusive - largely due to the design
	Rural Maintenance Program (RMP) ¹	Approximately 61,500 members of the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach group, destitute women	Exclusive - largely due to the design
	Test Relief (TR) – Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Program	Located where there is severe poverty (100,000 per year), guided by resource allocation map	In practice, partisan politics had great influence in its allocation
Direct Food transfers	Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)	Nation-wide (240,000 per year)	Seasonal poverty is addressed. Inclusive – poor
	Gratuitous Relief (GR)	All disaster/calamity victims	All inclusive
Direct Cash transfers	Allowances to the widowed, deserted, and destitute women	Nation-wide	Inclusive – poor
	Old age allowance	Nation-wide	Inclusive – poor



	Allowance for Retarded Disabled Persons	Nation-wide	All inclusive
Transfers linked to human resource development	Primary education stipend	Nation-wide (5.3 million per year)	Inclusive – poor
	School feeding	Pilot level - one million children in approx 6,000 primary schools in highly food-insecure rural areas, plus four slum areas in Dhaka City	Area targeted – all inclusive
	Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) / FSVGD	Nation-wide (about 0.5 million per year)	Guided by the resource allocation map
	VGD for Ultra Poor	Rajshahi division	Exclusive
Transfer of assets/access to productive resources, along with know-how (often supplemented with credit)	Targeting Ultra Poor (TUP) of Brac		
	Rehabilitation of livelihood in CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts	Inclusive – poor
	Char Livelihood project of DfID	Districts in the north-west along the Brahmaputra river	Inclusive – poor
	SOUHARDO project by CARE Rural livelihood program of CARE	Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Bogra, Jamalpur, Tangail, Sirajganj, Sherpur, Pabna, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Kishoreganj, Netrakon, Chittagong, Noakhali and Cox's Bazar and Islands of Kutubdia, Moheshkhali, Sandwip and Hatiya.	Inclusive – poor.



	Jibono-Jibika (SCF-USA) World Vision Program	Barisal, Patuakhali and Bhola (180,000 children under 2 years of age and over 72,000 pregnant women in the 11 upazillas)	
	Monga and PLDP II under PKSF	Monga in a district in northwest, to be replicated elsewhere	SLDP II, funded by ADB,
	SDF and PKSF expanded program on Monga		Primarily chronic poor
	EC-FoSHoL on technology adoption by marginal and poor farmers	Action Aid in Kurigram, Satkhira, Khulna, Patuakhli, Noakhali and Sunamgonj; CARE in Chapai Nawabganj, Naogaon and Rajshahi; ITDG-Practical Action in Faridpur	
Providing credit (primarily)	Financial Services for poor (FSP) and Credit for Ultra Poor by PKSF		
	Various self-employment generating microcredit programs under the line ministries (including DRR) and BRDB, RAKUB, BKB		
	Rural Social Services (RSS)		
Community targeted and/or community empowerment	Sustainable livelihood of the Socially Disadvantaged Women (SWG)	4 major brothel-based sites	
	Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE)	6 divisional cities	
	Rural Mother's Centre (RMC)		
	Urban Community Development (UCD)		
	Integrated Slum Improvement Projects (Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project UGIIP); Basic Support Services for Urban Poor	In about 30 municipal towns	



	Fourth fisheries, Community-based Fishery Management (CBFM), MACH	CBFM in three zones: north central; Comilla and Jessore areas	
	Adivasis/Charland, SAIP	Central north (Mymensingh, Jamalpur and Sherpur)	
	Programs aimed at women empowerment		Many are targeted to poor women
Targeted delivery of non-financial services	Grihayan (Housing) Adarsha Gram	Nation-wide	Often politically motivated resource distribution
	Underprivileged Children's Educational Program (UCEP)	Metropolitan Cities of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi.	Targeted urban children - poor
	Participatory Learning and Empowerment of Adivashis through Sustainable Education (PLEASE)		
	Marie Stopes CS Better Health for the Urban Poor (DFID)		
	Mobile clinic	City corporations	Inclusive – urban poor
	Community Managed Health Care Project (CIDA)	Approximately 814,000 primary beneficiaries, In 362 villages within four districts and thirteen project sites.	Inclusive – poor
	Other programs of DSK, UNICEF, HKI, SC-UK	Municipalities	Inclusive – poor

Notes: 1=PRSP shows RMP, RSS and SWG under community empowerment; TR is shown under infrastructure maintenance; Grihayan under health; and ARISE under 'other areas'.

While most government programs have been included, there are many NGO programs which could not be included.

Programs/projects selected for field study to assess micro level implementation problems (at project and activity levels) are shaded.



2.3 Resource Flows for Effective Policy Implementation: Review of the Routes

A policy is perceived as an intervention whose effective implementation begins with resource allocation to activities that are meant to realise the policy. Following extensive discussion with senior government officials, executives within development partners and local ‘governments’ at upazila and municipality levels (where resources having direct bearings on people), a route map of resource flows was drawn up – this is described in Figure 5.

There are two major sources of resources. Government’s own activities are supported through budgetary routes, while there is an MOU with development partners whereby government agencies at local levels are expected to extend their supports to these partners on demand. While external assistance is routed through ODA, and thereby reflected in the budgets, significant resources also flow directly through non-government implementing agencies, particularly in external assistance for pursuing pro-poor policy agendas.²¹ Operationally, the latter (non-budget route) is often coordinated by project offices, partnering with NGOs and (informally) drawing upon government assistance/supports. Incentives (or lack of such) provided to the government officials contributing to (non-government) project activities remains a tricky issue, often impeding the progress in implementation. Under the ‘non-budget’ route, a different set of incentive problems arises – where established NGOs can afford to engage only temporary staffs to a project with short life cycle. Some of the programs/projects looked into in depth (such as, Brac’s TUP) fall under the later category.²²

As in many other developing countries, national budget in Bangladesh has an Annual Development Plan (ADP) and a Revenue component – even though part of ‘revenue’ may be spent for development purpose and *vice versa*. Other than that disbursed through the Department of Local Government (DLG) and the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), all resources are channelled through various departments under line ministries. Actual use of the latter resources (except in case of specific projects) is coordinated at upazila levels through the functioning of the UDCC. Allocations through DLG, as well as many of the safety net programs are made directly to union levels, even though UDCC remains the coordinating agency in many such cases.²³ The present study looked into

²¹ Mahmud (2006) notes: “Some donors have preferred the NGO route of aid delivery; the USAID currently delivers almost 90 percent of aid through NGOs; European Union 45 percent and DFID 25 percent.”

²² The first year of PKSF’s Monga program that we looked into was funded out of PKSF’s own fund, and it does not enter the national budget. The expansion phase to be initiated in 2007 will be jointly with SDF, with supports from the World Bank. CBFM is another program, which is coordinated by the WorldFish Center, having active partnerships with D/O Fisheries and partner NGOs.

²³ On an average, around 9 unions constitute a upazila, and there are elected representatives forming Union Parishad. Chairmen of all Union Parishads in a Upazila are members of the UDCC. Since the district (Zila) level elected body was declared defunct, the UNO has been acting as the President of the UDCC.



some of the aspects in upazila level resource allocation and policy implementation. There are many projects (such as SAIP, ARISE and SWG), which are tagged to line departments (such as, DAE and DSS) and raise a different set of implementation problems – some of which will be addressed in this report.

2.3.1 Policies in MTBF

Till the time of undertaking this study, MTBFs (2006/07 to 2008/09) were prepared for ten line ministries, and another six were to be included in the current MOF exercise for the period beginning 2007/08. The policy matrix supported by financial allocation and having implications for the poor (and chronic poor) were identified and are summarised in Table 3. One may note that some of the programs/projects listed in Table 2 do not show up in MTBF's list since these are not directly supported by GOB budget. Examples include, among other items, Brac's TUP, PKSF's Monga eradication initiative, etc. As noted previously, the MTBF-poverty linkage is largely an accounting construct whereby a budgeted line item is scaled in terms of the 'pro-pooriness' of the underlying policy; and an (indexed) aggregate of all these numbers is arrived at to capture the degree of 'poverty-reducing initiative' in resource allocation, an indicator that may be monitored.



Figure 5: Resource Transfer Routes

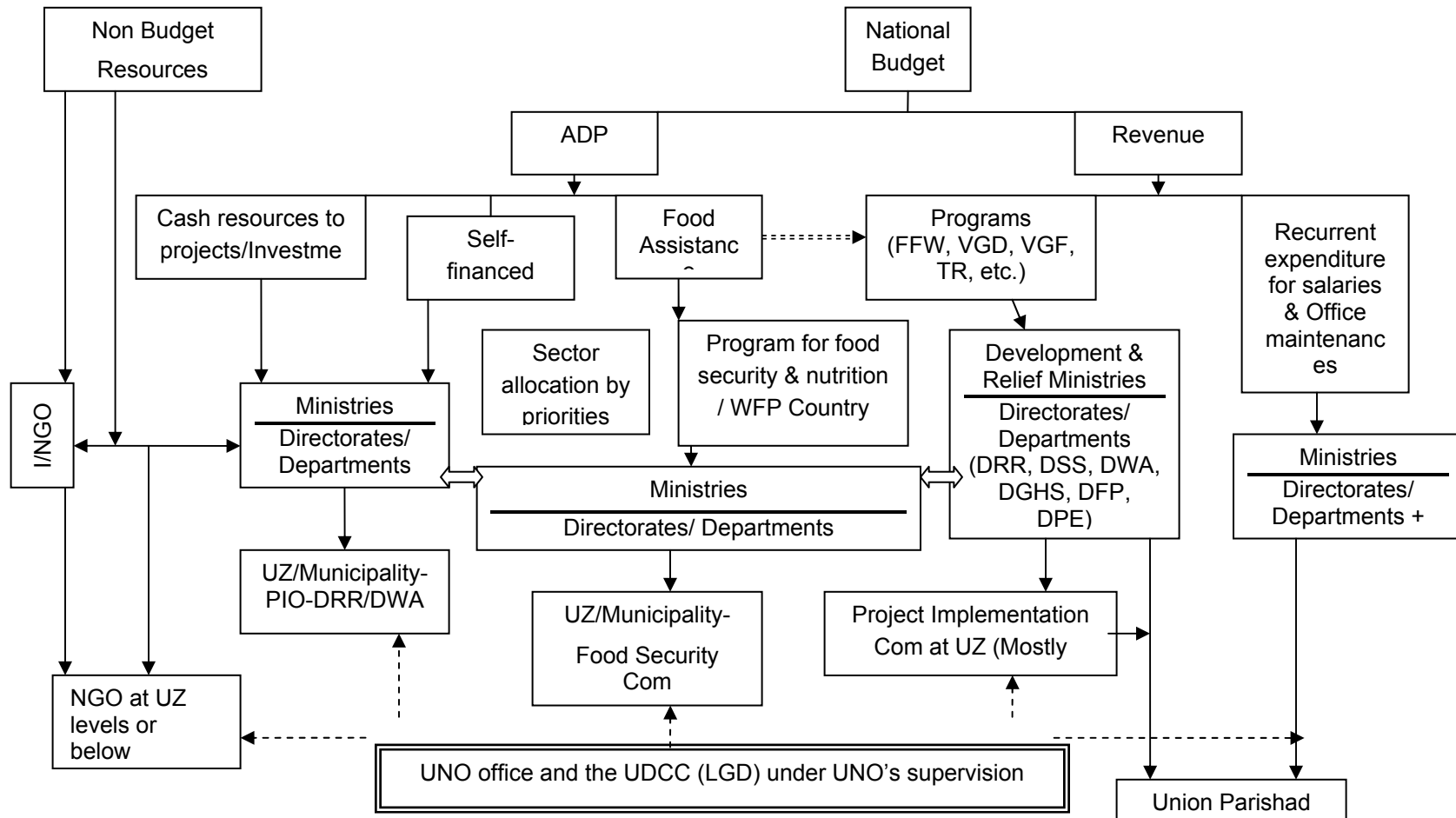




Table 3: Policies supported by Resources under MTBF

Objectives	Targets	Policies	Remark
Ministry of Primary & Mass Education			
Increase access to primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce primary education for drop-out and left-out children • Increase the re-entry of dropout and left-out children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise, encourage, facilitate and support the role of non-formal and complementary second chance primary 	Generally meant for poor
Increase the literacy rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From about 63 percent to 80 percent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a policy to develop a network for NFE and life-long learning • Create appropriate organisational structures to mobilise resources and to provide technical support partnership with NGO's and communities 	Such targets aim at covering the poor – not necessarily the chronic poor
Expand the scope of non-formal education beyond the literacy movement on a pilot basis particularly targeted at the extreme poor and in remote areas		Two post-literacy and continuing education projects under MoPME, targeting 3.2 million potential clients are designed to combine training in literacy and income-earning skills	Extreme poor is the target group
Ministry of Education			
Improvement in enrolment, attendance and completion of education by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce drop out rate by 50%; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce stipend for secondary school level students from poor families; 	Aimed at poor, which is unlikely to include the chronic poor



from poor families			
Expansion of technical and vocational education for adolescents, youths and adult males and females and to introduce technical and vocational education courses for post VI and VII classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Increase enrolment by 50% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop and introduce special courses for income generation and self employment for backward section of people including women to meet the internal market demand as determined with the cooperation of NGOs and private entrepreneurs; • To find out ways to develop skill in the non-formal sector; • To formulate a core policy and establish regulatory system of more coordination among the Government and the NGOs in running technical and vocational education courses by the private sector and prepare curricula; • To bring in informal sector within a formal framework by extending technical, financial and infrastructural assistance; 	Generally for urban poor
Ministry of Health: No specific policy for the poor or chronic poor noted!			
Objectives	Targets	Policies	Remark
Ministry of Social Welfare			
Improvement of the socioeconomic condition	To rehabilitate a greater number of people by providing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill development and increase in income of the poor through 	Inclusive – poor



and standard of living of the poor.	them with interest free micro credit and giving them vocational training.	<p>organising them and providing training and micro-credit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting family based poverty alleviation programs. • Alleviation of social problems through counseling. 	
Rehabilitation and welfare of abandoned, orphans and destitute children.	<p>Social rehabilitation of an increased number of orphaned, distressed, abandoned and rootless children;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide institution and society based services to extremely distressed and abandoned children; • Education, training and rehabilitation of street and rootless children; • Provide financial assistance for the welfare of orphan children living in privately run orphanages; • Arrange medical treatment and rehabilitation of physically tortured children; 	Urban poor children – primarily, chronic poor
Provide social security to helpless and problem ridden to segments of the population.	<p>Increase the coverage and rate of Old Age Allowance</p> <p>Provide assistance to a greater number of acid burnt and physically handicapped people patients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial help to old, extremely distressed people and physically handicapped people for their social security. • Arrange rehabilitation programs for acid burnt and physically handicapped people. • Arrange financial assistance and medical treatment for people affected by burning. 	Inclusive - poor
Welfare and resettlement of distressed and destitute patients.	Strengthen medical social service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide medical help to distressed, destitute and problem ridden patients to create opportunities for getting medical help; 	Poor – health



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide mental solace, upholding morale; develop programs for rehabilitation and its implementation. • Provide financial assistance to poor patients; 	
Strengthen Welfare Program for the handicapped	Provide assistance to a greater number of handicapped people and rehabilitate them in society;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide facilities and other assistance to empower the handicapped; • Involve the handicapped in the development activities of the country and groom them towards that end; • Create awareness for acceptance of the handicapped in society; 	Disabled – all inclusive
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs			
Ensure women's full participation in mainstream Economic activities	Reduce poverty of poor women by 50% by 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proper training and credit facilities for retrenched women workers; • Develop a national system of Provident Funds, Pension Funds for the working women (garments, other industries) and insurance cover in case of casualties and loss of life. 	Poor women
Reduce social violence against under-privileged children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase proper protection of children deprived of parental care; - Protect street children from abuse and exploitation; - Reduce all forms of ill-treatment and violence against children; - Increase coverage of programs for vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect street children from abuse and exploitation; • Improve the conditions of children living in dangerous environment; • Ensure the best facilities for indigenous children. • Strengthen monitoring process of children's rights and child welfare; 	Urban poor – chronic poor



	<p>children; early marriage by 70% during FY 2005- 2007;</p> <p>- Ensure safeguard for indigenous children;</p>		
Local Government Division			
Ensuring safe water supply and sanitation facilities for all	<p>- Reduce number of population not having access to safe water (26%) by half in 2006;</p> <p>- Reduce number of population not having access to sanitation (66%) by half in 2006;</p>	Develop strategies on water and sanitation to achieve MDGs;	Unlikely to target chronic poor
Increase access to sanitary latrines in rural areas and urban slums to provide a healthy environment for children;	Increase coverage of access to sanitary latrines to 70% in rural areas and urban slums by 2007;	Continue present activities for construction of sanitary latrines in rural areas and urban slums up to 2007;	Inclusive – poor
Improving living environment in slums.	<p>- Reduce drainage congestions in cities.</p> <p>- Establish a regulatory framework to ensure treatment of all industrial pollution before disposal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a slum improvement cell in every municipality. • Extend sanitary latrines, water points and solid waste collection services in slums; 	Urban poor
Ministry of Agriculture			
Ensure food security through increased food production	Increase intake of nutritious food by the poor through the development of crop diversification program	Implementation of National Nutrition Plan of Action	Indirect – chronic poor is more likely left out



Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock			
Help to increase the income of the poor fishermen	Cultivate fish in cage and "gher" and increase income through producing fingerling and fish fry.	Continue the efforts for production, processing and transportation of fish at a low cost through improved methods.	Inclusive - poor
Ministry of Water Resources			
Enhanced involvement of the poor in water management and other related resources;	Creation of income generating job opportunity for the poor through water management;	Encouragement of social participation by all in multilateral uses of water and other benefits like irrigation canal, cross dam, irrigation inlet, fish pass, regulator, dam slope etc.;	Inclusive – poor
Ministry of Communication			
Continue efforts for easy transportation of common people and poverty reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rehabilitate 1,150 km of branch line- Reopen closed branch line sections	Create accountability and increase transport services facilities to poor people in backward / remote areas and with that objective expand the transport network for easy movement of goods and passengers	All inclusive

Source: Compiled from various MTBFs of line ministries.



2.4 Study Area for Policy Implementation

Since policies are identified at different tiers, the study on their implementation has no unique space. Pro-poor policies effectively get reflected in resource allocation – by regions, sectors and other correlates of poverty. The geographic dimension has been an important consideration in decisions on resource allocation towards (chronic) poverty reduction; and therefore, the study had separately looked into the current practice and the mapping (VAM) exercise that underlies much of these practices.

Resource allocations through the budgetary routes were looked into at upazila levels. Ethnic dimension has been marginally addressed under the SAIP Adivasis program, while some of the demographic aspects are captured under the allowance program for poor divorcee and separated women.

Beyond the above-mentioned programs, the focus had been to look into two broad segments – rural and urban. Since programs aimed at providing short-term employment, especially during the slack seasons, has long been in practice in Bangladesh (and in erstwhile East Pakistan), and since several in-depth studies already exist, the current exercise does not include them for field queries. However, PKSf's Monga program, aimed at reducing chronic poverty during slack season, includes short-term employment-generating activity. The problems of implementing policies to reduce chronic poverty in rural areas were therefore sought by looking into:

- i. allowances for distressed, divorcee and separated women;
- ii. *Adivasis* program in SAIP; and
- iii. PKSf's Monga project; and
- iv. Community based fishery management addressing poor fishers.

In addition, the study team had probed into

- i. allocation to union levels through budgetary resource allocation and utilisation at upazila levels; and
- ii. Brac's Targeting Ultra Poor (TUP) program.

In case of urban poverty, two particular projects were looked into, both under the Department of Social Services of the GOB. These are;

- i. Sustainable livelihood of the Socially Disadvantaged Women (SWG); and
- ii. Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE).

The above programs have been looked into with a view to get insight into the problems of implementing pro-poor policies – and the location of activities is perceived to be one of the determinants of implementation. Some of the programs are spatially dispersed allowing for a choice of areas with contrasting characteristics:



- this was not so in case of Adivasis under SAIP and PKSf's Monga project. The choice of study area for SAIP had to be confined to northern districts bordering India – and Haluaghat in Mymensingh district was selected. The only district where PKSf's Monga program was experimented in 2006 is Lalmonirhat in the northwest. Brac's TUP program is implemented in several places, and
- this was partially addressed to assess the problems of implementation of a design that varied significantly from others. Project/program sites chosen for field studies are shown in Map 1 in Annex 2.

Concept of clearly bordered study area (as geographical units) for undertaking field study is less appropriate for the current study. Many of the information on contrasting experiences were often sought from people running the program at higher tiers. However, for some programs, grass root level stakeholders were valuable sources of information. Study areas selected for this purpose are shown in Table 4 below by selected programs/projects; and the geographical locations are shown in Map 1 in the Annex 2.

Table 4: Study Areas for assessing micro-level implementation problems

Program/project	Current Coverage	Study Area
Upazila-level resource	Nation-wide	<i>Close to capital:</i> Kaliganj, Dhamrail <i>Away from Capital:</i> Pirganj <i>Remote:</i> Swandeeep (island)
Allowance for distressed women	Nation-wide	<i>Better infrastructure:</i> Natore and Rangpur <i>Remote:</i> Swandeeep
CBFM/similar projects		Phulpur, Mitapukur and Nilphamari. Contrasts were made between projects with different districts, including their locations within the district.
<i>Policy on inland open water fishery</i>		All upazilas in Nilphamari (a district in the northwest)
Socially disadvantaged Women	6 locations with concentration of prostitutes	<i>Capital:</i> Dhaka <i>Away from capital:</i> Daulatdia, Faridpur
ARISE	6 divisional cities	<i>Capital:</i> Dhaka <i>Away from capital:</i> Khulna
PKSF-Monga	Lalmonirhat	Lalmonirhat
Adivasi-SAIP	Dhubaura, Haluaghat, Jhinaigati	Haluaghat
Brac TUP		Lalmonirhat/Mithapukur
<i>District level administration and inter-agency cooperation</i>		Natore (in the west), about 4 to 5 hours drive from Dhaka

Note: Those shaded had special focus for additional information and better insights.



3 Study Findings

The study had to take a step back and look for current perspectives (amongst policymakers and within implementing agencies) on chronic poor and policies for chronic poor. Subsequently, a number of programs were selected to look into the problems of implementing the projects aimed at reducing chronic poverty. The resultant case studies – several of them - have been included in the Annexes 5 to 9. This section summarises the findings within the broad structure outlined in the terms of reference.

3.1 Characterisation of poverty in policy documents

The issue had been discussed at length in Section 1. At the level of policymakers, there is no common understanding of policy category called the ‘chronic’ (or, extreme or ultra) poor. The PRSP, put together with the assistance of local consultants, has dealt with the terms ‘poor’, ‘extremely poor’ and ‘pro-poor growth’, but the main body of the report never mentioned of ‘chronic poor’.²⁴ The agencies that consider PRSP as a guideline for their actions are also stuck with similar vocabularies and terminology. Interestingly, the MTBF was a step ahead of the PRSP in this regard, possibly since the latter had to deal with programs and projects under implementation. In only two of the ten MTBFs, there is mention of the particular poor category –

- Ministry of Mass and primary education mention the term by referring to ultra/extreme poor in remote areas; and
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOCWA) mention of extreme poor destitute women.

None of the other MTBFs mention of it. And most interestingly, even the MTBF of the Ministry of Social Welfare does not have any mention of ultra, extreme, or chronic poor.

Since the guiding policies and follower agencies lack owning the term ‘chronic poor,’ let alone perceiving it, often the ‘chronic poor’ are kept out of the program and projects. The above does not negate the concerns the policymakers may have for the very poor, particularly since the wide acknowledgment that the very successful microcredit programs in the country had failed to reach the very poor. Two contexts where this manifests include:

- Projects that are largely designed and supported with external assistance; and
- In manuals (guidelines) provided by the line department/ministry for selection of target beneficiaries.

²⁴ In only six instances in a report exceeding 200 pages, the term ‘extremely poor’ was mentioned.



The targeting criteria applied by various government and non-government agencies in implementing pro-poor programs/projects are compiled in Table 5 below. There is a general recognition that ownership of no or little land, absence of (non-land) productive asset and absence of any adult working man in household are commonly considered as correlates of chronic poverty. The wide range of criteria and process to identify poor (and chronic poor) revealed two extremes where selection (not self-selection) is involved: measurable and/or observable indicators; and transparent selection by the local community. Neither of these two can claim to be superior to the other – rather a mix of both is considered by many to be the best choice, with adequate space for local (community-level) ownership of the selection.



Table 5: Target groups under various pro-Poor Programs

Programs	Implementing Agencies	Selection Criteria
Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)	Ministry of Food & Disaster Management.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Day labourer whose income is low or irregular. 2. Landless or those who have less than 0.15 acres of land. 3. Autistic persons or wife of physically disabled person. 4. Destitute poor women/men affected by natural disaster.
Vulnerable Group Development (VGD)	Ministry of Children & Women Affairs in collaboration with WFP.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Landless or households with not more than .15 acres of land. 2. Monthly household income is less than 300; depend upon seasonal wage employment. 3. Lack of Productive Assets. 4. Day labourer or temporary workers. 5. Women must be aged between 18- 49.
Old Age Allowance	Ministry of Social Welfare.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 65 years of age. 2. Income not more than Tk. 2000 per year. 3. Must not have worked in the formal sector.
Allowance to the Widowed, Deserted and Destitute Women.	Ministry of Social Welfare.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor, helpless left by their husbands. 2. Women who are widowed.
Smallholder Agricultural Improvement Project	Department of Agricultural Extension. <u>Donor:</u> IFAD, GoB, WFP (grant) and Sonali Bank	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small farmers who own 0.6-1.0 ha. 2. Marginal farmers who own 0.2-0.6 ha. 3. Landless and functionally landless who own up to 0.2 ha
Programmed Initiatives for Monga Eradication	PKSF. <u>Donor:</u> PKSF's own fund and DFID, Food Security Program of EC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women and children-headed households, especially widows and divorcees who have no income-earning member. 2. Families with limited assets. 3. Elderly persons and disabled. 4. Beggars. 5. Women with newborn babies and children suffering from malnutrition. 6. Day labourers. 7. Those prone to frequent migrations to other areas for jobs.



Community Based Fisheries Management Project II	1. World Fish Centre 2. Department of Fisheries <u>Donor:</u> DFID	1.Poor fishing households.
Food for Education (Upgrading Madrassah Education)	Nation-wide (partial)	1.Children from very poor families.
Agriculture subsidy on (inputs for) production, extension and marketing.	Nation-wide	1.Ultra poor.
Union Parishad Vulnerable Group Development (UPVGD)	Ministry of Children & Women Affairs in collaboration with WFP. Donor: AusAID.	1.Ultra poor women.
Rural Livelihood Program (RLP)	BRDB Donor: DFID.	1.Moderate and extreme poor living in rural household.
Integrated Food Security Program (IFSP)	Limited area Donor: WFP/USAID.	1.Ultra poor.
LIFE –NOPEST-2.	n/a Donor: EC.	1.Food insecure small-scale farmer.
PETRRRA	BARRI. Donor: DFIDB	1.Especially resource-poor farmer.
Project Dignity	Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra.	1.Beggars.



	Donor: Grameen Trust, Citi Group.	
Hardcore Poor Project (HCP).	Several Partner Organisations of PKSF Donor: PKSF/World Bank	1. Hardcore Poor.
Financial Services for the Poorest (FSP)	PKSF Donor: WB	Based on observables used by partner organisations during PRA
Programs on socio economic development and improvement of life standard for the poor.	Ministry of Social Welfare.	1. Poor & Extreme Poor.
Programs on Child Welfare.	Ministry of Social Welfare.	1. Orphan, helpless & destitute children.
Welfare programs for the persons with disabilities.	Ministry of Social Welfare.	1. Physically disabled persons 2. Autistic persons.
Targeted extension services for the poor and women through field schools.	MOFL, MOL, DOF, private sector, NGO's.	1. Pro-poor & pro-poor women.
Access to appropriate Micro-finance packages for HP & women.	DOF, MOFL, NGO's, CBO's.	1. Hardcore poor 2. Poor women.
Test Relief (TR) & Gratuitous Relief (GR)	Ministry of Food & Disaster Management.	1. Poor people.



Honorarium Program for Insolvent Freedom Fighters.	Ministry of Freedom Fighters Affairs.	1.Disabled or partially disabled FF. 2.Landless or Unemployed FF. 3.None in the family to depend upon.
Fund for Housing for the Distressed. (Grihayan Program)	Housing Fund authority in association with NGO.	1.Rural poor, low income & homeless family. 2.Household affected by natural disaster and fire.
Food –for-Works (Rural Infrastructure Development Program)	DLGED & DSS.	1.Functionally landless. 2.Lack of productive assets. 3.Day labourer or temporary workers. 4.Family headed household where women is widowed, deserted and destitute.
Rural Maintenance Program	DLGED, CARE.	1.Less than 30 decimals of land. 2.Destitute family circumstances. 3.Family headed household where women has 18-35 years of age. 4.Widowed or separated at least one year. 5.No other income and not participating in other targeted programs.
Basic Skills Training Program. Vocational Education	UCEP	1.Working children living in urban slums, shanties.
ARISE	Department of Social Services.	1.Street children.
Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (RPAP)	BRDB	1.Moderate poor
Palli Pragati Prakalpa	BRDB	1. Moderate poor
Targeting Ultra Poor (TUP)	BRAC Donor: DFID, EU	Exclusion indicators (needs to dissatisfy all) Any member of the household has current NGO participation. Any member of the household receives benefit from GoB programs. No physically able woman in household.



		<p>Inclusion indicators (needs to satisfy any two)</p> <p>Owned land of household including homestead less than 10 decimals. No adult working man in household. School-going aged children working. Adult woman selling labour. No productive assets</p>
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Source: Compiled from Official and Project document as well as from various sources of information on donor programs.



3.2 Policies and policies for chronic poor – is there a policy?

Given that chronic poor as a target group occurs only rarely in the two main policy document – PRSP and MTBF, it is expected that there would be no explicitly articulated policy for reduction of chronic poverty. Interviews of senior officials across all agencies within the government suggest that there is not only no such policy, there is no clear perception on ‘policies’ either. As noted earlier, senior officials in Dhaka (the capital) perceive policies in terms of ‘policy guidelines’ or ‘policy framework paper’, which lay out broad objectives and some strategies. One would expect policies to provide the criteria for choice of programs/ projects in order to attain one or a set of objectives. At district levels and below, no one reflects on policies – rather, as one put it, ‘we carry out the instructions from above to implement the programs and projects as per the rules laid out in the project document and/or government manuals/circulars’.

Thus, at a national level, chronic poor are addressed within the broader concept of poor; and there are broadly two sets of policies – (i) where resource transfers are made to poor either under safety net programs, or for economic empowerment through asset transfers; and (ii) growth strategies that are perceived to be pro-poor. On the latter, the plan document provides very little linkage between growth strategy and objectives to alleviate poverty. Thus, only the policies under the first category are considered articulate enough for probing into their implementation. Within this set, there are programs, which, by design target the very (chronic) poor. Some of the programs/ projects cited in Table 5 indicate of such practice.

Respondents at various tiers were asked as to how particular policies and programs/ projects were adopted (see case studies in Annexes 6 and 7). Other than the various kinds of (cash) allowance programs adopted at the national levels (and inclusive within a pre-defined target population), most programs/projects are perceived to be donor-driven.²⁵ That is, ‘consultants’ – national or expatriate - were either borrowing the concept from elsewhere, or had drawn upon the lessons learnt in previous projects. Unfortunately, such lessons were rarely owned within the government agencies. There are however three areas of past practices which hold potential for developing this ownership; these are identified below.

- Bangladesh has been known for developing new ideas in the field of social development (including safety net) programs. Microcredit of the Grameen Bank style is now widely recognised; and there are others, such as, the non-formal education (of Brac) and food for education. Their innovations and acceptance nation-wide and amongst policymakers could be realised through a long period of NGO activities (and experimentations) with supports from external development partners. **Within a more matured regime of rules of**

²⁵ Presence of ‘consultant-driven’ projects is in such abundance that the concern was echoed in all ministries. The concern also reflects in the following observation in Mahmud (2006): “donors can improve their project design by incorporating the insights of local experts and practitioners, ...(and) by offering assistance to the government agencies for preparing the projects themselves.” (p. 28)



engagements, the innovation-intensive process in Bangladesh's NGO sector may holds prospects for future dynamism.

- One of the positive fallout of the three cycles of parliamentary democracy had been the introduction of limited version of social welfare program in the form of old age allowance and cash allowances for distressed (divorced or widowed) women. Political leaders in the top, often out of an urge to attract votes in elections, had looked for popular programs; and introduction of the above-mentioned social programs are perceived rooted in such urges. A senior policy adviser recalled that the **introduction of cash allowance programs was locally initiated and owned**. Our field queries revealed that these are amongst the few programs owned by the government agencies as well as by the locally elected representatives, and resource transfer system involves minimal cost and are prone to minimum leakage.
- Many agencies within the government (such as the DSS), often with supports from one or more donor-supported projects, have developed the institutional culture of getting all field-level staffs (say, once in six months) to exchange ideas and identify new ideas. What is often lacking is the broad policy framework within which these ideas need to be gelled together – both to reflect on policies and to design program/projects to translate policies into actions. Thus, **participatory process within an implementing agency within a consistent and relevant policy framework holds much potential to build ownership and improve implementation.**

3.3 Policy-impact linkage: is there a common understanding?

In section 1.2.2, current thoughts (or lack of such) on policies were discussed. At a discourse level, the contrasts between MDG and PRSP approaches also reveal some of the dilemma in our approaches to development initiatives. PRSP structure in Bangladesh, as in many other countries, talk of poverty reduction strategies and four blocks are identified. These are,

- Macroeconomic environment for pro-poor economic growth;
- Critical sectors for pro-poor economic growth;
- Effective social safety nets and targeted programs; and
- Human development.

Within each of the above, areas (sectors) of interventions are identified. Amidst all these, the 'policy' is very often marginalised. There are repeated mentions of 'policy triangle of growth, human development and governance' in the PRSP; and yet, there is no explicit discussion on policies. Thus, the PRSP document includes such statements as, 'policy focus will be on the robustness of the growth process', and 'this must include policy goals which enhance the opportunities for the poor to be participants'. The perspective gets further obscured when efforts towards pragmatism



lose directions amidst too many (so called) policies; and the frustration is expressed in the following quote:

“Policy prescriptions burdened with encyclopaedic wish-lists are often a problem rather than an aid in the fight against poverty. Poverty remains so pervasive that a million priorities are unlikely to exhaust the agenda. The challenge is not really so much one of being exhaustive as in the intelligent reading of constraints and in the search for strategic promise. The challenge is also one of a far sharper engagement with issues of implementation and the political viability of policy packages” (PRSP, p. 43).

Direct transfers to poor (and chronic poor) covered under safety nets obviously have clearly defined purpose and general policies underlying such actions. In case of the more indirect policies, particularly with regards to macroeconomic policies and biases in favour of one or the other sector, the impact path is not spelled out. On the contrary, there is evidence to suggest that there is lack of clarity in the very basic concepts. To give an example, the Child Nutrition Policy (NCP) of 1994 is a policy document, which defines its goals to ensure security, welfare and development of children.²⁶ PRSP policy matrix mentions of ‘A World Fit for Children’, and a vision to attain pro-poor growth and economic development that is child-centred and that ensures both the basic rights and livelihood needs of children. **The policy agenda in the PRSP policy matrix has a mixture of goals, targets and actions**, covering components that include health, food and nutrition, education, empowerment, water, sanitation and environment, protection against abuse, exploitation and violence, recovery and reintegration, HIV/AIDS, STIs and substance abuse, coordination and monitoring. One of the strategic goals (in PRSP) under Food and Nutrition section is: ‘Make fortified food available in markets and fulfil requirement of micronutrients for Children’, and the action taken or underway is: ‘Fortification of Common Food with Vitamin A, Irons, Iodine’. There is no clarification about how to make available in markets and whether availability in the markets ensures that children get their required nutrients at all. In some instances, **goals are overlapped with targets and action**. For example, under the component of empowerment, the strategic goal is defined as, ‘Increase access, relevance, equity and participation in relevant sectors and institutions for children’, and the target is also the same statement. Interestingly, the corresponding Action is defined as, ‘empowerment of children’, which is more likely to be a goal or objective.

In summary, program/project based perspective towards resource allocation has increasingly marginalised ‘policy’ discourse; and the term (policy) used in the plan document is devoid of any comprehensible meaning. This is a generic problem, and does apply to ‘pro-poor policies’ where these occasionally occur in the document.

²⁶ The NCP identifies six strategic areas: birth and survival, education and psychological development, family environment, assistance to children in difficult circumstances, best interest of children, and legal rights of children.



3.4 Resource Allocations

We have alluded to two areas of resource allocation – the first is a regional targeting based on prior understanding of the regional mapping of extreme poverty; and the second is sector-specific utilisation of resources allocated to lowest (local) level of administrative units. In the former case, one may approach the real world practices in two different ways: (i) the (VAM) resource allocation map that guides allocations under most safety net programs as well as the choice of areas targeted under several programs of NGOs (and other agencies, such as, the PKSF) aimed at chronic poor; and (ii) actual utilisation of budgetary resources at the local (upazila) level. Findings pertaining to these two areas are presented in this section.

3.5 Bias in Regional Allocation

There are two important ways through which resources may be allocated at sub-national (district, upazila or union) levels. Large investments on roads, ports, and other infrastructure, as well as projects of soft nature such as those under the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) may often be biased towards particular region. For example, IFAD Country Programme Evaluation undertaken in 2005 mentions of such biases in the selection of project areas, often influenced by the constituency of the civil servants or political leaders having the authority to approve the project.²⁷ Generally, such biases arise when there are no transparent criteria laid out for making appropriate choice of project areas and location-specific projects. In this context, having a poverty mapping and allocation of resources for safety net (e.g., by the WFP), made in accordance to the relative poverty incidence in various regions, is clearly more objective and less prone to biases. Interestingly, the VAM resource allocation map has influenced many other agencies as well – notably, Brac in targeting areas under its TUP program and PKSF's choice of areas under the Credit for Ultra Poor (and subsequently, the *Monga* eradication initiative). It is also true that perception on region-specific poverty incidence is historically rooted and takes time to change, even when the reality may have changed substantially.²⁸ It is quite plausible that such perceptions may have influenced the technical exercise that led to the poverty (and vulnerability) mapping based on small area estimation technique. Some aspects of the latter are discussed below.

The essential technique used in all exercises on small area estimation is as follows: estimate an equation (normally by ordinary least square method) with a dependent variable of interest, using data from a sample survey (HIES in our case), and using the fitted equation on 5% of the census data (with same set of explanatory variables)

²⁷ Quite recently, the 'caretaker government' in power is reportedly working out a policy to bar civil servants to engage in politics for at least three years beyond the tenure of their service in the government. While this may reduce the chance of patronizing political parties while in service, the tendency to direct resources to one's own place of origin may persist.

²⁸ The Jamuna Bridge, one of the largest investments establishing road and railway links between the northwest and the east (and center) had significant positive impact on the economy and society in the former region. This also reflects in substantial reduction of poverty in the northwest, which may take a while to register in the national psyche.



to generate an estimate of the dependent variable (say, expenditure). The critical assumption is the conformity of distributions (captured by variance) across the two sets of data (HIES and the 5% census). Results from an earlier attempt on small area estimation are presented in Kam *et al.* (2003) using aggregate data. Some aspects of it are shown in Table 6, which clearly indicate a bias towards choosing the specification of the regression equation that establishes similarity in upper bound poverty level, which results in gross error in the measures of extreme poverty (lower bound).

Table 6: HIES estimates (rural) are lower than those in census rural households

Item	Population census	HEIS
Gini index (%)	41.0	36.5
Head Count Index (general)	44.6	43.6
Head Count Index (extreme poor)	18.0	12.0
Poverty Gap Index	16.6	13.6

Source: Compiled from Kam *et al.* (2003).

The BBS-WFP study is more fine tuned and estimates the equations for separate clusters ensuring higher degree of conformity in distributions across two datasets within each cluster. With 7,428 observations, the regression estimate with log of expenditure and 31 explanatory variables produced an unadjusted R^2 of 0.59. There is obviously a large unexplained term.²⁹ More importantly, ranking of the five divisions in terms of incidence of extreme poverty varies across the two datasets (Table 7). The lack of perfection would still be acceptable if the changes in the real economy were less drastic and/or there were regular updates. Unfortunately, the findings based on 2000 and 2001 data continued to be used as a guide till 2006; and even after the publication of preliminary findings of 2005 HIES, the country assistance program of WFP is designed to allocate resources to small areas (upazilas and unions) based on the same resource allocation map with only one change – earlier focus on vulnerability was replaced by mapping of incidence of poverty.

Table 7: Deviations in Measures of Extreme Poverty across HIES and SAE

Division	Lower bound poverty estimates (%)		Ranking of the divisions in terms of poverty incidence	
	HIES	SAE	HIES	SAE

²⁹ For some exercises, one would consider the explanatory power of the equation to be quite high. However, relative ranking of territorial units are tagged to resource allocations, it is important to ensure low error in the estimates.



Division 1	26.32	30.23	4	2
Division 2	22.63	23.38	5	5
Division 3	28.02	25.13	3	4
Division 4	28.33	26.84	2	3
Division 5	39.99	38.10	1	1

Note: HIES= Household Income Expenditure Survey; SAE = Small area estimation using census data.

Source: Compiled from BBS-UNWFP (2004).

Actual resource allocation often deviates from the less-than-perfect allocation map; and both WFP and the M/O Food personnel informed that other than political influences, logistics and presence (or absence) of NGO capacity in a locality were important determinants. Thus, the coastal belt in the south had been doubly jeopardised - less attractive to the NGOs and therefore less flow of resources targeted to the poor; and less weights in the official (including WFP supports) allocation of resources. The stagnant poverty incidence in the region over a decade when nation-wide poverty incidence had declined by more than one percentage point is a concern to be attended to in the coming years. Unfortunately, the PRSP fails to account for the current misallocation of resources arising out of ill-construed spatial poverty mapping.

3.6 Bias in local-level utilisation of ADP resources

Grants or fiscal transfers to the local government in Bangladesh come in the form of Annual Development Grant from ADP allocation. Fiscal transfers follow a simple formula with weights given to population, physical area and 'backwardness'.³⁰ Other than the block grant and salary subvention, Union Parishads are given grants in grains for TR, FFW, VGD, VGF, RIMP and also cash transfers on account of old age pension and allowances for widows and freedom fighters. Guidelines on expenditure mention of 60% on communication & transport, 20% on agriculture & irrigation, 10% on education and 10% on physical infrastructure.³¹ In reality, there are gross deviations, and upazila level stakeholders unanimously reported of increasing bias in actual expenditure towards projects involving physical infrastructure. There are claims that almost 95 percent of the resources are in such activities even when these are shown under such social sectors as education or health. An illustration of the detail expenditure at the upazila level (in the island of Swandeeep) is presented in Table 8. In another upazila, close to Dhaka (Dhamrail, Manikganj), on an average only 3.26% of total expenditure was on agriculture proper and another 1.42% on

³⁰ For upazilas, weights are respectively, 40%, 30% and 30%. For zilas, these are respectively 50%, 40% and 10%.

³¹ Source: Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.



education. Generally, there had been allegations that 'soft' part in development expenditure is increasingly marginalised – partly because of the perception that the responsibility is more of the NGOs, and partly because of easy option of 'rent-seeking' in schemes that deal with 'roads & culverts'.

There is an additional dimension to the ways resources are utilised, which relates to relative strength of various agencies. At a higher level, sponsors (development partners) feel comfortable with agencies (such as, LGED) who are quick in delivery; and the perception that higher utilisation rate is a desired quality dominates current thinking in development. Such perceptions lend support to strengthening the relative position of these organisations in controlling local resources as well. It is therefore no wonder that an LGED Engineer at the upazila level has a greater voice in actual expenditure at the local level compared to his/her counterparts in other agencies.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors location of an upazila, particularly its proximity from the centre of power (Dhaka) may have bearings on how resources are utilised. Drawing upon field notes from several upazilas several observations may be made with regards to the ways the distance factor may play a role.³² Potentially, lack of monitoring in distant places give way to local forces to dominate the resource allocation, and the deviations from the guidelines are very high. The hypothesis of NGO presence in social sectors with dampening effect on government resources spent (at local level) on soft areas did not appear to hold. Physical presence of government officers in place of work was found to be non-linearly related with distance from Dhaka or other major urban centres. In far-off places, the officers resided permanently. In contrast, places in the mid-ways (say, within 2 hours distance from a major urban centre), there are tendencies to commute and often remain absent. There is however a systematic bias in the quality of government servants stationed in remote areas (other than the outlier cases of good and honest officers being punished by mischievous political authorities)³³. Given all the cross-currents, it is difficult to generalise on a unique relation between local level resource utilisation and distance.

Table 8: Upazila Allocation, Swandeeep

Schemes	FY 2005-2006		FY 2004-2005		FY 2003-2004	
	Total Allocation ('000)	No of Projects	Total Allocation ('000)	No of Projects	Total Allocation ('000)	No of Projects

³² Other than Swandeeep (an island in the south-east), Pirganj (north-west, but well connected), Haluaghat (north) and Dhamrail and Kaliganj (both close to Dhaka) were visited for the purpose.

³³ This refers to a period before significant reforms were initiated by the post-1/11 Caretaker Government. Since the latter came to power with the declaration of emergency on 11th January 2007, the day is referred to as 1/11.



Agriculture						
Tree Plantation	6.3	1				
Drain	62.5	2	136.4	6		
RCC Pipe	196.3	4	114.5	5	159.4	
Culvert	192	4	112.8	4	374.2	7
Spray Machine			50	1	50	1
Total	457.1	11	413.7	16	583.6	8
Sanitation						
Ring Slab	682.7	29	328	15	544.7	14
Latrine	29.1	2				
Total	711.8	31	328	15	544.7	14
Road & Communication						
Total	2619.6	52	1814	16	2853.6	35
Education						
Furniture	35	1	81.6	4	103	6
Building construction	150	2	329.4	12	143.7	7
Gate					19.4	1
Fence					42	1
Latrine					14	1
School Shifting					50	1
Total	185	3	411	16	372.1	17
Miscellaneous						
Total	90.5	2	310	3	30	4
All sectors						
Total	4064	99	3276.7	66	4384	78

Source: Compiled from data obtained from the Upazila office.



3.7 Implementing Policy guidelines through selection of programs and projects

Of the three tiers of policy implementation identified in Section 1.2.3, the first was noted to be implementation of relevant (pro-poor) policies to identify programs and projects. In the absence of a clear focus on chronic poor at the level of policymakers within the government (that would have been articulated with a policy paper), the question of implementing the guidelines in choice of programs/projects does not arise. There are however programs for the poor or a segment within the poor population, which often by design are biased towards the relatively worse-off amongst the poor. Tables 2 and 3 provide some insights into the choice of programs, which were followed up during the course of interviews of policymakers. Some of the conclusions are as follows:

- *Self-targeted programs owned by the government and where the choice of beneficiaries is implemented by accountable local body, the chances of success is high:* Pro-poor programs initiated by the government and funded with its own resources are normally all inclusive. However, the guidelines mention of targeting the distressed segment, even though there are political difficulties in exclusive targeting of these programs. Moreover, due to resource constraint in undertaking monitoring and due to the presence of a large proportion of poor people, self-targeting is found to be the best option.
- *Choices of consultants involved in initial design and of implementing agencies are important determinants of program success:* Concern for chronic (or, extreme or ultra) poor has primarily been the agenda of external development partners (donors) and this concern often find their way into programs/projects owned by government agencies. There are also direct donor supports through NGOs. In the former case, choice of consultant and the prior choice of agency/sector where project is to be located had important role to play. In the latter case, particularly when big established NGOs (or, such institutions as PKSF and Grameen Bank) were involved, innovative ideas often came from grassroots. Since both these cases had adequate resource supports on monitoring, the agencies could undertake the risk of targeting the very poor. Examples include the credit for ultra poor program under the PKSF; program for the beggars by Grameen Bank; and Brac's ultra poor programs.
- *Failure to make a convincing case for the need to have special focus on chronic poor has led to limited initiatives towards reducing chronic poverty:* There is clearly a dearth of appreciation of a separate social category called the 'chronic' poor, which may as well be due to a failure on the part of the proponents to make convincing arguments. Thus, innovations have been less forthcoming in the field of targeting chronic poor; and therefore, the choice set is rather limited.
- *An agenda has better prospect of getting implemented if there are agencies to own that agenda:* It appears that having agencies in positions of strength to



own an agenda is critical. Only agencies are the expanding MFIs who would like to widen their credit net and would like to reach out to the very poor.

3.8 Implementation of Projects and their components

3.8.1 *Choice of Components within a Program/Project*

The last two tiers noted in 1.2.3 are: identification of relevant components/activities that are deemed pro-poor; and implementation of these activities. These are discussed in sequence with more content to the last theme.

In cases of programs/projects supported by the donors, the initial designs prepared by consultants remain vital in defining the orientation of the project and its success or failure in realising targets. There are however two clear cases: one with little scope of change; and the other where the projects have longer lives with provisions for changes in activities undertaken. For obvious reason, once approved, implementation involved following the guidelines laid out in the project design. The option to choose activities and therefore the roles of implementing agencies in choice of activities are only limited to the second category of projects – and such instances are very few. Of all the projects reviewed under the current study, those housed within government agencies, or, implemented directly by smaller NGOs with direct project/donor supervision were found to have less flexibility. In contrast, some of the pro-poor projects housed within large NGOs (or agencies with sufficiently diversified portfolio) are found to have greater flexibility – not always utilised for better cause.

As noted earlier, the research team had posed several questions to policymakers, higher officials within the donor agencies and to a group of consultants. One related to options available within a program, and factors that normally underlie choice of pro-poor components or lack of any such initiative? At the level of implementing agencies, exercising the choice is rare – almost nil in agencies within the government as well as amongst sponsoring donor agencies. Within the society, there is no visible organised group of strength. Thus, it is the conscience nurtured by individuals and/or organisations engaged in social development, which is an important factor influencing the choice in favour of chronic poor. A second aspect is the supply of resources (from donors), which induce various agencies to package programs to avail these resources. Such trends are observed in NGOs as well as in some of the government agencies.³⁴

Less interest had obvious implication for the 'pro-poor knowledge industry'. There have been fewer innovations; and many 'crude' ideas are put to practice that have little prospect of success. Two illustrations may be made. The first involves the credit for poor and chronic poor; and the second involves initiatives in introducing 'appropriate technology'. Overwhelming presence of 'general loan', which failed to reach the 'hardcore' poor, remains an obstacle to introducing new loan products that

³⁴ The institutional aspect is further discussed below.



may be acceptable to clients outside of the regular net.³⁵ The major problem lies in the failure to segment the markets; and new products with built-in self-selection elements are hard to come. PKSF's Monga eradication program is an attempt to repackage the old practices in the spheres of public works, community assets and social capital. Brac's TUP has new elements, but the cost of running the program is extraordinarily high.

Drives to innovate are largely confined to a community of socially motivated staffs in agencies involved in pro-poor programs and have the resources to undertake experimentations. For obvious reasons, these practitioners do not necessarily have the technical/professional expertise in the relevant areas; and yet have the urge and the resources to push ahead – often 're-inventing the wheel' at high costs.³⁶

3.8.2 Implementation of Project Components

Most of the field studies had focused on the problems of implementing of programs/projects; and these are summarised at length in a number of annexes at the end of this report. This section draws upon the case studies and project-specific information obtained from various sources to summarise the key issues pertaining to implementing pro-poor projects.

There are several types of projects that the study looked into. Three major categories in case of addressing rural poverty are addressed here. These include,

- Offering short-term employment, as in Monga eradication program;
- Cash transfers, as in the allowance program for distressed women; and
- Transfer of assets – through community-based organisations as in case of access to water bodies (CBFM), and asset transfers to individuals under Brac's TUP.

For urban poverty, the study primarily focused on projects, which aimed at improving social standing of targeted groups. Two broad areas included:

- Human development – through skill training, 'mainstreaming' and education among street children under ARISE project, and among commercial sex workers under the project Capacity Building, Poverty Alleviation and

³⁵ Most microcredit programs offer general loans, which are paid off in equal installments over a period of one year, in most cases, through weekly payments.

³⁶ At project levels there were instances of undertaking costly experimentation with low capacity incubators without stocktaking of prior knowledge on the subject. Sometimes, failure by the development practitioners to appreciate other's expertise lead to under-utilization of the existing stock of knowledge, which is also common amongst the various sets of policymakers – all shades of bureaucrats and politicians.



Sustainable Development of the Socially Disadvantaged Women and their Children.³⁷

- Improving governance through participation of municipalities and people under UGIIP.

While details are in the annex, we include briefs on ARISE.

Monga Eradication Initiative of PKS³⁸: Slack season in employment happens to be during a time when much of the land remains inundated. Thus, the extent of earthwork, which happens to be the easy option for engaging less skilled rural workers, can only be undertaken to a limited scale. **In the absence of alternative ways to generate employment during this season, excess cash flows (through earthwork) is generally associated with lower percentage of person days effectively employed.** Engaging NGO partners who had otherwise been tested by PKS³⁸ partly ensured control of any undesired leakage. However, all parties commonly acknowledged that there was idle manpower, paid but not properly utilised.

Since the program targeted the very poor, identifying them had been a major challenge. The program engaged the partner NGO/MFIs – of the six, for at least three, it was the first time to engage in the district.³⁹ The list prepared had initially, about 125,000 poor, of which, about 60,000 were identified to be more vulnerable during Monga, and finally 30,370 were short-listed for their willingness to work. Talking to various stakeholders, the following conclusions were reached:

- The list itself may not have been exhaustive to undertake future initiatives. However, the participating MFIs, because of their activity plan in the district had eyes on listing their target groups. **Convergence of interests of an implementing agency (NGO) and a sponsoring agency (PKS³⁸) ensured the work gets done on time.**
- While cash injection for short-term employment generation may not be sustained, **undertaking such activities (FGD, PRA and supervision of schemes) through partner NGO/MFIs enabled the latter to build their network in the locality at no cost of their own.** One expects these organisations to play active role in future pro-poor programs in the area.
- Because **the work involved manual labour, it was the very poor who engaged in the earthwork.**

³⁷ Since April 2007, UNICEF has been sponsoring the erstwhile ARISE activities under a new project name, PCAR (Protection of Children At Risk.)

³⁸ PKS³⁸ names it as “Integrated Initiative to Eradicate Monga” and calls it *Sangjog* in Bangla, meaning establishing contacts.

³⁹ The MFIs are, RDRS, PMUK, POPI, TMSS, ASORD and ESDO.



Short-term employment generation program cannot be sustained over a long period; and therefore, the expressed intention was to utilise the employment program to generate assets, which will give returns in subsequent years. Two types of assets were considered – those serving the community (schools, mosques, graveyard, playground, etc.); and homesteads of poor households so that these would be suitable for gardening/ vegetable production. For unmet demand of earth (and for need to compromise with local politics), money was spent on a third type of assets – excavation of ponds, which are normally owned by richer segment in rural society.

Cash allowances to Distressed/Widowed Women: The program is inclusive. Compared to other programs, this program is believed to involve fewer problems in identifying the poor and transferring the resources to the target population. While there have been reports of occasional biases in selection of recipients from relatives of UP members and Chairman, fixed allocation per Ward (a subset of Union), the scope for large scale mi-targeting is not feasible. **The critical element that makes the program a success is the disclosure of full information on eligibility and entitlements – which is not always the case in many programs targeting the poor.** Commercial banks are the outfits used for disbursing the money; list of recipients are prepared and submitted by the UP member (from each Ward) and vetted by the UDCC where UP Chairmen sit along with the Upazila officer from the Directorate of Women and Children Affairs. One of the Upazila officers noted:

“The power elites are not keen on grabbing such little money. They are more pleased to have others take their consent – a sign of authority – before the lists are put up in the UDCC meeting.”⁴⁰

There is, however, one black spot. The banks find it difficult to deal with so many small (deposit-wise) clients every month. Fortunately for them, the government normally disburses allowance money once in every three to six months. In spite of such low frequency, the banks declare a single date for withdrawing allowance money. **Few withdrawal dates force many to resort to assistance from an emerging intermediary group, who take care of all transactions (with authorisations) in return for a fee. The black spot is not so much in charging a fee, but more in increased chances of cheating many ignorant women and taking a large share of the allowance.**⁴¹

Asset transfer under CBFM: The policy and the supporting laws to protect and conserve fish had long been in place.⁴² Immediately after the Independence in 1971, the GOB replaced the auctioning of water bodies by leases to association (*Samity*) of

⁴⁰ There are many who believe that the UP members take money from beneficiaries for including their names in the list. We have not come across such complains during our field surveys.

⁴¹ These *touts*, as they are called in local language, claim a high cost on account of bribes paid to bank officials, which they may not be true.

⁴² The East Bengal Protection and Conservation of Fish Act 1950 was further improved in Protection and Conservation of Fish Rules 1985. The Presidential Order (Rule # 12) prohibited use of certain types of fishing nets harmful to young stocks and conservation of species.



fishers.⁴³ This was again put back to auctioning in 1985 through a Presidential Order, reversed again in 1995 when elected governments were back in power. Since then, it is a matter of enforcing the laws and building the capacity of poor fishers so that they may avail the opportunities given by the law. One may observe three broad phases in this transition, which may not always complete the cycle (or, may revert back to a previous mode):

- Big agents in the fish marketing (or, an intruder through political patronage) form an association on papers, get supports from local elites and employ local fishers to do the fishing;
- Local elites form association – either on papers, or with subordinate members from the fishing community – but runs the business by employing the local fishers; and
- Fishers in the locality organise themselves with external grants/supports.

Several projects, starting from fourth fisheries, CBFM, CBFM II, to MACH, attempted to benefit poor fishers by adopting the third variety for obtaining lease. There are several aspects of this experience that may be noted in understanding what works (or, does not work) for the chronic poor:

- Many of the fishers in the locality surrounding a water body are very poor, but they rarely engage in fishing as an occupation. In all sites visited, the study team found the very poor to be members of the association (where such associations have been formed) – but only as passive members. They are reported to have been out of the villages for employment elsewhere during most part of the year. Thus, **the policy to establish right of fishers on the water body (by leasing out to their associations) may not be perceived as pro-poor because fishing provides only part-time employment and the very poor have to leave their place of residence to seek employment elsewhere.** If successful, these programs counter trends towards poor descending into chronic poor.
- Problems related to working with groups – ensuring contributions from all and distributing benefits on the basis of a principle that is distribution-wise acceptable and economically efficient – are known obstructions to establishing groups that sustain long beyond project period. Meetings with group members, often organised by the NGO responsible for social mobilisation, revealed that the **there are a handful of members who control association activities; and lack of internal cohesion is often a greater obstacle (once lease is procured) than local elites.**

⁴³ We often mix aquaculture and 'fishing' – the former normally refers to fish farming in closed water body. There are however grey areas, especially in large closed water bodies. The present study primarily refers to fishing in large water bodies, without getting into the intricacies of cage fishing or of sanctuaries.



- The asset transfer involved is essentially the exclusive right for a given period (say, ten years), renewable every year upon payment of lease money, and the latter is at the market rate.⁴⁴ Thus, agencies intervening to benefit the poor fishers are providing grants for the first year's lease, and supports to sort out the legal and paper works and for group formation, motivation and training through partner NGOs. **There had been failures in procuring lease for the groups due to pressures generated through politically powerful ones. Such practice had increased in great proportion during the past political regime;** and with recent changes, the process part holds greater prospect. The same optimism holds for the sustenance of the organisations beyond project period.
- The work involves great deal of motivation on the part of the NGO workers engaged in social mobilisation. **Turnovers and short project cycles adversely affect the effort of NGO workers, which are very critical for program sustenance.**
- One positive effect of the initiatives around community-based approach in obtaining access to water bodies is the increase in local ownership of water bodies. **Where the leases could be obtained, the implied transfer has been from outside fish traders to association of local people around a water body, be it poor or rich, or a mix. In areas where local elites have shifted their base to urban areas and/or have other sources of income, good gestures of social recognition have succeeded in winning their supports to associations largely dominated by poor members.**

Asset transfer under Brac's TUP: While CBFM is more inclusive to accommodate households situated around a water body, Brac's TUP targets the 'ultra poor' more rigorously. The guidelines mention of both inclusion (eligibility) and exclusion (non-eligibility) criteria. Once the initial selection is made, the project staffs undertake resource (with great emphasis on skill) mapping. The program identified four areas of intervention: vegetable cultivation, poultry rearing, nursery and non-farm (petty trade and processing). The fourth activity involved low amount of financing; and even though it had been successful, the scale of engagement is generally very limited. The activities around vegetable farming raise interesting issues for pro-poor policies; and the difficulties in their implementation. These are highlighted below.

- Identification of the 'ultra poor' followed relatively more rigorous criteria. It had however one bias – leaving out those who are associated with other programs or got benefits from other programs.⁴⁵ This **exclusion principle applied in Brac TUP program allows smooth functioning due to having**

⁴⁴ Past auction values are considered as guide to fixing the lease value, with 10% annual increase in most cases.

⁴⁵ Lists prepared under the TUP program were circulated to other agencies, who had reportedly endorsed all cases of non-duplication. Interestingly though, participation in other BRAC program (including the credit program) did not appear to be an obstacle to entry into the TUP program.



greater vertical control, but often tends to segment the poor through organisational affiliations.

- Initial negotiations with landowners to convince them to lease out land to the very poor in the locality had been costly. There were apprehensions of losing control over otherwise cheap labour and there was also the social barrier in dealing with the very poor. Where the contracts could be realised, it was mostly the poor quality land (often fallow), which was leased out. Thus, **initial investment (borne by the program) on land improvement was high.** It was however a major effort in engaging in the land rental market, trying to influence the outcome through negotiation and with external financial supports.
- **Initial lease periods were for two years, and the landowners, in most cases, did not renew the contract. This forced Brac to buy land and lease them to their beneficiaries, adding a new dimension in pro-poor engagements.** Should Brac continue to act as a 'benevolent landowner' ensuring lease for their beneficiaries, or should they gradually withdraw by handing over the land to the beneficiaries through market means, are questions to be resolved in near future.
- Additional complementary inputs are provided for in the form of health and educational supports, and through forming *Gram Daridro Bimochon Committee* (Village Poverty Eradication Committee). The last of these (**Brac Committee**) is an interesting concept that provides the platform for the very poor to sit with the local elites and resolve the problems they may face in pursuit of their economic empowerment. There are however critics who would argue that creating new institutions by-passing the existing ones further complicate the development process.⁴⁶
- Field visits to several locations lead support to the conjecture that **there are capable ones amongst the very poor who can come out of poverty with concerted effort and multi-dimensional supports.** The capability mapping (termed as an Enterprise survey) is a pre-requisite. However, they may often be at the cost of some others, which could not be captured in the absence of in-depth study.
- At a more general level, the TUP experiment suggests that in the absence of a fuller utilisation of strategic resources (such as, land) resulting from either lack of adequate knowledge amongst current users or due to unwillingness to undertake some initial investments (such as, land improvement), **there is a**

⁴⁶ In an interview, a WFP official raised concerns with the Brac approach, particularly since Brac has been a key partner in the IGVGD program.



niche for a benevolent agency (with resource and know-how) to engage and benefit the poor.⁴⁷

Human development through skill development under ARISE: The street children can be identified as a particular group of urban poor with specific features of vulnerability and mobility. With this background of general deprivation and vulnerability, the Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE) Project has been formulated for implementation by the DSS (sponsored by the UNDP), under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh. The major objective of the project is to promote and protect the rights of the street children and to support the development programs targeted to street children by strengthening their survival skills and providing opportunities for a productive future through government, NGO and community-based interventions. A total of nine NGOs are engaged under this project to deliver services to street children in six divisional cities in the country.

The ProDoc had set a target of providing services to a total number of 50,000 street children with equal balance of gender. The major services relating to street Children offered by the partner NGOs are of five types: (i) education, awareness and training, (ii) shelter; (iii) psychological counseling; (iv) health, hygiene and nutrition; and (v) rescue and legal aid.

The study finds that the project had run into difficulties in three spheres: policy as reflected in Pro-doc, budget allocation & implementation arrangements, and sustainability. The observations on the project are summarised below.

- The challenge was to ensure an effective safety net by establishing a permanent institution, under a regular program rather than undertaking a project. The street children are mobile and their life is very different from others. At a very young age they start earning money, which makes any initiative to motivate them with a long-term vision very difficult. The **Pro-doc remains quite vague in defining objectives**. For instance, mention is made of re-integration with family or mainstreaming, and yet there is no mention of what is to be done for realising such objectives – even when many such activities could be borrowed from the National Child Policy document.
- The **number of children targeted across project sties was not proportionate to the number of street children distributed in different cities**. The Pro-doc mentioned of covering 50,000 children, and the **vagueness in such target setting allowed for exaggerated statement on achievements**. For example, a child receiving services from multiple components of the project could be counted several times. Thus, the actual number of children receiving project services could be lower than that shown with an aggregate figure. Some of the activities like legal aid, advocacy, and

⁴⁷ The two are related; ignorance of the potential explains why someone would not be keen to undertake the initial investment.



market survey are poorly or never addressed for the lack of implementation guideline and logistics support.

- The **NGO selection criterion was reportedly wrong and the practice of selection was fraudulent.** The technically best bidder very often fails to provide lowest financial proposal since there is a strong trade-off with quality. It was alleged during the interviews that unfair means were adopted during NGO selection and budget allocation. It was cited that, the partner NGO in Khulna was allocated with 17% of the budget, while around 8.5% of the total street children population was living there. Similarly Chittagong, having 9.9% of the street children, was allocated 17% of the budget. Despite the fact that there was provision of revising the budget (page 9, Pro.doc), only once the salary of the staff was revised. The DICs were not provided with sufficient fund, though the number of children (covered) and price of items increased gradually.
- The project itself did not have any clear direction in implementation strategy. **Implementation instructions were often not transmitted, or were transmitted with distortions, and were vague or inconsistent. All these caused serious obstacles to policy implementation; and realising numerical targets on coverage (or, activities) had little correspondence with actual achievements in terms of welfare of the children.** For example, it was mentioned in the ProDoc to provide health services, but the nature and extent of services were not clearly defined. As a result, most of the drop-in-centres, instead of making liaison with health centres, provided health services in the form of preliminary awareness building and medication of common diseases like diarrhoea and fever. Similarly, the education component had no clear idea as to what the children were to do with the education they received.
- The project tenure was subject to renewal on an annual basis leading to uncertainty. The project therefore failed to provide the beneficiaries and the partners a long-term vision, strong commitments and capacity developments. Finally, due to corruption and NGO policy, often the frontline workers and project personnel were deprived of the minimum remuneration required for sustained quality effort.
- Absence of long-term commitment also got reflected in lack of continuity in fund flows. For first three years funding was smooth, while last two three years fund disbursement was interrupted and came on piecemeal basis (like, three months, then another six months, then three months). Some NGOs, who do not have self-sustaining capacity, may not continue this program for this period. Many staff, who have already become demoralised, may leave, which would affect the project activities eventually.
- **Ownership of the project suffered due to frequent changes in the top management. The bureaucratic decision-making and the control of the**



Ministry is often the cause. Often the project directors were appointed without taking into consideration if they had necessary expertise or inclination for a particular project. The PD (of ARISE) who first initiated the program left the management just after the procurement of NGOs. The Deputy secretary from the Ministry who followed was appointed for only 2 years. By the time a civil bureaucrat acquires the requisite knowledge and grows an interest and understanding of the project, another transfer is due under the rotation system. Thus, ownership gets rarely owned within the project as well; and in the absence of partnership with other GOs and LGs, it is difficult to find an interest group to sustain the project activities.

3.9 Choice of Agency and Agency's Choice of Activities

3.9.1 *Selection of Implementing Partners*

Implementation of policies, almost tautologically, would require an implementing agency. Choice of agency has been a thorny issue in project implementation in Bangladesh. At two tiers, the problem normally surfaces. The first involves selection of an agency, which is entrusted to implement a project, normally within the government, but can be otherwise. The second relates to choice of partner organisations, mostly the NGOs, who perform the field-level activities. The latter arises more prominently in implementing pro-poor policies, many of which involve social mobilisation and other micro-level engagements. This sub-section discusses both selection of agency by donors and selection of partner NGOs by an implementing agency.

Very often, policies towards the poor and the subsequent choice of projects are driven by donor assistance and the urge to ensure high utilisation rate. This had often led to choice of projects that may be suitably located in agencies perceived to be more 'efficient'. Historically, DAE had been one such agency, whose standing had eroded over the 1990's. In its place, LGED had emerged as the 'first choice' within the government umbrella. Along with it, NGOs provided additional outfits; and the instances of channelling ODA through the latter increased. Of late, PKSF, conveniently considered within the public sector, has drawn much attention from the donor community as an effective implementing agency.

There are two broad lessons one may draw from the historical experience:

- Other than DAE (whose prominence surfaced during the period 'green revolution'), all others noted above had great deal of autonomy from the line ministry of any sort. While NGOs emerged completely from without, PKSF and several others (such as, IDCOL) were initiated from within in partnership with non-government persons and agencies. The latter category (of **locally initiated institutions**) **proved to be more innovative in ideas and the organisations had greater flexibility in delegating work responsibilities.** These were also able to mobilise workforce at competitive salaries.



- The agencies which had done well at one point in time were able to attract donor funds, which subsequently led to a new set of internal dynamics as well in their relations with other agents in the government hierarchy. The results of such dynamics have generally not been well; and **the effort to crowd-in (by donor agencies) has been more than the effort to support creation of new agencies.**
- While there are agencies, which may perform well in delivering services (of one or the other kind) when external assistance is provided, **agencies perceiving their interests commonly with those of chronic poor are rare.** One may expect that organised MFIs keen on expanding their net would have an interest in uplifting the 'chronic poor' into 'bankable poor' as long as such optimism prevails.

Very little probing has been done into the aforementioned theme, other than in the sphere of consultants searching for the right implementation design under a loan package. There has however been substantive focus on the second theme of agency selection – finding NGO partners in the implementation of projects. Other than in the case of Brac's TUP, all programs/projects studied involved partnership with NGO/MFIs⁴⁸; as the experience had been no different from what an IFAD Country Programme Evaluation noted:

"The performance of NGOs that worked with IFAD over the decade was *moderately unsuccessful* overall." (IFAD 2005)

The IFAD document further noted that the role ascribed to NGOs in 'project design document ... was often limited to service delivery'; and the 'opportunities for 'rents' to NGOs adversely influenced the original NGO selection processes'. Within the sample looked into under the current study, such instances were more prominent when the implementing agencies were government departments, and less so in other cases. The recognition of wrong-doings in NGO selection had led to devising new rules (criteria for selection), two of which are worth mentioning. The first is to rely on the rating of a trust-worthy agency – for example, limiting to PKSF's partner organisation (as done by IFAD). The second is to set new rules of selection upon bidding – say, lowest financial proposal. The case studies on urban poverty (see Annexes 6 and 7) mention that

"The NGO selection criteria were wrong and fraudulent. The technically first bidder cannot provide lowest financial proposal without curtailing the quality and quantity of activities. Even it was mentioned by many that unfair means were adopted for NGO selection and budget allocation. Some of the Project staffs say that the TA and PIC were bribed for NGO selection."

⁴⁸ IFAD (2005) notes that there had been collaboration of some kind in all the nine IFAD projects, and the total number of NGOs involved in these nine projects were 69.



The above observations are generally true for all sorts of project implementation, including those addressing chronic poverty. NGO partnership is generally sought where targeted programs are involved – whether it be resource transfer or delivery of non-financial services. Even if the payment to a participating NGO is for its service, the latter (like any service provider) may provide less than it is paid for; and such responses are often the result of initial move for ‘rent seeking’ by the implementing agency selecting the NGOs. The problem is aggravated in case of pro-poor safety net programs (where resource transfers are involved) since the poor are less empowered to ensure their rightful share!

3.9.2 Trend towards engagement in multiple activities within a single agency

Problems of implementation often arise due to lack of coordination among implementing agencies, as well as due to lack of specialised expertise within an agency. Symptoms of such problems are very much evident in increasing trend towards engaging in multiple activities by a single agency. There was a time when each agency within the government had a well-defined jurisdiction and was meant to perform a limited number of tasks where it was expected to specialise. Current situation (see Table 9) is one of multiple engagements by a single agency – to put it squarely, each agency chooses to open multiple windows (and thereby widen the net) to maximise its receipt of project fund! Within a regime of limited human capacity that is divided across agencies, this has meant below-average capability within each. This is believed to have added to policy implementation problem in general.

Table 9: Activities undertaken by various Agencies

Name of Agency	Infra-structure	Technical support	Credit	Relief / Food	Training / skill dev	Social Mobilisation	Health
DWA			√		√	√	
DSS		√	√		√	√	
MSW/d			√		√	√	√
DRR	√	√	√	√		√	√
DOFood				√		√	√
LGED	√	√	√	√	√	√	
City Corporation	√	√	√	√	√		
DPE				√	√		√
DAE			√		√		
DGHS					√		



DLS			√		√		
DOFish			√		√	√	
DYD			√		√	√	
BSCIC			√		√		
BRDB	√		√		√	√	

Source: Compiled from various departmental documents.

3.10 Monitoring and Evaluation

Importance of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) was noted in Figure 3 in Section 1.2.2. It had also been noted that programs/projects designed to accommodate changes while lessons are learnt from initial implementation have better prospects in delivering; and M&E connects practice with responsive decision-making. Statuses of M&E in all the projects, reviewed under the current study, were looked into. In addition, presence of monitoring within the government agency had also been probed. The broad observations are summarised below:

- **Regular monitoring of project activities with separate monitoring cells is observed only in projects funded externally.** Such projects may be located within the government agency (e.g., SAIP under DAE), or, is supervised by an outside agency (such as, WFC in case of CBFM). **In contrast, in-house monitoring within the government (other than IMED's involvement at a higher level) is almost absent.**
- **Monitoring in case of projects such as in SAIP is effectively located within the power hierarchy of the implementing agency (DAE), fails to generate results even if large volume of data is collected and much effort of consultants had gone into designing detail monitoring schedules.** Normally, data-collection and their compilations are done by project staffs, which fail to technically engage the in-house personnel. At the same time, enormous data collected fail to provide inputs to decision making since they are filtered through the hierarchy of the implementing agency who is least interested to expose its weakness to the sponsors.
- Where monitoring is done by a fund-manager (or, any other body), independent of the implementing agency, rich data is collected and their analyses may give good guidance. However, **in the absence of information sharing (and flows) with agencies within the government, the knowledge often gets lost with the departure of the responsible agency.**
- **Project monitoring is largely involved in input and output monitoring; and there is complete absence of links (at monitoring stage) between these and the purposes for which a project was designed. Such links**



are sought only at the stage of evaluation, with little or no scope for the project to benefit.

- Both at the upazila levels and at the national departmental levels, non-availability of adequate resources was identified to be the major obstacle to undertaking monitoring activities. Moreover, given a resource regime, effort towards monitoring is highly responsive to the action (or, non-action) taken at higher levels as a follow-up to monitoring results. **In general, the higher authority had failed to respond, and the state of monitoring had reached a dismal level when the study was conducted.**
- As experienced in case of TUP, level and intensity of monitoring required for programs targeting chronic poor are higher than an average program. In such cases, monitoring is done for outcome and problems encountered in realising the outcomes (largely involving the beneficiaries); and if the initial choices are appropriate, additional effort to monitor inputs and certain kinds of output are not necessary. But in the particular case, **monitoring is done by the same implementing agency, which has both merits and demerits.**



4 Summary and Recommendations

4.1 Summary Observations

The study covered a wide canvass – at conceptual plane, types of programs encompassing various sectors, and addressing multiple tiers within the ‘policy implementing’ structure. The study started off with an apparently innocuous set of questions: what are the problems of implementing policies for reducing chronic poverty in Bangladesh; is there a pattern in the problems encountered in implementation; and what measures may be taken to improve pro-poor policy implementation? The discourse on the concepts suggested that there is no uniquely defined policy that may be branded as ‘pro-poor policy’, nor can one perceive implementation issues at a single tier only. In the search for answers to the questions, while insights into the problems may have been provided, the study had possibly raised few additional questions. This section summarises the broad observations, rather bluntly, leaving the recommendations for the following section.

The study had looked into issues on ‘policy implementation’ at three tiers: identification of pro-poor programs and projects at policy levels; identification of activities at program/project levels; and implementation of activities that are considered pro-poor. There is a general lack of awareness about policy and its relation with programs and projects. The review of policy documents and the numerous interviews conducted reveal that there is no policy for the chronic poor, nor is there an appreciation of its need. In spite of this absence, there are programs and projects, which aim at reducing poverty and extreme or chronic poverty. Some, such as those under the food assistance program, have evolved historically; and even though these target the very poor, the underlying policy guidance remains more as a list of intentions. Others such as the cash allowances have been introduced at particular junctures of political democracy with intentions to ‘do-good’ for the people. In general, however, the agenda for the very poor has been driven by donor funds. Since the latter was not matched by adequate effort towards building conviction around the need for a special focus on chronic poor and creating ownership of the agenda within the government and/or local polity, the issue was largely marginalised in the PRSP document.

Given a lack of appreciation, it is quite expected that the pro-poor programs and projects are observed in the fields of safety net and asset transfer programs. At the macro level, the linkages between ‘pro-poor growth’ and ‘poverty alleviation’ remains obscure, not to mention about the links with reduction of chronic poverty. For obvious reasons, the mapping of policies had overwhelming presence of the former kind of programs than those expected to indirectly affect the chronic poor.

Poverty mapping has been done quite extensively in Bangladesh; and the poverty estimates (as well as vulnerability index) for smaller geographical areas have been used as guidelines for resource allocation across regions. In such allocations, extreme poverty had apparently been the major consideration. The study however



suggests that there are biases in such mapping exercise, and therefore in current pattern of resource allocation under food assistance. Disproportionate negligence of the southern coastal regions in the poverty maps drawn from small area estimation exercises had influenced resource allocations in government (and WFP) programs, as well as the spatial distribution of NGO programs. The result has been worsening of poverty situation in the south. It came as a surprise to the study team that none of the important actors registered any awareness of the problem during the numerous interviews undertaken for the study.

In summary, the critical missing element in the design and implementation of policies for reducing chronic poverty in Bangladesh is the absence of an agency who would recognise 'chronic poor' as a social entity and who would see the agency interests to be in line with promoting this segment. This is generally true in the spheres of intellect, policymaking, private sector initiatives, NGO activities, as well as in social and political activism. There are individuals in all these sectors who may be engaging more from a philanthropic perspective – but an agency is missing. It is therefore no wonder that the concerns have not made much inroad into the policy documents. With declining interests among lending agencies, the prospects may further be jeopardised. Historically, some of the projects and programs designed to address pro-poor concerns have been inducted in policy documents without having a holistic perspective put in place to tie these with broader policy objectives of growth and equity. For obvious reasons, the criteria for resource allocations are not meant to account for resource flows for the very poor – what exists for 'pro-poor' is an *ad hoc* accounting measure not widely endorsed.

There are however programs and projects, which have components aimed at very poor in the society, and some of these have been looked into in this study. Without repeating the various observations made in this study with regards to policy implementation in general, and implementation of pro-poor policy in particular, the following section lists a set of recommendations.

4.2 Recommendations

The recommendations may be broadly grouped into two – some are relevant for all sorts of policies, while others are more relevant for policies that address the poor or chronic poor. The two groups are distinguished in terms of general and specific recommendations.

4.2.1 General

1. Policies are rarely owned within the government and mostly donor-driven – there is a need to develop agenda of common interest around which ownership may be initiated

Everyone agrees that ownership of policies is critical in ensuring its proper implementation. Yet, lip-servicing on ownership is all too common these days. In a regime of coercive political culture, this would have been a difficult proposition. However, with changes in the country's political setting, building common agenda is a



feasible option. In this context, it is important to recognise that agencies within both the government and the donors may be equally non-responsive (or, responsive), which would call for a third party to propagate the feasibility of building agendas around common interests.

II. There is a need to critically examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two alternative institutional arrangements – that of multiple activities within an agency and the other of specialised agencies coordinating among themselves. The purpose is to put forward suggestions on the choice of institutional arrangement that will help in policy implementation.

The unabated proliferation of activities within a single agency has largely remained unnoticed, and it has not been flagged in the discourse on development, nor on governance. The phase of relying on a single agency, and therefore, desiring to have all activities in-house, will possibly not last long. Nor will it be an efficient arrangement with increasing demand for professionalism. Since the issues have not been critically examined, it is important that this be done soon.

The institutional rearrangement should also address current practice of biased resource allocation at local levels and the current domination of single agency (say, LGED).

There is also a need to rethink the relative roles of NGOs and GOs, and their spheres of specialisation. Presently, NGOs enter and engages in the soft delivery – marginalising the local initiatives and roles of local departmental agencies and stakeholders. One ought to look into the complementarities between agencies.

It is important to recognise that donor role often had important bearings on the outcomes on institutional space as well as on ownership and continuity of programs. It had been hoped that things would change significantly after the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005. Unfortunately, donor roles have often weakened the local institutional capacity – either through crowding in on few competent institutions for faster aid utilisation, or, for marginalising in-house capacity by emphasising on short-lived project-based capacities. There has also been a failure to ensure more predictable and multi-year commitments on aid flows. A recent review of donor supports to PRS (Mahmud 2006) suggests that ‘success of aid harmonisation efforts depends to a large extent on donors’ genuine commitment, along with finding trustworthy partners within the government’.

III. Need to revisit the purposes of monitoring and accordingly develop manageable sets of indicators and processes to monitor. It is also important to institutionalise monitoring agencies independent of (not separated from) implementing agency

Within the government, central monitoring is the responsibility of the IMED; and all government projects are supposedly ‘audited’ upon their completions. IMED coverage of projects however is rather limited. More importantly, IMED focuses on limited output tracking and (primarily) expenditure monitoring that hardly differs from an audit (except that the latter is possibly more rigorous in keeping to the books of



account). As for programs/projects implemented through regular government administration, there is no provision for monitoring, even within the government agency. Current monitoring design is biased towards progress (planned activities) monitoring. More emphasis needs to be given on monitoring output and outcome.

IV. Supports to be provided to national governments to institutionalise independent monitoring department with adequate capacity and resources for recurrent expenditure.

There is a need for stock-taking of all the various kinds of monitoring that are undertaken at project and department levels, and link these with the national level PRS monitoring located within the General Economics Division of the Planning Commission. It is important to direct donor supports/resources, whether channelled through sector-specific projects or through budgetary supports to national planning, towards building monitoring capacity within the national government. In such initiatives, greater coordination between the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Finance needs to be forged.

4.2.2 Specific Recommendations

V. Regional resource allocation has been biased; and needs immediate revisions

Often perceptions and the press have contributed in hyping up an agenda, leading to biased resource allocation. That the coastal areas have long been neglected is yet to be fully acknowledged. First VAM map was in 1996, drawing upon 1991-92 data. Relative spatial poverty situation in the country has changed significantly since the Jamuna Bridge was opened in 1998. Prior perception may have influenced the subsequent mapping exercise – especially choice of weights. While the vulnerability mapping is abandoned, the old poverty map is now the basis of the next WFP country program (2006-10). Resource allocations based on such biased (against the south) poverty maps will fail to match resource flows with spatial poverty incidence. If not redressed soon, spatial inequality may aggravate.

VI. Targeting poor and the process of identifying poor – there is a need to innovate new programs that have self (built-in) targeting, and have the right balance of operational criteria and process-based identification.

Programs for chronic poor which involve direct transfer of benefits are targeted. There are two extremes in operational targeting practiced in the country – one, where the characteristics of eligible beneficiaries are defined in rigorous manner with no discretion to the field-level operators; and the other which promotes a participatory process that enable the community (or, an inclusive segment within it) to identify who the poor are. The relative strengths (or weaknesses) of the two approaches should be assessed. It is recommended that the right balance (in each case) should be sought when chronic poor need to be identified. However, innovating self-targeting programs will reduce the burden of identifying poor, and such programs may be better implemented within an environment of greater inclusiveness and full information disclosure.



VII. There is no homogenous category called the chronic poor; and therefore there is a need to appreciate multiple approaches. There is also a need to define policies that will realise targets in sustained manner.

Chronic poor in Bangladesh occupies multiple spaces – in terms of their geographic locations, demographic and social spaces, participation in economic activities (and markets), and at times, even in dispersed endowment spaces. Even when the focus is on eradication of extreme hunger, several entry points may have to be sought, including that of ‘pro-poor’ growth.

VIII. Separate effort required to initiate the process of innovating pro-poor technologies

Often non-availability of appropriate technology is a binding constraint for implementing pro-poor programs, as in the case of poultry sector. Widening the choice set of such technologies hold much prospect in designing and implementing programs aimed at reducing chronic poverty.

IX. Program design ought to have provisions for modifying implementation designs through learning.

Often project designs emphasise on mechanical monitoring, which requires stability in the original design. While one needs to weigh the trade-off, there is a need to accommodate revisions during the process of learning.

X. Tenure of staff should be appropriately defined in order to ensure their incentives to undertake tedious jobs of social mobilisation and reaching out to the very poor.

Short project cycles are often desirable from Finance division’s perspective – both to keep track of expenses as well as to ensure timely disbursements. Short-term projects also carry less liability, which is associated with short-term contractual employment. The latter is often conducive to ensure higher effort, but at an aggregate level, such practices have generated a large pool of temporary workforce with dwindling social motivation. The general demand has been for transferring project staffs from ‘project’/‘development’ budget to ‘revenue’ budget. However, without changing the institutional culture of the departments, such moves are perceived to be more wasteful. It is important to look for a right balance.



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Annex 1

Terms of Reference for Economic Research Group

Name of the Project: PRS Country Study,- Bangladesh

Name of Donor: Chronic Poverty Research Center

Objectives

The study aims to address the followings:

- Map out who and where the chronically poor are in Bangladesh;
- Review policies to identify the ones pertinent chronically poor;
- Assess/Find out if policies that respond to chronic poverty and articulated in Bangladesh's PRS actually implemented in practice?
- Identify the determinants of the observed patterns of implementation/non implementation, and how the latter may be affecting chronic poverty; and
- Identify up to ten key recommendations for what should/could be done to improve policy and policy processes for chronic poverty reduction in Bangladesh.

Study Methodology

The study will review relevant policy and research document/reports. It will also draw upon existing/available data from national statistical agencies. The Bangladesh Study will also involve extensive research with civil servants and field level bureaucrats, as well as groups representing the chronically poor, key poverty academics, and also chronically poor people themselves.

Annex 1 to 3 (not included here) provide guidelines for undertaking the study, and the key researcher representing the ERG is expected to satisfactorily complete the project PRS Country Study: Bangladesh in close cooperation (and regular consultation) with the Institute Project Leader Ursula Grant in developing the details.

Representations

Unless revised later, in all matters pertaining to the fulfillment of the contract, ODI will be represented by

Ursula Grant, ODI Project Leader and

ERG will be represented by

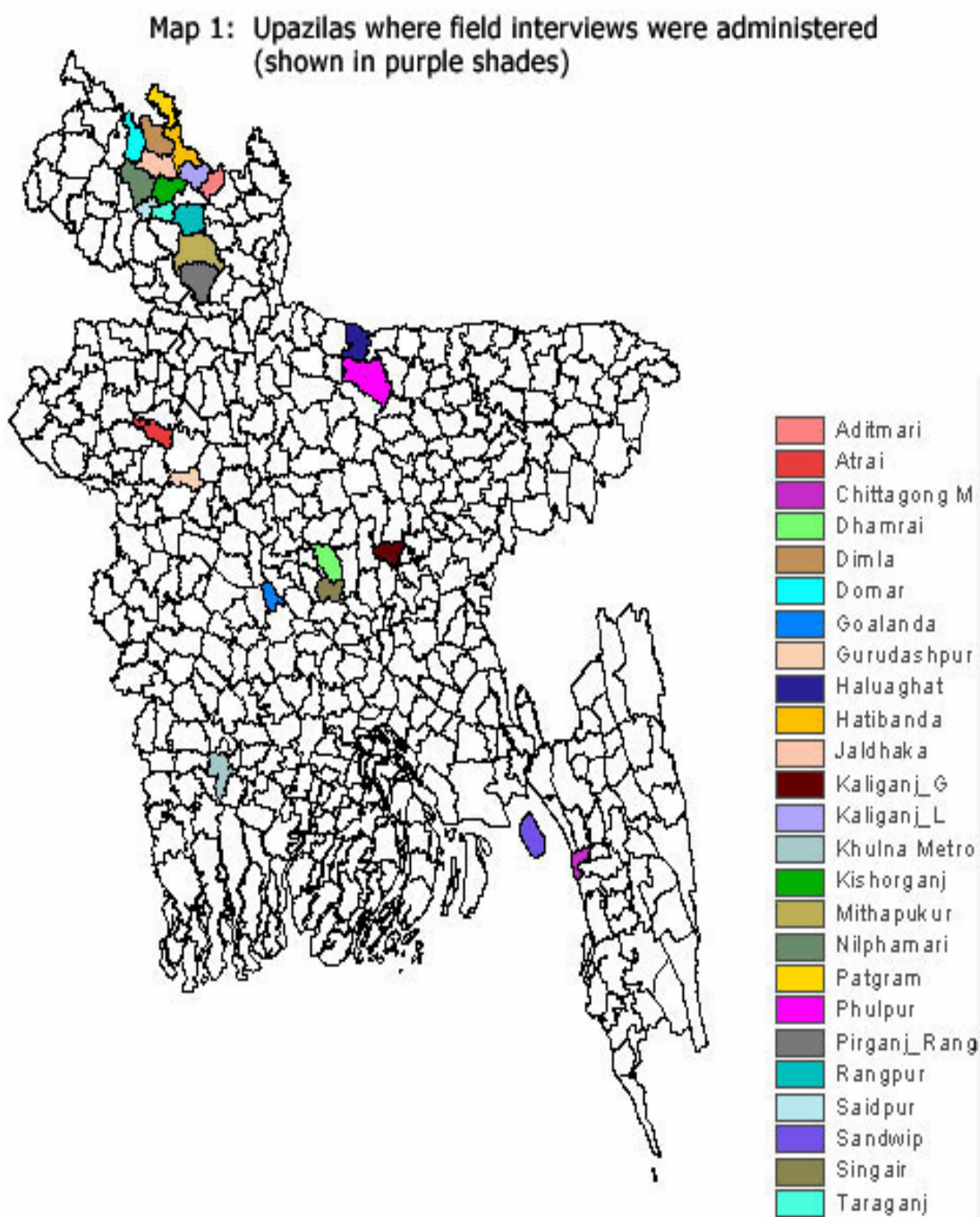
Sajjad Zohir, Executive Director, ERG



Annex 2

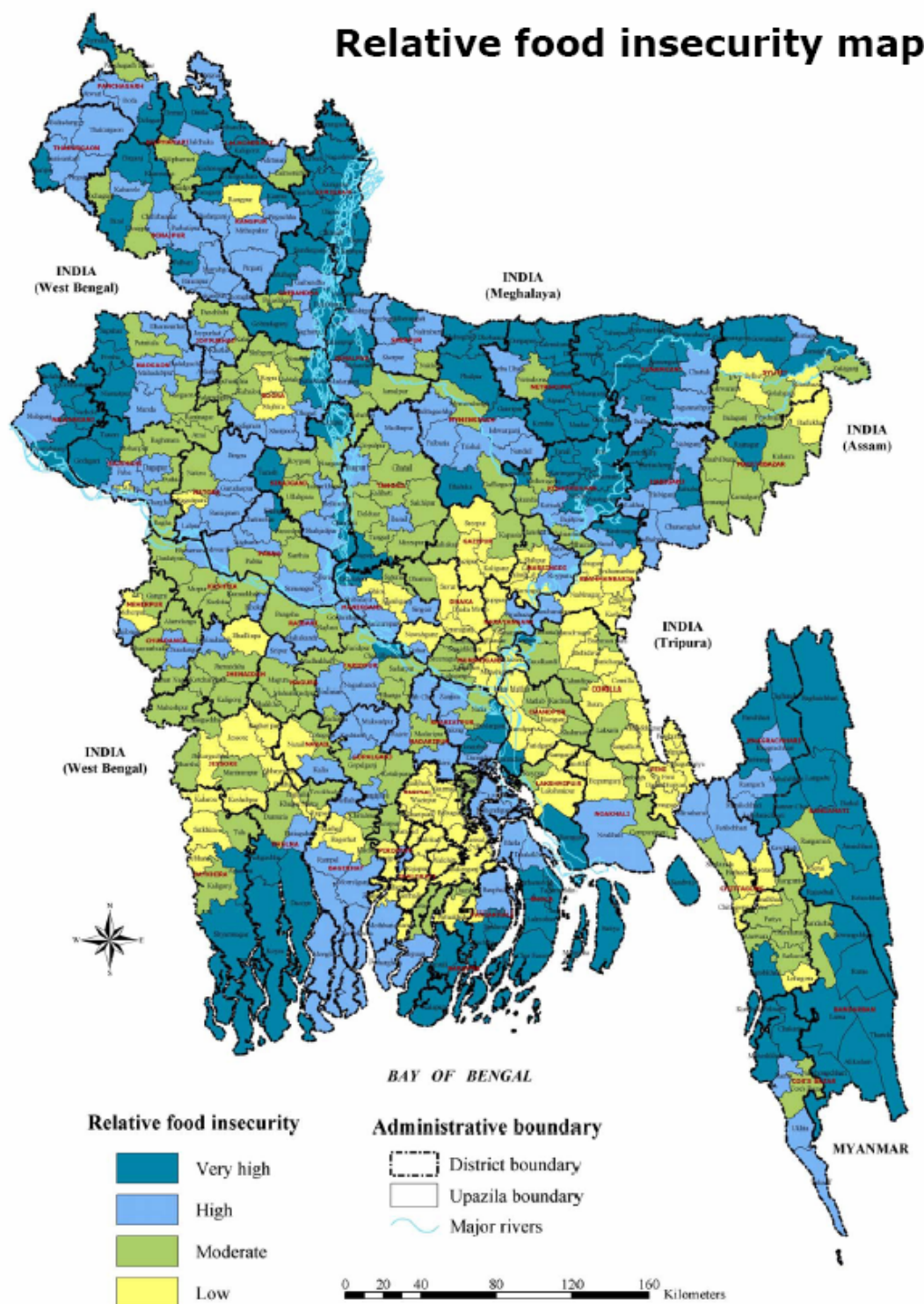
Maps and Figures

Map1: Upazilas where field interviews were administered (shown in purple shades)





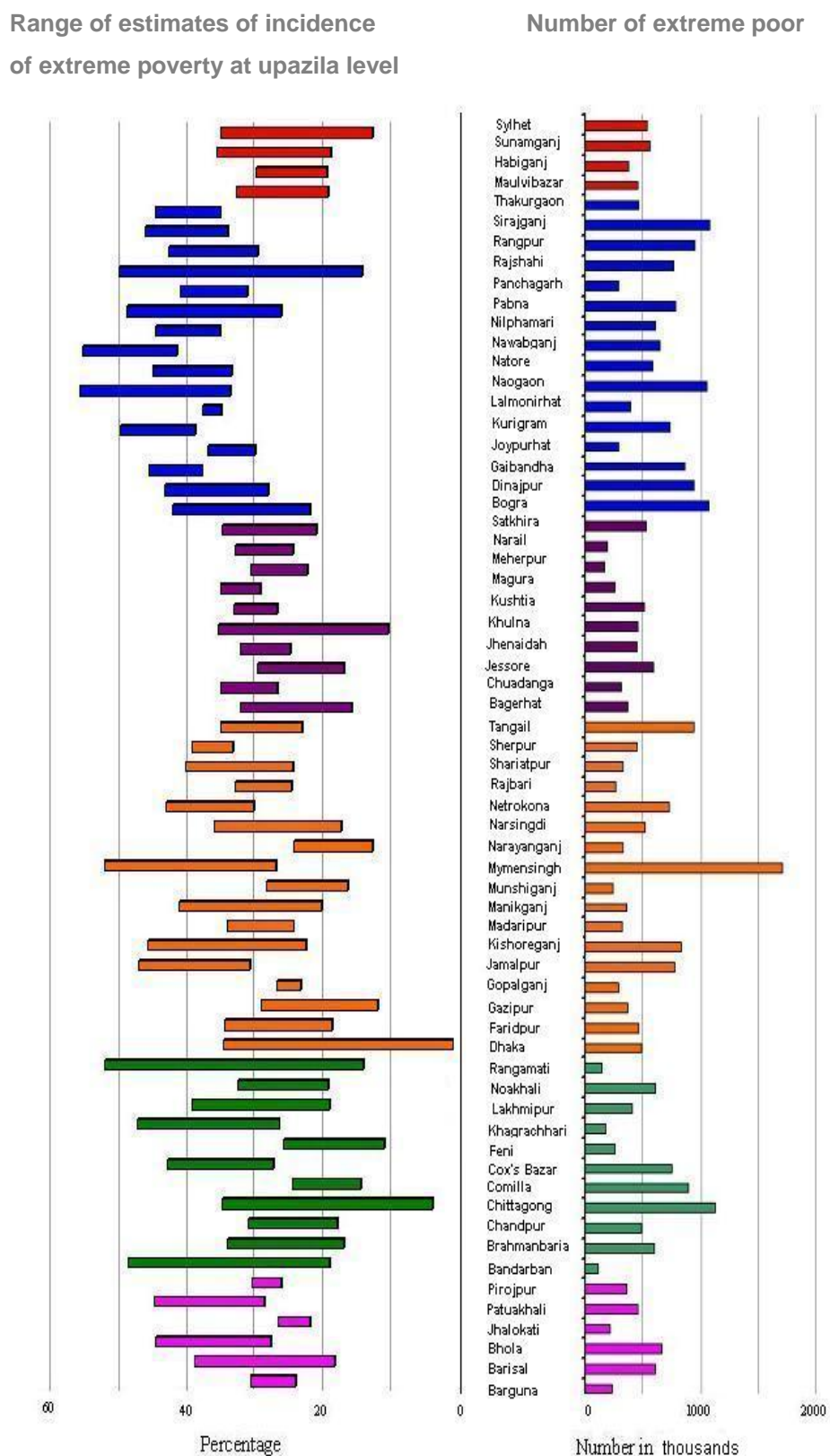
Map 2: Relative Food Insecurity map, 2004



Source: Government of Bangladesh / World Food Programme, 2004



Figure A.1: Range and number of extreme poor by district





Annex 3

Statistical Tables

Table A.3.1: Incidence of Extreme Poor, based on small area estimation

District Name	Based on UZ est.			BIDS HPI'03	District Name	Based on UZ est.			BIDS HPI'03
	min.	max.	agg.			min.	max.	agg.	
C' Nawabganj	42	56	49.31	26.67	Shariatpur	24	40	31.22	29.39
Naogaon	33	56	44.17	33.04	Meherpur	24	33	31.06	23.40
Kurigram	38	50	42.08	32.25	Kustia	26	33	30.94	32.20
Nilphamari	35	45	41.92	31.40	Sunamganj	18	36	30.48	28.92
Khagrachhari	26	47	41.91	27.36	Jhalokati	22	26	30.17	28.50
Bhola	27	45	41.75	33.81	Maulavibazar	19	32	29.92	30.11
Cox's Bazar	27	43	41.54	37.91	Satkhira	21	35	29.84	27.33
Sirajgonj	34	46	40.64	25.25	Barguna	23	30	29.83	28.75
Gaibandha	37	46	40.13	30.22	Tangail	23	36	29.20	36.73
Thakurgaon	35	45	40.12	28.35	Lakhmipur	19	39	29.07	28.60
Natore	33	45	39.44	36.16	Narail	24	33	29.03	27.92
Netrokona	30	43	38.70	32.45	Jhenaidah	25	32	28.95	28.33
Mymensingh	27	52	38.30	31.77	Narsingdi	17	37	28.02	33.81
Jamalpur	31	47	38.29	33.26	Barisal	18	38	27.89	26.38
Rangpur	29	43	37.48	28.33	Brahmanbaria	17	34	27.47	28.51
Pabna	26	48	37.14	28.23	Faridpur	18	34	27.33	33.90
Bogra	22	42	36.81	27.65	Jessore	17	29	26.63	25.48
Lalmonirhat	35	38	36.73	29.40	Bagerhat	15	32	26.39	28.34
Dinajpur	27	43	36.29	25.08	Madaripur	24	34	26.39	29.76
Panchagarh	31	41	36.17	32.40	Noakhali	19	33	25.66	24.19
Sherpur	33	39	36.10	30.32	Gopalganj	23	27	25.18	27.21
Joypurhat	30	37	35.51	26.61	Habiganj	19	29	22.76	26.37
Pirojpur	26	30	35.51	22.98	Chandpur	18	31	22.62	30.85
Rangamati	13	52	35.49	31.98	Feni	11	26	22.57	24.46



Chuadanga	26	36	35.45	24.38	Sylhet	13	35	21.40	29.64
Rajshahi	14	50	35.36	29.84	Munshiganj	16	28	20.87	33.84
Magura	29	36	34.52	28.23	Khulna	10	36	20.13	31.51
Kishoreganj	22	46	33.66	27.51	Gazipur	12	29	19.74	26.46
Patuakhali	28	45	33.23	28.90	Comilla	14	25	19.62	27.50
Bandarban	19	48	32.43	35.40	Chittagong	4	35	17.57	35.05
Rajbari	24	33	31.90	32.44	Narayanganj	12	24	16.37	29.20
Manikganj	20	42	31.38	25.73	Dhaka	2	34	5.83	32.28
					All Bangladesh	2	56	29.21	33.70

Note: Upazila-level poverty estimates were first derived upon using small area estimation technique on HEIS 2000 and (5% of) Population Census 2001 data. The minimum and maximum upazila-level poverty figures (incidence of poverty based on BCN approach) are reported along with an estimate of the district-level poverty upon aggregating the numbers (not percentages) in each upazila in a district.

Source: WFP Annual Report 2004.

Table A.3.2: Incidence of Poverty and Recent Changes by Regions

Divisions	# of districts	District level aggregates based on uz poverty estimates, 2001			Incidence of poverty, HIES		% of districts, avg. daily agr. wage	
		minimum	maximum	aggregate	2000	2005	< Tk. 50	< Tk. 65
Barisal	6	27.89	41.75	33.16	34.7	35.6	0.00	33.33
Chittagong	11	17.57	41.91	24.06	27.5	16.1	0.00	18.18
Dhaka	17	5.83	38.70	24.91	34.5	19.9	0.00	23.53
Khulna	10	20.13	35.45	28.06	32.3	31.6	10.00	90.00
Rajshahi	16	35.36	49.31	39.28	42.7	34.5	43.75	100.00
Sylhet	4	21.40	30.48	25.70	26.7	20.8	0.00	0.00
Bangladesh	64	5.83	49.31	29.21	34.3	25.1	12.50	51.56

Note: District level aggregates are compiled from Table 1, and the latter draws upon small area estimations done by BBS. Incidence of poverty refers to the measures of extreme poverty (using the lower poverty line). The very last column includes households in the preceding column.

Source: WFP for the first and last sets (of columns) of information. Incidence of headcount measures of poverty are from HIES of BBS.



Table A.3.3: Zones based on similar poverty pattern and their correspondence with Regions (number of districts/ % of upazilas)

Division	South-east	North-east	Coastal	Western	Central	North	All regions
Barisal			6 (18.18)				6 (18.18)
Chittagong	3 (33.33)		4 (17.24)		4 (0.00)		11 (15.66)
Dhaka					12 (4.23)	5 (54.35)	17 (23.93)
Khulna			3 (0.00)	6 (0.00)	1 (0.00)		10 (0.00)
Rajshahi				4 (74.07)	2 (70.59)	10 (54.93)	16 (61.74)
Sylhet		4 (0.00)					4 (0.00)
Bangladesh	3 (33.33)	4 (0.00)	13 (11.93)	10 (35.09)	19 (12.30)	15 (54.70)	64 (25.97)

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages of upazilas in each geographic category with incidence of extreme poverty ranging from 37 % to 55%.

Source: Information on zones from WFP 2004 was compiled and processed by the author.

Table A.3.4: Recent Changes in Incidence of Extreme Poverty (using lower poverty line)

Division	% extreme poor in 2005			% extreme poor in 2000			Ratio of 2005 to 2000		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
<i>Bangladesh</i>	25.1	28.6	14.6	34.3	37.9	20.0	0.73	0.75	0.73
Barishal	35.6	37.2	26.4	34.7	35.9	21.7	1.03	1.04	1.22
Chittagong	16.1	18.7	8.1	27.5	30.1	17.1	0.59	0.62	0.47
Dhaka	19.9	26.1	9.6	34.5	43.6	15.8	0.58	0.60	0.61



Khulna	31.6	32.7	27.8	32.3	34.0	23.0	0.98	0.96	1.21
Rajshahi	34.5	35.6	28.4	42.7	43.9	34.5	0.81	0.81	0.82
Sylhet	20.8	22.3	11.0	26.7	26.1	35.2	0.78	0.85	0.31

Source: HEIS 2005, BBS

Table A.3.5: Trends in Poverty and Squared Poverty Gap

Divisions	Poverty Gap			Squared Poverty Gap		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
2005						
National	4.6	5.3	2.6	1.3	1.5	0.7
Barishal	9.1	9.6	6.4	3.3	3.4	2.6
Chittagong	2.2	2.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.2
Dhaka	3.6	4.9	1.5	1.0	1.4	0.3
Khulna	6.2	6.3	5.5	1.7	1.7	1.7
Rajshahi	6.4	6.5	5.5	1.8	1.8	1.6
Sylhet	3.4	3.7	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.5
2000						
National	7.5	8.3	4.1	2.4	2.6	1.2
Barishal	6.9	7.0	4.9	1.9	2.0	1.6
Chittagong	5.7	6.3	3.6	1.7	1.9	1.1
Dhaka	8.1	10.5	3.0	2.6	3.5	0.8
Khulna	5.6	5.7	4.5	1.4	1.4	1.3
Rajshahi	10.2	10.5	7.8	3.5	3.6	2.7
Sylhet	4.4	4.4	4.5	1.1	1.1	1.2

Source: HIES 2005



Table A.3.6: Incidence of extreme poverty, by Professional Groups

	2005			2000		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
All Professions	25.1	28.6	14.6	34.3	37.9	20.0
Professional, Technical & Related Works	16.1	18.5	11.7	22.2	22.2	15.1
Adm. & Management Works	2.4	12.6	0	1.5	0	2.0
Clerical, Related Works & Govt. Executive	29.4	36.6	18.0	34.2	42.6	22.0
Sales Workers	16.7	21.7	9.6	23	28.4	14.2
Service Workers	25.3	31.4	16.5	37.3	41.3	30.2
Agri., Forestry & Fisheries	31.5	32.0	24.7	40.8	41.2	29.8
Prod. Transport & Related Workers	23.6	30.6	14.2	34.1	40.7	21.6
Head Not Working	17.0	18.5	12.1	25.6	29.7	13.0

Table A.3.7: Incidence of extreme poverty, by Religion and Educational Status

	2005			2000			Ratio of 2005 to 2000		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
Widowed/ Divorced	29.6	32.3	20	37	41.6	22.1	0.80	0.78	0.90
Muslim	24.9	28.3	15	35	38.6	20.8	0.71	0.73	0.72
Non Muslim	26.6	30.3	10.4	27.3	30.7	10.9	0.97	0.99	0.95
No education	36.3	37.4	30.3	46.1	47.2	39.1	0.79	0.79	0.77
Completed class IV	19.3	21.8	12.6	27.6	30.3	16.1	0.70	0.72	0.78
Completed class IX	15.8	17.5	11.1	22.8	26.2	11.8	0.69	0.67	0.94
Class X / SSC	4.4	7.1	1.9	7.2	10.9	1.6	0.61	0.65	1.19



Table A.3.8: Incidence of extreme poverty, by Landownership Groups

	2005			2000			Ratio of 2005 to 2000		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
All Sise	25.1	28.6	14.6	34.3	37.9	20	0.73	0.75	0.73
No land	25.2	49.3	17.8	30.4	53.1	20.5	0.83	0.93	0.87
<0.05	39.2	47.8	23.7	43.3	48.8	22.3	0.91	0.98	1.06
0.05-0.49	28.2	33.3	11.4	40	41.7	12.6	0.71	0.80	0.90
0.50-1.49	20.8	22.8	9.1	29.6	30.6	15.4	0.70	0.75	0.59
1.50-2.49	11.2	12.8	2.7	21.9	22.9	1.4	0.51	0.56	1.93
2.50-7.49	7	7.7	3	11.5	12.4	0	0.61	0.62	
7.50+	1.7	2	0	4	4.1	0	0.43	0.49	

Table A.3.9: Incidence of Poverty (Head Count Ratio) using DCI method

	National	Rural	Urban
Absolute Poverty, <= 2122 kc/capita/day			
2005	40.4	39.5	43.2
2000	44.3	42.3	52.5
1995-96	47.5	47.1	49.7
1991-92	47.5	47.6	46.7
Hardcore Poverty, <= 1805 kc/capita/day			
2005	19.5	17.9	24.4
2000	20.0	18.7	25.0
1995-96	25.1	24.6	27.3
1991-92	28.0	28.3	26.3
Ultra Poverty, <= 1600 kc/capita/day			
2005	7.8	6.7	11.0
2000	8.2	7.3	11.7

Source: BBS (2005)



Annex 4: Inconsistencies in PRSP and national policy document – examples from Child Policy

Ideal State/Concept	Taking an example: National Child Policy 1994	PRSP Policy Matrix	Comments
Policy Definition			
A definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions	National Child Policy (NCP) defines its goal as to ensure security, welfare and development	The vision and long-term goal of the PRSP for children's advancement and protection of their rights is encapsulated in the slogan "A World Fit for Children." The vision is to attain pro-poor growth and economic development that is child-centered and ensures both the basic rights and livelihood needs of children.	<p>A definite goal, course or method of action to guide and determine present and future decisions are found neither in the goals of NCP nor in PRSP.</p> <p>Often the goals are broad and generic. As such, these are more likely to be frameworks than a definite policy</p>
Objectives/strategic goals			
Program goals: Program goals clearly state the intended results of the program	NCP identifies six major objectives: Birth and Survival, education and Psychological development, Family Environment, Assistance to Children in Difficult circumstances, Best Interest	In some of the components in PRSP policy matrix, such as, Health, Food and Nutrition, Education, Empowerment, Water, sanitation and Environment, Protection against Abuse	<p>Some goals are vague non-specific, as such difficult to realise what is to be attained. The PRSP policy matrix also suggests that there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of the problem</p> <p>Goals are often vague</p> <p>NCP mentions that proper steps ... be taken to improve family</p>



<p>Program objectives: Objectives are specific, concrete statements of what needs to be accomplished to realise a goal</p>	<p>of Children, Legal Rights.</p>	<p>Exploitation and Violence, Recovery and Reintegration, HIV/AIDS, STIs and Substance Abuse, Coordination and Monitoring, there is mention of children.</p>	<p>environment, and for the best interest of the children.</p> <p>Often NCP does not clearly spell out who the beneficiaries are.</p> <p>In PRSP, one of the strategic goals under Food and Nutrition section is: Make fortified food available in markets and fulfill requirement of micronutrients for Children. The document notes the action to be Fortification of Common Food with Vitamin A, Irons Iodine. There is no mention of how this will be made available in order to ensure that children get their required nutrients.</p> <p>Overlapping of Goals, targets and actions</p> <p>At times, goals overlap with targets and actions. For example, under the component of empowerment, the strategic goal is defined as, Increase access, relevance, equity and participation in relevant sectors and institutions for children and the target is also the same statement. And the Action is defined as empowerment of children – which is more likely to be a goal or objective.</p>
Actions			
<p>Programs that focus on measurable, clear, and focused objectives will have more impact than a program with an overly broad goal, however admirable</p>	<p>There are certain steps of implementation stated in the document, which can be considered as actions.</p>	<p>Each component contains a number of strategic goals and there are subsequent key targets, actions against each or some goals.</p>	<p>In both cases, no particular programs are designed on measurable, clear and focused objectives.</p> <p>In NCP, the objective of Family environment contains the steps of implementation, such as, <i>ensure the responsibility of parents, society and state; bringing up children so that they love one another develop respect for human kind</i>; etc. Such statements definitely do not suggest any particular guideline for implementation</p> <p>The PRSP policy matrix also suggests that there is a lack of</p>



			<p>comprehensive understanding of the problem (why fortified foods are unavailable to children), which is also an essential part of policy-making.</p> <p>Often goals, actions and PRSP agendas are overlapping and difficult to distinguish. For example, strategic goal # xii is stated as: <i>Assist street children in accessing their rights and protecting them from all forms of abuse and exploitation</i>, whereas the action is <i>Protection of Street Children from Abuse and Exploitation</i> and the target is <i>Protect street children from all forms abuse & exploitation</i>.</p> <p>Some actions are contradictory. Universal Primary Education is stated as an action under three sub-goals in strategic goal # C.2. Actions under other sub goals identify non-formal and Madrasah education, and increase market relevance of Madrasah education.</p>
Organisation and management			
<p>Planning should address organisational structure, type of personnel to comprise management, and issues related to staff training and expertise.</p> <p>Evaluation strategy to be addressed during the program planning stage and be ongoing.</p>	<p>Three major strategies are suggested: Individual and Collective management, Government Management and Non-government Voluntary organisations. A National Children Council is also proposed.</p>	<p>Particular ministries are suggested as responsible agencies.</p> <p>Some targets are set in quantitative forms.</p>	<p>Exact tasks and operations of the agencies of management bodies along with their coordination are not suggested.</p> <p>There is no guideline for evaluation strategy and feasibility of the policies.</p>



Annex 5

Brief Description of Selected Projects on Reducing Chronic Poverty

- Smallholder Agricultural Improvement Project
- Programmed Initiatives for Monga Eradication
- Community Based Fisheries Management Project II
- Appropriate Resources for improving Street Children Environment (ARISE)
- Capacity Building Poverty of Alleviation and Sustainable livelihood of the Social Disadvantage Women and their Children
- Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project(UGIIP)



Table A.5.1: Description of three Projects targeted to reduce rural chronic poverty

Title of the project	Smallholder Agricultural Improvement Project	Programmed Initiatives for Monga Eradication	Community Based Fisheries Management Project II
Type			Technical Assistance
Executing agency	Department of Agricultural Extension	PKSF	WorldFish Center
Implementing agency	Department of Agricultural Extension	PKSF	i. WorldFish Center ii. Department of Fisheries
Donor/Financier	IFAD, GoB, WFP (grant) and Sonali Bank	PKSF (DFID, Food Security Program of EC)	DFID
Project chief	Mr Md Abdur Razzaque Bhuyian Project Coordinating Director	Dr. Jashim Uddin Deputy Genral Manager, PKSF	Malcolm Dickson Project Leader, WorldFish Center
Duration	July 1999 – June 2007	Aug 2006 – till date	Sep 2001 – Mar 2007
Implementing partners	i. Local Government Engineering Department, ii. Sonali Bank iii. NGOs	Partner Organisations (PMUK, ASOD, POPI, TMSS, RDRS, ESDO)	NGOs (Banchte Shekha Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Associations (BELA), BRAC, CARITAS, Center for Natural Resources Studies (CNRS), Center for Rural and Environmental Development (CRED), Grassroots Health and Rural Organisation for Nutrition Initiative (GHARANI), FemCom Bangladesh, PROSHIKA,



			Shikkha Shastha Unnayan Karzakram (SHISUK), Society Development Committee (SDC)
Location	All thanas of Mymensingh, Jamalpur and Sherpur	Launched in Lalmonirhat and will be replicated in greater Rangpur, Kishoreganj, Netrokona and Jamalpur	Brahmanbaria, Moulovibazar, Sunamganj Kishoreganj, Narsingdi Netrokona, Tangail Magura, Narail
Goal	To improve food security and living standards while improving the economic infrastructure serving targeted rural households.	To eradicate Monga by creating wage employment and self- employment opportunities for the Monga-affected families throughout the year.	To sustainably improve the livelihoods of poor people dependant on aquatic resources through the adoption of improved inland fisheries management policies resulting in more sustainable, equitable and participatory management of these resources.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. contracting suitable NGOs to form cohesive beneficiary groups and providing them with training and support; ii. strengthening extension services and reorienting their approaches to ensure beneficiary participation in the planning and implementation of activities; iii. increasing employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. providing them with necessary and timely credit support throughout the year to increase income ii. emergency / consumption credit iii. providing remittances facility for the migrating male members to send 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to test management systems, ii. to demonstrate conclusively whether community based approaches actually do result in more sustainable fisheries and if they can enhance poor people's livelihoods. iii. to ensure that the positive lessons learnt from application of community managed approaches are taken up by policy makers to effect a change in the way fisheries are managed in Bangladesh.



	<p>opportunities for the landless, functionally landless and women through provision of collateral-free credit for IGAs;</p> <p>iv. promoting a number of activities to benefit minority groups such as the Adivasi and <i>Charlanders</i>; and</p> <p>v. improving basic infrastructure, including access roads and marketing and training facilities.</p>	<p>money to family easily and quickly</p> <p>iv. creating wage employment opportunities during Monga period</p> <p>v. building and enhancing their coping skills and resources for the future</p>	
Target groups	<p>i. small farmers who own 0.6-1.0 ha.</p> <p>ii. marginal farmers who own 0.2-0.6 ha.</p> <p>iii. landless and functionally landless who own up to 0.2 ha</p>	<p>i. women and children-headed households, especially widows and divorcees who have no income-earning member</p> <p>ii. families with limited assets</p> <p>iii. elderly persons and disabled</p> <p>iv. beggars</p> <p>v. women with new born babies and children suffering from</p>	Poor fishing households around 115 specific waterbodies



		malnutrition vi. day labourers vii. those prone to frequent migration to other areas for jobs	
Components	i. agricultural development; ii. rural community support; iii. rural finance and savings; iv. support to Adivasi population (infrastructure development, special skill development training) and <i>Charland</i> areas (agriculture technology training, protect houses from floods); v. rural community infrastructure; and vi. project management.	i. suitable microcredit services including consumer loans ii. establishment of labour intensive small industries iii. support services for Monga affected families including income generating activities iv. emergency loa v. investment in infrastructure building	Three broad components i. Fishery management (which includes fish sanctuaries and closed seasons, habitat restoration and reintroduction of endangered fish species) ii. Waterbody management (which includes capacity building of Community Based Organisations and additional livelihoods where microcredit is a component and legal support and studies) iii. Others (which includes research activities and media activities)
Coverage	1377000 households	Providing short term employment to 30,000 households during 2006 slack season in Nilphamari	23,000 poor fishing households



Table A.5.2: Description of three projects targeted to reduce urban poverty

Items	Appropriate Resources for improving Street Children Environment (ARISE)	Capacity Building Poverty of Alleviation and Sustainable livelihood of the Social Disadvantage Women and their Children	Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project(UGIIP)
Type	Technical Assistance Project	Technical Assistance Project	
Executive Agency	Ministry of Social Welfare	Ministry of Social Welfare	Ministry of LGRD &C
Implementing Agency	Department of Social Services	Department of Social Services	LGED and Municipalities (pourashavas)
Donor/Financer	UNDP(grant) and GoB	UNDP(grant) and GoB	ADB and GoB
Project Chief	National Project Coordinator (A Deputy Secretary of the Ministry)	National Project Coordinator (A Deputy Secretary of the Ministry)	Project Director (executive Engineer)
Task Master (Donor's side)	Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP(Dr.Nazmus Sahar Sadik)	Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP(Dr.Nazmus Sahar Sadik)	
Duration	1999 (implementation from 2000) First phase ends on June 2005	1999 (implementation from 2000)	3 phases. (July 2003-June 2009) First Phase ends on June 2006 Second phase runs from July 2006 to June 2008



Implementation Partners	9 NGOs	7 NGOs(including Consortium of PIACT and INCIDIN)	Municipalities and NGOs
Location	6 divisional cities (Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet)	Brothel based sites in Daulatdia, Mymensingh, Jessore and 4 zones in Dhaka	30 Pourashavas
Goal	<p>To promote and protect the rights of the street children</p> <p>To support the development programs targeted to street children by strengthening their survival skills and providing opportunities for a productive future through government, NGO and community-based interventions.</p>	<p>To build capacity and empower the target group for alternative livelihood and to create the favourable environment to ensure their rights and social dignity.</p>	<p>To develop good urban governance and human resources in mid-level towns or municipalities</p>
Action	<p>Access to vocational training, health services, counseling services, awareness through non-formal educational and livelihood opportunities for 50,000 children.</p> <p>Exploratory and participatory research for better approaches towards improved services for street children.</p> <p>Formulate appropriate National Policy and advocacy strategies to</p>	<p>To salvage the young girls from the brothels/ prostitutions and rehabilitate them socially</p> <p>To establish the rights and freedom of the SDW and their children like other citizens of the state</p> <p>To establish basic human rights for the SDW and their children</p>	<p>Enhance accountability in municipal management and strengthen their capabilities in the provision of municipal services</p> <p>Develop and expand physical infrastructure and urban services to increase economic opportunities, reduce vulnerability to environmental degradation poverty and natural hazards</p> <p>Benefit the entire urban community in</p>



	work for the benefit of street children. Equip Government and Non Government agencies to mobilise resources.		general to focus on upgrading the conditions of the poor living in slum areas and promote active participation of women citizens in municipal management and services as both beneficiaries and agents
Beneficiaries	Street children are those children who are "below the age of 18, spend their days and nights on the street or some of their day time on the street for earning".	Socially Disadvantaged Women (SDW), mainly sex workers and their children.	Municipalities and beneficiaries in slum areas.
Activities/components	Drop-in center as shelters, Non-formal education, Vocational and life-skill training, Psychological counseling Health awareness counselling, Preventive and curative healthcare services, Rescue and legal aid, Recreational/cultural activities, Advocacy and awareness on CRC related issues, and Community mobilisation	Crèche and basic education Pre-formal schooling, Informal education, Advocacy for admission in formal schools, Boarding support, Vocational training, Provide health services, Employment	Physical Infrastructure (roads, bridges/culverts, storm water, drainage, municipal facilities, sanitation solid waste management, slum upgrading after supply Urban governance Improvement (micro-credits, poverty alleviation activities, institutional reform/UGIAP implementation, capacity building (training) Implementation assistance (MDS consultants, GPD consultants, Facilitators, NGOS)
Coverage	50,000(education, health and DIC services)	3920(3115 SDWs and 805 children)	30 pourashavas



Annex 6

Case Study: Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE)

Background: Urban Poverty

In many developing countries, cities have been growing faster than that was imagined. In Bangladesh, only about a quarter of the population is living in urban areas. But the magnitude of urban population (40 million) is larger than the national Population of many countries in the world. Despite the low level of urbanisation, the pace of urbanisation has been very high in Bangladesh. The urban population is increasing at an annual rate of between six to seven per cent.

According to the 2001 Census, Bangladesh has 20 urban areas with population over 100,000. Within these lac-plus populated urban centers, the four largest cities, namely Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna, have been given official status of metropolitan cities. These four Statistical Metropolitan Areas (SMAs) accommodate more than 50 per cent of the country's total urban population, while Dhaka city alone contains more than 30 per cent of the urban population.

In Bangladesh, as in many other developing countries, large cities are overcrowded with dense slums, squatter settlements and pavement dwellers whose access to the most basic services is negligible and they frequently fall victims to epidemics and disease. Despite this, the pull of the rural poor to growing urban areas is occurring in Bangladesh. Migrants come for jobs and they move where they can be near to those jobs, despite unbearable living conditions. Most of the cities and towns in Bangladesh are over crowded, unclean, dirty and hazardous for healthy living.

The urban poor, mostly engaged in informal activities, live in the slum areas. In Dhaka city, about a quarter of the population are slum dwellers. They are in a vicious circle of too little or inadequate food, poor nutrition, polluted water and air, lack of education, poor sanitation and overall low levels of living – a violent environment breeding suspicion and violence. In reality, a slum is a swamp of mud, excrement, garbage, mosquitoes and disease; and these have been growing in the big cities during the last two decades. The conditions of slum children are worse than those of adults.

In a country where appalling poverty and misery prevail, children are among the hardest hit. They live with extreme economic hardship, suffering and exploitation. Furthermore, Bangladesh is prone to recurrent disasters such as floods, cyclones, famines and epidemics, all of which aggravate the sufferings and vulnerabilities of children. In such situations, children sometimes have to make their own decisions for self-survival. All of these conditions leave children open to various types of exploitation. They may be compelled to work for their own survival but also for their families' survival. Children without education may work in conditions that are hazardous and detrimental to their health and upbringing.



While there are conflicting estimates on the extent of child labor in Bangladesh – the HIES analysis shows that there are less than two million child workers in Bangladesh while the analysis of the Labor Force Survey (LFS) shows that the number is closer to five million – child labor is a pressing issue. A significant proportion of child laborers do not attend school. In addition, the HIES shows that about 20 percent of children are doing ‘nothing’ – neither at school or working – and that most of these children come from poorer households. Many of these individuals may be ‘street children’ who do not have access to basic education and health care services.

With the increase of landlessness in rural areas and consequent large-scale rural-urban migration, the number of ‘floating’ people in urban areas of Bangladesh is on the increase. In particular, the prevalence of destitute children (*‘Tokai’*, as they are popularly called) is increasing rapidly. They are either homeless, having no fixed address, or are residing in streets, slums and squatter settlements.

The scale, magnitude and dimensions of the problem are increasingly being felt over the last few years. That is why, Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children’s Environment (ARISE) project has been undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh to address the problems faced by street children and to devise ways and means of rehabilitating the street children with a view to improving their socio-economic condition.

The following section would deal with the concerned policies and implementation and non –implementation for ARISE project.

Selection of Case: The ARISE Project

The last few decades have witnessed rapid urbanisation in Bangladesh, the current rate of urbanisation being around 7 per cent per annum. The rural urban migration has contributed to 65 per cent of the urban growth while the remaining 35 per cent has been contributed by natural growth. Having ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1990, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to meet the needs of all children, including street children.

A base line survey, conducted in 2001 by the ARISE project, revealed that there are 445, 226 street children in six divisional cities of Bangladesh. Of them, 75.2% children (334,807) are in Dhaka, 9.9% children (44,102) in Chittagong, 2.4% children (10,814) in Rajshahi, 8.5% children (38,070) in Khulna, 2.6% children (11,400) in Barisal and 1.4% children (6,033) in Sylhet city. A majority of those children are in the streets due to their homelessness and the rest work on the streets to support their families. They are unable to attend schools and are considered to live in especially difficult circumstances.

Once on the street, children have to face a daily routine of exploitation and violence. Older children as well as adults, including those in positions of public authority, may abuse them. They are also exposed to a world of crime with few viable alternatives. Rather than receiving protection and security by concerned authority, a life of petty theft and substance abuse leads to beatings, arrest and imprisonment, the



harassment by adult offenders in harsh conditions along with no recourse to a compassionate juvenile justice system. Amongst all these children, adolescent girls are most exposed to the dangers of sexual abuse and prostitution on the street, for which they are unjustly punished.

Many factors are related to this increase, particularly the migration of poor and starving populations to the cities to form gross peri-urban slums ends in the discovery of harsh reality that work, housing, sanitation and even food have to be gained by stealing, begging or any other available means, resulting in the abandonment of children to the streets. Some other children are driven to the streets due to familial violence, death of parent/s, separation and/or remarriage of parent/s, or even the sheer desire for adventure with a gang of other urchins. Death, disease, injury, prostitution, petty crime, stealing, mugging, and other violence – even sudden death from police interference – is the price to be paid by these children.

As such, the street children can be identified as a particular group of urban poor with specific features of vulnerability and mobility. With this background of general deprivation, the Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE) Project has been formulated for implementation by the DSS (sponsored by the UNDP), under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh. The major objective of the project is to promote and protect the rights of the street children and to support the development programs targeted to street children by strengthening their survival skills and providing opportunities for a productive future through government, NGO and community-based interventions.

Methodology

This study involved three separate components: (1) review of project documents and relevant policy papers, (2) interviews with key GoB Officials, (3) FGD with NGO staff, and (4) Consultations with children. To explore whether any difference lies between Dhaka and other urban areas that significantly influence poverty we chose to select two fields for study: Dhaka and Khulna metropolitan cities.

Similar Activities

Child Welfare and Child development program by DSS addressed the following activities: Sarkari Shishu Sadan(73 orphanages), Baby Homes (3 institutes), destitute Children rehabilitation centers(1), vocational training center for orphan and destitute children, welfare and rehabilitation for children with disability, Correctional service for youth offenders (2 units)

Another project of MSW with the assistance of UNICEF, named Strengthening of Urban Community Development programme for Welfare and Rehabilitation of Children Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC) continued from 1992 to 1997.



Policy concern⁴⁹

The street children, who are an extreme case of urban poverty, both involve urban poverty and childhood concerns.

From the state side, two major policies targeting or inclusive of street children can be identified; These are National Child Policy 1994 and the National Social Welfare Policy.

A number of ministries and departments share responsibility for meeting children's rights and needs. This includes Bangladesh Shishu Academy, under the broad direction of MWCA. However, no single institution is accountable for children's affairs. Such diffused responsibility means that it is difficult to develop coherent national strategies, such as those required to meet obligations under the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, 1989.

According to the objective 2.5, National Social Welfare Policy, the MoSW aims to initiate programmes for the care, education, training, welfare, development and interest of the children in difficult circumstances including distressed, orphan and street children. Section 4 of this policy paper describes the Programmes on Child Welfare and article 4.1.3 describes education, training and rehabilitation for street and homeless children as the strategy. On the other hand, objectives of the National Child policy are more generic and nonspecific to street children. Street children are categorised along with the other children in difficult circumstances. In this policy paper, the stated implementation plan for the Children in difficult circumstances are also very misleading and that often coincide with objectives. The other policy guidelines that are mentioned in the Pro.doc can be categorised into two: state legislations (e.g. The Bangladesh Children Act 1974) and international conventions (e.g. UNCRC or ILO convention and so on). The implementation of these guidelines may be found in other activities and projects. UNDP as the donor justified the project in terms of the objectives of 'Sustainable Human Development (SHD) and the objectives of 'Community Empowerment Programme(CEP)', which are articulated in the Country Cooperation Framework.

Budget Allocation

Project Financing

Donor	UNDP Bangladesh	Tk. 1905.76 lac (Grant)
Local cost source the office structure	GoB	Tk. 61.79 lac (ADP budget) in

⁴⁹ Sources are, National Child Policy, National Social Welfare Policy Project Document ARISE



Table A.6.1: Proposed and implemented budgetary allocation of 6 Divisions (April 200-June 2005) (Figures are in Taka)

Activities	Total Fund Allocation	Dhaka 4 zones	Chittagon g	Rajshah i	Khulna	Barisal	Sylhet
Developm ent of NGO Best practices	45,912,488	17,905,870	7,805,123	5,509,499	7,805,123	3,672,999	3,213,874
Market Survey	716,766	279,500	121,833	86,000	121,833	57,333	50,167
Vocationa l Training	64,005,689	24,962,219	10,880,967	7,680,683	10,880,967	5,120,455	4,480,398
All Activities	110,635,043	43,147,628	18,807,940	13,276,194	18,807,940	8,850,795	7,744,446
% share	100	39	17	12	17	8	7

Intervention and Activities

i. Implementation Arrangements

A TA team with Senior Deputy Project Coordinator and Six divisional coordinators and other support staffs. A group of consultants can provide necessary support. A total of nine NGOs are engaged under this project to deliver services to street children in six divisional cities in the country. The NGOs in Dhaka are Aparajeyo Bangladesh, Padakhep, PSTC, SPK, JOGAJOG in Chittagong, ACLAB in Khulna, ASD in Rajshahi, VOSD in Barisal VARD in Sylhet.

ii. Selection of NGOs

Ideally, the NGO were selected through scrutinising competitive technical and financial proposals. Lowest financial bidder and highest technical bidder were considered to be acceptable to be offered.

iii. Target

Estimated target was to provide services to a total number of 50,000 street children with equal balance of gender.

Activities

The major services relating to Street Children offered by the partner NGOs are of five types: (i) education, awareness and training, (ii) shelter; (iii) psychological counseling; (iv) health, hygiene and nutrition; and (v) rescue and legal aid. The existing services in ranking order as mentioned by the GO/NGO staff at different



levels are: non-formal education, recreational/cultural activities, counseling and health awareness, vocational and life-skill training, preventive and curative healthcare services, advocacy and awareness on CRC related issues, role and responsibility of government as well as civil society, community mobilisation, creation of child-friendly shelter home, rescue and legal support in addition to employment creation.

Coordination with Agencies

A Steering Committee (PIC) and a Project implementation Committee (PIC) to review the progress of works and implementation of activities. Both committees have members from other agencies.

1. Problems with policy

- Policies are not clearly stated guiding principle for action. Interestingly, though ARISE is a project of Department of Social Services, of Ministry of Social Welfare, the Social Welfare Policy is never addressed in the Pro.doc. Even the goals and objectives of the ARISE project are properly synchronised with the objectives and strategies of the Social Welfare policy. Often the officials of DSS pronounce: the policy of MoSW is to transform Bangladesh to a Welfare State.
- It was revealed from the discussion that when plans are initiated from within the Department itself, it is not the policies, is a major concern, rather the evaluation of and recommendations from previous projects or activities. NPD of ARISE said that, when donors initiate any plan, they take policies into their consideration, along with the deliberation of fitting the plans within their country framework. DD of Planning and Dev notes that welfare of poor and gender equality are their major concerns.
- The NGO selection criterion was wrong and fraudulent. The technically first bidder cannot provide lowest financial proposal without curtailing the quality and quantity of activities. Even it was mentioned by many that unfair means were adopted for NGO selection and budget allocation. There was only one NGO working in Khulna region. Around 8.5% of the total street children population was living in Khulna, while the PNGO was allocated with 17% of the budget, Similarly Chittagong having 9.9% of the street children were allocated with 17% of the budget. Some of the Project staffs say that the TA and PIC were bribed for NGO selection.
- The Children and NGOs were never consulted in the planning process, though there was such recommendation in the mid-term evaluation report. Only if this is done during this preliminary stage will the best policy options be considered, consensus developed and appropriate policy instruments chosen.
- The cost to the budget need not be higher than that of existing schemes, although, in many settings, current spending on social protection may well be



too low. Budgetary outlays might be highly variable over time, as it happened in Bangladesh through huge price hike. Despite the fact that there was provision of revision of budget (page 9, Pro.doc), only once the salary of the staff was revised. There might be unforeseeable crises for which extra external help will be needed. The DICs were not provided with sufficient fund, though the number of children and price of items increased gradually.

- The PIC and SIC have inter-departmental representatives but they do not have any partnership or collaboration in implementation. This is completely an isolated project without having any connection with other GOs and LGs. Nowhere in the project document there is any direction to make liaison with other GOs, administrative units and local government. Such coordination is necessary to successfully implement a complex policy especially one that requires the cooperation of many people. It may also result in wastage of scarce resources, inhibit change, create confusion, lead to policies working at cross-purposes and, at the end, result in important functions being overlooked.
- There was no follow-up provision for the stakeholders which is very important to visualise the long-term effect of any project.
- Some objectives are vaguely defined: Like reintegration with family or mainstreaming, how and what to do for realising such objectives are not clearly defined. As such, some NGOs tried to implement these activities seriously, whereas other never bothered to do so. Nevertheless, a comprehensive program to include the Family and community is essential. Such activities are mentioned National Child Policy, though not addressed by ARISE.
- The real challenge is to ensure that an effective safety net is a permanent institution, being a regular program rather than being a project. The street children are mobile and their life is completely different from many other poor people. In a very young age they start earning money, so it is very difficult to motivate them with a long term vision. Economic and Social characteristics of the children must be considered in the planning process.
- One of the major weaknesses of the project is that it failed to provide the beneficiaries and the partners a long-term vision, strong commitments and capacity developments. Further the project was extended on year-to-year that leads uncertainty and does not help in development of strong commitment of the project staff and NGOs as well.
- For example, where there is the need to employ staff for the purpose of implementation, or acquire equipment for similar action, adequate funding becomes very crucial. Lack of funds will only result in the inability of the policy implementers to function, as they should. Even where there is an ongoing project, if money fails to come up, such a project may become interrupted.



For first three years funding was smooth, while last two three years fund disbursement was interrupted and came on piecemeal.(like three months, then another six months, then three months.). Some NGOs, who do not have self-sustaining capacity, may not continue this program for this period. Many staff, who have already become demoralised, may leave, which would affect the project activities eventually

ii. Arrangements

- The bureaucratic structure, can generate the problems of implementation especially when dealing with such a long-term issue. Often the project directors were appointed without taking into consideration whether they have necessary expertise or fascination for the particular project. Often the Deputy Secretary of the Ministry is appointed for short-term (2 years), which is too short to be involved with the project. The PD who first initiated the program left the project just after the procurement of NGOs. Then the bureaucrats, who came as Project Director who normally used to be a Deputy Secretary might not have the expertise and interest in such projects. For this reason, ownership of the project is often missing by the top personnel.
- On the other hand, bribery and corruption are also found in some of the NGOs in a situation where huge amounts are earmarked for a project but the Officers (particularly ED) in charge of implementation steal such amounts or a substantial part of the amounts. The corrupt practices of the implementers actually negated the intention of the project.

iii. Targeting

- The number of children targeted was quite disproportionate according to the number of street children in Bangladesh. It was mentioned in the Pro-doc that 50,000 children will receive services from the project , but it was not clearly defined that what sort of services are targeted for how many children. A child may receive services from multiple components of the project and that may increase the total number of children received services, though the child remain the same individual. Programs that focus on measurable, clear, and focused objectives will have more impact than a program with an overly broad goal as it was found in ARISE.

iv. Activities

- Some of the activities like Legal aid, Advocacy, Market Survey are poorly or never addressed by many NGOs.
- NPD mentioned that the project itself did not have any clear-cut direction of implementation methodology. Inadequate information leads to a misunderstanding on the part of the implementers who may be confused as to what exactly are required of them. In effect, implementation instructions that are not transmitted, that are distorted in transmission, that are vague, or that



are inconsistent caused serious obstacles to policy implementation. As a result, often one can feel satisfaction only reaching the targets in number, but without having proper understanding whether it really mattered for the welfare of the children. For example, it was mentioned in the ProDoc to provide health services, but the nature and extent of services are not clearly defined. As a result, most of the drop-in-centers, instead of making liaison with health centers, provided health services by preliminary awareness building and medication of common diseases like diarrhea and fever. Similarly education activities do not clarify what the children are to do with this education in the long run

- Self-sustaining activities are not encouraged in the project design: the DSS and the partners are not sure about what to do for the sustaining process after the withdrawal of funds from donor.
- Another weak aspect of the project is its failure to enable the partners a long-term vision, strong commitments and capacity developments. Further the project was extended on year-to-year that leads uncertainty and does not help in development of strong commitment of the project staff and NGOs as well.
- Resources include both the human and material such as adequate number of staff who are well equipped to carry out the implementation, relevant and adequate information on implementation process, the authority to ensure that policies are carried out as they are intended, and facilities such as land, equipment, buildings, etc. as may be deemed necessary for the successful implementation of the policy. Often it was found that due to the disrupted flow of fund such maintenance were interrupted. Besides these, other resources particularly equipment facilities are not sufficient. Computer, Internet and other technological supports are inadequate to execute, monitor and record the activities.

Finally, due to corruption and NGO policy, often the frontline workers and project personnel were deprived of their proper incentives that may include paying less salary than they were promised, depriving other facilities and so on.



Annex 7

Case Study: Capacity Building, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development of the Socially Disadvantaged Women and their Children

Introduction

At present, 14 brothels are in operation throughout the country having 15,000 commercial sex workers and their children, the number of floating are much higher. . There is an acute lack of accurate statistics on sex work. The term sex work may be used to cover a broad range of transactions and sex workers are not a homogenous group. Despite a number of males' involvement, women and girls remain the largest group involved in sex work.

Those who engage in sex work are generally viewed by society in a discriminatory way. For many, it may be the only employment or survival option. While some may freely choose sex work as their occupation, many more young girls, young boys and women are coerced through violence, trafficking, debt-bondage or the influence of more powerful adults. Sex work may be formal or informal. In some instances, sex work is only a temporary informal activity. Commercial sex work may be conducted in formally organised settings from sites such as brothels, nightclubs, and massage parlours; or more informally by commercial sex worker (CSW)s who are street-based or self-employed. The context in which the transactions occur have implication for accessing those at risk and for information or behavioural change programmes.

In different studies, poverty appears to be the major factor that has contributed to adoption of this profession by the sex workers. But their sufferings take new shape after entering the profession. Sex workers are frequently regarded as easy targets for harassment and violence by mastanas(social miscreants), police, social elites, political, sardarnis and others. The situation of street based sex workers is even worse- they do not have specific arrangements for sleeping, cleaning or toilet. Sometimes who have small children face these problems more acutely because there is no place to leave their children while servicing their customers, harassment and violence by police and others is also their regular experience.

Major characteristics of CSW

Therefore, in view of the special features of the CSWs, they could be considered as chronic urban poor for following reasons:

- Commercial sex work is often centred around urban areas including sea and river ports, bus terminals industrial centers, large market places, tourist spots and business centers.



- The major reason for entering the profession is acute poverty. Trafficking, particularly of women and girl children, is another reason and is primarily a consequence of poverty
- By and large, sex work is highly stigmatised and sex workers and their children are often subjected to blame, labelling, disapproval and discriminatory treatment.
- The street based CSWs are deprived of basic human needs. Both the brothel-based and street based CSWs are victims of violence, abuse and exploitation.
- Sex work is a short-term way of livelihood. Most of the sex workers have to leave the profession after 35 years of their age. Most of them (except those who become Sardarnis) have to leave a miserable life when their income flow stops.
- Rarely they are addressed as urban poor in policies and programmes.

Description of Project

As an implementing agency of the Ministry of Social Welfare, DSS provides social protection to a wide spectrum of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The department operates training and rehabilitation centres for socially disadvantaged women (female sex workers). The project is in operation among the CSWs in the brothels of Mymensinghm, Daulatdia, Jessore and four zones of Dhaka. This is a first initiative of technical assistance by GoB to provide comprehensive package support to Socially Disadvantaged Women (SDW), i.e the sex workers and their children. It has been launched by the Department of Social Services (DSS) of the Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW) in collaboration with UNDP and 5 selected partner NGOs: ACLAB, PIACT, DORP. Nari Maitree., Nari Unnayan Shakti,.

Policy Concerns

i. Broader policy framework

There are ample provisions to ensure equal rights to women in the Constitution of Bangladesh. The country is signatory to several important international conventions such as the CEDAW(Convention for Eliminating Discrimination Against Women) and the CRC(Convention on Rights of Children).The Draft five year plan in its chapter on Women and development and Child Development refers to a measure to reach socially and economically disadvantaged women including 'women engaged in sex work'. Also on the legal front in Bangladesh there are many existing laws and legal provisions such as Women and Suppression Act (special Provision 1955), the Prevention and Repression of Women, Children Act Ordinance 2001.

Recently many organisations (GOs and NGOs) have a number of programmes on HIV/AIDS and STI prevention targeting the CSW



These broader policy frameworks are in realisation to some extent through different programmes. The Capacity Building project was designed in the line of these policy concerns and with the initiative to fulfill the goals of Millenium Development Goals no 1, 2 and 8.

ii. Policy of the Project

Major concern of the project is to provide services to build capacity and empower the target group for alternative livelihoods, and at the same time create an enabling environment to ensure their socio-economic rights.

iii. Ambiguities

- In Bangladesh, sex work is either illegal or has an ambiguous legal status (e.g. prostitution is not illegal, but procurement of sex workers and soliciting in public is illegal). They are considered immoral and deserving of punishment. Sex workers in the brothels are registered, while floating sex workers are illegal, and therefore, in the name of rehabilitation often they are either harassed or sent to Bhabaghure Centre.
- The policies adopted by many organisations also reflect similar ambiguity. Having a closer look at the policies and programmes, two major approaches can be identified: first is the *protective* labour market approach which takes sex work as inevitable reality and fight to establish their enabling environment (like decreasing harassment of the CSW or increasing awareness for condom use); second is the *preventive* human right approach that attempts initiatives for rehabilitation of the CSWs. Often the same organisation adopt both approaches haphazardly without having the proper understanding of the contrasting nature of the approaches. The other third approach, which is more feminist in nature, considering sex work as extreme form of women's subordination and salvation from patriarchal repression is not predominant among the feminist activists.
- Most of the activities are designed to address the sex work, while other policy reforms are required to restrict sex work. Specific measures should be initiated to identify the root causes and making pro-active policies in combating these problems in an organised and coordinated manner. The other policy measures that should be addressed in large scale are: establishment of inheritance law and property rights, prohibition of violence and repression against women basic legal rights including social and political rights and birth registrations.
- Rescuing and sheltering of trafficked girls may restrict entrance to profession, which require greater network of Ministry of Home, Law enforcing agencies and a number human rights organisations.
- Often the children of CSWs are deprived of education and access to other rights for lacking father's name. Allowing birth registration in mother's name



could make a change in their access to services. State must take a pioneer role for legitimacy of their children.

- However till now the national plans and policies have not been adequately translated into concrete programmes to deal with the target group.
- Since they are not treated as 'poor' in strict sense of the term, they are deprived of other social protection like Old Age Allowances, housing and so on. Such programmes never target the CSWs.

Problems in Implementation

DSS has been the major implementing and executing agency of the project with financial assistance from UNDP. GoB appointed National Project Director (NPD) and a project management team has been providing support in overall implementation, planning, operation and monitoring. Six NGOs in each site are the providers of services to the beneficiaries, whereas a Project Implementation Committee is also active at each project site. At the national level the National Steering Committee is in charge of reviewing the overall planning, implementation, monitoring and coordination. At both levels, representatives of other implementing agencies are involved.

i. Coordination within the projects and organisations

It was revealed in the study that the partner NGOs have similar type of programmes funded by other donors. Sometimes the programmes are targeted to the same beneficiaries with cross-cutting sectors, while same programmes are implemented among different target groups as well. Even the organisations do not have any clarified policy on how to coordinate and maintain different projects and beneficiaries. When similar projects are funded by different donors, it appears that projects are targeting the same beneficiaries at the same location. For example, building awareness on human rights and HIV/AIDS is the part of two projects by PIACT in Daulatdia : one is funded by DSS-UNDP and another by Manusher Janno. Unofficially activities are overlapped and collaborated, officially certain occasions like World AIDS Day are observed jointly with the projects and other organisations. There is no coordination among the donors at project level. Reports are made accordingly to the donors. Though the officials of PIACT argue that their goal is to build awareness among the SDW, it appears that goals and strategies are often donor driven.

The study exposes that a number of NGOs are working in Daulatdia having similar project components. Such overlapping of the activities re-target and duplicate the beneficiaries in certain aspects (like credit programmes) while many others remain mis-targeted. Since no particular policy and implementation strategy is centrally adopted, activities, location and beneficiaries are crosscut.

Some children of PIACT were admitted to formal school, but they could not continue due to social attitude of the teachers and fellow class mates. Then the project tried to



make liaison with a school maintained by Save the Children Sweden Denmark and where the children were successfully admitted and continued. Such collaboration should be centrally organised and implemented accordingly.

ii. Donors approach

Donors often shift programmes and stakeholders that also generate ambiguity and interrupt the works for short-term duration and shifting stakeholders. The HIV-AIDS programme that was initially implemented by PIACT from 2002-03 is now being implemented PSTC at Daulatdia, though the beneficiaries remained the same.

iii. Problems of targeting

Since there is an acute lack of data, the policies are not properly supported by necessary guidelines and indicators that are essential for identification, analysis and act upon specific inequalities and success achieved. For instance, since the number CSWs and their problems are not properly known, there always remains gaps to understand exactly how far has been covered by project.

The project targets mainly young children (under 5) for various components and most of the components are designed for adolescent girls of the CSWs. A number of male children remain out of the target who consequently become social troublemakers.

iv. Problems of misunderstanding the nature of the profession

Often similar model of poverty alleviation are adopted for the poor who are different to a large extent. The project encourages training on tailoring, embroidery and so on to build capacity for alternative livelihoods, which are often implemented to address the distressed women in rural areas. Such policies of the project often fail to realise the nature of this particular profession. A young brothel based CSW may earn at least 200-300 taka per day and maintain living accordingly, whereas she may earn hardly 2000 taka per month from tailoring. Unsurprisingly, many of them may not feel encouraged to join the training. Sometimes the mother of a CSW may not want her daughter to receive such trainings for insecurity of income. Some CSWs said, 'there is no assurance that whether society would accept me as a tailor and come to me with orders. But if I can earn money at this age, that may provide my security at old age.'

v. Long-term approach for understanding impact

The fact that came to the fore in the backdrop of these events was that considering the religious and cultural context of the country, the question of legitimising sex work and rehabilitation of sex workers would always remain questionable. The tasks of community sensitisation, rehabilitation and mainstreaming are to be realised in long-term strategies. For example, when a CSW is said to be rehabilitated and her child is admitted to a formal school that does not necessarily indicate that they are actually rehabilitated. Many CSWs in Daulatdia are found who got married and went to in-laws house which may appear as rehabilitation at first instance, but after few months or years they came back due to social rejection.



Similarly the legal aid is actually the referral services that may not create expected support for the beneficiary.

The frontline staffs of PIACT suggested that without having a long-term programme strategy, targets and achievements can never be analyzed by projects.

vi. Budget

Delay in the start-up date of this project was the reason for not spending the allocated budget of the project. TAPP was revised twice and consequently delayed in delivery of the allocated amount of the budget to NGOs was delayed. NGOs were given the grant money on the exchange rate decided at the inception of the project that also delayed the delivery rate. Budget provision was made for innovative vocational training, since the project was unable to find a competent organisation to implement this component; the grant money was spent. Irregular flow and disbursement on piecemeal basis of budget interrupted the activities severely.

vii. Corruption and harassment

Corruption of officials in different tiers disrupts the proper implementation of components. Such corruption ranges from selection of partner NGOs, proper disbursement of fund, targeting, issuing fake notary and age certificates, to receiving bribes. At the same time, both in the brothel and in the street, CSWs are regular victims of threat, physical abuse and mugging by police, miscreants, pimps, and sardarnis.



Annex 8

Problems in Implementations: Contrasts between Study Sites

Table A.8.1: Social Safety-Nets: Implementation of Old Age Allowance Program (Implementing Agency: Department of Social Services)

Components	Area		Remarks
	Sandwip (remote)	Rangpur	
Beneficiary Selection	<p>Mis-targeting of real beneficiaries because manpower shortage does not permit proper survey and verification.</p> <p>Sometimes non-poor and non-old age people are also selected as beneficiaries.</p> <p>UP Chairman often cannot take proper initiatives because members may contradict them.</p>	<p>Nepotism by UP Members in selection process of beneficiaries.</p> <p>Survey and verification of beneficiaries are present</p>	<p>Mis-targeting, nepotism, lack of survey and verification may interrupt the entire goal of such programmes.</p>
General trends of Disbursement	<p>From 1998-99 to 2005-2006 a total amount of 29 lac taka has not been disbursed for certain reasons:</p> <p>Since Sandwip is such an area that is vulnerable to natural disaster and river-erosion; people migrate quite frequently and transportation cost is higher</p>	<p>Total amount of allowances are disbursed.</p>	<p>Natural and other factors may often obstruct proper implementation</p>
Allowance distribution process	<p>Beneficiaries have to receive allowances from the bank in Upazila sadar</p>	<p>Allowances are disbursed through sub-centers</p>	<p>Disbursement of money through a decentralised financial system can ensure better implementation</p>



	The beneficiaries do not get allowances at once, they have to come at least twice: once for inquiry and then for receiving allowances	Beneficiaries do not face hassles to receive allowances	Officials (of both banks and government agencies) are less reluctant to provide prompt services in remote areas
	The concerned bank neither informs the beneficiaries nor the concerned authority (including Upazila officers or Union Parishad) on whether money has been received by them.	Beneficiaries are informed by appointed <i>Chowkidar</i> (Village Police) Concerned officials are also informed by Bank	same as above
	Irregular flow of allowances Often the transaction book reach irregularly	Flow of money and other papers is regular	
	Bank officials often deprive the beneficiaries by fake signs. Members charge the beneficiaries for distribution	Sometimes bank official deprive the beneficiaries by fake signs.	
	Authorised persons cannot receive on behalf of the beneficiary.	Authorised persons can receive money on behalf of the beneficiary. Reportedly, there are instances of extortions by an intermediary group assisting with bank withdrawal	Considering the specific nature of the beneficiaries and their living condition regularity and flexibility of allowance distribution are required to some extent
Office	The post of officer has been remaining vacant for long.	Proper chain of program execution is	



Management	Tasks are being implemented by frontline workers. As such, there is persistent lack of monitoring and supervision.	present	
	Bank officers themselves do not distribute the allowances, rather the fourth class employees distribute allowances, who are often ill-mannered to the beneficiaries.	Bank officers themselves distribute the allowances	
Lack of coordination	Since people migrate frequently, they come to the bank at their convenient time. Such irregular movement interrupts the bank activities	People are settled and they come to the bank at due date	



Table A.8.2: Targeted Empowerment of Poor Community: Community Based Fisheries Management (CBFM) (Implementing agency: Department of Fisheries / WorldFish Center / NGOs)

Components	Partner NGOs		Remarks
	BRAC	CARITAS	
Following pro-doc policies	BRAC improvised and deviated from the project document, particularly in case of monitoring and decision-making	CARITAS followed the project rules accurately	If the implementing organisation executes many other activities, often policy and strategic goal of particular project are mesmerised with organisational goal that certainly obstructs realisation of project objectives
	More attention was given to Credit Programme and other organisational activities than to inland water body management.	Major objective was to enhance community based management of water-bodies.	
Management and Execution	Fieldworkers are not properly done and often lack adequate experience.	Fieldworkers are skilled and experienced.	Bureaucratic structure of management disrupts the implementation process. Decentralisation of power may improve effective implementation.
	For every decision-making, field workers have to consult the higher authority	Decentralised decision-making process allows the fieldworker to take any decision considering the field situation.	
Coordination	Field workers are more engaged in other extra-project activities so that they fail to manage adequate for project related activities.	Activities of fieldworkers are specific and focused.	



	Since a fieldworker has to execute both project related and non-project organisational activities, coordination of activities becomes difficult.		
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Table A.8.3: Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE) (Executing Body: Department of Social Services (DSS), Ministry of Social Welfare (MSW))

Components	Area		Remarks
	Dhaka PNGO - Aparajeyo Bangla(AB), SPK, Padakhep and PSTC	Khulna: PNGO-ACLAB	
Nature of the Street children	75.2% of the street children (334,807) are in Dhaka. In Dhaka, these children come from all over the country. Along with poverty and migration of family, there are some other reasons. Many of them are victims of trafficking and do not have any relationship with family.	8.5% children (38,070) in Khulna. They are mainly from greater Khulna and Barisal regions. Most of them are victims of river erosion, often having connection with family.	The street children are mobile and their life is completely different from many other poor people. At a very young age they start earning money, so it is very difficult to motivate them with a long term vision. Economic and Social characteristics of the children must be considered in the planning process.
NGO selection	SPK did not have any similar experience. The other 3 NGOs –Aparajeyo Bangla(AB), Padakhep and		The NGO selection criteria were wrong and fraudulent. The



criteria Technically first and financially lowest. Having previous experience in similar activities	PSTC had similar experience, but had to compromise with quality due to budget shortage.	ACLAB-the PNGO did not have any experience of similar activities. The Chairman and ED were relatives to the then DG of DSS.	technically first bidder cannot provide lowest financial proposal without curtailing the quality and quantity of activities. Even it was mentioned by many that unfair means were adopted for NGO selection and budget allocation. Some of the Project staffs say that the TA and PIC were bribed for NGO selection.
Implementation process	Decentralised administrative structure in Padakkhep, AB and PSTC. In SPK, decision-making is a centralised process.	Power is centralised to the ED. Budget and decision-making processes are not transparent.	
Budget Allocation	<p>In Dhaka, where 75.% of the street children reside, only 39% of the budget was allocated for NGOs</p> <p>The DICs were not provided with sufficient fund, though the number of children and price of items increased gradually. AB and Padakkhep could manage it from their other sources, others gradually decreased the quality of services.</p>	<p>In Khulna region. Around 8.5% of the total street children population were living, There was only one NGO in Khulna , while the PNGO was allocated with 17% of the budget.</p> <p>The DICs were not provided with sufficient fund, though the number of children and price of items increased gradually, that in effect decreased the quality of services.</p>	Even where there is an ongoing project, if money fails to come up, such a project may become interrupted. For first three years funding was smooth, while last two three years fund disbursement was interrupted



Sustenance No guideline for enhancing self-sustaining activities in the Pro.doc	Padakkhep, AB may sustain these activities because they have similar activities and these fit within their organisational goal	Staffs expressed their worry that this project may not sustain if the fund is withdrawn.	Some NGOs, who do not have self-sustaining capacity, may not continue this program for this period.
Frontline staff motivation	The project failed to enable the partners a long-term vision, strong commitments and capacity developments. Further the project was extended on year-to-year that leads uncertainty and does not help in development of strong commitment of the project staff and NGOs as well.	Due to corruption and NGO policy, often the frontline workers and project personnel were deprived of their proper incentives that may include paying less salary than they were promised, depriving other facilities and so on. Sometimes their salary is less than they were promised	Many staff, who have already become demoralised, may leave, which would affect the project activities eventually. Despite everything the project runs mostly due to the dedication of the frontline staff.
Targeting		More focused on number and coverage.	The number of children targeted was quite disproportionate according to the number of street children in Bangladesh. It was mentioned in the Pro-doc that 50,000 children will receive services from the project, but it was not clearly defined that what sort of services are targeted for how many children. A child may receive services from multiple components of the project and that may increase the total number of



			children received services, though the child remain the same individual. Programs that focus on measurable, clear, and focused objectives will have more impact than a program with an overly broad goal as it was found in ARISE
Activities Vagueness in policy and Pro.doc Some of the activities like Legal aid, Advocacy, Market Survey are poorly or never addressed by many NGOs	<p>AB and Padakkhep are quite concerned with the quality of activities. Others are more concerned about coverage.</p>	<p>For example, it was mentioned in the ProDoc to provide health services, but the nature and extent of services are not clearly defined. As a result, most of the drop-in-centers, instead of making liaison with health centers, provided health services by preliminary awareness building and medication of common diseases like diarrhea and fever. Similarly education activities do not clarify what the children are to do with this education in the long run</p>	<p>Inadequate information leads to a misunderstanding on the part of the implementers who may be confused as to what exactly are required of them. As a result, often one can feel satisfaction only reaching the targets in number, but without having proper understanding whether it really mattered for the welfare of the children.</p> <p>Like reintegration with family or mainstreaming, how and what to do for realising such objectives are not clearly defined. As such, some NGOs tried to implement these activities seriously, whereas other never bothered to do so. Nevertheless, a comprehensive program to include the Family and</p>



			community is essential. Such activities are mentioned National Child Policy, though not addressed by ARISE.
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Table A.8.4: Capacity Building, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development of the Socially Disadvantaged Women and their Children (Executing Body Department of Social Services (DSS), Ministry of Social Welfare (MSW))

Components	Area		Remarks
	Dhaka NUS z-1, DORP z-2 NMz-3, INCIDIN z-4	Daulatdia PNGO-PIACT	
Targeted population Rarely they are addressed as urban poor in policies and programmes.	<p>Mainly street based sex workers.</p> <p>Always insecure, stigmatised. The street based CSWs are deprived of basic human needs.</p>	<p>Brothel based CSWs.</p> <p>They are comparatively secure and have certainty of shelter and profession at least up to a certain age.</p> <p>Some of them have connection with family, even sometimes get married.</p>	<p>Commercial sex work is often centred around urban areas including sea and river ports, bus terminals industrial centers, large market places, tourist spots and business centers.</p> <p>The major reason for entering the profession is acute poverty. Trafficking, particularly of women and girl children, is another reason and is primarily a consequence of poverty</p> <p>Sex work is a short-term way of livelihood. Most of the sex workers have to leave the profession after 35 years of their age. Most of them (except those who become Sardarnis) have to leave a miserable life when their income flow stops.</p> <p>By and large, sex work is highly stigmatised and sex workers and their children are often subjected to blame, labelling, disapproval and</p>



			discriminatory treatment.
Targeting	Since there is an acute lack of data, the policies are not properly supported by necessary guidelines and indicators that are essential for identification, analysis and act upon specific inequalities and success achieved. For instance, since the number CSWs and their problems are not properly known, there always remains gaps to understand exactly how far has been covered by project	More easy to locate number of CSWs and problems, but the problem is that same beneficiaries at different programmes of the same and different organisation	The project targets mainly young children (under 5) for various components and most of the components are designed for adolescent girls of the CSWs. A number of male children remain out of the target who consequently become social troublemakers
Policy Ambiguity Since they are not treated as 'poor' in strict sense of the term, they are deprived of other social protection like Old Age Allowances, housing and so	Most of them are not registered. Since floating sex workers are illegal, and therefore, in the name of rehabilitation often they are either harassed or sent to Bhabaghure Centre.	Sex workers in the brothels are registered. There are problems regarding issuing fake notary and age certificates, receiving bribes by GO officials,	In Bangladesh, sex work is either illegal or has an ambiguous legal status (e.g. prostitution is not illegal, but procurement of sex workers and soliciting in public is illegal). Most of the activities are designed to address the sex work, while other policy reforms are required to restrict sex work. Specific measures should be initiated to identify the root causes and making pro-active policies in combating these problems in an organised and coordinated manner. The other policy measures that should be addressed in large scale are: establishment of inheritance law and property rights, prohibition of violence and repression against women basic legal rights



<p>on. Such programmes never target the CSWs</p> <p>Rescuing and sheltering of trafficked girls may restrict entrance to profession, which require greater network of Ministry of Home, Law enforcing agencies and a number human rights organisations</p>			<p>including social and political rights and birth registrations</p>
<p>Ambiguity of policy adopted</p>	<p>The <i>protective</i> approach - labour market approach which takes sex work as inevitable reality and fight to establish their enabling environment (like decreasing harassment of the CSW or increasing awareness for condom use)</p>	<p>The <i>preventive</i> approach - human right approach that attempts initiatives for rehabilitation of the CSWs</p>	<p>Often the same organisation adopt both approaches haphazardly without having the proper understanding of the contrasting nature of the approaches. The other third approach, which is more feminist in nature, considering sex work as extreme form of women's subordination and salvation from patriarchal repression is not predominant among the feminist activists</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>A number of similar</p>	<p>For example, building</p>	<p>There is no coordination among the donors at project level. Reports</p>



	activities are run by DORP funded by different donors. Such programmes include Awareness building for AIDS prevention , human rights etc.	awareness on human rights and HIV/AIDS is the part of two projects by PIACT in Daulatdia: one is funded by DSS-UNDP and another by Manusher Janno. Unofficially activities are overlapped and collaborated, officially certain occasions like World AIDS Day are observed jointly with the projects and other organisations. Though the officials of PIACT argue that their goal is to build awareness among the SDW, it appears that goals and strategies are often donor driven.	are made accordingly to the donors.
<i>Problem of misunderstanding the nature of the profession</i>	The model is more appropriate for the floating CSWs, because it provides them with more certainty and security. Though actual rehabilitation and mainstreaming takes a	The project encourages training on tailoring, embroidery and so on to build capacity for alternative livelihoods, which are often implemented to address the	Often similar model of poverty alleviation are adopted for the poor who are different to a large extent. Without having a long-term programme strategy, targets and achievements can never be analyzed by projects.



	long- term coordination and implementation of policies.	distressed women in rural areas. Such policies of the project often fail to realise the nature of this particular profession. A young brothel based CSW may earn at least 200-300 taka per day and maintain living accordingly, whereas she may earn hardly 2000 taka per month from tailoring. Unsurprisingly, many of them may not feel encouraged to join the training. Sometimes the mother of a CSW may not want her daughter to receive such trainings for insecurity of income. Some CSWs said, 'there is no assurance that whether society would accept me as a tailor and come to me with orders. But if I can earn money at this age, that may provide my security at old age.'	
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	Corruption of officials in different tiers disrupts the proper implementation of components. Such corruptions range from selection of partner NGOs. On the other way, both in the brothel and in the street, CSWs are regular victims of threat, physical abuse and mugging by police, miscreants, pimps, sardarnis		
Self-sustenance	May not sustain if the funds are withdrawn	May support activities through other sources of fund.	
Frontline staff	Dedicated	Dedicated and realises the problem	



Annex 9

“*Jaal jar jola taar*” - Fishing right (of access to the water body) to the Fishers: a case study on obstacles to policy implementation in Nilphamari district⁵⁰

Introduction

In Bangladesh, the fishermen community is considered as one of the most vulnerable and extreme poor group. Thus some government and non-government programs on pro poor growth are concentrated in this area. This report tries to identify some of the difficulties in working with and problems that exist in this sector. In so doing, the researcher has looked into several government and NGO programs and conducted interviews among government and NGO officials as well as the common citizens. The list of programs, interviewees and statistics of different kinds of water bodies within Nilphamari zila are presented at the end of this annex. Several problems at different tiers have emerged from the analysis. A synopsis of these is presented below.

Policy

Except Fishery Department, policies of other departments are not favorable to the cause of the poor fishers. In some cases, policies of some of the departments are biased against the extreme poor.

There is no separate budget assigned by the government at the union level for fisheries. All water bodies within the vicinity of three acres are under the control of the Union Parishad. If separate budget was allocated for fisheries, the Parishad could put these water bodies to productive use. It must be noted however, that such a step would create another entry point for corruption among the UP.

Design

Even though the policy is targeted to extreme poor, the latter fails to benefit because of faulty program design. Some programs are such that the poor can not afford to participate. For example, the training program organised by the Department of Fisheries does not have provisions for allowance during the training period. As a result, the unemployed among the relatively better off households are able to participate, and not the extreme poor individuals.

The way the water bodies are leased causes another kind of bias against the very poor. The lease of water bodies are allotted by the government through a system of bidding. Therefore, sometimes rich businessmen rather than fishermen take the lease. They in turn let it out to the fishermen in return for a fixed amount of ‘tax’. When the rate charged by the businessmen is too high, the fishermen do not have the choice but to over harvest in the water body.

⁵⁰ A full report in Bangla was prepared by the team assigned to undertake the case study in Nilphamari; only some highlights are presented here.



Implementation

Lack of ownership

- In practice it is the implementing agencies that make all the decisions with the beneficiaries depending on them. Although, the main decisions are supposed to be taken by the beneficiaries with the help of implementing agencies. This is why the poor never really gain ownership of the project, which makes it easy for the local influential group to take over after the NGOs departed.
- The understanding among the community is that the project is owned by the field officers rather than the community. Thus, whenever the field officers are absent there is a tendency to exceed the optimal amount of fish catch (necessary for sustainable fish stock) by the community as well as other individuals in the area.

Free Riding Attitude

- In case of monitoring the water bodies most of the members acted like free rider. Therefore, desired outcome couldn't be achieved in most cases.

Property rights

- For the poor fishermen it is extremely difficult to have access to water bodies. Thus even if they take loans, they fail to put it to productive use in fishing.

Loan recovery

- Loans given out by the Department of Fisheries and Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank on fisheries were not recovered. Every year a sum of TK. 300,000 is approved by the government through the Department of Fisheries, but as the loan was not recovered; the total capital did not increase to 1,500,000 over the next five years. From the Domar branch, Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank gave Taka 41,91,000 to 15 fish farmers in three years and almost none of it is recovered yet. This failure of recovery of loans forces these agencies to stop giving out loans in fisheries sector.
- Because of loan default revolving didn't grow, as it should be. Therefore few programs provided by Department of Fisheries, which are targeted to extreme poor, are not working properly due to lack of funds.

Influence of local elites

- Whenever a project phases out and the implementing agency leaves the project area, the local elites takeover the allotted ponds and reap any benefits of the project.
- If a community is formed successfully, i.e. they participate actively and become strong within the village, the elites start to view them as a threat to their 'power'. In that case, the elites start to threaten them or take actions that



will intimidate and weaken the community. The poor are thus eventually left out.

Corruption and infiltration of the non-poor

- Some projects do not even want to include poor fishermen as labourers because of the apprehension that they may steal the fish.
- Even if the poor fishermen receive training they may lack the resources to put them to productive use. For example they do not have the ability to secure their fish cage worth of Taka 10,000 to Tk. 15,000.
- Given that there is no allowance during training, the opportunity cost of the poor is too high. They cannot thus afford to participate in the training.
- Some trainings are pre-requisite to get loans and lease of water bodies. In such instances, the well-off participants are ready to bribe the authority, marginalising the extreme poor.
- Even if all criteria of the project are fulfilled as per project guidelines, it is sometimes not possible to lease the pond from the government without bribe.
- Due to corruption, ponds are sometimes leased out to the middle class rather than the extreme poor.

Conclusion

For various reasons, the current fish based projects prove to be inappropriate for the extreme poor. This is largely because of either mistreating policies or inappropriate policy designs. It is therefore recommended that future projects should be properly targeted and designed with the involvement of beneficiaries, which in turn develop their communities in such a way that the ownership is actually transferred to them.



Statistical Tables to Annex 9

Table A.9.1: Overview of Govt. Water bodies of Nilphamari Zila

Upazila	No. of Different Water Bodies				Area of Govt. Water body (acres)			
	Closed	Open	Other	Total	Closed Water	Open	Others	Total
Nilphamari	22	-	5	27	506.00	-	550.00	1178.00
Syedpur	13	-	-	13	241.80	-	-	241.00
Kishorgang	17	1	4	22	425.00	102.00	450.00	977.00
Dimla	5	2	2	9	87.50	2400.00	160.00	2787.50
Domar	7	-	2	9	126.00	-	210.00	426.00
Jaldhaka	16	-	3	19	286.40	-	350.00	736.40
Total	80	3	16	99	1671.90	2502.00	1720.00	5893.90

Table A.9.2: Areas of Water Bodies Occupied by Different Directorate

Nature of Water Body	Land Directorate	Water Development Board	Forestry Department	Others	Total
Closed Water Body	1532.90	-	-	139.00	1671.90
Open Water Body	67.00	1533.00	292.00	-	2502.00
Others	-	17.00	-	-	1720.00
Total	2209.90	3253.00	292.00	139.00	5893.90
Percentage Rate (%)	37.49	55.19	3.96	2.33	100



Table A.9.3: Existing Management System of Closed Water Bodies.

Nature	Department of Youth Development	Fishery	Zila & Upazila Parishad	Total
No of Legally Occupied Water Bodies	51	11	17	79
No of Illegally Occupied Water Bodies	15	2	-	17
Total	66	13	17	96
Areas of Water Body (Acre)	269.25	175.50	78.70	53.45
Silted Water Body	734.75	353.40	60.30	1148.45
Total	1004.00	528.90	139.00	1671.90
Areas of Legally Occupied Water Bodies	254.00	142.00	139.00	535.00
Areas of Illegally Occupied Water Bodies	750.00	386.90	-	1136.9

Table A.9.4: List of on-going GO and NGO initiatives in Nilphamari

Category	Agency	Activity
Government	Department of Fisheries	30 day training for fishing in an enclosed area with the provision of a loan of Taka 5,000 at the end
		7 day training for making fishing nets with a stipend of Taka 100 and a loan of Taka 1000
		3 month training on fisheries for 30 individuals selected by the different ministries. Individuals are required to pay Taka 1500 for accommodation and food at the Regional Fisheries Development Training Center at Dinajpur
	Directorate of Youth	Training on fisheries
		Lease out waterbodies within 3 and 20 acres to institutions/clubs registered in the name of the



		youth
	Directorate of Women and Child Affairs	Credit program where part of it is allotted for fishing
	Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank	Credit program
NGOs	Care - Bangladesh	Shouhardo program
		Go-interfish
	Concern	Nodi o Jibon project
	Brac	TUP program
	RDRS	Fisheries project
	Gono Shahajjo Shonghostha	Gono Shongodhon fisheries project
	Development Research Center	Fisheries project
	Development Research Foundation	Poverty alleviation through effective use of local resources
		Poverty alleviation through self-awareness



List of Persons Interviewed

M.I. Golzar, District Fisheries Officer, Nilphamari

Sri Dipak Kumar Roy, Upazila Fisheries Officer, Dimla, Nilphamari

Upazila Fisheries Officer, Syedpur, Nilphamari

Md. Badruz Zaman, Department of Fisheries, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari

Md. Shakhawat Hossain, Supervisor, DoF, Domar, Nilphamari

Upazila Fisheries Officer, Kishoregonj, Nilphamari

Md. Raja Shohidul Aslam, District Youth Development Officer, Nilphamari

Abdul Monjur Mondol, Upazila Officer, Ministry of Youth, Domar, Nilphamari

Ali Al Raja, Upazila Youth Development Officer, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari

Upazila Youth Development Officer, Syedpur, Nilphamari

Upazila Youth Development Officer, Domar, Nilphamari

Upazila Youth Development Officer, Kishoregonj, Nilphamari

Directorate of Women and Child Affairs

Bina Mojumder, Upazila Women Affairs Officer, Dimla, Nilphamari

Masuda Hossain, Upazila Women Affairs Officer, Domar, Nilphamari

Farhana Akhter, Upazila Women Affairs Officer, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari

Upazila Women Affairs Officer, Syedpur, Nilphamari

District Coordinating Officer, Nilphamari

Md. Mofiz Uddin, Ideal Village Implementation Department, Dimla, Nilphamari

Atul Chandra Proshad, Secretary, Shimulbari Union, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari

Emdadul Hoque, Executive Director, VDO, Kishoregonj, Nilphamari

Ruhul Amin, Executive Director, Development Research Foundation, Syedpur, Nilphamari

Project Co-ordinator, MUSUK – Partner organisation to implement Shouhardo, Dimla, Nilphamari

Mr. Ramanuz, Project Co-ordinator, JSKS – Partner organisation to implement Shouhardo, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari



Mr. Alam, Executive Director, SHARP, Syedpur, Nilphamari

Mostafizur Rahman, Manager, Mirgonj Branch, RDRS, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari

Johurul Islam, Area Manager, RDRS, Jaldhaka, Nilphamari

Rokeya Begum, Accountant, MUSUK, Domar, Nilphamari

Md. Farid Haider, Branch Manager, PKSF, Domar, Nilphamari

Md. Rakibul Hasan, Regional Coordinator, Concern, Dimla, Nilphamari

Akhteruzzaman Basunia, Fisheries Manager, RDRS, Domar, Nilphamari

Momtaz Uddin, Ex-worker, Gonoshahajjo Shanghostha, Nilphamari

Jobed Ali, Ex-worker, Gonoshahajjo Shanghostha, Nilphamari

Upazila Coordinator, TUP, Brac, Syedpur, Nilphamari

Malcolm Dickson, Project Leader, WorldFish Center

Muzaffar Ahmed, NGO Coordinator, WorldFish Center

Mr. Mahbubur Rahman Khan, Project Director, Department of Fisheries

Md. Abul Hashem (Sumon), Assistant Director, Department of Fisheries

Md. Abdul Razzaque Bhuiyan, Project Coordinating Director, DAE

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Mr. Syed Md. Iqbal, National Project Director (NPD), Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment

Mr. Masood Ahmed, Vocational Training Specialist, Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE)

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Ms. Kaniz Mostafa, Social Services Officer, Urban Community Development(UCD) Programme-2, Khulna

Mr. Fakhrul Alam, Slum Development Officer, Khulna City Corporation

Mr. Liaquat Ali Sharif, Chief Engineer, Khulna City Corporation

Advocate Sheikh Taiyabur Rahman, Mayor, Khulna City Corporation



FGDs

Beneficiaries of Monga Program Aditmari Upazilla Lalmonirhat.

Dhirendra Shiel, Kaushalya, Shushil Barman, Aita Rani , Santana, Khaybar Ali, Hasina Ali, Hasina, Afasna , Shahedul, Namita, Kusumbala Rokeya, Bina Rani and Swapna Rani ---

FGDs at ACLAN Project Director

Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project(UGIIP)]

LGED

FGD at ACLAB Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE) Project office Khulna: all the project staffs were participants

FGD at Sonadanga Drop-in Center, Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE) Project office Khulna: 11 female street children receiving services from DIC participated

FGD at Capacity Building, Poverty Alleviation and Alternative Livelihoods for Socially Disadvantaged Women and their Children, PIACT – Project office Daulatdia: All the project staffs participated

FGD at Daulatdia brothel: 9 Commercial Sex Workers participated